HOUSE OF COMMONS DEBATES

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, May 15, 1990

The House met at 11 a.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*Translation*]

HOUSE OF COMMONS

VACANCY IN THE POSITION OF DEPUTY SPEAKER

Mr. Speaker: I have the honour to inform the House that I have received a communication notifying me that a vacancy has occurred in the position of Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons, namely, the hon. Marcel Danis, by resignation.

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[*English*]

CRIMINAL CODE

MEASURE TO AMEND

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-301, an act to amend the Criminal Code (gun control).

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Shall the hon. member have leave to introduce the said bill?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Fulton: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to introduce legislation in relation to gun control. It has two principal elements to it. One is in relation to the difficulties rural Canadians have long faced in terms of obtaining farm acquisition certificates. I believe the suggestion that I have is one that members from rural Canada would well understand and very likely support.

The second element is in relation to the deletion of the search and seizure without warrant provisions which were provided for in the notorious gun control legislation of more than a decade ago. Even independent analyses of the existing legislation that have been done indicate that there have been serious abrogations of it. My legislation would intend to remedy that.

Motion agreed to, bill read the first time, and ordered to be printed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Before I recognize the hon. member for Skeena again, I would hope he would do the Chair the courtesy of giving advance notice that he is going to present bills. Is the hon. member going to present his three bills today?

Mr. Fulton: Four bills.

* * *

CANADA SAFE DRINKING WATER ACT

MEASURE TO ENACT

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): moved for leave to introduce Bill C-302, an act to protect and enhance the quality of drinking water in Canada.

• (1110)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Shall the hon. member have leave to introduce the said bill?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Fulton: Mr. Speaker, as all members of the House are aware, the quality of drinking water in Canada is the greatest environmental issue Canadians want addressed. Some 40 per cent of the marine pollution, both salt and fresh water, in Canada is presently coming from the pulp and paper industry.

One of the things that my legislation does is to establish base lines upon which we can move toward the same concept of zero discharge and zero tolerance that one finds in relation to the recent annex to the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement. The intention is to clean up and keep safe and potable all fresh water in Canada.

Motion agreed to, bill read the first time and ordered to be printed.

Routine Proceedings

CANADIAN ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-303, an act to amend the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, (application of fines).

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Shall the hon. member have leave to introduce the bill?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Fulton: Mr. Speaker, this amendment to the Canadian Environmental Protection Act is a fundamental one. It provides for is what is known as fines-splitting. Under this provision, private groups or private individuals, which either provide information to the Crown or proceed with private prosecutions, would be returned up to one-half of the fine following the completion of the legal and court process and a ruling by the courts.

This is a widely respected and known principle used in many countries to encourage people who are working in an industry, farmers who see things happen, or private individuals who see degrading matters going on that affect the environment, to bring these matters properly before the courts.

Motion agreed to, bill read the first time and ordered to be printed.

* * *

FORESTRY DEVELOPMENT AND RESEARCH ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-304, an act to amend the Forestry Development and Research Act (modified trees).

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Shall the hon. member have leave to introduce the said bill?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Fulton: Mr. Speaker, as you know, the recently passed Department of Forestry Act has a provision for the taking of a national inventory, something I know the Minister of Forests is undertaking with great speed.

One of the amendments to the federal legislation that I think is urgently is required is in relation to what are known as culturally modified trees. They are found in all areas of Canada, including both the territories. In particular, one finds culturally modified trees in places like Meares Island, where aboriginal people centuries ago operated, on a sustainable basis, the large-scale harvesting of wood from the forests without even cutting the tree down. They simply stripped planks and other materials from the trees.

The intention of this amendment to federal legislation is to provide for protection of culturally modified trees where they have a particular scientific or cultural value.

Motion agreed to, bill read the first time and ordered to be printed.

* * *

PETITIONS

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Stan Keyes (Hamilton West): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour and duty, pursuant to Standing Order 36, to present to the House yet another petition certified correct by the Clerk of Petitions. It contains the signatures of hundreds of Canadians who say that since September, 1984, the Conservative federal government has imposed on Canadian taxpayers at least 32 new taxes or tax increases. The Conservative government wants to impose on Canadians a new general 7 per cent tax on goods and services whereas the Liberals, on behalf of Canadians, strongly oppose this new goods and services tax, which is an unprecedented tax grab from the pockets of Canadians and will hit them not only with higher taxes but with higher inflation, higher interest rates and higher unemployment.

Therefore, the petitioners pray and call upon Parliament to reject the proposed goods and services tax.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mrs. Coline Campbell (South West Nova): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I have the honour to present a petition certified correct as to form and content and signed by some 42 concerned constituents. It is with regard to recent amendments to the Unemployment Insurance Act which deprive adoptive parents of proper assistance.

RIGHTS OF THE UNBORN

Mrs. Coline Campbell (South West Nova): Mr. Speaker, I would also like to present a certified petition with 49 signatures calling on the House to legislate to protect the rights of the unborn.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mrs. Coline Campbell (South West Nova): I have two other petitions, Mr. Speaker. One is signed by 70 people calling on the government to scrap its proposed goods and services tax.

VETERANS AFFAIRS

Mrs. Coline Campbell (South West Nova): I have another petition, Mr. Speaker, signed by 46 constituents calling on the government to reconsider recent budget cuts affecting veterans' lodging.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table a petition today dealing with the infamous tax concerning services and products which will be imposed by this government in January 1991.

This petition presents serious arguments against the imposition of this regressive tax. The petition says that it will be applied unjustly to Canadians, that it will complicate their lives, and will make small business very difficult to administer. As a matter of fact, it will be an onerous burden on small business.

These people strongly oppose this goods and services tax which is, in their view, an unprecedented tax grab from the pockets of Canadians and will hit them not only with higher taxes but with higher inflation, higher interests rates—and God knows we have them now—and higher unemployment which is still with us.

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, I have the pleasure to present a petition signed by substantially over 100 residents of my riding of Kingston and the Islands, who indicate their support for the proposition that no tax be applied to books and magazines, to the printed word in Canada, a democratic country. They submit that culture and education in a literate and productive society would be affected by the imposition of a tax on the printed word.

They call on Parliament to reaffirm this basic tenet or principle of democracy and reject a tax as proposed by this government on the printed word as embodied in the legislation supporting the GST, Bill C-62. They call on Parliament to reject that bill and that tax.

Ms. Lynn Hunter (Saanich—Gulf Islands): Mr. Speaker, I rise today pursuant to Standing Order 36 to present three petitions all related to the goods and services tax, all somewhat different in their focus. They are all wanting Parliament to scrap the tax. Today's news is that the inflationary pressures of tax increases by the government are in fact increasing the interest rates and endangering small business.

The petitioners want us to make it known that while there is a broad public consensus to scrap the manufacturers' sales tax, the government should not use it as an opportunity to impose a massive tax grab.

Mr. Neil Young (Beaches—Woodbine): Mr. Speaker, I too have the pleasure to present a petition pursuant to Standing Order 36. It is signed by quite a number of people from southeastern Ontario.

The petition says that the Minister of Finance's proposed goods and services tax is an unfair form of taxation because of its lack of regard for a taxpayer's ability to pay. The petitioners call on Parliament to reject the current proposal for a goods and services tax and to reform the taxation system so that there is an effective minimum tax on wealthy individuals and corporations. They also ask the government to cease with a proposal which will shift the tax burden on to ordinary Canadians through a regressive consumption tax instead of through real tax reform.

• (1120)

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present, on behalf of hundreds of petitioners, a large number of petitions which have been certified correct pursuant to Standing Order 36.

The petitioners are concerned that the government has not addressed the unfair taxation system currently in place which permits wealthy Canadians and corporations to pay little or no federal tax, while forcing low and middle income taxpayers to bear more of the national tax burden. The government is now trying to tax piano lessons, haircuts, diapers, coffins and even consumer loans, which some Canadians must take out just to pay their taxes.

Therefore they call on all members of this House—and I know, Mr. Speaker, you will be at the front of the line to oppose the GST when it comes before the

House—to reject the current proposals for a grief and suffering tax, the goods and services tax, the GST.

* * *

[*Translation*]

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, I ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

[*English*]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Danis: Mr. Speaker, I would like to advise the House that tomorrow will be an allotted day.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

BORROWING AUTHORITY ACT, 1990–91

MEASURE TO ENACT

The House resumed from Monday, May 14, consideration of the motion of Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre) that Bill C-65, an act to provide borrowing authority, be read the third time and passed.

Mr. David D. Stupich (Nanaimo—Cowichan): Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to stand in my place and debate this borrowing bill, particularly since it gives me an opportunity to talk a little more about Canada's record with respect to interest rates.

I read some time ago that it was the practice in old China, for those who could afford it, to pay the medical practitioners when they were doing a good job; that is, when they kept them well. If they became ill, they cut off the payment to the medical practitioner until such time as they got well again. Obviously, if they became sick under that practitioner's treatment, he was not doing the right job. So they paid him to keep them well, paid him while they were well, but cut off the payment when the medical practitioner was ineffective in his work.

In Canada, we look at it differently. We have a person who is responsible for economic affairs, the Governor of the Bank of Canada, who admits that he has failed in his announced goal. It has been his goal to reduce inflation to zero. He keeps talking about zero inflation. Inflation keeps creeping up.

He admits that he is failing in his job. In the Bank of Canada report for 1989 he said: "The Bank of Canada actions did not result in any improvement in our inflation performance". There is no one better than he to say that he failed totally in his job.

Instead of punishing him in some way, exhibiting our displeasure at what he has or has not done, we give him a salary increase of 35 per cent over three years. This to the very man who is telling Canadians that they should exercise restraint. To him we give an increase of 35 per cent in a period of just three years.

I think the Chinese approach was better. Perhaps it worked better too. I do not have any details as to just how well it worked, but we all know that Mr. Crow's policies have failed Canada totally in every way, not only in his announced goal of getting inflation down to zero, which he still tells us is his goal, but in the fact that many parts of the country are experiencing a very severe recession. So he has failed us in every way and we should be taking another look at his medicine.

Let us go back to the medical analogy. If you have something wrong with you and you go to a doctor who puts you on some treatment plan and, instead of getting better you are getting worse, then surely you would question the treatment. If he prescribes a medicine which, instead of improving your situation makes you worse, would you not question whether there was something wrong with the medicine or that maybe he was giving you the wrong medicine? Surely, Mr. Speaker, it is appropriate to ask questions like that.

We do ask questions. Mr. Crow is asked questions and his response is always that we must try more of the same medicine, we must make it worse than it has been.

That reminds me, using a medical analogy again, of the days when they bled patients. The thinking was that if they were sick, let's make them worse, let's take some blood out of them so they cannot cope with their illness and then maybe they will get contrary enough to recover.

That would seem to be what Mr. Crow is trying to do to the Canadian economy. He is trying to make it worse in the hope that the punishment will make us achieve the target for which he is reaching.

He is trying to get inflation down to zero by increasing interest rates. He might just as well be trying to control a forest fire in British Columbia by pouring gasoline on it. There is no more effective way of increasing inflation than to increase interest rates. Interest rates immediately impact on the cost of everything in the country.

Take as an example businesses producing goods for sale in this country. Every one of those businesses, every one of the suppliers of those businesses, everybody in the whole production line is borrowing money somewhere along the way for capital construction, for inventory or even to finance their accounts receivable. Every time the cost of borrowing goes up they have to increase the cost of their product to recover that, or they do not pay any corporation tax and we lose out that way as well.

The impact of an increasing interest rate on business is to increase their costs. They pass those costs on to the pubic generally and that is one of the ways in which inflation is measured.

It increases the value of our dollar. Of course that is the real purpose, I believe, of increasing the interest rates but, nevertheless, it does increase the price of our dollar. Increasing the price of our dollar makes it more difficult for us to export, more difficult for us to compete with other countries. So it cuts down on our exports which again cuts back on employment and makes our economy just that much worse off.

It increases imports because, relatively, the cost of goods that are imported into Canada goes down as our dollar goes up relative to other currencies. It is easier then for us to buy from abroad so we import more and export less and that, again, hurts our total economy and makes for inflation. It does not bring inflation down to zero; it makes it worse.

It increases budget deficits, and we certainly know the history of that. Year after year the budget deficit is in the neighbourhood of $28 billion to $30 billion, all of it going for interest. Although you cannot allocate the dollars and say this dollar goes to interest and that dollar goes to something else, certainly we know the amount of the deficit is almost as much as we are paying on financing the current debt of Canada.

Of course if increases unemployment. All of these things have a detrimental effect on inflation and defeat the very purpose as announced by the Governor of the Bank of Canada.

It encourages higher taxes. Of course when the government starts running into trouble financing its deficit, financing its programs, when taxes fall off because of unemployment, because of cut-backs in business, the government is inclined to increase taxes in order to try to recover some of the lost revenue to meet the bills that it still has. Of course we all know that that is just as inflationary as anything else that can be done. Inflation is fuelled by increases in taxes.

It affects the balance of payments, increases interest rates, brings the dollar up to a higher value and cuts down on our exports. There is any number of industries from one end of this country to the other complaining about the effect of the increase in the dollar and how it has hurt their position in world markets.

• (1130)

We talked about free trade and the benefits we were supposed to get from that. Everyone will agree—and I do not think anyone would deny for one moment—that the increase in the value of the Canadian dollar has many times wiped out whatever advantages we might have had to date from the free trade deal with the United States. Any reduction in prices from the Americans has been more than taken into account by the increase in the value of the Canadian dollar.

When we affect the balance of payments negatively—that is when we reduce our exports and increase our imports—we have to increase our borrowing abroad. We did not have to do it before, but we do now. I have seen figures anywhere from $50 billion to $200 billion representing what we owe abroad right now. That is bad business. We should not be borrowing from abroad. We should be able to finance everything we are doing in Canada from our own resources. Otherwise we are simply borrowing trouble for the future.

I recall speaking in the B.C. legislature, criticizing the government of the day for borrowing from abroad and reminding them of a speech that the finance minister of British Columbia, the Hon. Herbert Anscombe, had made almost 50 years ago when he was cautioning the province of British Columbia and Canadian governments in general about borrowing abroad. Some day those loans have to be paid, not with Canadian dollars, but with Canadian goods. We have to some day export more than we are importing or we will never catch up. The foreign debt is bound to increase unless we start exporting more and importing less.

Increasing the value of the Canadian dollar, which is a direct result of increases in interest rates, means that we borrow more abroad, and we are doing that steadily these days. That, too, is borrowing trouble for the future.

I mentioned earlier that the Governor of the Bank of Canada, who by his own admission has failed in his attempt to get to zero inflation, was granted a 35 per cent increase in salary over a period of three years. And he is asking Canadians to hold the line.

The executives of CNR were given an average increase of 18.7 per cent in one year, and they are asking their employees to hold the line. As a matter of fact they used the power of Parliament to ensure that their employees would get an increase in one year of 4.5 per cent. That is good enough for the people who are doing the work, and the people looking and watching over them got 18.7 per cent in one year. And they have the nerve to ask people to hold the line and be careful.

The Minister of Finance said something to the effect that it was Canada's policies during the late 1970s and early 1980s that led us into the recession of 1982-83. I do not know where the minister was at that time, but it may be news for him that Canada was not the only country in the world that suffered a recession in that period. Every country in the western world at least suffered a severe recession in that period.

It was not Canada's policy to drag the rest of the western world into the mires of a recession. Certainly it was economic policies and every one of the countries was following similar economic policies, but we were not in trouble here because of something we did in Canada. We were in trouble in British Columbia because the Americans quit building houses and they were not buying our lumber. We were in trouble in Ontario because they were not building the automobiles they used to build and we were not selling them automobile parts. We were in trouble in the east because they were not buying our minerals and the lumber, the pulp, the newsprint, the paper. We live on our exports, and our exports were severely curtailed during that period because our customers were not buying. It had absolutely nothing to do with what we were doing here in Canada.

Certainly, we could have done better for ourselves in Canada than we did, but the severe recession that we had was brought on by the western world-wide recession. Now we are heading down the same road. The Governor of the Bank of Canada and the Minister of Finance seem to feel that that is the route for us to go. "Let's make things so bad that whatever happens people will think they are better off than they were yesterday."

The Minister of Finance estimated in his budget that the interest rate would be 11 per cent this year. I wonder if he remembers that these days. The last figure for the Bank of Canada as I recall was 13.77 per cent. It is understandable that inflation will result from the imposition of the GST which is scheduled to come on line January 1, 1991. The government wants to curtail as much as it can any attempts by workers to keep even with inflation.

In general, that has not been happening in recent years, except for the workers at the very top. They have been doing very well, but the workers on the production line have not been keeping up with inflation. Mr. Crow and the Minister of Finance want to keep them down further. That is not the way to prosperity in Canada. We should not increase unemployment.

I mentioned earlier where free trade comes into it. One of the reasons the New Democrats did so well in British Columbia, and especially on Vancouver Island, was that we talked about free trade. We said that one of the main reasons for going into the free trade deal, the Mulroney—Reagan deal, was to improve the U.S. trade balance.

The U.S. was in a tremendous deficit position with respect to Canada. It was importing far more from us than it was selling to us, and it did not like that. The U.S.

was having trouble, so it wanted to change it, turn it around. That is why we got into that deal.

One of the ways to achieve it was to increase the value of the Canadian dollar. The interest rates do not follow inflation. They follow the Canadian dollar. When the dollar dips, the interest rates go up. If it dips a bit more, they go up higher. If the dollar gets beyond a certain point then interest rates hold steady for a while. Mr. Crow said he made a mistake when he dropped the rate back in January, but it is the dollar that they are watching.

Canada has committed itself to the United States to do everything it can to improve the American balance of payments position with respect to our country. We are accomplishing it by getting the dollar up so high that it is creating unemployment, bad business opportunities for our enterprises in Canada, reducing corporation taxes we might be collecting from them, increasing our deficit, hurting our economy in every way conceivable but it is great for the Americans.

In part, while this borrowing bill says it is for public works and other purposes, it is there because we need the money to finance the ever increasing foreign debt that Canada is building. We need to have the money to pay it, but it is time we started sending a message to the practitioners who are supposed to be curing the Canadian economy. Your medicine is not working. Your treatment is not working. Change your medicine, change your treatment or get out of the way and make room for somebody who will take hold of the Canadian economy and make Canada a country in which we all want to live.

Mr. Eugène Bellemare (Carleton—Gloucester): Mr. Speaker, I listened to the member with interest. I congratulate him on his presentation.

I wonder if he would elaborate somewhat on the question of the value of the Canadian dollar when and if it is affected by lending abroad as opposed to lending money within Canada. Would he expand a bit on that?

Mr. Stupich: Mr. Speaker, when we borrow abroad, we have to pay the interest rates demanded of us. If our economy seems to be in bad shape or if there are some political problems—there are some questions now—then the foreign lenders want more money.

• (1140)

Foreign lenders have other opportunities. There are stories now as to what might happen in Germany with respect to their interest rates when the East German and West German marks become one. Japan may have to raise its interest rates. They are looking for opportunities to lend and they will lend to the best places for the best interest rates.

For Canada to get the money it needs to keep the lifestyle in which we have been living, importing more than we are exporting, means we have to pay more interest, which means we have to raise our taxes, and raise government revenues by selling products. We cannot print dollars, we have to export. That is the only way we can do it.

During the war, Canada had one million people in uniform. I was one of them and perhaps there are others here who were as well. We were producing everything we consumed. We were producing things to try to fill the Atlantic. Boat after boat was being sunk carrying goods produced in Canada. We did not fill the hole, but we did keep everyone working. It was great and the economy was booming. We did it without borrowing a single dollar abroad because no one had any money to lend us at that time. It can be done if we are prepared to do it ourselves in our own country. It is time we started tightening up in Canada.

Mr. Guy Ricard (Laval): Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to the speech of the last speaker. He says that Canada, sooner or later, will have to export more than it imports.

I remember quite well the debate on the free trade agreement. His party was dead against it. I wonder if he can explain why there are two policies in his party?

Mr. Stupich: Mr. Speaker, there are not two policies. We were dead against the free trade deal because it was a bad deal for Canada. We were in favour of trade. We are in favour of trade. We are in favour of international trade. We support GATT, because that is a trade agreement. The deal made between our Prime Minister and the then President of the United States was made in the United States for the United States. It was a deal that was contrary to the interests of Canada and, as such, we opposed it. That is not opposition to trade, it is opposition to a bad deal for Canada.

Mrs. Coline Campbell (South West Nova): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to speak at report stage of Bill C-65, an act to provide borrowing authority in the amount of $25.5 billion that this government needs to borrow in order to carry on the business of government. I question whether it is the business of government they are carrying on. It seems to me the government is slowly leading Canada into a way of life we have not known for a long time.

It gives me an opportunity as well to draw attention to the government's mismanagement of fiscal policy, mismanagement that it steadfastly has tried to avoid responsibility for ever since it came into power in 1984. The time has long past when members opposite could credibly blame the previous administration for its fiscal wrongs. Canadians are now measuring the government's performance against its own standards and promises, not those of former governments. They see Canadian standards being torn down; VIA, financing between the provinces and the federal government, they see Air Canada being sold and having losses, they see Canadian Airlines not doing well, the deregulation that the government brought forward in these areas is not really working to the benefit of Canada.

The Minister of Finance is again asking Parliament for the authority to borrow billions of dollars and increase the public debt as a testament to his own failures. The minister's lack of action on the deficit has left the financial cupboard bare and greatly reduced the ability of the government to come to the aid of Canadians who, through no fault of their own, are in a time of crisis: Atlantic fishermen and fish plant workers, prairie farmers, and laid-off workers in all industries that are moving to the United States because of the free trade agreement.

There is no money for these people because this government will only give them money if the provinces chip in.

It has made great promises that it will give money if the provinces come in to help the prairie farmers. It has money, supposedly: give them the interest at least to keep it going until it can make arrangements with the governments on the prairies to help the farmers. It gave a program to the Atlantic fisheries last week that is going to be conditional on whether the provinces and the companies put money in for the adjustment program and all work to use what little federal money was put in.

In September 1984 the Minister of Finance warned Canadians about the dire fiscal situation he had been left with by the previous government. I was a member in this House, and I do not think it was very dire considering the economic times we had just come through with the high interest rates and high inflation.

This is not what we have today. We have high interest rates and low inflation in comparison to that time. The minister called for a quick change in policy direction, a change that he promised would cut the yearly budget deficit in half by the end of the decade and vastly reduce the growing net public debt. He projected this debt would reach $400 billion if the legacy of the former government was not brought to a quick end. What did he replace it with? In 1990-91 we find that the net public debt is projected to be $379.9 billion, just slightly below what the Minister of Finance projected in 1984 and more than double what he inherited.

This is a government that had the best of economic times in the last six years. It did not reduce the deficit. It did not even cut back on government spending as it should have in good economic times. We have the largest cabinet that we have ever seen. We have so many ministers of state that people do not know where to go to get some action.

The yearly deficit for 1989-90 stood at $30.5 billion, a mere $4 billion below the $34 billion deficit the minister posted in 1985-86, the first full year of Tory rule.

More to the point, the small progress that he has made on deficit reduction has come about, not from expenditure reduction as he promised in 1984, but from massive tax increases. The average family of four in Canada is now paying an average of $3,000 more in taxes compared to 1984.

The question that remains is why is this happening. In the first place, despite the minister's well-known pride in his ability to forecast the direction of the economy, his department has consistently underestimated yearly growth rates. In 1984-85, for example, he predicted that growth would run at 4.2 per cent and 2.4 per cent respectively when in fact it ran at 6.3 per cent and 4.8 per cent. This first failure has in turn in my opinion played into the hands of the Governor of the Bank of Canada, whose fixation in achieving a zero rate of inflation has pushed the prime to 13.75 per cent. This rate is murderously high—and I will talk about that further in a

moment—and highly discriminatory against the regions that have never really joined Toronto in the boom of the 1980s.

I say that because we now have the Governor of the Bank of Canada in an impossible position. If he reduces interest rates, inflation will go up. His prime objective is to get it down. Whatever he is going to do we are going to see high interest rates when the country cannot afford to see the rates we are seeing presently.

Each point the minister is off in his interest rate predictions adds another $1.7 billion to the deficit. This year's budget forecasts were finalized in January before the most recent escalation in rates. It is not likely now that they will fall from 12.2 per cent to 9.5 per cent in 1991 as predicted in his budget.

• (1150)

The government must be doing something wrong. It has to have another look at what it is doing to interest rates and to this country. Maybe we need a two interest rate policy in Canada. Maybe Toronto and Montreal in the golden belt and Vancouver need one interest rate. Maybe we should have an interest rate for the rural areas as long as the money is being kept there in the area and is not leaving.

I do not know what the minister needs for new ideas, but certainly his policy is not working in Canada today. He needs to look at a lot of other proposals that have come across rather than tax, tax, tax and not admit his own fiscal responsibility to Canadians.

The dismal figures I quoted today are not the responsibility of any previous administration. It is not the previous government that created a tax policy that tightened the screws on the individual while letting large corporations off the hook. In 1984, corporate taxes accounted for 13.2 per cent of revenues compared to 10.4 per cent in 1991. In 1991 alone, the government will collect some $2.4 billion less in corporate revenue than it had predicted last year.

When the GST comes on stream in 1991, the corporate sector stands to reap a $6 billion tax break even if the reduction in the existing manufacturers' sales tax is fully passed on to consumers; we will have to wait and see if it will be passed on. They could do it better than with the break that this government is giving them.

It is not the former government that followed the fiscal policy which has more than doubled the net public debt since 1984. It is not the previous government that promised to cut the deficit in half by the end of the 1980s. It is not the former government that followed an interest rate policy that binds our rates some five points above those of the United States, leaving our dollar artificially high and hurting our exporters. It is not the former government that was so strapped for money that it dreamed up the single largest tax grab in Canadian history, the GST, the most cynical and regressive cash cow ever designed.

No, it is this government, this Prime Minister and this Minister of Finance who must take credit for all of these dubious accomplishments. Canadians are still waiting impatiently for members opposite to deal with these facts, not the previous government. The Conservatives are in power. Why do they not come up with the programs that Canadians want?

I want to use some of my time to speak about the fishery and the effect this government's policy has had. Last week we had the Atlantic Fisheries Adjustment Program from this government, but its financial cupboard is bare. We saw just one consequence of this bareness and lack of ability to come up with assistance in the fish aid package.

The crisis in the groundfishery on the east coast is a result of many factors mostly beyond the control of those affected: the fishermen, the plant workers and the communities. Europeans and Americans have refused to adopt conservation measures consistent with our own. As a result, they continue to fish our stocks at a murderous rate, while our own fishermen are forced to tie up their boats.

In the House last night I talked about the 45-footer that went out to fish silver hake on Brown's Bank, which is closed to our fishermen, because it is a spawning and preservation area. This refers to the million dollar fines that the minister wants to bring into the House against Canadians, yet there are foreigners on the spawning banks today taking the fish. The fisherman could not get silver hake in his nets; he got about a 185 per cent catch of pollock.

What are all the large foreign trawlers and freezer factory ships that are out there getting? They are getting the traditional fish, not just silver hake, and they are interrupting the spawning grounds of the local fishery.

The federal government's record of scientific analysis has been poor as we saw in northern cod. As a result stocks have been reduced leaving fishermen who have invested in expensive sophisticated equipment often with federal and provincial encouragement holding the bag. They have also lost markets due to the high interest rates and the artificially high Canadian dollar that has resulted, that is if they have a market.

The two counties I represent, Digby and Yarmouth, as well as Shelburne county represented by my colleague from South Shore had markets for many years but they do not have them today because they do not have fish. They do not have to worry about high interest rates or the dollar. They could sell fish. Their fish has always been known to be the best. The offshore has fish in the markets, but what they put into the markets sometimes leaves a lot to be desired. I am saying that if they even had fish they could be marketing and helping themselves.

Only about one-quarter of the government's total aid package, $120 million out of the $584 million over five years, will be devoted to finding new jobs for plant workers. In terms of new money in the aid package, there is very little: $426 million over five years, averaging out to $108 million per province over five years or $20 million per province per year. This is for an industry that has over 100,000 workers and generates $1 billion in business income annually.

More money has been made available for developing underutilized species and marketing in that fish aid package. I think the amount was $50 million to establish markets in underutilized species such as silver hake. Last week there were 20 Russian boats out there on Brown's Bank and in the silver hake box the 42 foreigners who were fishing up at the easterd. "Easterd" is a term to say that you are southeast of Halifax, probably in the same area as Brown's. There are still foreigners fishing there when our fishermen could not be there.

If we had more money to put into underutilized markets, we would find that our offshore would perhaps be given an incentive to go after the underutilized. Back when we had the northern cod, ironically as it sounds, and nobody wanted to fish it, the Liberal government of the day gave an incentive for the offshore to go and fish the northern cod. In fact it was a very healthy incentive. It was so much a pound to the boat. It was capped around $13,000 for the boat trip; $15,000 if you came from Nova Scotia and $13,000 in Newfoundland. However, they paid part of the insurance because it was supposed to be treacherous waters for those boats to go to the offshore for northern cod. As well, they put an observer on those boats.

We cannot have that type of program today because of the free trade agreement. Even the bail-out last week could not be given directly to the fish plants or to the boats. It had to be given to communities, if it is going to be given at all, and to laid off workers in the adjustment program. It could not be given directly to the fishery because of the free trade agreement and it being considered a subsidy to those offshore companies.

So you give a gift to National Sea. They get to keep the companies. They get to keep the boats. They can take the boats away from Lockeport, Canso, and North Sydney without blinking an eye. Our provincial government is allowing it. Our federal government is allowing it. Why? Because they are sitting there opposite allowing big business to take over what used to be a healthy inshore fishery.

I want to go back to the underutilized because I think that is the direction this government must go if it is going to save the fishery. If we send the offshore out to fish the underutilized, the foreigners would not need to come because we would be utilizing the fish within our 200-mile limit. It is so simple, but it seems to be hard for this government to understand that if we fish the underutilized here in Canada, the foreigners will not come and fish within our 200-mile limit. We will not have those big offshore foreign trawlers taking 400,000 pounds of fish a trip when our boats are limited to 2,000 pounds if they can even go out in the course of one week.

• (1200)

More money has been made available for developing underutilized species and marketing directed at maintaining the processing capacity at plants that would

otherwise close. But it is not enough. The $90 million over five years, or $4 million per province per year, on average, to develop new markets or to go after the existing markets of the foreigners who fish here is not enough from this government. It has to put more money in. It has to forget the free trade agreement because most of the markets for the underutilized species are not in the U.S.

I could talk now about rebuilding the stocks. However, right now I want to bring to the attention of the House a crisis that has developed because of a lack of willingness on the part of officials in the Department of Fisheries to take more interest in the problem.

I understand that fishermen are sitting-in in the fisheries offices in Barrington, Pubnico, Meteghan and Digby. Barrington is in Shelburne County. Shelburne County is 100 per cent dependent on the inshore fishery. Those fishermen are protesting for one very basic reason. They put in a proposal in January or February. It was discussed. They put it in again over a week and a half ago and last week they were getting frustrated. They have not fished. They asked to meet to discuss their proposal on Georges Bank, where the Americans are fishing and taking all they want.

As a result of protests in front of the building in Yarmouth last Tuesday, they came back on Thursday and asked for a meeting in Meteghan yesterday with the department officials. Not one official came. Yet late Friday the department gave a counter proposal which did not relate at all to what the original proposal had been. These fishermen are upset. The department officials do not have any credibility, which is why they did not come to explain why they put forward those counter proposals.

I know my time is up. Perhaps some of my colleagues would like to hear more in the time provided for questions and answers.

I want to say that a very dangerous situation is in existence in the southern end of Nova Scotia today. It is because for over a year the fishermen have asked to meet with the ministers of fishery. I say "ministers" because there has been a change in ministers. They put in a proposal that was countered without any due consideration to all the discussions that had gone on before.

This government has got to start to act. It must listen to the provincial ministers who were there at the meeting yesterday to ask that this government realize the dangerous situation that is now in existence in our area.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The hon. member would like some questions or comments. The hon. member for Winnipeg North on a question or comment.

Mr. Rey Pagtakhan (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, I congratulate my colleague for her dissertation on this proposed bill to borrow $25.5 billion during the current 1990–91 fiscal year to cover the government's budgetary deficit.

During the last part of her presentation on the fishing industry she spoke about how it has been damaged by this government in that part of our country. I would like the hon. member to continue. In a real sense what this government has done is continue to damage the have-not provinces of Canada. If she has some more data, I would appreciate hearing from her.

Mrs. Campbell (South West Nova): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question and for giving me the opportunity to explain.

In the southern end of Nova Scotia we are dealing with an inshore fishery that has been there for a long time. These boats are very efficient. At one time about six years ago you might have 45-foot or 65-foot boats that could go out and easily catch 50,000 pounds to 100,000 pounds of fish.

Quotas have decreased. The last time they were allowed to fish was for a three week period. They were allowed to catch 20,000 pounds over three weeks.

You have to imagine, Mr. Speaker, that these boats have had an opportunity in the past to come in with up to 50,000 pounds of fish. Yet they were given a quota of 20,000 pounds over three weeks.

There was no mesh size, something that they had been asking for, which would allow the escapement of small fish. So they had to do selective catching. They took the big fish which will bring them money, something which the offshore fishermen and the foreigners do as well, which causes a lot of dumping of dead fish.

In effect you are saying to fishermen in a fleet: "You can only go out and fish *x* number of fish" when their capacity is great. They will tell you that maybe there are fewer fish out there. But all the studies they have been involved in with the department show that there is more fish there and that they should be allowed to fish. This was in the proposal which was submitted to the department over the last few months.

That proposal was for 25,000 pounds a week, per boat, regardless of using it or not if they did not go out, over 40 weeks. We are talking about 250 boats. We are not even talking maximums or an amount that the fishermen would have liked to have had. We are talking of a fishery in Georges that would allow them to go fish every week on Georges Bank where their American counterparts have been fishing all winter. They went one day last year to Georges, the area that has been so good to the fishery in the southern end of Nova Scotia.

I will tell hon. members the difficulty. A mesh size has been talked about. A mesh size allows the escapement of the little fish through the nets. I am sure that there have been at least five meetings a year for the last five years, if not more, where mesh size has been discussed with the department. The discussions started at a mesh size of 120 mm through to 140 mm. After many meetings a square mesh size of 130 mm was arrived at, a figure which the fishermen felt would allow them to start working with.

On Friday department officials said 140. They are never satisfied. They could not even meet the fishermen and tell them that face-to-face. They had to do it in a round-about way.

On Friday the department said to the fishermen: "You won't take a mixed bag". It is pretty hard to put the pollock over here, the cod over there and the haddock here and throw it back after it has been caught. That is a mixed bag. The department said: "You won't take a mixed bag. You'll take two-thirds of pollock and one-third of cod and haddock".

You tell me, Mr. Speaker, that when you are out fishing you can take two-thirds of this in your catch for the week, or whatever the allowance is? The department's attitude toward these people has become so incredible. Sure these people are sophisticated, but this is the only employment in the area. It is those fishermen who have kept the economy going.

We have had a year-round fishery in the past. There has been no sympathy from this government at all.

I would like to say one more thing about the proposal which came out on Friday. It was greeted with anger. The department was using the different sectors such as the longliners, the fish draggers and others to get at people. It came out clear yesterday that the department officials want to divide and see the offshore given total control of the area. They want to see the freezer factory ship given a licence in January 1991 again to come and fish within 20 miles where these people have traditionally fished.

The department is so numbed by having helped National Sea Products and Fishery Products International that it cannot see what it is doing to the inshore communities. It is very tragic when you think that these people have families and debts and yet they cannot go out and fish.

Over the last 11 months they have gone out seven weeks, and that includes the 20,000 pounds that they were allowed to catch over three weeks, which I talked about. It has become a tragedy.

The government will be responsible for what is going on there today. The fishermen are asking to go out and fish. The government should believe the fishermen when they say that there is more fish out there. They are not saying there is a lot of fish. The government should believe the fishermen and allow them to go out and fish. The government should allow them the dignity to earn their living in that area. This was the healthiest area in all of Nova Scotia. That should not be why it is being sacrificed.

• (1210)

I say to the government and my colleagues here in the House the tragedy that is happening down there today should not be happening. It is departmental officials who have closed the minds of the ministers involved in the east coast fishery. I do not think there is anyone there who would say that the fishermen have not tried to present a valid proposal on how they would fish for the rest of the year, as well as taking the caution on mesh size and other things into consideration.

With the news today that the northern cod stocks are even lower, there will be an increased effort by National Sea and the big guys to put more concentration in the Scotia-Fundy. You will see that it cannot be done. National Sea and Fishery Products have to be encouraged to go and get rid of the foreigners within the 200-mile limit. We have to encourage a good marketing system for the underutilized stocks that we have not been able to use and market up until now and which we have allowed the foreigners to come and fish.

I understand the minister will be in Halifax tonight. I do not know why he will be in Halifax tonight. I hope it is to meet with the fishermen who are sitting in at those offices in the areas that I mentioned. I do hope that he will go down and meet with them. It is long overdue.

Mr. Joseph Volpe (Eglinton—Lawrence): Mr. Speaker, I too rise to speak against this bill and to offer my views contrary to the request to borrow $25.5 billion to finance a budget that in my view is predicated on some fundamentally, radically different views and concepts on economic and fiscal management imperatives that the government has overlooked over the course of the last several years. It is now in the course of this budget, in the course of its economic plan for this coming fiscal year, imposing changes on the economic and social contract of this country that has until now existed between the federal government and Canadians everywhere.

It is important to keep in mind that when we are talking about borrowing that amount of money in order to carry out a plan it is a plan that should meet the needs of Canadians. Yet some of the principles that are being addressed by the government are in direct opposition to the interests and needs of all Canadians.

For example, some of those basic principles that the Tories have ignored over the course of the last several years in office—some would say it has been much too long, but that would be too partisan and I do not want to engage in that—is the concept of mobility of all Canadians from one area of the country to another while at the same time maintaining an accessibility to government services provided by the federal government wherever they be in Canada. I speak of the provision of an equality of opportunity for all Canadians no matter where they live.

The other principle is that all Canadians have the right to enjoy the benefits which accrue to them as citizens of this country, again regardless of the region from which they originate or the region in which they choose to live.

Finally—and definitely it is not the last point but it is the one that I want to concentrate on—is the fact that all Canadians have the right to have a government that recognizes under all the democratic principles which we hold dear that it be not only responsible but accountable for its actions.

What do we see instead? Through government policies over the course of the last six years we have seen a veritable onslaught—not a simple attack—on all those social programs which Canadians have fought so hard for and which they have become accustomed to accept as being part of the Canadian mainstream. I refer to the universality of social programs.

Many of my colleagues have documented the manner in which the government has attacked those programs that we have referred to as universal social programs. Over the course of the last two elections the governing party has identified these programs as being sacred trusts. Those programs have been eroded, I would say almost maliciously and viciously, by the budgets presented by the government.

For example, under these principles, workers, who by virtue of their contributions along with their employers' to the unemployment insurance fund, could expect to receive some sort of income maintenance in times of duress, not that they aspire to moments of duress. On the contrary, they see themselves as contributors and as those who play a role in the development of the economy and the future of the country. But there are occasions when there is a downturn in the market-place. In order for them to enjoy those five principles which I enumerated a few moments ago, they have the right to expect that their government, which was a third party to that unemployment insurance scheme, would also allow them to rely on a financial scheme that allows them to remain in their communities.

Fishermen, as my colleague pointed out, and farmers as well, have an equal right to remain in their communities with a guarantee of financial support from the federal government when times become tough. The alternative is much too unbearable. The alternative is that they take up their roots, leave, and a go someplace else. It continues that whole process of inexorable urbanization and deprives the country of the opportunity

to exploit and capitalize on those resources with which nature has gifted all Canadians. I refer to land for farming, the enormous riches in the fishing industry, and, of course, our mineral and forestry resources.

If we do not leave a mechanism in place by which those Canadians can continue to employ their skills and their talents in these industries, then we are abandoning a fundamental character of the way that Canadians see the development of the economy of this nation.

Another principle that the government refuses to acknowledge and addresses in the most perverse fashion with this bill is that taxes not be regressive, that they apply equitably to all Canadians, and, above all, that they be fair.

I refer you, Mr. Speaker, to the debates over the course of the last several months with respect to one of the initiatives of the government. That one and only initiative, the GST, is going to reign its terror on all Canadians, unless of course the House and the other place can in some fashion cause the government to change its ways.

Finally, among some of those principles is also the one that is consistent and flows from the last one. It is that Canadians not be made to bear the burden of government fiscal and economic mismanagement. Those who are in a position to dictate the finances of this nation must also be accountable for their actions.

Yet, what do we have? With this bill, the government very callously, in a nonchalant, almost arrogant fashion, says: "Give us the $25.5 billion to meet the obligations which we incur as a government, as the representatives of the people." I want to stress the "representation of the people" component in that statement. If we consent to this bill—and I will not—we will become accomplices to the plan that the government is putting before Canadians in a most insidious fashion.

The government is violating those principles I have enumerated via its economic mismanagement. Through that economic mismanagement, it is drawing conclusions through its analyses that suggest that its way is the only way to correct all the faults and evils that visit us. In fact, what we have is a forum for incorrect analyses upon which to base decisions.

• (1220)

Let us take a look at the record. The government has tried over the course of this budget to rectify an enormous problem presented by it over the course of the last six years. After six years of total indifference to what has been developing in the country on an economic basis, the government is now advocating an economic policy of high interest rates, budget cuts, and increased taxation to the point that we have counted 31 different direct increases of taxation by the government since 1984.

Why are we doing this? Why would anyone on this side of the House agree to such a bill as the one proposed now? "In 1984," the government is very fond of saying, "the former government left a public debt of $170 billion." I say, with them, "Shame." A mere six years later that public debt is now $380 billion.

It took from Confederation until 1984 to raise the public debt to $170 billion. Yet, it took the people opposite a mere six years to increase that $170 billion to $380 billion. That is spelled with a "b" as in intolerable.

The same government, which through its finance minister says: "That is not our problem", is the one which, in 1985, said in the House in front of all Canadians: "Do you know what we are going to do? We are such great managers that we are going to rectify all the problems of the past. We are going to present a budget that is going to decrease the deficit that stood at intolerable levels in 1984. We are going to decrease it to $18 billion by 1990."

We are at 1990. Thank you, Mr. Finance Minister, your predictions have come true again. The deficit stands at $30.5 billion. This is a great sign of economic management, of fiscal management. As long as the only version of reality that we hear emanates from that side of the House, then we are faced with the prospect of simply saying: "No, no. Enough is enough."

On the basis of the presentations of reality by the Minister of Finance and the government, the minister says: "The only way that we are going to pull up our socks and make Canada more competitive, make workers

more productive, and restore a sense of decency and proper fiscal management to our finances is through high interest rates."

The prime rate yesterday was 14.75 per cent. The finance minister does not see in the short term a diminution in that rate. In fact, yesterday, the C.D. Howe Institute stated that it takes at least two years for a tight money campaign to have a marked impact on inflation. It suggests that Canadians will be lucky to see any marked improvement before the end of 1990. What else is new? We have been seeing a steady climb in interest rates over the course of the last three years because the government says: "We have to protect the dollar. We have got to get the dollar at an extremely high rate. We have to attract foreign investment and we have got to develop growth and dynamics through foreign investment".

That money is not being attracted to the manufacturing industry. The high interest rates may be maintaining a flow of foreign capital, but it is not going into the manufacturing industries that suggest that foreign capital is confident that the Canadian economy and the dynamics of the Canadian market-place are such that we should have more and more investment, that the tools for growth are there and that they are developing and that the opportunities for expansion and for consumption are actually what the market-place would say is appropriate for our investment and our confidence.

The Minister of Finance says we have to maintain foreign confidence. I do not know how we do that. You will never guess that what he is talking about, Mr. Speaker, is simply that the high interest rates will allow his government to continue to attract foreign money to finance a debt that he has created and a deficit that he is incapable of reducing.

Thinking Canadians have a different version of the way the world is unfolding in Canada. They understand the need to maintain a low level of inflation. What they also understand is that the primary source of inflationary pressures are created, not by consumer spending, but by government action: taxes, high interest rates, postal increases, tuition increases, transit increases, communications increases, transportation increases, all of which are a direct result of government fiscal mismanagement and not as a result of consumer spending. If anything, what it does is decrease consumer spending. I think that the average Canadian is much more responsible than the Minister of Finance and his cabinet colleagues who have devised an economic plan for the country.

Most Canadians recognize that under those circumstances—and they do it in an almost suppliant fashion, because the Minister of Finance is one to beat his chest and say he is the only one who is right—a high interest rate policy is perhaps the wrong tool with which to fight inflation.

Some would suggest that perhaps the government should become more responsible in the ways in which it handles its expenditures and raises its revenues. Even the Treasurer of Ontario, Mr. Nixon, says that interest rates must come down in order to avoid an even deeper slowdown than the one that is occurring throughout all Canada. He makes reference to the fact that the rate of inflation today is not to be compared with the rate of inflation of 12 per cent or higher that we saw some eight years ago. A lower interest rate and a lower dollar will make the Canadian economy much, much more competitive.

If we are going to talk about what we should be doing with this particular bill, then we should be taking a look at the kind of economic policy and fiscal plan that the government could have in place that would attract Canadians to its side and to say: "Yes, we agree, we should expend money in order to carry out that plan".

The government is requesting $25.5 billion today. If we were to agree, then Canadians would be financing the Tory government's disregard for the right of Parliament and all Canadians to debate in a serious context all those important economic and fiscal policies that impact on the social programs and the economic agendas, the contracts, both explicit and implicit, that Canadians have with their federal government.

Our position is that we cannot possibly support this bill because, in so doing, we would be undermining the fundamental social principles of Canada.

I am sorry that my time is up. I will take a leaf out of my colleague's book and suggest that perhaps we might continue through the period for questions and comments.

Mr. Wilbee: Mr. Speaker, I sat here in amazement at times at what I was hearing. I wondered just where the hon. gentleman was sitting because of some of the statements that he made.

As I think back over the voting record of his party over the last year and a half, I really do not see any assistance that it has given to the Government of Canada in meeting the problems that he has outlined.

I think that I should also remind the hon. member that when the present government took over in 1984, we were spending $16 billion—that is with a "b" and not with an "m"—more than we were taking in in taxes and, as a result, the deficit was increasing by that rate. Of course that was being added to the debt. At the present time, we have a $9 billion surplus in that account, if we do not add on to the debt. The debt is one of the major problems that we are facing in Canada today. We need to point out that 80 per cent of that debt is as a result of interest on the debt that was left to us by the previous administration. Only 20 per cent of that amount is new debt.

• (1230)

With the opposition of the parties and also of the Liberal dominated other place to such things as the UI reform, our government is working very diligently under difficult circumstances. If this bill is not approved, it will cost the Canadian government another $1.75 billion annually.

When the member states that the government is doing nothing, I believe that it is doing a great many valuable things. We all recognize that we can reduce our deficit by increasing taxes and he accused us of doing this. I should also point out that many of these tax changes that we have had were advocated by some members of his party. In other words, we shut down many of the tax loopholes which the wealthy people were using to escape paying taxes. We have put some taxes on large corporations that previously were not paying taxes. Certainly, we have increased some taxes, but I believe that the tax system is much fairer than previously.

We have cut spending. I would ask the hon. member to give me one example of his support for any expenditure cuts which this government has made. I cannot think of any. We have made a lot of cuts in expenditures. It seems to me that the opposition has opposed every single cut that we have recommended.

The government has cut its spending. We have reduced the size of the Public Service. A third way we have reduced our deficit and our debt is by economic stimulation. Since this government has taken over, there have been 1.6 million new jobs created in Canada. This obviously means that is a great deal of expansion in Canadian industry. Many of these jobs are employing women.

I would like to hear the member give an example of the types of deficit reduction which our government has introduced which they are supporting. We have heard nothing but criticism and negative ideas, and I would like him to tell the House just what they would support in the way of deficit reduction?

Mr. Volpe: Mr. Speaker, I hope you will allow me extra time in order to satisfy the member from British Columbia. Since he has asked a comprehensive question, I do not want him to leave this House without getting all of the answers.

He has been listening diligently. I know that he wants to understand what the impact of some his government's initiatives are. I have already pointed to the increase in the public debt, which he has acknowledged. The member spoke about job creation. Seventy per cent of the jobs that this government is taking credit for are low paying service sector type jobs.

I do not think he wants to suggest that many of those jobs go to women. We are fighting for pay equity and for improving the lot of all people in Canada, including that of women, who are capable of doing a lot more than some of those low paying service sector type jobs that he would foist upon them.

I have pointed out in the House—and the hon. member was here to listen—that the Canadian economy has lost, not gained, nearly 200,000 jobs over the last year. Both the Minister of Finance and the Prime Minister have admitted this. That is under its major initiative of free trade. Those are not my statistics. They come from the hon. member's caucus colleagues, the Prime Minister and his Minister of Finance. Show up at caucus and you will get that information.

What is worse, under the initiatives of this government, over the course of the last two years the Canadian economy has lost 180,000 jobs in the manufacturing sector. Those were permanent jobs that paid well over $10 an hour. By providing that kind of employment to Canadians, it gave this government an opportunity to raise revenues from people who were productive.

I do not know whether this member reads what is going on in his country or whether in caucus they discuss the realities of this world. In Toronto, which is supposed to be the mecca for industrial expansion and growth, 35,000 construction workers with an average salary of somewhere between $25 and $30 per hour are now unemployed. They were not low paid service sector type jobs that the member takes great pride in saying that his government created. They were products of a highly trained, highly educated system in southern Ontario which realized that, in order to meet the needs of a new economy, we have to produce these kinds of people.

Can you imagine the amount of revenue the Canadian government would garner from taxing those people who have salaries of $25 to $30 an hour, but who are now unemployed, thanks to your economic policy and fiscal mismanagement. The are unemployed and the member wants to know what is going to happen to these people.

The member states that the government is going to change the unemployment insurance system. He is talking about taking $2.9 billion of government moneys from those people who have contributed right up to this point. He is talking about a 30 per cent increase in bankruptcies in Canada. This is the highest level since the recession eight years ago. He takes great pride in that. I do not understand it. When I said earlier that the government opposite had a distorted view of reality, I did not think it had permeated down to the back benches.

Complete industries are being wasted away. Over the course of the last several weeks, we have had example after example. The major furniture manufacturers of southern Ontario and southern Quebec are moving their plants to the United States. Textile industries are closing their doors one after the other. Yesterday, one of the oldest carpet manufacturers in southern Ontario was closing all of its operations and moving down south, causing jobs to be lost. All of that is as a result of the high interest rate policy, the FTA, and a high dollar which decreases the opportunity for Canadians to engage in a productive environment here in Canada.

If the member is suggesting that the government is saying that the best thing Canadians can do is to close down shop and move down south, and we are going to make sure that we provide the fiscal environment to cause that as an inducement, an encouragement, a push factor, then he is right. But I will have no part of that. That is not the Canadian way.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Questions and comments are now terminated. On debate, the hon. member for Winnipeg Transcona.

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona): Mr. Speaker, while we are talking about the deficit, I think members might be interested in being reminded that the real source of the deficit over the years has not been what the government spent and what the government collected in the form of taxes, but what the government did not collect in the form of tax expenditures, that is, those moneys which governments over the years could have collected, but which they forfeited in the form of a variety of tax shelters, loopholes, depreciation allowances, credits and various other schemes by which the government used the tax system to provide what it called incentives.

• (1240)

I recall when I was first elected to this place 11 years ago next week that the Conservative government of that time, under the leadership of the present Right Hon. Secretary of State for External Affairs, lived up to a campaign promise that it had made and provided a tax expenditure account which previous Liberal governments had not been willing to do. It provided Parliament with an account of the money that was forfeited in the form of tax expenditures. If I remember correctly, in 1979 the deficit was $14 billion and the tax expenditure account was $32 billion. So in that year alone we see that the government did not collect an amount which was over twice what the deficit was.

It is this kind of policy which accumulated over the years a deficit and a tax expenditure account which was much greater than the deficit for that particular year. Of course, that particular Progressive Conservative government was defeated in the fall of 1979 and the Liberals thereafter reverted to their policy of not publishing a tax expenditure account. By 1984 the Conservatives had lost their fiscal idealism and they have not published a tax expenditure account since their re-election in 1984.

I want to talk a bit about interest rates which is one of the things that concerns me. By virtue of the high

interest rate policy of the government, we are entering into a period of random cruelty brought on by what I would call a kind of chronological roulette. There are many families in Canada right now who are sitting at or near the end of a three-year or a five-year mortgage and who now have an interest rate that they have found a way to live with, even though it may have been onerous.

I heard from a constituent yesterday who said that he was coming to the end of a five-year mortgage. I believe he said that his interest rate was 10.5 per cent, which is still 4.5 per cent over the 6 per cent over 25 years which a previous generation had to pay for their houses. In any event, 10.5 per cent does not look so bad these days.

This person's five-year mortgage is coming to an end. He went through this in the early 1980s. He almost lost his house, and has spent the last several years recovering from the early 1980s and now faces once again the prospect of losing his home, only now of course losing it after another decade of investment which makes it all the more threatening.

This is happening all over the place. It is one of the reasons why I will never ever be a fan of the kind of economic system that we have in this country. Any economic system which by virtue of some macro-fiscal policy that a Minister of Finance applies from time to time because in his wisdom or lack of it he thinks will have an effect on inflation, any policy that can just like that throw people out of their homes because they are unable to meet the new payments demanded of them in a renegotiated mortgage situation, is to me on the face of it so morally unacceptable that I cannot understand or fathom why people would want to come to its defence. If the Minister of Finance does not wake up, this is what is going to happen to more and more families, particularly young families in Canada.

We often hear pro-family rhetoric from Conservative members. Indeed, we hear it from Liberal members who belonged to a government in the early 1980s that pursued exactly the same policy. It is these kinds of economic policies which are more destructive to the family than anything else that one can imagine. It forces mother, father and everyone who can possibly get a job to work in order to try and meet these new economic circumstances. This is the rat race gone wild for a lot of people.

It is about time that the Canadian people made it absolutely clear to the Minister of Finance that they do not want to have anything to do with the high interest rate policy and that they are willing to take their chances on a little bit of inflation, if that might be the result. I am not even sure that it would be, but that is the prevailing theory.

Another thing, of course, with respect to interest rates is that the reason offered for high interest rates is so Ontario-centric. We have high interest rates in order to cool down the economy in southern Ontario, and the rest of the country be damned. If that means that farmers in western Canada and other small business persons and families in the rest of the country have to go under in order to cool the Ontario economy down, well then so be it.

It is no wonder that we have regional alienation in this country when that is the case and when it is so clearly seen to be the case. When farmers at this critical point have heard that the price for their wheat is going to be low once again, at a time when they are facing drought, when they face continuing high costs for fertilizers and pesticides, and increased competition from the United States and the European Community, and when they see the whole agricultural system moving in a direction which would remove even those supports which they now have, on top of all this, they have to suffer the high cost of money that this government is inflicting on them through its high interest rate policy. Many of them are not going to be able to afford it. They are just simply going to go bust and walk away.

Every time a farmer leaves the land, every time a family has to move into town or particularly to a big city, a little bit of Canada dies, a little bit of the Canada that the Conservative party said for decades that it valued. Yet, this is the little bit of Canada which time and again the Conservative party is sacrificing to the values of the market-place. In so doing, it is betraying its own people, betraying its own tradition, and betraying the very soul of Canada.

The other thing that needs to be said, and I do not think has been said nearly often enough, is that the high interest rate policy is related to the free trade agreement.

I was on the External Affairs committee and travelled with that committee studying the elements of the deal in the fall of 1987. I recall a meeting here in Ottawa. The former minister of finance for a Liberal government, Mitchell Sharp, appeared before the committee. He said to the committee members, but particularly to the

government members who were supporters of the FTA: "How long do you think you will be in a free trade agreement with the United States before you will have to accept, either directly or indirectly, some form of regulation of the value of the Canadian dollar? The United States is not forever going to allow Canadians to export without restriction into the United States, if that exporting is taking place in the context of Canadian exporters having the advantage of a much lower Canadian dollar".

• (1250)

I often remember those words when I see what is happening now. I ask myself why this mania, why this obsession on the part of the government to maintain high interest rates and in so doing maintaining a high dollar? Perhaps it is because the integrity of the deal depends on maintaining the dollar at least at a certain level.

So what are Canadian business people and Canadian exporters up against? They find that the free trade agreement is not everything it was cracked up to be. The Americans are still able to harass our exporters and make life difficult for them. They have lost and are continuing to lose the advantage of the lower dollar. On top of losing the advantage of the lower dollar, they are now subjected to the disadvantage of the high cost of money related to the high interest rate policy of this government. Therefore, they are in double, even triple jeopardy as a result of the agreement. The other dimension of the agreement is that it has made it so much easier for Americans to operate in Canada and has also created a situation, as we all know, in which many Canadian companies, rather than face this array of obstacles, have decided to move their operations south and be done with it all.

This is as a result of a free trade agreement that was supposed to be the best thing that ever happened to Canada. I think we will see over time that it was one of the worst things that ever happened to Canada, but that is something that only time will tell. I think the time that has passed so far has told us this, but only if one is willing to suspend the kind of uncritical belief in the agreement that government members still have.

What lies ahead, Mr. Speaker? Well, it appears that we are destined to have a free trade agreement with Mexico. The government stated that we do not have to harmonize with the United States, but we find that we are harmonizing with the United States. One of the first things that came along in this Parliament after the free trade agreement was signed was a bill in respect of unemployment insurance that, just by coincidence, made our unemployment insurance system a lot like the American system. Pure coincidence, of course, because the government maintained during the campaign, and this was its biggest lie during the campaign, that there would be no need to harmonize our social system with the Americans. Anybody who has studied economic integration, wherever it has taken place, will tell you that one of the end results of economic integration, wherever it takes place, is the harmonization of social systems, labour laws, et cetera.

It is happening in the European Community in preparation for the single market of 1992. Everyone there is working on what they call the social charter; they are working for what they call a social Europe. They are saying that if we are not going to have any barriers, if we are going to have a completely integrated and single market in Europe, then there has to be a basic agreement about the ground rules. There have to be some ground rules about social security, minimum wages, labour market conditions, and a socially just basis on which this competition can occur.

This is something that the government refused to admit when it was bargaining and negotiating Canada's way into the free trade agreement. Every time critics of the agreement said you are going to have to come to some kind of harmonization—and we Canadians stand to lose in that harmonization—or if you do not have harmonization in the short-run, our system is such that we will have to unilaterally give up certain elements of our social system in order to remain competitive in this new situation that we have entered through the free trade agreement.

I began this conversation about Europe at the point at which I mentioned the possibility of entering into a free trade agreement with Mexico. It would be bad enough if we had to harmonize our social policies and our labour market policies with the United States, which is already a more exploitive and less socially just country than our

own, but it would be a nightmare if we had to arrive at that kind of harmonization, no matter how long it took, with Mexico. Then we would really be at a disadvantage with both the United States and Mexico calling on us to reduce our view of what a just economy was like.

This is what is at stake in the free trade agreement. With respect to Mexico, it may already be there in the form of the Maquiladora corridor, a free trade corridor which exists between the United States and Mexico and which we still have no assurances is not a place where Mexican goods, manufactured at Mexican labour prices, are finding their way into the United States and into Canada as American goods. This is another element of the free trade agreement which we found very scary at the time and still do.

I see that we are nearing one o'clock. I wish to make one final remark. One of the other things that we said about the consequences of the free trade agreement would be that over time it would erode our health care system. It is no coincidence that in the last little while we have started to have various ministers of health, most notably from Quebec, but also others, saying that we are going to have to go to user fees. We are going to have to go to more of a user-pay kind of health care system.

I do not think that this is a coincidence. It is related not only to the free trade agreement, but to the fact that this government is forcing the hand of provincial governments with respect to health care by its continued unilateral reduction in the federal commitment to health care.

As the NDP health critic at the time of the debate on the Canada Health Act in April 1984, I said that through cut-backs in federal commitments we would eventually arrive at a time when provincial governments would, for fiscal reasons, begin to dismantle health care systems in their provinces and this is beginning to happen. Unless we have a renewed debate about the future of health care in this country and the future of medicare, then piece by piece, province by province, user-fee by user-fee, privatization by privatization, we are going to lose our health care system and it will all fit perfectly into the long-term plan by which the American multinational health and hospital companies can find their way into the Canadian market-place.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Before I call it one o'clock, the hon. member will have 10 minutes for questions and comments once we begin debate again. He has used up his 20 minutes in debate.

It being one o'clock, I do now leave the chair until two o'clock this day.

At 1 p.m. the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S. O. 31

[*English*]

CFB SUMMERSIDE

Ms. Catherine Callbeck (Malpeque): Mr. Speaker, CFB Summerside is scheduled to close in 1992. Next spring the anchor squadron, 413, will be moved to Greenwood, Nova Scotia. This squadron should remain in Summerside.

A retired major who has been actively involved with the fight to save the base supports this suggestion. He states that lives will be placed at greater risk if the squadron moves.

This is a good idea for a number of worth-while reasons. The financial benefits are there, the medical benefits are well known, and it is the best location.

In fact, an entire paper entitled the Hopping-Naylor report covers every beneficial aspect of maintaining the squadron at the base in Summerside.

I whole-heartedly support maintaining the 413 search and rescue at Summerside. I urge the federal government to offer its endorsement of this excellent suggestion immediately.

* * *

TOURISM

Mr. Ross Stevenson (Durham): Mr. Speaker, this is National Tourism Week and an excellent occasion to advise the House of a spectacular new $100 million resort which is in the planning stages for the town of Newcastle, Ontario, in my constituency of Durham.

Called Newcastle-on-the-Lake, this resort will be situated on 100 acres along the northern shore of Lake

Ontario. The resort is to have two 225-room hotels, 1,100 luxury condominiums, conference and recreational facilities, as well as a marina.

Newcastle-on-the-Lake promises to be a most imaginative project. It will provide a whole new dimension to the town of Newcastle, while also greatly enhancing the future of this area and the way the area is developed.

* * *

HOUSING

Ms. Margaret Mitchell (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are finding it increasingly difficult to locate affordable housing.

Yesterday, the mayor of Vancouver, councillors, representatives of labour, co-ops and social housing groups came to Ottawa to meet with the housing minister only to be told that there were no funds to deal with Vancouver's housing crisis.

RRAP funding which would rehabilitate downtown rental housing has been cancelled. Funding for social housing has been cut from 5,000 to 1,700 units with only 150 units last year for Vancouver.

In addition to reinstated federal funding for rental housing, co-ops and social housing, Vancouver needs a special fund for transition houses and affordable housing for new megaproject areas.

I call on the minister to develop a national housing strategy with adequate funding to counteract homelessness in our nation, to build native housing, and to develop affordable housing in the big cities of Canada.

A pre-election symposium in Vancouver will not build housing.

* * *

GRAIN TRANSPORTATION

Mr. Joe Comuzzi (Thunder Bay—Nipigon): Mr. Speaker, the mayors of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Seaway ports will be meeting in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, this week to address problems of mutual concern.

Naturally the environment, zebra mussels, Great Lakes water quality, oil spills on the seaway, emissions from pulp and paper plants, and water levels in the Great Lakes will be thoroughly discussed and thoroughly aired.

However the key will be the economic future of the Great Lakes ports and the viability of the St. Lawrence Seaway. To this end we ask this government to change the Western Grain Transportation Act which unfairly distorts the distribution of grain in Canada. This inequitable distribution is hurting shippers and the entire seaway system.

I ask this government to listen to the provinces including British Columbia, Alberta and northern Ontario, the shippers, the unions in this country, and the farmers. They all come to the conclusion that the Western Grain Transportation Act must be changed now. The future of all Great Lakes ports, of all shippers, and the true viability of this seaway will be harmed unless it is changed.

* * *

[*Translation*]

FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

Mr. Guy Saint-Julien (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, a study by the Department of External Affairs and International Trade has revealed that less than a year and a half after it came into effect, the free trade agreement has already generated investment worth $3 billion in Quebec, creating over 1,000 jobs.

Mr. Young (Gloucester): It has been disruptive! That is what free trade has done!

Mr. Saint-Julien: According to Normand Villeneuve, who heads the department's branch responsible for liaison with the provinces and the private sector, these figures show that Americans have invested more in Canada than we have in the United States. The score is: $7 billion for the Americans to $6 billion for Canadians.

Mr. Young (Gloucester): Talk to the workers at Stone-Consolidated about what is happening in the pulp and paper sector!

Mr. Saint-Julien: Mr. Villeneuve mentions the following companies that invested in Quebec as an example: Alumax aluminum refinery, $1 billion; Abbott Laboratories, $12 billion; Nikon Canada, $4 million. However, Mr. Villeneuve feels that so far, Canadian companies have been slow to react.

Mr. Speaker, thanks to the free trade agreement, Canada is a winner, but no thanks to the Liberals opposite.

S. O. 31

[*English*]

PETRO-CANADA

Mr. Scott Thorkelson (Edmonton—Strathcona): Mr. Speaker, the Petro-Canada International Assistance Corporation has withdrawn its scholarship support for the University of Alberta Summer Petroleum Program.

Petro-Canada arrogantly withdrew its support without notifying the University of Alberta, forcing the cancellation of the program. The Summer Petroleum Program has trained over 300 people from developing countries in the last seven years.

It has trained people who have come back to Alberta to buy petroleum equipment and technology.

Meanwhile, Petro-Canada is providing $10 million over five years to an institution in central Canada, quadruple the support that the University of Alberta has received and to an institution over 2,500 miles from the oil patch.

I condemn the arrogant, smug, self-satisfied bureaucrats in the Petro-Canada International Assistance Corporation, centralist bureaucrats who did not even have the common decency to notify the University of Alberta.

Western Canadians deserve better than a slap in the face.

* * *

SCOTIA SYNFUELS PROJECT

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, Cape Breton is a region that has experienced more than its share of economic uncertainty. The Scotia Synfuels project could mean a revitalization of the island's economy. This project promises to create at least 2,000 permanent jobs for industrial Cape Breton and the north eastern mainland of Nova Scotia.

This is a project that is environmentally sensitive as it will utilize the most environmentally advanced fuel system for power plants. Private investors are assuming the major risk here and not the taxpayer. This project will provide more than $800 million in corporation taxes.

The Scotia Synfuels project will build on the strength of the people of Cape Breton and on the strength of its natural resources, namely, coal.

On April 18, 1990 the Nova Scotia legislature passed an all-party resolution in support of this project. Likewise, yesterday, the mayors and wardens of all of Cape Breton lent their unqualified support to this project.

This project, however, needs the approval of the federal government for the Cape Breton investment tax credit and the incentives of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency.

I call upon the Government of Canada to recommend this valuable project as this is a project that will bring economic growth to the area and give Cape Bretoners hope for a future.

* * *

ONTARIO PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE PARTY

Mr. Terry Clifford (London—Middlesex): Mr. Speaker, as the winds of democratic reform continue to blow throughout the world, it is refreshing to see Canadians right here in Ontario initiating innovative improvements to our own democracy.

The Ontario Progressive Conservative Party deserves heartiest congratulations for allowing all of its members a direct vote in electing Michael Harris, MPP for Nipissing, leader of that great party.

Congratulations are also in order for Dianne Cunningham, MPP for London North, for waging a tough, classy campaign. All members on this side of the House, I am sure, join with me in wishing Mike Harris well as he begins his important role as leader of the Ontario Progressive Conservative Party.

This Progressive Conservative initiative serves as an excellent example of democracy in action, not only for this House but all legislatures across the country.

Freedom seeking people everywhere can learn an important lesson from this exercise, that once attained, democracy must evolve in order to flourish. In Ontario, democracy is flourishing.

• (1410)

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Mr. Ross Harvey (Edmonton East): Mr. Speaker, I want to say a few words about a terrible addiction plaguing our society today: the government's addiction to secrecy.

As the Prime Minister put it in 1984:

> The more the government can have of it, the more it wants of it.

In fact the government wants secrecy so bad that the Minister of Justice wants to change the fee structure for access to information, implementing some new charges and increasing existing ones.

Why? The deficit made them do it. At least that is what they say.

I have a suggestion for the minister. Why does she not put meters in the limos she and her cabinet colleagues constantly use and have waiting around the front door for them, instead of putting meters on Canadians trying to get access to government held information.?

As the Prime Minister said again in 1984:

> Secrecy and stonewalling have become a habit with the government. We will never break the habit until we change the government.

He was right then. Do you know what? He is right now.

* * *

GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE

Mr. Ken James (Sarnia—Lambton): Mr. Speaker, over the past few weeks I have made a number of statements calling for more leadership in our restraint of government spending. Such restraint will take some of the pressure off monetary policy in fighting inflation and create greater potential for lower interest rates.

On this very theme I recently read with considerable interest a speech by one of our deputy ministers. I could not help but notice a reference to Public Service 2000, which is to be the first real overhaul of the Public Service in more than 20 years.

As part of this review were all members aware that if PS 2000 can streamline the process and improve public sector productivity by even 10 per cent, we will save something like $1.7 billion per year just on the wage bill?

I encourage all members of this House to get behind this important initiative and call upon this government to undertake further measures to ensure the best value for Canadians' tax dollars.

* * *

FISHERIES

Mr. Fred J. Mifflin (Bonavista—Trinity—Conception): Mr. Speaker, as you know, the Atlantic fishery is in a crisis. We discovered yesterday that the stocks were not as good as we thought they were. Our entire region faces a devastating long-term deterioration of the fishery based economy. It is affecting hundreds of communities and tens of thousands of citizens.

I would like to remind the House that the fishery sector in Atlantic Canada is equivalent in economic terms to the auto industry in central Canada and to the grain sector on the prairies.

One aspect of this situation requires the Prime Minister's immediate personal intervention. I refer now to the discussion with the European community plus Europeans in other countries concerning their violations of internationally established quotas and their consequent destructive overfishing practices on the nose and tail of Canada's continental shelf. This issue must be resolved quickly.

Only the international stature of the Prime Minister's office will give it the priority and the high level attention necessary for such a resolution. We urge the Prime Minister to take a personal interest and to participate now in these negotiations.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona): Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to call on the Soviet Union to recognize that the demands which President Gorbachev is making of the three Baltic republics are unrealistic. It is unrealistic to expect that the Baltic republics should be treated in a way similar to other republics, that is to say that they can only secede through the law which has been set up for secession.

I think it would be in the interests of everyone, both East and West, and in the interests of Mr. Gorbachev's reputation as a democrat and a reformer, to recognize that the Baltic republics are different and to deal with them accordingly.

In the same respect, the Baltic leadership should be prepared to deal reasonably with the Soviet Union in order to deal with its economic, military and other security needs.

In the meantime this senselessness of the blockade should stop, particularly the blockade with respect to medical supplies. The situation in Lithuania is worsening. There is a shortage of insulin, syringes and other important medical supplies. The first thing the Soviet Union should do in addition to sitting down at the table with the Baltic leadership is to stop the blockade, particularly the blockade of medical supplies. The international community should do what it can to come to the aid of Lithuania with respect to medical supplies as well.

* * *

FISHERIES

Mr. Peter L. McCreath (South Shore): Mr. Speaker, the Atlantic Fisheries Adjustment Program represents an important first step in the government's response to the current difficulties in the Atlantic fishery.

Funds allocated for additional research and more effective management will benefit all regions of coastal Atlantic Canada. The $147 million in diversification funds will provide incentives to reduce our dependency on traditional fisheries. The programs and community development funds targeted for communities specifically impacted by the northern cod decline will obviously benefit those communities.

I trust, however, that the government does not consider that with these announcements its job is done. Communities which have suffered plant closures for causes other than the decline of northern cod do not understand why their specific needs were not addressed in the adjustment component of the aid package.

I urge the government to get on with establishing community development funding for these communities as well, in particular, for the communities of southern and western Nova Scotia such as Port Mouton, Clarks Harbour, Shag Harbour and Woods Harbour.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[*English*]

FISHERIES

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister. I understand that the Prime Minister will meet today with the head of the Spanish government, President Felipe Gonzales.

Experts have identified overfishing by the Spanish and Portuguese fleets as an important cause of declining fish stocks off Atlantic Canada.

Will the Prime Minister discuss this important issue with the President of Spain today? Will he obtain the assurance of the president that Spain will accept lower fish quotas and not continue its overfishing which is causing serious and possibly permanent damage to Canadian fish stocks?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I had meetings with the President of the Government of Spain last night and again today dealing with the important question of the fishery. We will be meeting a little later on this afternoon and again tonight.

I have expressed very clearly the point of view of the people of Canada and the government of Canada and have found in President Gonzales a very constructive interlocutor who recognizes full well that important conservation measures must begin if there is to be the preservation of that vital resource.

I am happy to advise the House that the conversations that I have had with the Spanish President in this important area have been what I think my hon. friend would qualify as thoughtful, very constructive and, I am sure, beneficial for those who work in the fishing industry in Canada.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Prime Minister why, in the course of his talks, he did not receive the assurance that Spain would immediately stop overfishing and start

working together with Canada and other countries to ensure the long-term survival of our fisheries. Why did he not receive any assurances in those terms?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): I just want to inform the Leader of the opposition of the constructive attitude taken by the President of the Government of Spain. The same approach was taken by Vice-Chairman Marin of the European Economic Community last week, all of which will be helpful in initiating a realistic process to protect a resource that is so important to Canada.

I think the hon. member knows perfectly well this is not a problem that can be solved overnight. However, the attitude taken by Mr. Gonzalez will be a very positive contribution to the ultimate settlement of a problem that has gone on far too long in this country.

[*English*]

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister should know there is a crisis in Atlantic Canada and that crisis is in the fishery. Entire towns are being shut down, fishermen and plant workers are losing their jobs and still this government lets foreign fleets continue to deplete our fish stocks.

It is not always clear that these countries realize the extent of the damage their fishermen are causing to our economy.

• (1420)

Will the Prime Minister, at the very least, press for continuing direct discussions with Spain on an ongoing basis to seek an early resolution to the problem of overfishing by foreign fleets? He said this matter has been going on too long. Why does he not do something right now when the President of Spain is visiting our country?

Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, what would the Leader of the Opposition want me to do, arrest him?

Some hon. members: Talk to him.

Mr. Mulroney: He says talk to him. That is exactly what we have been doing. We have been talking directly, bluntly and effectively, as opposed to suggesting, as we heard in this House in the past, that the Canadian government dispatch instruments of war to clear people out of the gulf.

This fishing has been taking place outside of the 200-mile limit. The Government of Canada is pursuing the question of conservation outside of the 200-mile limit very vigorously. We have made the case very carefully to all members of the European Community, to the commission itself and to the President of Spain that obviously the European Community must accept the NAFO regime. It is the only way that conservation can proceed so there is fish left there for all involved and particularly for Canadian fishermen.

Surely the Leader of the Opposition knows full well that this has to be resolved in precisely the manner that we are resolving it now and not by gunboat diplomacy suggested by a party that really has neither guns nor boats.

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[*Translation*]

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Douglas Young (Gloucester): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Finance. The private sector and Canadian consumers are very much aware of the problems connected with the GST. My question is as follows: Will the government finally admit that if the GST is introduced as proposed, it will be an administrative nightmare? Is the Minister of Finance now prepared to admit in this House that he is changing the rules for collecting the GST?

[*English*]

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I reject the expression that is used by the hon. member. We have said, though, on a number of occasions that we are looking at various ways of continually simplifying the process, particularly for small business.

We have two means of streamlined accounting in place. We have means by which small business can pay over a less frequent time period than larger businesses. We have put in place ways that small business can reduce the cost of point of sale equipment like cash registers. We have a one-page form for the GST. We have a number of other things we are working on with the provinces to reduce the complexity and the compliance burden of the GST.

I have always said that if there are ways that we can add to those means by which we can simplify the process we are quite prepared to look at them and consider them in a positive way.

Mr. Douglas Young (Gloucester): Mr. Speaker, the government is spending millions of dollars in propaganda that is disguised as straightforward answers regarding questions concerning the goods and services tax.

Will the government, in an honest and straightforward way, discuss in this place the changes that it is suggesting to people in private will take place to make the goods and services tax more palatable? If the government is going to distribute information such as this, why not discuss the changes it wants to make right here in this House and make sure we all know about it?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, let me just make a few points on that. The finance committee of the House of Commons in the last Parliament recommended that we use a wide means of advising people what the GST is all about, how it affects them and how it affects the cost of living. That is what we are proceeding to do because a finance committee of the House of Commons asked us to do that.

The hon. member wonders why we provide this information. Just yesterday we had 6,300 phone calls from people asking for information about the goods and services tax.

The hon. member asks why we don't discuss it here in this House. We have had committee hearings, we have had the legislative process, we have had debate in this House. We have made a number of changes as a result of good, solid recommendations from the finance committee.

Unfortunately, my hon. friend did not participate in any of those positive recommendations. All that he said was to scrap the whole thing. He had no positive idea or understanding of what the process was all about. He was totally negative. This is the sort of thing that makes no contribution to the positive development of legislation.

ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister who is aware that three weeks ago Dr. Schindler, a professor at the University of Alberta, reported to the federal government that the proposed pulp industry regulations do not take account of the fact that dioxin is a known carcinogen and that those regulations do not reflect the expert evidence of the federal government's own scientists.

Since Dr. Schindler concludes that allowing discharges of chlorinated organic substances from new pulp industries should be prevented because of the risks to human health, will the Deputy Prime Minister assure this House that the government will redraft the regulations, taking account of the fact that dioxin is a known cancer-causing agent?

Hon. Frank Oberle (Minister of Forestry): Mr. Speaker, my hon. friend knows that it is the intention to add over time to the regulations that were recently published limiting the pulp mills to certain harmful agents that are being discharged into the waters and air.

My hon. friend will be pleased when the full story is told. Yes, we are very sensitive to the potential of harm to human health as a result of some of these agents in the environment.

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the Prime Minister. We are told we have to wait for The Green Plan, we have to wait on carbon dioxide emissions, we have to wait in relation to the greenhouse effect.

Three weeks ago Dr. Schindler advised the federal government that tens of thousands of Canadians are at risk now from dioxins, furans and chlorinated organic compounds. Dr. Schindler has warned that the regulations, as posed, will present a risk of increased heart disease and increased deaths from cancer to Canadians if they are implemented.

Canadians should not have to wait. Will the Prime Minister show some backbone on just one environmental issue? Will he bring forward regulations which recognize that dioxins are a cancer-causing agent and their release

should not be allowed into the river systems and lakes of this country by the pulp industry? Just once, stand up.

Hon. Frank Oberle (Minister of Forestry): Mr. Speaker, the pulp and paper industry has, over the last five years, invested $1 billion a year in making improvements to their plants.

Under the new regulations the industry will be required over the next three years to invest another $5 billion to $7 billion, the result of which will be a complete elimination of the emission of dioxins into the river systems.

My hon. friend should read the regulations that have been published and consult with people other than those whom he calls friends who give him a single vision of the reality of the situation.

Mr. Ross Harvey (Edmonton East): Mr. Speaker, in his April 24 paper, Mr. Schindler writes:

> In brief, hundreds of thousands of people in northern Canada could be exposed to high levels of dioxins, furans and other toxic chlorinated organic compounds in Canada—

There are currently no regulations governing dioxin emissions from pulp and paper mills. Lack of effective government action is almost guaranteeing tragedy.

My question to the Prime Minister, to the Minister of Forestry, to any minister is, when will the government implement dioxin emission standards for pulp mills to eliminate this widespread public health threat?

Hon. Frank Oberle (Minister of Forestry): Mr. Speaker, my answer to this hon. member is the same as to his predecessor. To shout louder and to repeat untruths does not make a truth.

The fact is that action has been taken and the results will be evident. If the hon. member bothers to see what has happened and what will happen as a result of the new regulation, he will perhaps refrain from causing unjustified fear and perhaps destroying an industry that is the mainstay of the Canadian economy.

• (1430)

FISHERIES

Mrs. Coline Campbell (South West Nova): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and, in his absence, to the Acting Minister of Fisheries and Oceans.

The fishermen's proposals for groundfish allocations in 4X and 5 have been before the minister's department since last February. Last week the fishermen invited local politicians and officials from the minister's department to meet in Meteghan yesterday. There were over 500 concerned fishermen and plant workers and not one Department of Fisheries official.

Could the Acting Minister tell us why that insult was given to the people who have not fished in the last few months and who are looking for some type of proposal? Why was there not one department official? Surely, the government spends enough money on those people that one of them could have been there.

Hon. Elmer M. MacKay (Minister of Public Works): Mr. Speaker, if I might be permitted to answer this question on behalf of my colleague.

I understand there has been extensive dialogue between the department and the fishermen who are understandably concerned about the situation in South West Nova. I can also tell my colleague that arrangements are being made that will result in a meeting next week between the minister and appropriate officials so that these matters can be fully discussed and the fishermen's demands and aspirations can be heard and dealt with.

Mrs. Coline Campbell (South West Nova): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary is directed to the Prime Minister. There exists today a very dangerous situation in the southern end of Nova Scotia. Yesterday, provincial ministers and I, and others, met with the fishermen. There were no officials there. The fishermen would like to meet with the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans. The present minister of fisheries is attending a Seafood 2000 dinner tonight. I can assure you there will not be a fisherman from that end of the province invited to the dinner. I know the government is paying for some of it.

Would the Prime Minister instruct his Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, in light of the dangerous situation at all those DFO offices right now, not to leave Nova Scotia without meeting with some of the representatives of those fishermen?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I think most members of the House of Commons would acknowledge that since his swearing in as Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, the minister has spend an enormous amount of time meeting with fishermen in all parts of Atlantic Canada. I personally had the occasion to—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker, I am trying to respond to my hon. friend. I personally had the occasion to be—

Ms. Campbell (South West Nova): It is very dangerous.

An hon. member: Come on, motor-mouth.

Ms. Campbell (South West Nova): He is spending government money to get there. Let him meet them.

An hon. member: A large-mouth bass.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Mulroney: Mr. Speaker, I know the minister views his meetings with Atlantic coast fishermen as probably the most important matter on his agenda. Although he is travelling and exceptionally busy, I will, of course, ask him to see if he can make time on this particular trip to meet with the group mentioned by my hon. friend. And, if he has a little more time, I will ask him to have dinner with the hon. member as well.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mrs. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister and concerns the speech delivered by the Minister of the Environment this morning in Norway at an international environment conference.

The minister said that we must act now and that we must make real commitments. He then talks about next November, and last week in Parliament he talked about 1992 in Brazil.

It is evident that last week's leaked telex from Washington was right. Canada is siding with the Americans and against the countries that want to set real targets and timetables for reducing carbon dioxide emissions.

I ask the Prime Minister, before this conference ends, will Canada take a stand with those nations that want to take action now on the environment?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I do not know why my hon. friend sees conspiracies behind every little headline.

The role of Canada and its independence on the environment has been lauded by people ranging from Prime Minister Brundtland to Foreign Minister Shevardnadze of the Soviet Union. That is a broad range of compliments.

It is strange that the Liberal opposition cannot once acknowledge the very significant leadership that Canada is providing in the environment, even though it escapes the attention of my hon. friend. I can assure her that she need not bother her head as there is no conspiracy going on. Canada is going to conduct itself with the degree of independence that has brought so much pride to the government of the people of Canada over so many years.

Mrs. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased the Prime Minister had the opportunity to re-read his old press clippings.

This is this morning's speech by our Minister of the Environment. It shows very clearly that this government prefers a wishy-washy consensus with the Americans to tough action on global warming.

An hon. member: Shame.

Mrs. Catterall: Why is Canada caving in? Why will the government not stand up with the seven countries who are showing leadership? Why will it not agree to set targets and timetables on carbon dioxide emissions?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, why the repetition of these silly questions that presume that the Government of Canada is not going to do exactly what the minister has very clearly set out? The minister has clearly established the intentions of the government to proceed with timetables and to proceed in a very deliberate and helpful manner.

The Government of Canada is trying to undo about a decade of inaction in the environment by my hon. friend's Party. Nothing was done, from acid rain to global warming. Your record was a big zero.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

* * *

AGRICULTURE

Mr. Ray Funk (Prince Albert—Churchill River): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Agriculture.

Yesterday the parliamentary secretary to the minister reported to the House that the Minister of Agriculture, the Minister of Grains and Oilseeds and the prairie agriculture ministers met in Winnipeg "to formalize and, hopefully, to finalize an agreement with those provinces".

Everyone attending all these endless meetings for the last six weeks has presumably still been getting their pay cheques and hard-pressed farmers have yet to see a dollar. I would like to ask the minister, was an agreement was reached and, if one was, what was it?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I can tell the hon. member and members of the House that the meeting was held and it was a very productive meeting. I think it is fair to say that progress was made.

The provinces acknowledged the fact that there would have to be some cost sharing with respect to this particular program. I think there was also an acknowledgement of the unique situation that Saskatchewan finds itself in because of the huge decrease of income in that province. There was certainly acknowledgement made and we are trying to find a way to deal with that. As well, we had a very productive discussion with respect to the safety-net and long-term stabilization program which is something that the government is actively considering.

All these things are being worked on during the course of this week. We will have a further meeting in Toronto where all the ministers of agriculture will be meeting on Friday. Hopefully, we will be able to advance these proposals at that time.

Mr. Ray Funk (Prince Albert—Churchill River): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary is directed to the same minister. I appreciate the fact that he reports that progress has been made, but we certainly have had reports of progress something like 10 or 11 times.

I would like to remind the minister that up to 45 per cent of the crop is in in some areas; 20 per cent over-all. Much of this crop has gone in with inadequate preparation for fertilizer and other inputs, and acreages are being reduced. This is starting to look like a crop reduction program rather than a seeding assistance program.

When can farmers expect finally to have some money in their hands?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, despite what the hon. member says, I think he will find that statistics will reveal that there is an increase in plantings projected for this year and I think that is a very positive sign.

I recognize the difficulty and the hon. member knows that. That is why the federal government announced its intention to put $500 million on the table on March 30. We have asked the provinces to come on board, to help us to design the program, to help us deliver the program, and to help us pay for that program because it was in everyone's interest to get as much money into the hands of the farmers as quickly as we possibly could.

* * *

[*Translation*]

PRESENCE IN THE GALLERY

Mr. Speaker: It is with great pleasure that I draw the attention of the House to the presence in our gallery of His Excellency Felipe Gonzalez Marquez, President of the Government of Spain.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

* * *

• (1440)

[*English*]

HOUSING

Mr. Joe Fontana (London East): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Housing. Yesterday, my colleague from LaSalle—Émard and I presented

the Liberal party's recommendation on housing affordability to the Canadian Housing Renewal Association. I might add it was very well received.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Fontana: I would also like to tell the minister that all the speakers, the 500 participants, municipal leaders, and all other people involved in housing, have labelled this government a do-nothing government for housing.

I want to ask this minister and his government will he today in this House, or tomorrow when he meets with CHRA, commit his government to the reinstatement of rental RRAP? Will he show support for the homeless? Will he show support for the people on the waiting list for affordable housing? Will he support and recommit himself to co-operative housing? And, will he support the workers and builders—

Mr. Speaker: I think the hon. member has put his question.

Hon. Alan Redway (Minister of State (Housing)): Mr. Speaker, I, too, had meetings with a number of people involved with housing at the municipal level yesterday, including mayors of big cities across the country, and I must say the government and its programs were very well received there as well.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Redway: I am looking forward to the meetings tomorrow with the Canadian Housing Renewal Association because I will have an opportunity to tell them that, under our programs, as opposed to Liberal government programs, 60 per cent more of the housing funds federally are being devoted to social housing than before.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Peterson: Balderdash!

Mr. Joe Fontana (London East): Mr. Speaker, the minister knows that that is a bunch of bunk. He knows it and his government knows it. The municipal leaders were the same ones who said that the government does absolutely nothing.

Let me ask this further question, but I wish he would answer my first question. The housing ministers will meet with the minister next week. They want some solutions to the housing crisis in the country. Will the Minister in fact be part of the solution and not part of the problem?

Hon. Alan Redway (Minister of State (Housing)): Mr. Speaker, I can assure the hon. member that I will be part of the solution and not part of the problem. I also want to assure the hon. member that, if he carefully followed what was going on next week, he would know that the meeting with housing ministers is to discuss the allocation of the existing federal housing funds among the provinces. Hopefully, we can arrive at a formula on which all will agree, as they did in the past under the Regina Accord, something that did not happen under the former Liberal government.

Mr. Marchi: That's bunk! Minister of bunk.

An hon. member: Exactly!

* * *

FORESTRY

Mr. Guy H. Arseneault (Restigouche—Chaleur): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Forestry. Yesterday, an environmental group called Canada's Future Forest Alliance, which represents over one million Canadians, stated that our forests were facing a national disaster comparable to the destruction of the Amazon forests.

Since the present government policies and programs result in a net loss of 200 hectares of Canadian forests annually, what new programs will the government implement to remedy the depletion of Canada's forests?

Hon. Frank Oberle (Minister of Forestry): Mr. Speaker, we very much intend to continue the programs that we have initiated over the last five years and which, as the hon. member might readily concede, are showing very impressive results. In fact, one should anticipate that there should not be any more additions to any so-called backlog of NSR lands as we move into the new generation of federal-provincial agreements, and as the new Department of Forestry which the Prime Minister has established begins to function fully.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Guy H. Arseneault (Restigouche—Chaleur): My question is directed to the same minister. Because of the government's failure to create a national data bank, there is a lack of information on the state of Canada's forests. As a result, contradictory statements are being

made by representatives of industry, governments and environmental groups.

When will the minister take his responsibility seriously? When will we have a national forestry data bank?

[*English*]

Hon. Frank Oberle (Minister of Forestry): Mr. Speaker, I agree with my hon. friend that the lack of factual and reliable data has been a major problem in the development of the kind of forestry practices that will take us into the next century and that will be required in the modern context. Despite that, my hon. friend knows that this year we will be planting 1.2 billion new seedlings in our country, which is at least double what we are harvesting, so we are on the right track. Improvements will be necessary as we go along and if we begin to incorporate the principle of sustainable development and integrated management into our management structures, my hon. friend will see a major improvement in all these areas.

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Lynn Hunter (Saanich—Gulf Islands): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport, but in his absence I will address it to the parliamentary secretary.

It has been over a year since the *Exxon Valdez* and the *Nestucca* oil spills occurred. In the wake of these disasters, serious concerns were raised about the transport of oil through coastal waters. Report after report has stressed the lack of regulations with respect to oil barges, yet the government has failed to take action. Within a week, a barge carrying three million gallons of bunker oil is expected to travel through the Gulf Islands and into the waters of Saanich Inlet, an area proposed as a federal marine reserve park.

Given the regulatory vacuum with respect to oil barges, what assurances can the government give that this particular barge will not be permitted in these sensitive waters without the strictest supervision and with adequate provisions, in the event of an oil spill?

Mr. Ross Belsher (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I want to assure the hon. member opposite that the Coast Guard is well aware that the proposed transportation has been designated to go forward and will be keeping everything under its direct surveillance. I might remind the hon. member that the Coast Guard has been very active in dealing with this, in conjunction with the provincial authorities as well. I want to assure the hon. member that her concerns are being addressed.

Ms. Lynn Hunter (Saanich—Gulf Islands): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the minister. The interim report of the Brander–Smith inquiry released in September of 1989 stated that early action on the unregulated aspects of tanker barge construction and operation is required. That same report condemned the government's lack of readiness in the event of oil spills. When can we expect the government to enact regulations that would minimize the danger to the environment from fuel barging operations?

Mr. Ross Belsher (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, this is being actively looked at and the reports of the various committees which have reported are being dealt with, on a day-to-day basis.

* * *

BILL C-21

Mr. Doug Fee (Red Deer): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Employment and Immigration.

Bill C-21 is now back in the other place and we hope that, in the interests of Canadians, it will accept the message sent to it by this elected House. I know, for my part, in the legislative committee hearings on Bill C-21, that most negative witnesses were from union affiliated groups. These are the same groups that Liberal senators chose to hear, and the same groups they now lean on for support. I would like to ask the minister if she could inform the House if the views of these groups truly represent what the Canadian public feels about Bill C-21?

• (1450)

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, certainly I would never deny a committee of this House or of the other place its right to hear witnesses of its choosing.

I must admit I was surprised by some of the messages that were heard by the committee, given that we had conducted a poll, the results of which I released today, which showed that 66 per cent of Canadians in all regions of Canada support our efforts under Bill C-21 to

spend more money on training under UI. That support is spread right across Canada.

* * *

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. George Proud (Hillsborough): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance.

The government has said that workers must not negotiate wage increases in anticipation of an inflationary GST. On the other hand, the Canadian Labour Congress does not trust the assurances of the Minister of Finance that his tax will not hurt ordinary Canadians. Workers are determined to offset damage caused by such a regressive tax.

Why is this government continually threatening workers for trying to seek their necessary protection?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, we are not threatening anybody, we are just stating what we believe are the basic facts.

Let me quote from some fairly well-known people. The Economic Council of Canada said: "The reality of the world marketplace will force business people to pass through the great bulk of the tax." The Canadian Construction Association said: "The selling price for all kinds of construction in our analysis is found to be lower under the GST than under the current tax system." John Crispo says: "Very few manufacturers of significance are going to be able to pocket the reduction in the MST. Competition is going to force them to pass it on to us."

We do not believe the concerns that have been expressed by some people in the labour movement and in other places will be found in actual reality as we move into the world of GST. We think it would be wrong and very unhealthy for the economy for people to go after excessive wage demands in anticipation of the GST, which will not produce an increase in the cost of living.

Mr. George Proud (Hillsborough): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the same minister.

The government's policies that we have seen over the last number of years have been clearly anti-labour. The legislative policies have battered Canadians for the past six years.

With such a track record, how can the workers believe this minister when he promises them that they will not suffer from the GST? Can he make that promise here today?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I listened to the hon. member saying that the policies of this government are anti-labour.

What could be more pro-labour than the 1.6 million jobs that have been created since 1984? If the hon. member is looking for more specific policies, all he has to do is look at the support we have provided to the labour venture capital funds that have been requested by labour and to which this government has responded positively.

These are the things that labour can look to from this government as ways in which we are supporting the growth of labour in this country.

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COURT CHALLENGES PROGRAM

Mrs. Christine Stewart (Northumberland): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Secretary of State, but in his absence I will direct it to the Minister of Justice.

The Court Challenges Program provides legal and funding assistance to disadvantaged groups or individuals to clarify charter equality and language rights. Last week, the Secretary of State announced an extension of this program for five years, but failed to announce the agency that would be administering the program.

Can the minister rectify the neglect today and inform us to whom the court challenges staff is now responsible, thus allowing the program to continue efficiently?

Hon. Kim Campbell (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I believe my colleague, the Secretary of State is reviewing the administration of the Court Challenges Program and will make an announcement when he has made a decision.

Mrs. Christine Stewart (Northumberland): Mr. Speaker, it is very difficult for the program to carry on efficiently in the absence of an agency. Citing the current economic situation, the Secretary of State refused to consider important recommendations to the Court Challenges Program from the Human Rights Committee. Equality rights, language rights, women's rights, native rights, among others, are denied *de facto* justice if

disadvantaged groups are not even aware of the program.

Can the minister tell us how the government plans to inform Canadians about the existence of this important program?

Hon. Kim Campbell (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I find the hon. member's question very interesting because when we seek to inform Canadians about something as important as tax reform, her party gets very incensed about it. Is the hon. member saying that she approves of expenditures by the Government of Canada to advertise its programs?

Ms. Clancy: That's what she asked.

* * *

SOCIAL PROGRAMS

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the minister responsible for the Older Worker Adjustment Program. Members will recall that many Canadian workers lost their jobs as a result of the privatization of CN Route and then the dismantling of the private company that resulted from that privatization.

In Winnipeg, 94 people lost their jobs as a result of the closing down of Transport Route Canada. None of these workers are eligible for the Older Worker Adjustment Program because the limit set for the application of that program in Winnipeg is for companies of 100 workers or over. By falling six short of this 100-person limit many people who have lost their jobs through the privatization of Route Canada are not eligible for the older worker adjustment.

Is it not possible that the government could find a way to be flexible in this instance and make it possible for these older workers who lost their jobs as a result of that government initiated sequence of events to qualify for that program?

Hon. Jean Corbeil (Minister of Labour) and (Minister of State (Transport)): Mr. Speaker, I would like to tell the hon. member that all the components of the program to help older workers were negotiated by the federal government with each province. We have established a criteria that must be respected across the country, but certainly we are willing to look at anything that could be helpful to these people.

I think the member will understand that in large cities all across the country we have to set a minimum under which we have to make exclusions. Nevertheless, our program has been very effective so far, because a very large number of older people have been helped by this program.

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona): Mr. Speaker, the fact remains that people who lost their jobs from the same company, because they live in a different province, for example, New Brunswick, have become eligible for that older worker adjustment, whereas workers in Winnipeg, because of this 100 worker limit, have been deprived of the same benefits even though they worked for the same company. Is there not a way of taking into account, when people lose their jobs as a result of a national company going under, to make sure that everyone who worked for that company gets the same benefits no matter where they live in Canada?

Hon. Jean Corbeil (Minister of Labour) and (Minister of State (Transport)): Mr. Speaker, I hope that the hon. member will understand that a lay-off of ten people in a small community is, at times, much more important than a lay-off of 50 people in a much larger community.

Mr. Lapierre: Try it yourself. You'll see.

Mr. Corbeil: We would not be treating the older workers fairly if we did not have a different criteria, depending on the location, because the possibility of finding new jobs after being laid off in a large city is much higher than finding a new job in a much smaller community.

* * *

AIRPORTS

Mr. Stan Keyes (Hamilton West): Mr. Speaker, since his appointment the Minister of Transport has visited a number of Canadian airports and has witnessed firsthand the air traffic problem in southern Ontario.

Given the minister's statement that, "Hamilton Airport is a proven facility" and that "the expansion of Hamilton Airport as a solution to Pearson International" is a priority. He also knows that a comprehensive study released by his department earlier this year concluded

that Hamilton airport is the best alternative to Pearson International.

Therefore, in the absence of the Minister of Transport I would ask the Minister of State for Transport if he can explain what concrete measures the Ministry of Transport has in mind for Hamilton airport *vis-à-vis* Pearson International?

• (1500)

Mr. Ross Belsher (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, yes, it is true that the minister has been to the Hamilton airport. He has also been to Pearson International Airport. Pearson is the busiest airport in the country.

The member must be reminded that the airline companies are not clamouring for facilities to land at Hamilton. There has to be a demand from the companies to fly into Hamilton. It is not a case of ordering the airline companies to go where we demand they go. The member must also bear that in mind.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to advise the House that during Question Period I received notice of a question of privilege from the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands. I am wondering if the hon. member and the House would agree that I hear the Prime Minister on a short matter and then return to the hon. member.

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

[*Translation*]

HOUSE OF COMMONS

APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE AND CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES OF THE WHOLE HOUSE

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I move:

> That the Hon. Andrée Champagne, member for the electoral district of Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, be appointed Deputy Speaker of the House and Chairman of Committees of the Whole House.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Gauthier: Mr. Speaker, as Parliamentary House Leader of the Liberal caucus, I take great pleasure in supporting the appointment of the hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot as Chairman of Committees of the Whole House and Deputy Speaker of the House.

I would also like to take this opportunity to say a word of thanks to my friend and colleague, the hon. member for Verchères. I hope the House will bear with me, because there are a few things I would like to say about my friend Marcel. For six years he has been a member and Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons. He has chaired a number of important committees of this House. He was president of the Canadian branch of the AIPLF, the *Association internationale des parlementaires de langue française*. To us, he was someone who managed to be impartial in practically every circumstance, at the same time displaying a unique ability for comradeship with his fellow members. He has made friends on all sides of the House.

To Marcel Danis, the hon. member for Verchères, I want to say thank you for the impressive services rendered to the Canadian people.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

[*English*]

Mr. Iain Angus (Thunder Bay—Atikokan): Mr. Speaker, I too wish to rise on behalf of my caucus to indicate our support of the motion.

I also want to say thank you to the outgoing Deputy Speaker whom I got to know in the last year or so in the special committee that I have been working on as well as prior to that in the House in the chair. He has done a remarkable job. We wish him well in his new endeavours.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt this motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to.

[*English*]

Mr. Mulroney: Mr. Speaker, I had great hopes for the career of Marcel Danis, but after listening to the member for Ottawa—Vanier and his eulogistic references, I will have to think this over again.

I just want to tell my hon. friend and the member from the NDP that I share their high regard. On behalf of all government members, I thank them for their fine display of parliamentary leadership. I think it is very much appreciated by all.

[*Translation*]

APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES OF THE WHOLE HOUSE

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I also move that Mr. Denis Pronovost, member for the electoral district of Saint-Maurice, present and future—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Mulroney: —all right, member for the electoral district of Saint-Maurice. Mr. Speaker, I move:

That Mr. Denis Pronovost, member for the electoral district of Saint-Maurice, be appointed Deputy Chairman of Committees of the Whole House.

Motion agreed to.

* * *

[*English*]

PRIVILEGE

RELEASE OF RESULTS OF POLLS

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, I received in my mail that I was sorting through during Question Period the material that I referred to in the notice to Your Honour. In fact it was referred to subsequently in an answer given by the Minister of Employment and Immigration in this House.

To say that I was shocked to receive this material is to put it mildly because it was a press release issued by the Minister of Employment and Immigration in which she releases statistics prepared by Decima Research, apparently in response to a government contract for a series of questions put to Canadians concerning, effectively, the government's policies as adumbrated in Bill C-21.

It is a well known fact that when we in the opposition put questions to the government and Notices of Motions for the Production of Papers on the Order Paper requesting studies and statistical data prepared in the form of polls by the government, this information is regularly refused to us. We are told that the polling is private and is done, admittedly with public funds, but for the purpose of enabling the government to make decisions or receive the views of Canadians, or whatever the answer may be. The information is denied to us here in Parliament.

Yet here, today, we have a situation in which the Minister of Employment and Immigration has released this bundle of statistics, this poll, that she has had commissioned, apparently at public expense, because the results of the poll clearly are ones that she thinks are favourable to the cause that she is proposing in Bill C-21. It is an attempt to influence the Senate of Canada by making this—

Mr. Cooper: Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Milliken: I am on a question of privilege and a question of privilege takes precedence over a point of order. I wish the hon. member for Peace River would pay some attention to the rules.

Mr. Speaker: I will hear the hon. member for Peace River in a moment. Perhaps the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands could get to where the privilege is in this.

Mr. Milliken: I am almost there.

The point is that this information is denied to members of Parliament on a regular and consistent basis. Now, all of a sudden, when it suits the government's purpose, it dumps it out on the floor of the House in answer to questions and in press releases across the country.

If it is going to be made public today in this way, it should be made public on every occasion that it is asked for. The denial of making it public and the secrecy that surrounds these polls in the usual way constitutes a breach of the privileges of this House, if the government is going to release the polls when it suits its fancy to do so. That is what is going on here. I object and ask, Mr. Speaker, that you rule this is unparliamentary and a breach of our privileges.

SPEAKER'S RULING

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Kingston and the Islands has a complaint. It is not a new complaint. The complaint has been raised on a number of occasions going back through the long history of this place.

The hon. member has made his complaint clear, but I do not think the Chair can intervene if the government wishes, as it has in this case, to release all the material, and as it has refused to do in other cases. I have to say the complaint falls short of privilege.

Point of Order

The hon. member has put the complaint forward with vigour. Perhaps following this complaint some conversations might take place between hon. members on both sides of the House.

* * *

• (1510)

POINT OF ORDER

COMMENT DURING QUESTION PERIOD

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, I rise now on a point of order. The point I want to make has nothing to do with the previous one.

It is a point of order that arose during Question Period. I do not want to appear to be objecting on behalf of any member, but in the course of Question Period during a question being put by the hon. member for Edmonton East I heard some members on the government side, and I cannot identify them so I do not think it is a question of privilege, refer to the hon. member who had the floor as a "windbag".

I have been called that before in this House. I have checked the precedents. I have looked at Beauchesne, Sixth Edition, citation 488 which states:

> It has been ruled unparliamentary to refer to a member as:
>
> (c) a bag of wind.

It cites a precedent of February 15, 1878, which I have here and would be pleased to provide Your Honour.

In my submission a "bag of wind" and a "windbag" are one and the same. I suggest that the term is unparliamentary. I ask that Your Honour consider the matter and if it is unparliamentary and so rule, then I will object the next time it is used. I am not objecting for myself in this particular case, although I have been called that. I could identify the hon. member who has used that unparliamentary expression in reference to some of my perhaps longer speeches in this House. I will not say long-winded speeches, but certainly perhaps longer speeches.

I would ask Your Honour to consider the matter and if windbag is in fact unparliamentary, perhaps its use could be discontinued in the Chamber. I know all hon. members would not want to use unparliamentary terms.

SPEAKER'S RULING

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Kingston and the Islands has raised a crucial point in the long history of parliamentary or unparliamentary language.

The hon. member advises the Chair, and I have no reason to disbelieve him, that when another hon. member was up some other hon. member, unidentified, referred to him as a windbag. The hon. member for Kingston and the Islands has pointed out that "bag of wind" has been referred to as unparliamentary and that it ought to be equated with windbag.

"Bag of wind" has also been used as a synonym for the Scottish pipes. Of course I would have to say that if it was used in that context, given my own ancestry, it would be completely and utterly parliamentary.

However, I must incline to the view that under the circumstances in which it was apparently given today, I think it certainly does border on the unparliamentary. It might be that some discussion could take place in the appropriate lobby. If it can be found who uttered this affront, perhaps he or she could be persuaded to come in front of the House and eventually withdraw it.

There is no question in my mind that we are bound by precedent under certain circumstances. The hon. member for Kingston and the Islands whose sharp ears picked up this exchange has given considerable assistance to the Chair.

I hope that all hon. members would refrain from referring to other hon. members as either a bag of wind or a windbag, especially because we would not want confusion with Scottish pipes.

I thank all hon. members.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gauthier: Mr. Speaker, I merely want to take this opportunity to use the other official language and inform you that Beauchesne's, Fifth Edition, makes an important point, because many Canadians listening today probably don't understand what is meant by a "bag of wind" or a "windbag". I may refer them to Beauchesne's, citation 320, which says in the French edition that the following list is a more or less complete collection of various expressions that have been ruled unparliamentary in the House since over a century ago. Used in English, they do not always take the same form or have the same undesirable impact in their official translation.

Citation 320 goes on to say that we should remember that in this respect, the original, not the translation, creates the precedent.

In French, we are too polite to call anyone a windbag or a bag of wind. We would simply say "une outre pleine de vent".

Mr. Speaker: I want to thank the hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier for his comments. His polite comments are always appreciated.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

BORROWING AUTHORITY ACT, 1990-91

MEASURE TO ENACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre) that Bill C-65, an act to provide borrowing authority, be read the third time and passed.

Mr. Neil Young (Beaches—Woodbine): Mr. Speaker, when I looked at the motion before the House today, which runs under the title: "Resuming debate on the motion of the Minister of Finance for the third reading of Bill C-65, an act to provide borrowing authority", I thought it was rather innocuous and did not tell us too much until I checked on how much the government was wanting to borrow and I realized it was in the area of some $25.5 billion.

If I compare that $25.5 billion that the government wishes to borrow with the 1987 figures for those corporations whose untaxed profits almost doubled to $27 billion from $15 billion in 1984, I can well imagine what this government could do to reduce this country's deficit if it were to do something proper about income tax reform.

I will come back to those corporate figures in a second, but I want to deal first with what this government has done to the income tax system and the tax systems since it came to power in 1984.

In November 1984 when the Minister of Finance introduced his first economic statement to the House, Canadians discovered that due to increases in oil and gas prices it would cost the average Canadian family about an additional $100 per year.

If that were not enough, the increased UI premiums up to different levels cost the average Canadian family another $102 per year. Combining that with increased sales taxes by $150 per year, plus many user fees on parks and harbours for services, et cetera, the total in that 1984 economic statement caused Canadian families in one blow to pay an additional $352 per year in taxes.

Shortly thereafter, on May 23, 1985 when the Minister of Finance actually brought in a budget, through the elimination of federal tax reductions it cost Canadian families another $100 per year. Modification to indexing of various programs cost Canadians another $115. Cuts in family allowance payments cost families $22.50. Cigarette and alcohol tax increases cost another $75. The sales tax was broadened, which cost another $150. Increases in gasoline taxes cost another $50.

At the same time, Mr. Speaker, you will recall, the Minister of Finance proposed that pensions for senior citizens be deindexed. That of course was later reversed. However, in that budget it cost the average Canadian taxpayer another $512.50 per year.

On June 27, 1985 the minister came along and reversed his decision to deindex old age pensions, but to compensate he decided to impose a one cent per litre increase on gasoline to pay for the lack of revenue that he would miss through the now cancelled deindexing program. That one cent a litre cost Canadian taxpayers another $50 per year.

All of that reduced the ability of Canadians to pay for other items. These three initiatives alone amount to well over $1,000 a year, money which was removed from the disposable incomes of Canadians.

• (1520)

In his budget of February 26, 1986 the Minister of Finance introduced a 3 per cent surtax to the tune of another $170 a year on the salaries of average Canadian. There was another sales tax increase of $150 a year. Cigarette and alcohol taxes were increased accounting for another $20.

On February 18, 1987, the Minister of Finance introduced another budget. In this one there were gas tax increases amounting to another $50 a year for ordinary Canadians paying taxes. The sales tax base was broad-

ened, which amounted to another $15 a year. Cigarette, and this time airline ticket taxes, caused an increase of $35 in taxes.

On June 18, 1987, under tax reform this time for a change the average Canadian was paying $310 a year less than after the previous budget.

However the Minister of Finance went on to correct that. On February 10, 1988, additional gas tax increases of one cent per litre were introduced, which cost Canadians another $50 a year in disposable income.

I could go on and on about what this government has done in the taxation sector for ordinary Canadians. This year I had more complaints from constituents about the amount of taxes they are paying today over what they paid in 1984. I would have said previously that this government is slowly nickeling and diming Canadians to death, but it is more than that. Average Canadian families are now paying a couple of thousand dollars more a year in taxation than they were in 1984.

If we compare that to what this government has done for the corporate sector, we find a situation contrary to what the Minister of Finance set out in a speech in February 1987. He said: "This government's fundamental strategy in reviewing the corporate income tax is to ensure that profitable corporations pay their fair share to preserve respect for the tax system. We must further reduce the source of the problem by cutting back special corporate tax write-offs. This is the direction that I set out in May 1985 and acted on last February".

Despite the finance minister's rhetoric, in every year the Conservatives have been in power more and more profits have gone untaxed. By 1987 those untaxed profits had almost doubled to $27 billion from $15 billion in 1984.

It has been suggested by Department of Finance officials and members of the government that it is mostly farmers and small businesses that do not pay tax. To say the least, that is a distortion of the facts and it does a disservice to both farmers and the small business sector. If we look at the most recent Statistics Canada data, it should be clear even to finance officials that the farming, fishing and forestry sectors together make up less than 1 per cent of all untaxed profits.

The Minister of Finance has called the data outdated since, as he said, that was the year before tax reform. Yet, some tax reform measures were implemented in the middle of 1987 and should therefore have been reflected even somewhat in the 1987 data.

Further, if one looks at more recent industrial corporation statistics, one finds that total deferred taxes for Canada's largest corporations are continuing to grow in 1988 and into 1989. By the end of 1989 cumulative deferred taxes for wealthy industrial corporations reached $38.5 billion. In fact deferred taxes grew by $6.1 billion between 1987 and 1989—and that was after tax reform—compared to $3.7 billion worth of growth between 1985 and 1987.

The government's tax reform has done little so far to slow down deferred taxes for the corporate sector, particularly for large corporations.

If you take a look at what this government considers to be fair tax reform, Mr. Speaker, you will discover that there are still some 480 Canadians with incomes over $100,000 a year who have not paid one cent in income tax. There are some 2,920 individuals with incomes over $50,000 a year who do not pay a red cent in income tax. So much for fairly sharing the tax burden.

Mr. Speaker, I know you will be interested in the following figures. In 1988 the corporate tax rate was reduced from 36 per cent to 28 per cent. More than 60,000 corporations paid no taxes at all. These corporations include Algoma Steel at profits of $80 million. It paid no taxes. Interestingly it made donations of some $8,750 to the Conservative Party of Canada.

Bramalea had profits of $33 million and paid no taxes. Its contribution to the Conservative Party was $12,625.08.

Brascade had profits of $64 million and paid no taxes. Its contribution to the Conservative Party was $24,319.

Confederation Life had profits of $62 million and paid no taxes on it. It contributed $11,186.52 to the Conservative Party.

Brascan Corporation's profits were $263 million. It paid no taxes. Its contribution to the Conservative Party was $50,362.92.

Edper Enterprises made $52 million in profits and no taxes paid. The amount of money it contributed to the Conservative Party is not available.

Fletcher Challenge Finance had a $24 million profit and paid no taxes. Yet it managed to pay $30,000 to the Conservative Party.

North Canadian Oils had $30 million in profit. It paid no income taxes either but managed to come up with $5,000 for the Conservative Party.

Ocelot Industries made $432 million in profits and paid not a red cent in income tax.

PWA's profit was $30 million, and it paid not a cent in income tax.

Standard Trustco made $30 million in profit and paid no income taxes.

Tridel, which is an interesting one, had $72 million in profits and paid not a cent in income tax. It managed to cough up $29,441.06 to the Conservative Party.

Xerox Canada had $74 million in profits. It paid not a red cent paid in income tax. Its little contribution to the Conservative Party was $11,558.

I will just go down the list because some of the other ones are really quite interesting.

Central Guaranty Trustco made $75 million in profits. They managed to come up with $2.86 million in a tax credit and paid no taxes.

• (1530)

Goodyear Canada made an $11 million profit. Then they got a hand-out from the government of $1.4 million and paid no taxes. Hemlo Gold Mines, $43 million profit. They got a hand-out of $2.73 million and did not pay a cent in income taxes.

Magna International is a dandy example, with $19 million profit, $8.2 million tax credits and not a cent in income tax.

MICC Investments, $72 million profit, $29.97 million in tax credits and not a cent in income tax.

Power Corporation, the big daddy, had a $214 million profit, $2.2 million in tax credits and no taxes paid. They managed to cough up $72,000 for the Conservative party.

Ranger Oil, $15 million profits, $4.07 million in tax credits and no taxes paid. They managed to come up with $36,000 for the Conservative Party.

That is hardly equitable tax reform. There is an increasing number of Canadians who are beginning to understand that when this government talks about deficit reduction it is playing the old shell game. It is asking Canadians to tighten their purse strings and tighten their belts while initiating programs to cut back on health care services and on programs for the disabled under the Canada Assistance Plan. It is cancelling programs for improving child care services. It is instituting clawbacks of family allowance benefits and old age pensions. The government is slashing funding for Via Rail and CBC, structures that hold this country together.

This government is playing the old shell game. It is telling Canadians that they have to cut back on their expectations from government in order to reduce the deficit, while at the same time it is handing out billions of dollars to the corporate sector in reduced taxes, deferred taxes and through all kinds of legal loopholes that it would close if it seriously wanted to do something about reducing the deficit and bringing in fair tax reform in this country.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): On debate, the hon. member for Etobicoke North.

Hon. Roy MacLaren (Etobicoke North): Mr. Speaker, the bill before us, Bill C-65, an act to provide borrowing authority of some $25.5 billion is, to a substantial degree, an admission of failure on the part of this government to manage the economy.

The government has sought in a variety of ways to reduce inflation, stimulate employment, promote growth in our economy, but in each of those self-proclaimed goals, it has failed to provide for any reduction in the levels of deficit spending or any reduction in interest rates.

Bill C-65 once again draws attention to this government's policy of borrowing to cover its deficits rather than reducing its own expenditures and the interest rates that it pays on its accumulated debt.

It is obvious to anyone who follows the question that more borrowing, the level of borrowing that we see before us today, will only add fuel to the real engine that is driving the increase in public deficits in our country, our current high interest rates.

Every percentage increase in interest rates adds a further $1.7 billion to the government's debt servicing costs. The recent policy of borrowing short term has only further exacerbated what is already a major problem, the huge cost of servicing our debt.

The government's projection in its last budget of a deficit of $28 billion, which is no major change from the deficit that it insisted it was going to reduce during its term of office, hinges on an interest rate forecast of an average of 11.1 per cent. Yet since January alone, interest rates in Canada have continued to rise from 12.4 per cent to 13.8 per cent, an increase of an astonishing 133 basis points. And there is no sign today that interest rates will decline. International rates, on the contrary, continue to rise, driven both by the spectre of inflation in Japan and in Europe and by the competition for capital in world money markets.

Moreover, the Canadian inflation rate remains at about 5.5 per cent, prompting the Bank of Canada to use that one blunt instrument available to it, interest rates, to attempt to achieve its self-proclaimed goal of zero inflation.

It is now predicted with some confidence that if current interest rates trend upward, debt service charges will absorb all the spending cuts from February's budget, leaving the government's deficit closer to $31 billion or $32 billion rather than the $28 billion it projected in its budget. Of course, an increase of that magnitude will necessitate further spending cuts, further taxation and further government borrowing simply to finance the growing public debt.

Interest rates are clearly driving the government's fiscal agenda. The government's fiscal agenda is not controlling interest rates in Canada, but rather is a victim of interest rates.

It is time we asked whether interest rates are serving the purpose for which they were intended. According to monetary theory, inflation is caused by too much money chasing too few goods. Thus, in its pursuit of zero inflation, the Bank of Canada has consistently raised interest rates in an effort to shrink the money supply and to induce an deflationary period in the Canadian economy.

Yet the fact is that the consumer spending is remarkably resilient to the Bank of Canada's harsh monetary medicine. Since interest rates began to escalate in 1988 after five years of relative stability, inflation has also risen from around 4 per cent to today's 5.5 per cent.

What fundamentally undermines the bank's efforts to curb inflation is the national debt. Every time the bank increases interest rates, the government has to spend more merely to service the debt and to raise taxes to finance its own spending. It seems clear that persistent increases in excise taxes are one of the major causes, if not the major cause, of our rising inflation in Canada. In short, monetary policy and fiscal policy have become inseparable. This government has placed itself in a vicious circle from which it seems unable to extricate itself.

• (1540)

I refer to a report by the C.D. Howe Institute which well summarizes the box in which the government has placed itself. The institute notes that as the national debt grows, a vicious circle develops. At present, the size and the short average term to maturity of the federal government's debt are magnifying the Bank of Canada's difficulty in controlling inflation since a 1 per cent rise in short-term interest rates over a year tends to increase federal expenditures by more than $1.7 billion, adding further to the pressure of demand. The bank's task of controlling inflation would be considerably easier if fiscal policy were more restrictive.

Not only do we need to ask if interest rates are working to curb inflation, we must also ask whether it is worthwhile to risk recession in pursuit of what is called zero inflation.

Surely the purpose of tackling inflation is to help ensure price stability. Surely price stability is the goal of any government, not zero inflation as such. Price stability can enhance the long-term health of the Canadian economy, but can the current government's reliance on monetary policy alone serve that end? Is it achieving price stability as it pursues its single-minded goal of zero inflation?

Inflation is largely limited to central Canada. Atlantic Canada and parts of western Canada have barely extricated themselves from the last recession. Those regions

can hardly be considered overheated or inflationary. Yet interest rates fail to discriminate among these differing levels of growth across our country, differing levels of inflation across our country, with the result that beyond southern Ontario the regions are being driven farther into recession.

It is not merely in regions of Canada that the indiscriminate impact of high interest rates is felt. It is felt unevenly in the various sectors of the Canadian economy. The impact on the manufacturing sector, the impact on the resources sector can be especially severe, vulnerable as they are to borrowings and high levels of interest on those borrowings. On the other hand, the service sector may largely escape from the impact of higher interest rates, so that both a regional and a sectoral impact is felt as the government pursues its single-minded policy of high interest rates to achieve what it calls zero inflation.

Is a 5.5 per cent inflation rate really such a threat to price stability and economic growth? The Bank of Canada praises the goal of zero inflation, but in an increasingly interdependent world economy it is impossible to see how Canada can reach zero inflation when its trading partners, particularly the United States, have inflation rates well above that level.

Above all, we must realize what an anti-inflationary monetary policy entails. What is euphemistically described as slowing the economy or taking the steam out of the economy really translates into recession.

The goal here is twofold: The government sets out, first, through the Bank of Canada, to reduce demand by increasing the cost of money; and, second, to reduce wage demands by increasing unemployment, thereby restricting labour's bargaining power. Both these goals, by definition, entail recession and a decline in living standards for the average Canadian.

To achieve zero inflation, which is the stated goal of the Bank of Canada with the full support of the government, a government would have to forgo inflationary tax increases like the goods and services tax. Average wage increases would have to decline to the point where they would be roughly equal to the average increase in real output per member of the labour force. That would mean about a 2.8 per cent increase in 1988, 1.1 per cent increase in 1989, and probably less than that in 1990 as productivity declines due to recessionary pressures. Does anyone really believe that wage increases of such a low level will be achieved through interest rate policy? I doubt it very much.

A tight monetary policy alone is not achieving the goals for which it was intended. It does not appear to be limiting even the moderate inflation and is certainly not leading to zero inflation. The high interest rate policy of the government is undermining the very thing that it was intended to protect, the living standards of Canadians. It is not working because the government's fiscal policy is working at cross-purposes with its monetary policy.

High levels of government spending have both fuelled inflationary pressure in the economy and have incurred an unprecedented national debt. Countering those inflationary pressures with higher interest rates has forced the government to raise taxes which further fuels the economy by paying greater interest on its debt. This inflationary pressure in turn leads the Bank of Canada to raise interest rates. Here, again, we are in the vicious circle which is familiar to all those who have followed the economic policies of the government.

What has complicated this dilemma even further is the fact that the government increasingly has been forced to go off-shore for its capital, meaning that Canada is now tied more closely to rising international interest rates than it has been in a very long time. Canada's off-shore debt, both public and private, is now about $200 billion and growing. Each year Canada now looks to foreign lenders for almost $60 billion, unprecedented levels in Canadian experience and placing real restrictions on our ability to participate in the rapidly evolving international economy.

The policy of high interest rates in Canada has had a major adverse impact on our exports. High interest rates typically drive up the value of a currency. We have seen the value of the Canadian currency increase rapidly from the 70 cent level up to more than 85 cents today. The adverse impact on Canadian exports is substantial. It is not surprising that Canada has demonstrated a deteriorating trade position. Canada's merchandise trade surplus fell below $5 billion in 1989, half the level reported a year earlier, and about one-quarter of the peak Canada achieved in 1984.

• (1550)

The decline in currency toward 80 cents, which could follow from a lower interest rate policy, would help exports. Of course, they might continue to be hindered by any softness in the U.S. market given the degree to which we have tied ourselves to that particular market.

The fact remains that the government has placed Canada in a position where the government's financial requirements have continued to absorb a large share of our domestic savings pool, putting upward pressure on interest rates and forcing other, mainly private, borrowers offshore. Unprecedently large international capital flows have been needed to supplement the domestic savings shortfall, placing Canada in greater debt to foreign countries than we have seen for a very long time.

If the government is truly interested in price stability, if that is their goal—not zero inflation as such, but rather price stability and a strong Canadian economy—it must now turn to solutions other than monetary policy alone.

First, the cost of servicing Canada's national debt must be reduced, if the government is going to extricate itself from the vicious circle that I have described.

Second, if the government's goal is indeed price stability, it must investigate, as a matter of urgency, other means of dampening demand and curbing wage increases.

Third, the government should attempt to encourage domestic savings and investment as a means of reducing our reliance on foreign capital. The most obvious route here is to reduce its debt, thus reducing the government's demand for indigenous savings which then can be utilized by private borrowers.

Finally, the government must not lose sight of the fact that low or zero inflation is not a goal in itself, but only one step toward achieving economic stability and growth.

If, in pursuing an anti-inflationary policy, these goals are not furthered, then surely the policy itself is seriously flawed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): On questions or comments, the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands.

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Etobicoke North made an excellent speech. I know that his knowledge of financial matters is profound. He, of course, speaks with authority as our past critic on financial matters and is particularly knowledgeable, in my submission, as a former minister.

He is aware of the way government policy is formulated. Is he of the view that the government has responsibility for interest rates in the country? Can the government dictate policy to the Governor of the Bank of Canada in respect of interest rates, and should we really be regarding the Minister of Finance as the person responsible for the high interest rates that we are now suffering from in Canada?

Mr. MacLaren: Mr. Speaker, the answer to the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands is, clearly, yes. The government is responsible for interest rate policy, as well as monetary policy and fiscal policy, in the country.

The Governor of the Bank of Canada is, by his own definition, the agent of the government. The hon. member may recall that some decades ago a Governor of the Bank of Canada pursued policies which were contrary to those sought by the government of the day. In the aftermath of that disagreement between the governor and the government, the policy was clearly established that the government is responsible for monetary policy. The ultimate responsibility resides with the Minister of Finance. If there is disagreement between them, there is a procedure provided whereby the government informs the Governor of the Bank of Canada of its dissatisfaction with the policies he is pursuing and the Governor has the choice to conform with the policy outlines of the government or to resign.

In the case of today, we see a government that clearly is in full step with the Governor of the Bank of Canada. Let us not fool ourselves for one moment that the Governor of the Bank of Canada is acting in some independent fashion, pursuing his own monetary policies. Failure of the government to pursue a monetary policy which is integrated with a fiscal policy, which is essentially the problem we are facing today in Canada, is the fault of the government, not the Governor of the Bank of Canada. The Governor of the Bank of Canada is essentially the agent of the government.

The real problem that the government has demonstrated since it came to office in 1984 is a basic one, that it has not taken advantage of the prosperity which the country enjoyed since 1982. We have heard a lot from the other side of the House, from time time time we are still told, that the high interest rate policy today, the high deficit today, and the high debt today are all the result of some nefarious policies pursued by Liberal governments in the late 1970s and the early 1980s.

Those who advance that line of argument should recall that the impact of international oil price increases and of international interest rate increases at that time, not only drove the Canadian economy into a recession, but created recessionary circumstances across the western world. In accordance with standard economic policy, the government of the day used its spending to ensure that there would be employment to ensure a minimal standard of living for Canadians during a time of severe international recession.

The other half of that coin is that when prosperity returns, as it did partly as a result of the very policies pursued by the Liberal government of the day, then a government should withdraw some degree of its spending from the economy so that the economy does not become overheated. But this government has failed to do so, despite its repeated proclamations that was what it intended to do. Its financial plan of 1984 set forth a fiscal commitment to reduce its spending, to constrain its spending at a time when Canada was enjoying increasing prosperity. The government says that it still wants to pursue that policy, but it has left that policy so late in the business cycle that I, myself, fear that cutting government spending substantially, which it should have done consistently over the past six years, will now in fact contribute to the recessionary circumstances which are feared across our country.

The government has failed to do what it said it wanted to do. It has left Canadians in a situation of high interest rates, increasing inflation, and a fiscal policy that has not been used to create the circumstance of growth and employment which we all seek in this country.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Before I recognize the hon. member for Winnipeg—St. James, 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 Halifax—Child Care; the hon. member for Haldimand—Norfolk—Trade; the hon. member for London—Middlesex—Science and Technology.

On debate, the Hon. Member for Winnipeg—St. James.

Mr. John Harvard (Winnipeg—St. James): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak on this borrowing bill because it affords me the opportunity to express a number of concerns of my constituents of Winnipeg—St. James.

In Canada today, there is a crisis in confidence.

• (1600)

This crisis in confidence manifests itself on many fronts. There is more to it than just the apparent ever-present constitutional crisis which reflects poor leadership on the part of the Prime Minister. The ease that I feel in this country and that is expressed to me goes well beyond Meech Lake.

There is a crisis in confidence in the handling of the economy. Clearly, Canada's economy is in a state of deterioration. The indicators are pointing the wrong way. The country is adrift, and people are asking over and over again: "Who is in charge in Ottawa?" What is going on in the nation's capital? Does the government know what it is doing? Where is the leadership?" Those are some of the feelings the people of Canada are expressing.

The finance minister says: "Everything is okay. Believe me, trust me. Everything is going to be all right." The trouble is that nobody believes him any more. The man's credibility is completely shot. He has been singing this tune ever since he became the finance minister in the fall of 1984. Nobody believes him any more. In 1984, six years ago, the minister announced a five-year deficit reduction plan which has been an unqualified failure despite a spell of record economic growth.

At home and among our major trading partners, our deficit has come down a paltry, insignificant $4 billion. Most of this reduction is the result of tax increases and not expenditure reduction. The minister's big talk is just that, big talk. In a period of unprecedented growth when our economic house should be in order, what has he done about the debt? He has doubled it. What has he done about taxes? He has raised them about 31 times.

That does not even include the goods and services tax which is yet to come.

That monster will be foisted upon us if everything goes according to Hoyle or at least the way the government wants it on January 1. There is little wonder that there is a crisis in confidence.

My hon. colleague from Etobicoke who spoke before me talked about the insane, high interest rate policy of this government. It is reasonable to ask these questions. Has the government gone mad? Has John Crow gone mad? Has the Minister of Finance gone mad? Have the officials in his department gone mad? Have all the people who are responsible for the government gone mad?

The editorial writers of *The Globe and Mail* support this kind of madness. We have come to know *The Globe and Mail* as a Tory apologist, have we not?

The interest rates in Canada today are more than five points higher than those in the United States. Think about it. It is unprecedented. Never before has it happened. The American inflation rate is virtually the same as that of Canada. We have an interest rate five points higher than the Americans. What does it do? It is quite apparent what the disparity between interests here and across the border do. It makes life very difficult for the Canadian companies to compete in the American market and to sell products across the line. That high interest rate policy kills jobs. It makes houses much more expensive. It makes cars more expensive. Everything that Canadians buy with the help of loans becomes much more expensive.

Earlier I spoke of indicators showing that the economy is going the wrong way. I can tell you there is a slump—and this is one of the indicators—in housing in this country. There is a slump in the retail industry. The economy is slumping. The economy is sinking. For the first time since 1982 the economy has declined for two consecutive months, all of it a very disturbing picture. Canadians are saying: "Enough is enough. We have had enough of this nonsense". They are loudly and clearly telling the Minister of Finance that it is time that he abandoned his insane high interest rate policy, his over-reliance on monetary policy. But is the Minister of Finance listening? Does he ever listen, Mr. Speaker? Sadly I must say that the answer to that question is no. This government never seems to listen to Canadians.

Canadians do not like the GST. Does the government listen? Canadians do not like the free trade agreement. Does it listen? Canadians do not like cuts to VIA Rail. Does it listen? Canadians do not like the clawback. Does the government listen? Canadians do not like transferring federal debt to the provinces. Does it listen? Canadians do not like cuts to native programs, to women's programs. Does it listen? They do not like the government's abandonment of the unemployment insurance scheme. Does it listen? Not on your life.

Little wonder that there is a crisis in confidence in Canada. Canadians feel, and it is a growing feeling, that this government is totally out of control and totally out of touch with reality. This government does not have the moral authority to govern. It is down at 15 per cent in the polls which is unprecedented. The government exists only because it gained more seats in the 1988 election, an election that was largely bought, purchased, by big corporate money.

I said that the government is out of control and out of touch with reality. Let me explain further. It says it is concerned about the deficit. Man, alive; that is all we have heard since the election of 1988. But I ask, what is contributing more than anything else to the deficit? It is the government's own high interest rate policy. The high interest rates make it much more costly for the government to do business. The government this year will pay, and I emphasize this figure, $41 billion in interest charges on the public debt. That is more than what the government pays in federal salaries. Little wonder there is a crisis in confidence.

But there are other things too that shake our confidence. Take for example the revelation the other day about increases in pay and salaries for executives of CN Rail. Those top five executives got an average boost in pay of 18.7 per cent. The CN president got an increase of 10.9 per cent, boosting his salary to $416,000 a year. The CN group vice-president did much better on a percentage basis; he got a boost of almost 40 per cent. He now earns a paltry $295,000. Nice work if you can get it. And guess what? They got those increases for what? Can you guess? Performance.

CN profits dropped last year 27 per cent. Can you imagine the kind of increases they would have received if their profits had gone up? I do not know. But my imagination is stirred. What did the workers get, Mr. Speaker? Four and a half per cent. These guys at the top who are so concerned about inflation did not content themselves with 4.5 per cent. Not on your life.

• (1610)

Yes, there is a crisis in confidence in this country. Let us not forget while we are on this theme that these people who are so concerned about inflation, about Canadians not overspending and tightening our belts. What about the Governor of the Bank of Canada, the biggest creature of them all? What did he get in the last one or two years? Did he get a 5 per cent, or 10 per cent or 15 per cent increase? Not on your life. According to information, it was more like 20 or 25 per cent. It is very sad and it hurts. I think that Canadians deserve a lot better.

Let me touch on some other things. This is something that is not addressed in this House very often. It is the Canadian pension plan. We all contribute to it and it dates back more than 20 years. It is a great idea that all Canadians contribute into a general pot, as it were, providing a nest egg for all of us at our retirement. It sounds good in theory and it is good in theory. It is also very good in practice if it is run and operated properly.

What kind of a situation are we in with respect to the Canada Pension Plan? I will tell you the kind of situation we are in. According to documents, four years back in 1986, Canada's chief actuary said that the CPP fund was underfunded by $230 billion. That is a lot of money. What is it today? We do not know, Mr. Speaker, but we can tell you that when it comes to the Canada Pension Plan things are getting worse, not better. The reason is we are not paying the full cost of CPP. According to the actuarial tables, Canadians should be paying about 8 per cent of their salaries or their income into the Canadian pension plan. The fact of the matter is, they are paying 4.2 per cent. Plainly the plan is underfunded and we are heading for serious trouble.

In fact, I was listening to the president of the Canadian Chartered Accountants Association on CBC Radio not too long ago. He should know what he is talking about, particularly when it comes to CPP. What did he say? I do not know how old he is or exactly when he is going to retire, but he said he was not counting on the Canadian pension plan. In other words, he believes, as a lot of Canadians believe, that the Canadian pension plan is heading for bankruptcy and that the crunch will come probably around the turn of the century.

We have to ask ourselves, when it comes to CPP, if we should count on a retirement income that we have not paid for. It is more than just a fiscal or a pension question, it is really a moral question. If we have not paid or properly supported that fund should we expect the kind of moneys that are outlined when our retirement comes? I do not think so. Also, I do not think it is fair to future generations. What will happen is that somewhere down the line there will be a hard choice. Either taxes or premiums will have to be raised sharply if we want to continue the plan, or we could let the plan go asunder. I do not think many Canadians would want that.

I know in a discussion of this kind the parameters are very wide. I have learned that little bit of knowledge since coming to the House.

Let me touch on something else. You may not think it has anything to do with the borrowing bill, and you could make that argument, but I go forward anyway. It has to do with the David Milgaard case. This man has been in the penitentiary for 21 years. It is a long time. He is perhaps Canada's longest serving inmate. He claims, as a lot of criminals claim, that he is in the penitentiary for a crime he never committed. There is more than just his word. There is his action and some evidence as well.

His action is that he refuses to admit to the crime because he says he did not murder the girl in Saskatoon in 1969. He has paid a high price for that. The price is that he is denied parole. One of the basic tenets of parole in this country is that before you get parole you must admit to your crime. David Milgaard refuses to do that. He has never been paroled in 21 years. I think he has had a few day passes, but that is all.

There is more to it than that. A couple of years ago a leading forensic expert on the west coast, Dr. Ferris, said after studying the case that with the availability of new forensic technology and knowledge, it was impossible for

David Milgaard to have committed the murder. That is pretty significant evidence.

Just a few weeks ago we learned that at the behest of the Department of Justice, the RCMP are investigating and have interviewed a suspect in the case. Canadians wonder just what is going on with our justice system and our judicial system.

One of the reasons I am concerned is that despite an application by the counsel for Mr. Milgaard before the Department of Justice to reopen the case, an application that went to the Justice department 15 or 16 months ago, the file on this case has not yet reached the minister's desk.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I believe the hon. member's time has expired.

I would like to say to the hon. member that he has gone a little further astray as far as the borrowing bill is concerned. There is another place for him to bring that up. That is either at committee or other places he may find here, particularly when the Minister of Justice is in the House, and he could perhaps get some information.

I will give him another minute to wind up and then go to the next speaker.

Mr. Harvard: Mr. Speaker, I mention this only because I think it fits in with what I said at the beginning of my remarks and that is that there is a crisis in confidence in this country. It applies not just to the economy, but it has to do with the GST.

The government says the GST is good for Canada and good for the economy. It will be good for us. We will be happy to pay it. If it is so good for us and so good for the economy, why is the government spending—and this is what it has set aside—$14 million to advertise the GST? Some advertising kitty.

Canadians deserve better, Canadians want something better, they want a government that is in charge, they want action from this government on so many fronts that scream out for attention, and they want some leadership.

• (1620)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The hon. member has gone over his time, but I will allow a short question or a comment from the hon. member for Dartmouth.

Mr. Ron MacDonald (Dartmouth): Mr. Speaker, I listened to the fine remarks from my colleague. Could he further elaborate on how this government's misguided economic policies, since we are now on the borrowing authority bill, have led to a further feeling of alienation in western Canada, particularly in the farming sector which feels that this government's economic policies have clearly abandoned the responsibility that a federal government should have for a primary resource industry such as agriculture, and to find out whether or not this government's economic policies have led to a widening gap between western Canada and the rest of the nation?

Mr. Harvard: Mr. Speaker, first of all, I congratulate my colleague on his perspicacity. His astute question fits a concern of mine that has been raised in this House for a number of weeks.

In western Canada agriculture is still king. As agriculture goes, so goes the west. We know that forests are important, oil is important, potash is important and tourism is important, but agriculture is still, in my opinion, king. Let me just mention a couple of things. Agriculture is going through a revolution, through uncertain and difficult times. Some people believe it is on the precipice and that things are beginning to fall apart.

If there was ever a time when agriculture in western Canada needed the most extreme attention from Ottawa, it is now, not yesterday or the day before, but now.

One of the things we get from this government in Ottawa, besides a lot of talk and so-called public relations, is a cut-back in all kinds of support programs. I have mentioned these support programs before and will not enumerate them now.

The cuts in support programs amount to something like $400 million. Agriculture Canada has pointed out that the expected reduction in farm income this year will be as a result of cut-backs in farm support programs. In fact, if my memory serves me correctly, the cut-backs in support will account for 57 per cent of the reduction in farm income this year. That is one point I wanted to make.

The other point has to do with immediate farm aid. Farmers are sowing the grain in the ground. The government came up with this wonderful farm aid program. What the Minister of Agriculture has said is that the federal government is prepared to come up with $500 million if the provinces, in return, will match those federal dollars, dollar for dollar. In other words, if the

federal government will come up with $500 million, provinces should come up with $500 million for a total package of $1 billion.

That sounds all right, does it not? Except the provinces are strapped; they are absolutely strapped. They cannot accede to this; they have not got the cash. The strange part is that the federal government has the money. Yet, for some unknown reason, whether it is intransigence or stubbornness, the government will not release the money. The government has been beseeched, begged and implored to release the money without strings attached. It will not do it.

The Minister of Agriculture has said over and over again: "It is time for the provinces to stop playing politics and to get serious". It is time for the federal government to get serious about this matter because farmers are in a desperate situation. They need the money now. If you cannot get the seed in the ground, you can hardly harvest in August and September.

Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina—Lumsden): Mr. Speaker, I agree entirely with what my hon. friend said about the farmers. We used to say that to the Liberals many years ago.

However, after listening and watching him I did take exception when he said something about the Canada Pension Plan going bankrupt. That is the line the insurance companies peddled since 1966 and every year since.

Every year they increase contributions by all Canadians to the Canada Pension Plan which keeps it actuarially sound. It provides a pool of capital for the provinces and the federal government to borrow from on which they pay interest. In fact it is the interest the provinces pay that keeps the damn thing actuarially sound.

Could the hon. gentleman provide us with any kind of statistical and actuarial evidence? In my opinion, the Canada Pension Plan is one of the best deals an employee can get. Can he provide any evidence about the doomsday scenario we have had since 1966 when it first came in? I have made my full contribution every year, and so has my employer—and there were several of them. The predictions in 1960 were that by the year 1990, and now it has somehow or other changed to the year 2000, it would be bankrupt. Where the hell does he get this? Why does he keep undermining and peddling the line of the insurance industry which would like to have that business?

Ms. Mitchell: Right on.

Mr. Harvard: Mr. Speaker, I will try to keep my remarks short because I know we are running out of time.

First of all I would like to say to my good friend from the Regina area that I am not attacking the Canada Pension Plan in principle. I am a supporter of the Canada Pension Plan. It is not only New Democrats and socialists with their high moral values who support something like a pension plan. I happen to support it as well, strongly, and I can tell you that I do not want to see the Canada Pension Plan die. I do not want to see the Canada Pension Plan go bankrupt.

But, by golly, I am not going to bury my head in the sand like my good friend from Regina who just wants to sit there and believe that it is a good idea and that it will somehow swim on its own. It really does not matter what you contribute to it or what kind of enhancement benefits there are. It does not matter how many workers there are, or how many retirees there are. It is just simply a good idea, and if it is a good idea it will work. Typical NDP thinking.

Mr. Maurizio Bevilacqua (York North): Mr. Speaker, I rise today in the House of Commons to debate Bill C-65, but more important I will take this opportunity to bring Canadians up to date and, more specifically, the 200,000 people who reside in the riding of York North up to date with the government's economic record.

I will illustrate how it has managed, or should I say mismanaged, the finances of this nation. Everywhere I go in the federal riding of York North I meet people—at barber shops, local grocery stores, supermarkets, community centres, and senior citizen homes. During my school speaking tour I spoke to close to 7,000 students in elementary and high schools.

• (1630)

People of all ages are very disappointed in the performance of this government, and rightly so. Under the leadership of the Conservative government the public debt has doubled in five years from $170 billion to $351 billion. The government failed to reduce the public debt at a time when national and international economic growth was at its peak. In five years this government has

accumulated as much debt as have all the other governments from Confederation until 1984.

That requires unbelievable skill. A public debt of $351 billion is equivalent to a persona! debt of $25,000 for each Canadian taxpayer. When the Conservatives took over in 1984 the debt was $18,000 per individual. The doubling of the public debt under this government means that each Canadian taxpayer must now pay over $2,500 in taxes each year just to pay the interest on the federal government debt.

The people from my federal riding of York North, whether they live in Aurora, Richmond Hill, Thornhill, Woodbridge, King City, Maple, Kleinburg, or Nobelton, tell me that they have lost total confidence in this government, especially in the way it has handled its financial affairs.

On May 23, 1985, during his budget speech the Minister of Finance stated: "Our actions will directly reduce the annual deficit at the end of the decade to $20 billion." Well the decade has ended, we are into another one, and the deficit has not been reduced. The deficit has risen from $28.1 billion in 1987–88, to $28.7 billion in 1988–89 and to $30.5 billion in 1989–90. That to me is not an impressive record. That is unacceptable, and that is what the people of York North are telling me everywhere I go.

What make matters worse is that this government has raised taxes on Canadians over 30 separate times since 1984, and still the deficit is not under control. On March 6, 1984 the present Minister of Finance stated: "We would cut spending. We would not raise taxes. Tax levels in Canada are already too high".

For the record, federal tax revenues have increased by $50 billion since the Conservatives came to power in 1984. In 1984–85 the federal government collected $71 billion in taxes. In 1990–91 it will collect $121 billion. Canadians have had more than their share of tax increases to help reduce the deficit, but this government has failed drastically to bring down the deficit.

To the residents of the federal riding of York North and to all Canadians the words "Conservative government" are synonymous with taxes, taxes and more taxes. They are getting tired of paying while they watch a completely incompetent team of economic managers work very hard at producing economic failure for this nation.

Not only is this government taxing Canadians in an unprecedented fashion, but it has coupled that with a high interest rate policy. This high interest rate policy is choking off consumer spending. It is raising mortgage rates and denying young people the right to home ownership. It is stifling investment in this nation, making Canadian exports more expensive in foreign markets and making it more difficult for small Canadian businesses to compete. High interest rates will lead to more business bankruptcies, more families losing their homes, more plant closings, higher unemployment and fewer jobs for Canadians.

The economic policy of this government also includes the goods and services tax. After having studied the proposal by the government, which started at 9 per cent and went to 7 per cent, Liberal members concluded that the goods and services tax should be scrapped. We felt that the implementation of the goods and services tax would cause serious economic damage to Canada. The GST is certainly not revenue neutral. It would be a nightmare for small business and would introduce unprecedented complexities into the tax system.

We also realized that the GST proposal is regressive and would hurt low income families and persons living on fixed incomes including, obviously, seniors and welfare recipients. We also learned that the GST would not be visible and that the government has failed to consider the long-term economic and social impact of the goods and services tax. We also believe that the goods and services tax would put further pressure on the budgets of provincial governments forcing them to either raise taxes, cut services, or run larger deficits. We came to the conclusion that the goods and services tax proposal would damage several key sectors of the Canadian economy and society.

Obviously we had to also look at at least the parameters of what tax reform we would be introducing. We believe that it should be based on some fundamental principles, the first being fairness. The tax system should be based on the ability to pay. It should be based on simplicity. Tax reform should make the tax system easier for Canadians to understand and thus ensure compliance. We also believe that it should be integrated. Over-all tax reform must encompass all forms of taxa-

tion and the needs and practices of other levels of government.

We as a party believe that the issue of visibility is also important, that tax reform should be designed to help Canadians understand exactly how much tax they are paying and to which level of government they are paying it.

Also as Liberals, being the progressive people that we are, we believe that tax reform should be revenue neutral. Tax reform should be undertaken for the goal of improving the tax system, not of raising raise taxes.

When the people who reside in the federal riding of North York received my special GST report they responded quite favourably. They also participated in signing petitions which were eventually forwarded to the House. They felt betrayed by the Conservative government, a government that made many election promises but is certainly not following through with action. The many signatures on petitions from residents of York North were a manifestation of frustrations that they felt about this government.

• (1640)

They began to realize that as the Conservative agenda unfolds they are more and more left out of the system. They began looking, for example, at the erosion of the social safety net of our country. They looked at the clawback of seniors' old age pension and family allowances. They looked at the withdrawal of government from unemployment insurance. They looked at the cuts in Established Programs Financing that are putting great financial strain on our provinces.

Essentially what I am very concerned about in this particular issue is that it touches the very essence of what government should be doing. Government should be taking care of the people. Nothing is more important than the issues of health care and education. Anything that we do to hurt post-secondary education will block the major artery to Canada's future.

In many of the meetings I have when I return to my riding to listen to the concerns of the constituents of York North on Fridays or Saturdays, they tell me that they are also concerned about what this government is doing in relation to dismantling the national infrastructures of this nation. We have heard a lot about VIA Rail in this House. The residents are very much concerned about not only the symbolism, but the importance in economic terms of linking east and west together.

Although the closure of military bases might not affect the people of North York personally, it does affect the very essence of being Canadian. They are concerned about the refusal of this government to aid municipalities on the issue of infrastructure decay. They are concerned about the CBC and post office cuts. I could go on and on.

Also the people of York North are telling me—and I am sure that in the next election they will tell this government—that they are concerned about the creation of two Canadas: the increasing gap between the rich and the poor. I speak not only about individuals but also about the regions of this nation.

Poverty is increasing in Canada, especially among women and children. To make matters worse, the tax system of this nation affects low income wage earners.

We are also beginning to realize, as we see the Conservative government agenda unfold, that this government has a very narrow, almost tunnel vision of what the future of the nation should be. Nothing symbolizes that more than the cuts to areas such as research and development, EPF and VIA Rail. These examples that are given to us by the government tell me that indeed this nation is going through some serious problems.

Today's debate is not merely a debate about borrowing, it is a debate about the future direction of the nation. Do we accept the concept that we live solely in a market-driven economy where profits come first and people last, or should we be looking at other ways to make sure that within the economic agenda the government includes a humane and compassionate dimension to its policies?

I believe I reflect the feelings of the people whom I represent in the riding of York North when I say that unless this government is interested in self-destruction it should seriously re-examine the direction that it is taking and bring about the type of progressive changes that this nation deeply desires.

Mr. Rey Pagtakhan (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, I certainly commend my colleague from North York for his concluding remarks that the government must re-examine its policies to provide for the future of our

country. I cannot help but reiterate that quite strongly for we know that today's decisions will shape our future.

Bill C-65 would give the government the authority to borrow up to $25.5 billion during the 1990-91 fiscal year to cover its budgetary deficit. Certainly this is a political confession of failure of its fiscal and monetary policies.

I would like to draw to your attention, Mr. Speaker, that since the 1988 election the Minister of Finance has relentlessly pursued a brutal and discriminatory high interest rate policy which has resulted in a decrease in housing sales and a decrease in the affordability of homes. It kills businesses and leads to lay-offs and to a decrease in consumer spending. More important, the high interest rate policy will increase the deficit even more. Under the guise of cutting the deficit this government has shown insensitivity to programs for Canadians.

Can we trust the finance minister when he asks us to support his bill on borrowing authority? Of course, we cannot trust this government and the answer has to be a resounding no.

Western Canada's First Ministers have warned the finance minister and the Governor of the Bank of Canada of the ridiculousness with which they try to pursue the high interest rate policy, the real villain today. The Governor of the Bank of Canada remains committed to his policy. We must challenge government to change that policy. It must assume responsibility. The constituents of Winnipeg North demand just that.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): In my opinion the yeas have it.

And more than five members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Call in the members.

The House divided on the motion which was agreed to on the following division:

(*Division No. 256*)

YEAS

Members

Anderson	Andre
Atkinson	Attewell
Belsher	Bernier
Blackburn (Jonquière)	Blais
Bouchard (Roberval)	Bourgault
Boyer	Brightwell
Browes	Campbell (Vancouver Centre)
Cardiff	Chadwick
Champagne (Champlain)	Charest
Chartrand	Clifford
Cole	Collins
Cooper	Corbeil
Corbett	Côté
Couture	Danis
Darling	DeBlois
de Cotret	Della Noce
Desjardins	Dobbie
Dorin	Duplessis
Epp	Fee
Ferland	Fontaine
Friesen	Gérin
Gibeau	Greene
Guilbault	Halliday
Harvey (Chicoutimi)	Hawkes
Hogue	Holtmann
Horner	Horning
Hudon	Hughes
James	Jelinek
Kempling	Koury
Landry	Langlois
Larrivée	Layton
Leblanc (Longueuil)	Loiselle
MacDonald (Rosedale)	MacKay
Malone	Marin
Mazankowski	McCreath
McDermid	McDougall (St. Paul's)
Merrithew	Mitges
Monteith	Nicholson
Oberle	O'Kurley
Plamondon	Plourde
Porter	Reid
Ricard	Richardson
Robitaille	Roy-Arcelin
Saint-Julien	Schneider
Scott (Hamilton—Wentworth)	Siddon
Sparrow	Stevenson
Tardif	Thacker
Thorkelson	Tremblay (Rosemont)
Tremblay (Québec-Est)	Turner (Halton—Peel)
Van de Walle	Vankoughnet
Venne	Vézina
Wenman	White
Wilbee	Wilson (Etobicoke Centre)
Winegard—107	

NAYS

Members

Allmand	Anawak
Angus	Arseneault
Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing)	Baker
Bélair	Bellemare
Benjamin	Bevilacqua
Blaikie	Blondin
Boudria	Callbeck
Campbell (South West Nova)	Catterall
Clancy	Crawford
Duhamel	Ferguson
Flis	Fontana
Foster	Fulton
Gaffney	Gauthier
Grey (Beaver River)	Guarnieri
Harvey (Edmonton East)	Hunter
Keyes	Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)
Kristiansen	LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso)
Lee	MacAulay
MacLaren	MacLellan
Marleau	McGuire
Mifflin	Milliken
Mills	Mitchell
Nault	Ouellet
Pagtakhan	Parent
Peterson	Pickard
Proud	Prud'homme
Rideout	Robichaud
Rodriguez	Simmons
Speller	Stewart
Stupich	Vanclief
Volpe	Wood
Young (Gloucester)	Young (Beaches—Woodbine)—64

• (1730)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I declare the motion carried.

Motion agreed to, bill read the third time and passed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): It being 5.30 p.m. the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on today's Order Paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS—BILLS

[*English*]

CANADIAN INSTITUTE OF CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

MEASURE TO ENACT

Mr. Murray W. Dorin (Edmonton Northwest) moved that Bill S-10, an act respecting the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants, be read the second time and referred to a legislative committee.

Private Members' Business

He said: Mr. Speaker, today I am pleased to have the opportunity to introduce this bill into the House. This bill has come from the Senate and involves an amendment to the act with regard to the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants.

There are three chartered accountants in the House of Commons. They are myself, the Minister of Transport and the member for Nanaimo—Cowichan. I must say at the outset that I was quite surprised to find that someone could be both a chartered accountant and a member of the New Democratic Party. I thought that there must be something in that which would violate the Charter. However, perhaps given this opportunity we could consider making an amendment to do something about that, if the hon. member is in agreement.

This bill, first introduced in the Senate, modernizes the statement of objects and powers exercised by the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants, a professional body of which I am proud to be a member.

[*Translation*]

The Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants was established almost 90 years ago by representatives of existing local and provincial associations of chartered accountants. The purpose of its founders was to establish a national organization that would promote the status of the profession in Canada.

[*English*]

Its incorporating statute, the Dominion Institute of Chartered Accountants Act, 1902, codified the powers and objects of the institute. That statute governs its affairs to this day. The only significant amendment to the act took place in 1951 when the institute adopted its current name, the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants. Despite the change in name, however, the institute's powers and objects remained the same as those first adopted in 1902. The objects and powers set forth in the 1902 act have served the profession well for nearly a century but the time has come to recognize the reality of the institute's current role.

Since the passage of the 1902 Act the profession has grown from less than 50 to nearly 48,500 members. Yet, while the sheer growth of the profession has been impressive, numbers alone do not convey how vital the role of CAs has become in every area of Canadian business and commercial activity. The knowledge and

expertise which a chartered accountant brings to a commercial transaction have become indispensable tools in our modern business world.

The CICA has worked since 1946 at codifying best accounting practice. The result of this long and vigorous commitment has been that the CICA handbook is today regarded as the central reference source of accounting and auditing standards for chartered accountants. As well, governments and financial authorities have recognized the handbook as the primary source of generally accepted accounting principles, for example, by referring to the handbook in statutes such as its incorporation by reference in the Canada Business Corporations Act Regulations.

[*Translation*]

Canada, a country whose trade activities are complex and which enjoys the benefits of a market economy, plays a major role in promoting harmonisation and co-ordination, at the international level, of accounting and auditing standards. The international business community appreciates the unique achievements of CICA in developing and improving Canadian accounting standards and the presentation of financial and audit information.

[*English*]

Accounting and auditing standards are not static. In this world of rapid change the CICA must monitor, shape and codify the constantly evolving set of generally accepted accounting principles and generally accepted auditing standards. In order to accomplish that goal the CICA relies on a number of committees composed completely of volunteers. The committee's task is to oversee the rigorous due process and extensive public consultations which are essential to the standard setting process. In fact, when those who act as advisors and sounding boards for these communities are included, there are over 600 volunteers who contribute well over 5,000 person days annually to this process.

The CICA's Accounting Standards Committee develops the accounting standards eventually published in the handbook. While most of the volunteers on the committee are chartered accountants, it also includes representatives of the Financial Executives Institute of Canada, the Society of Management Accountants of Canada and the Canadian Council of Financial Analysts.

The Auditing Standards Committee develops and publishes in the handbook recommended standards and practical guidance on auditing matters in the best interests of the CA profession and the public as a whole.

In 1981, the CICA established the Public Sector Accounting and Auditing Committee to recommend standards to improve and harmonize financial reporting, accounting and auditing in the public sector in the best interest of the public, including users, preparers and auditors of financial information. The committee consists of senior public sector officials from the federal, provincial and municipal levels of government as well as public accountants and academics. The Auditor General, in his last report, praised the committee's work and encouraged the government to act upon its recommendations.

Both the business world and the profession are evolving rapidly and becoming much more sophisticated. The resulting complexities have created a need to examine new and potentially controversial accounting practices to meet the public's expectations of standard practice. The CICA is meeting this challenge. It has established an Emerging Issues Committee to review emerging and potentially controversial accounting issues and to reach a consensus on appropriate accounting treatments. It has also published a major independent review, conducted by the Macdonald commission, of the public's expectations of audits which recommended ways to narrow the gap between current practice and those expectations.

The bill cannot, however, be said to give to the CICA the exclusive right to set accounting and auditing standards in Canada. As all members are aware, a private bill, such as this one, cannot affect the rights of any person other than the members of the organization which is the subject of the bill. The Interpretation Act is quite clear on this point.

In many ways the bill which is being introduced today simply recognizes the scope and importance of current CA activities and explicitly provides the profession with the powers and objects which reflect that reality. It also sets out in broad terms the mandate which the institute enjoys with respect to such matters as member services, strategic planning, the development of post qualification education and the promotion of the international harmo-

nization and co-ordination of accounting and auditing standards.

This bill is the result of lengthy consultation, co-operation and careful review. The bill has been approved by the Canadian Institute's board of governors on which sit representatives of all provincial institutes. It incorporates the CICA's mission statement and its statement of objectives and powers, and reflects fully the agreed division of responsibilities between the provincial institutes of chartered accountants and the CICA. The process of reform which brings this bill before the House was endorsed by the CICA's annual general meeting held in St. John's, Newfoundland, in August 1988.

This bill establishes a clear and modern set of powers and objectives which will help to lead the chartered accountancy profession into the next century. By recognizing the scope and importance of the activities carried on by the institute, and by CA's generally, we believe the proposed amendments are worthy of the support of this House.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alfonso Gagliano (Saint-Léonard): Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to take part in the debate on second reading of Bill S-10, an Act respecting the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants, a bill that is to be referred to a legislative committee.

First of all, I speak also as an accountant by profession, although not a member of CICA but of the Certified General Accountants Association of Canada, one of three professional accountants' organizations incorporated under an Act of Parliament. The hon. member tended to sing the praises of his association. As a CGA, Mr. Speaker, I shall, if I may, without taking to much of your time, say there are three accounting organizations in Canada whose members are either certified general accountants, certified management accountants or chartered accountants. These three groups have the same status with respect to the international standardization process. I may add that there are about 40,000 CGAs, including both members and students, in this country. Mr. Speaker, I must say I agree with the hon. member that we should pass the bill on second reading and then consider the legislation in a legislative committee, to give representatives of the other associations, the CGAs and the CMAs, a chance to make some major submissions.

• (1740)

Mr. Speaker, the CAs are trying to update their statutes and regulations. However, when we read those sections, it becomes clear—this is nothing new, and I am thinking of the situation in the province of Quebec—that the CICA is trying to have a monopoly on the profession in Canada.

This is quite obvious, Mr. Speaker, when we read in section 2.:

> (1) The purpose of the Institute is to promote by all lawful means the practice of accountancy within Canada.
>
> (2) In carrying out its purpose, the Institute has all the powers necessary—

This is followed, Mr. Speaker, by a list of the powers it needs to carry out its purpose. In most cases—I am not going to read the whole thing because it would take too long—the section refers to the membership and how they should conduct themselves. I will give an example:

> (b) to assist and encourage provincial, territorial and affiliated institutes in promoting and developing appropriate and uniform standards of qualification for admission to membership therein

Paragraph (*c*) reads and I quote:

> (c) to create and improve standards of financial accounting, reporting and auditing;

It does not refer to the membership. So when we are talking about the profession, the CICA speaks for the whole country, and when we are talking about internal standards, the CICA refers to its membership. I think it is clear from this bill that the CICA is trying to get a monopoly on the accounting and auditing profession in Canada.

I am sure that the other two organizations, the CGAS and the CMAs, will be anxious to appear before the legislative committee to make their representations. We really must correct those— It seems the president of the CICA said he was not seeking a monopoly position for the Institute. If he is not, this should be made clear in the Act, because the present legislation, Mr. Speaker—

[*English*]

There is a monopoly perception. It is very clear in the legislation where it says:

Section 2 of the said Act is repealed and the following substituted therefor:

2. (1) The purpose of the Institute is to promote by all lawful means the practice of accountancy within Canada.

This is for its members within Canada. What about the CGA? What about the CMA? There are three accounting organizations in Canada recognized by this Parliament. Therefore, with the pretext of improving or updating its constitution, the Canadian Charter Accountants Institute should not acquire a monopoly in the accounting and auditing profession.

With that, I agree that we should pass this bill at second reading and go to the legislative committee so that we can invite the audit organization to present its briefs in order that we can correct this piece of legislation.

Mr. David D. Stupich (Nanaimo—Cowichan): Mr. Speaker, we cannot really invite associations that are controlled by other legislation to make changes to this bill. They might want to bring in changes for their own at some later date, but that is up to them.

I will comment only briefly on the remarks of the member for Edmonton Northwest. Not only am I a CA of some long standing, I am also an FCA. He, at least, will know what that means.

We are pleased to support this bill at second reading and pleased to support it going to committee where any interested party will have an opportunity to make representations.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and referred to a legislative committee.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The time provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired. Pursuant to Standing Order 96(1), the order is dropped from the Order Paper.

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[*English*]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order deemed to have been moved.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Mr. Terry Clifford (London—Middlesex): Mr. Speaker, I rise on this occasion to comment further on my question to the Minister for Science with regard to the scholarship program.

I am quite alarmed, as I am sure are many Canadians, that although they applaud the initiative of the government with its scholarship program which involves 900 scholarships for scientists and engineers badly needed in Canada, the facts are worrisome.

The fact is that the number of engineers and trained scientists in this country does not seem to be going up from the 20 per cent that it has been. Scientific illiteracy is rampant in this country. Two-thirds of our adult population cannot correctly identify the source of acid rain. More than half believe that the earliest humans may have lived side by side with the dinosaurs. At stake is the very future of Canada in the global economy.

A recent University of Calgary study suggests that only 14 per cent of adult Canadians have a clear understanding of DNA, and only 37 per cent understand the nature and cause of acid rain.

Two-thirds of Canadians cannot even name a single Canadian scientist. Clearly we have got a problem. If we are going to take advantage of this scholarship program and produce more trained scientists and engineers, then government action is necessary.

I was pleased with the initiative of the Department of Science and Technology, which two years ago developed a federal program to launch public awareness to nurture what is badly needed in this country—a science culture. Some $10 million was aimed at 14 to 15 year olds in order to do this. We now see signs on buses which urge young Canadians to partake of a science education and to become scientifically literate, looking to these areas for a future job in Canada.

Clearly what some of the experts have been telling us is that teacher education in science and mathematics is lacking. Professor Paul Park, Dean of Education at Queen's University, believes that students would be more science oriented if their elementary teachers were more comfortable themselves with science.

Alberta is already addressing this issue through a teacher's research experience program. Other universities have identified it as one of the main weaknesses.

Dr. William Fyfe, Dean of the Faculty of Science at the University of Western Ontario, says that Canada faces an acute shortage of scientists in the near future. He states further:

> The gap between the informed and those not is increasing. Scientific illiteracy is increasing. The root cause is the training of teachers and I think the universities have failed. We're trying to improve this with a new program for science teachers, and a very practical field program for kids of all ages, using the environment to teach basic science. We've made a start, but it needs lots of work.

Clearly we must work with teachers. We have to put in some energy. We have to call not just on the government and the ministers such as the minister responsible for science and technology, but the private sector to help.

During summer months science teachers of all levels are encouraged to take part in projects at the Alberta Research Council, for example. Those who oversee the programs say there is an amazing level of enthusiasm the teachers take back to the classroom. This is proving to be a very effective way of making science and technology a more attractive career choice for children.

I might add that a former colleague of ours, Mr. Elzinga, who is now the Minister of Trade for the province of Alberta, has joined in this debate fully. He wants his ministry and Alberta to respond to young Albertans and children to say that they have a future.

The University of Calgary has reaffirmed that women tend to score lower in science literacy and interest than men. The result, most agree, has to do with early conditioning.

But what is happening? I am happy to say that the B.C. government had funded a science camp for girls.

Recently, in London, Ontario, I noticed an advertisement stating that some trained female scientists are opening a camp for young Canadians. I think these are good steps.

[*Translation*]

The college dropout level is 30 per cent. This means 100,000 young people who are trying to enter the labour market without a college degree.

Canada ranks tenth among eighteen industrialized countries when we compare levels of college enrolment of seventeen-year-olds.

• (1750)

[*English*]

We have to stop this drop-out rate. We have to increase the opportunities for young people.

The minister has clearly shown some direction and his ministry is on side, but more effort is going to be required from all of us.

Canada needs trained scientists and mathematicians so that we can move ahead in research and development from being one of the worst nations in the world in terms of contributions to R and D in terms of our Gross National Product. I think we are about seventh in terms of our contributions. We should move up the ladder from the 1.3 per cent into the 2 per cent range. To do that we need the government and the private sector to work together so that there is the stimulus for young people to respond and to move into these fields as a career.

We need young people who can see when they are very young that they can work toward it with more enlightened and informed teachers. We can then start to see a Canada that is going to be competitive in the 1990s as we roll toward big competition from Europe, the Pacific Rim and indeed our partner the United States.

We can grow together. Young people will have the opportunity. They will not have to go away to learn science and become scientifically literate. Indeed, they will be able to make it part of their lifestyle in the future.

I urge the minister concerned to work with his colleagues and the Prime Minister to make it a priority with the Canadian government. The private sector will join in, and the young people of Canada will congratulate him.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Suzanne Duplessis (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of State (Science and Technology)): Mr. Speaker, the Canada Scholarships Program was announced by the Prime Minister in 1988 with the aim of recognizing and rewarding the best and brightest students entering undergraduate programs in naturral sciences and engineering across Canada. The focus on excellence in the

program underpins the scholarships award process and the criteria for renewal of the scholarships. The program, through its encouragement to outstanding students to pursue studies in these fields, will contribute in an important way to Canada's future industrial competitiveness. With excellent people, our industry will be able to produce excellent products and foster excellence in processes. Standards of excellence in industry are necessary to ensure that canadians continue to have the standards of living we currently enjoy.

The first class standing renewal requirement for the program is not easy to meet, especially in first year when students are making major life-style adjustments. When it became apparent last year that significant numbers of our 1988-89 Canada scholars were not going to make this requirement, we conducted a thorough review of the renewal criterion and consulted with a number of universities. A decision was made at that time to maintain the standards that has been established for the program in recongnition that, unless excellence was the basis for holding the scholarship throughout a scholar's tenure, the program's focus on excellence would be compromised.

The renewal requirements are stringent. Nonetheless, 55 per cent of the 2,500 1988-89 Canada scholars met the grade and were awarded the scholarship for a second year. Although I would like to see better renewal results, they are gratifying given the general performance of first year undergraduates in natural sciences and engineering. Of the students who enter university with first class standing in these disciplines, only 25 percent on average can be expected to maintain first class standing in their first year.

To counteract the loss of scholars in the 1988-89 program resulting from non-renewal, 900 additional first year scholarships were awarded in 1989-90. We currently have close to 4,800 top science and engineering students in the program, studying at over 80 universities and colleges across Canada. These young people are tremendous role models for their generation. I am pleased that the government of Canada can support them in that role and excited about their prospects to make a difference in the science and technology scene in Canada.

I would like to see higher rates of renewal for Canada scholars in the future.

My officials will be undertaking further analysis when data for 1989-90 scholars become available to attempt to isolate the factors which contribute most to renewal and to come up with measures which will encourage higher retention rates.

It is evident from the 1988-89 data that the most significant factor affecting retention of the scholarship is gender. Whereas 64 percent of males renewed their sholarships last year, only 46 percent of females renewed.

This differential is clearly unacceptable. Studies are being undertaken this year to increase our understanding of these results. In the meantime, a pilot project to establish mentor clubs in an attempt to improve the prospects for renewal has been initiated.

The Science Minister has asked me to give the hon. member who raised the question regarding standards for the Canada Scholarships Program the assurance that he will be on guard to maintain standards of excellence in the program.

[*English*]

CHILD CARE

Ms. Mary Clancy (Halifax): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to raise again a question I asked of the Prime Minister over a year ago. It is a question that I have asked subsequently of various and sundry other ministers, including the Minister of National Health and Welfare, the Minister of Justice, and the Minister of Finance.

The question is this. Given the problems facing Canadian parents and children, given the problems facing Canadian women in the workforce, given the fact that there are one million latch-key children in this country, why has the government cancelled the National Child Care Program?

The answer, not that I ever received one particularly, seems to be—if one can surmise and read between the lines—that in this country money is more important than children and child care, and that reducing the deficit, which is certainly an important thing to do and which has not been done to date by this government but it is an important theory, is more important than the care of children.

We all believe in fiscal responsibility, but we also know that we have to have certain priorities.

What a noble government we have that snatches valuable and needed programs away from Canadian children, all in the name of saving money. The wealthy are the ones who benefit, and the weak and the poor are the ones who are chosen to be targeted.

It is not just children who are targeted. We have seen a clawback of old age pensions. We have seen a clawback of family allowances from parents, from mothers in particular. It makes one wonder as to just where the priorities of the government are when it decides that these are the people who should be made to suffer and bear the burden of the cuts that the government has inflicted over the past five years.

We have seen seniors targeted. We have seen mothers and children targeted. We have seen the sick targeted. Veterans were targeted this year, as well. Going after Canadian veterans was not a popular move. Indeed, it was a move even less popular than going after seniors' pensions some time ago. In the end it appears that the best target in the spectrum is Canadian children.

Right across the country we know the problems facing parents who must work to achieve a decent standard of living. It is extremely rare today that, for the "average" family of four, one income is enough to provide the necessities of life, let alone a few of the comforts that make life more bearable. It is a fact of life today that both parents in a two-parent family will have to work. Consequently, child care is needed for those families.

The other fact of life is the increasing number of single-parent families, the vast majority of whom are headed by women. Again, there is no question that if these women do not have gainful employment their choice is the welfare system. They do not want to make that choice—they want to work.

Over and over again we hear about people who do not really understand the average Canadian out there and who say that there is unemployment in Atlantic Canada, or unemployment among single parents, or unemployment in the north because "those people do not want to work". Those of us who sit in this House know that is not true. We know that Canadians want to work. They want to be productive workers, want to contribute to this society, want to raise their families and want to partake in all of the good things that should be the legacy of all Canadian citizens. If we do not provide an adequate social service system for all Canadians, then we are all the poorer.

• (1800)

I spent five years on the board of the largest child care centre in Atlantic Canada. This centre has more than 12 units, or locations, across the city of Halifax. It deals with pre-school children and with children who need after-school and lunch-time programs. It deals with disabled children in that it has one of the very few units for disabled children, whether physically disabled or otherwise disabled. It has a French immersion program and it has enriched programs with specific dance and music programs, et cetera.

Lucky are the parents who can take advantage of this kind of program. If parents live in rural areas, they will probably not even have the access to the barest minimum standard child care program. It is just not good enough.

My hon. friend across the way from Etobicoke—Lakeshore, who I suspect is going to respond to me, will probably try to blame this matter on the Senate of Canada because it did not pass the bill before the election was called a long time ago. I merely state that it was a long time ago. We are into a new mandate. The children of Canada are waiting. I know that the member for Etobicoke—Lakeshore has a heart. I would like to hear him say that this government has a heart and that this problem is one that is not going to be addressed in some airy-fairy future but now.

Mr. Patrick Boyer (Parliamentary Secretary to Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I rise to accept the invitation and I say without hesitation that the government has a heart and I would like to show how that is in fact the case. As she stated, the hon. member for Halifax has repeatedly raised in the House the question of the federal government's involvement with child care programs, national standards and so on. I think she quite rightly keeps this issue high on the public agenda.

In a preliminary way, I want to say that I think that this is not entirely a matter for the federal government. The closer that one is to the home, the community, I think of provincial governments, I think of unions, I think of companies, families, churches, many other organizations that are much closer to the children and the families as being more appropriately involved in this. Yet, of course, as we seek to have national standards, there is clearly an important role for the federal government.

In December, 1987 the federal government announced a three-part policy to deal with child care, carrying into effect a commitment that had been made by the Prime Minister. Two of the three parts have been carried forward.

Let me point out the first aspect of that. Families have been given an enhanced tax assistance for pre-school aged children as a result of changes to the child care expense deduction and the introduction of a supplement to the child tax credit. This became effective in the tax year 1988 and the expense deduction was doubled from $2,000 to $4,000 per child for children six years of age and under and, also very important, for children with special needs.

As well, again showing that the government has heart, a new $200 supplement was added to the basic child tax credit. This supplement is particularly aimed at younger children, specifically children in lower and middle-income families. Taken together these tax measures, which were key components of the government's 1987 child care policy, have provided additional financial assistance for about 1.4 million families in our country.

Also part of the national strategy was the Child Care Initiatives Fund. This was established in 1988 to support whatever innovative approaches were coming from the community. I hope the member would agree that community involvement is what we need. This fund provides funding to projects that develop or demonstrate quality child care services for Canadian families. So far, more than $33 million in funding has been provided under this fund.

The hon. member said that money seems more important than children to this government. These facts totally contradict her allegations.

In fact, the third part of the strategy had to do with the legislation that was passed in the House of Commons. The hon. member for Halifax is quite right, it was held up in the other place dominated by members of her party. So there is some accounting to be made there.

As a result of having missed that window of opportunity, the Minister of Finance indicated in his 1989 budget that the funds were not there to proceed with that. However, there have been subsequent announcements by the government that this will be done within this mandate. It shows that actions speak louder than words when it comes to proving who has a heart.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m, pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

The House adjourned at 6.06 p.m.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, May 16, 1990

The House met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S. O. 31

[*English*]

HOUSING

Mr. Dennis Mills (Broadview—Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge the government to act on the disastrous housing shortage in the greater Metro Toronto region.

With high interest rates, the GST, increasing job losses, and an inadequate infrastructure, we are condemning our youth to lives of poverty and fear.

Some politicians in the Toronto area recognize this tremendous need and, in fact, are using the Olympic Games as a lever to gain 5,000 badly-needed houses.

There are other prospects such as the Queensville development where almost 50 per cent of the total 10,000 homes are in the $150,000 range. Yet, construction cannot begin because the government is lacking the political will to pressure the province to move forward on shelter that is affordable.

* * *

[*Translation*]

THE GREAT HOSPITAL BED RACE OF THE FONDATION DE L'HÔPITAL CHRIST-ROI

Mr. Marcel R. Tremblay (Québec-Est): Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw the attention of the House to an unusual event organized by members of the Fondation de l'hôpital Christ-Roi, a hospital in my riding.

On May 27, residents will either watch or take part in a big hospital bed race through the streets of Quebec City and Ville Vanier, to raise money to upgrade the hospital's medical equipment.

This is a very important and also very unusual race. The method has been tried before, with great success, in New York, Boston, London and Vancouver.

I would like to emphasize the generosity of our sponsors who have already made a commitment, and the enthusiasm of all racers who are already in training, and finally, on behalf of present and future patients of the Christ-Roi Hospital, I wish to thank the organizers of this "great race".

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

* * *

[*English*]

CABLE TELEVISION

Mr. Ian Waddell (Port Moody—Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, Canadians have been paying a lot of money for cable television. The viewers who watch the House know that.

The cable industry has been making lots and lots of money. The rate of return on fixed assets is between 24 per cent and 30 per cent—twice as much as the phone companies which are regulated. The cable people are not regulated.

The CRTC, the body that makes the decisions on rates and other matters, yesterday, finally had some good news for consumers. Instead of giving the cable companies a Rolls-Royce this time it just gave them a Buick or a Toyota, and it capped the increases for consumers.

We, in the NDP, believe there is an alternative way. The government in the House of Commons should pass legislation so that the rate of return of cable companies is regulated as are the telephone companies. Cable fees would go down, not up.

* * *

NATIONAL TOURISM AWARENESS WEEK

Mr. Ken James (Sarnia—Lambton): Mr. Speaker, this week is National Tourism Awareness Week in Canada. Knowing how important tourism is to every single riding in the country, I am sure all members will want to join

me in congratulating 630,000 Canadians who work in this vital, $24 billion a year industry.

The government recognizes the vital importance of tourism which is why we released, on Monday, an important research study into the travel intentions of our most important tourists, our friends from south of the border. The valuable information gained from this study will enable us to continue to attract increasing numbers of U.S. and foreign visitors.

In addition, the government announced yesterday that foreign tourists will be able to collect cash GST refunds at duty-free shops when leaving the country. This extremely efficient and simple process will encourage more tourists to visit Canada and will also be a major boost to business at Canada's duty-free shops.

Canada grows with tourism, courtesy of your Progressive Conservative government.

* * *

POSTAL SERVICE

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, I rise to confirm what everyone knows already. First-class mail does not mean anything under the Tory government.

Just recently a Canada Post manager confirmed that first-class mail had been held back an extra day in Vancouver so that advertising flyers could be delivered in its place. What was the feeble excuse given for such unmitigated gall? Simply that first-class mail could be delivered the next day and still be within the accepted, so-called, delivery standard.

Canada Post should be renamed "Ad Mail Canada", or better yet "Canada Junk Mail".

* * *

HEALTH SERVICES

Mr. Ross Belsher (Fraser Valley East): Mr. Speaker, this past weekend I had the pleasure of celebrating Canada Health Day with the people of Mountain View Home in Yarrow, B.C.

Mountain View Home is a psychiatric facility that enables people to live in close proximity to their community. Pat and Kathy Newby and their staff at Mountain View are committed professionals who work with residents, enabling them to lead active, dignified and therapeutic lives.

No longer are people shut up in massive impersonal institutions far from their homes. Now people with psychiatric disabilities are living their lives as part of the community.

The theme of Canada Health Day this year was Health Services: Our Community Resources. With facilities like Mountain View Home assisting people and helping them to be all that they can be, there can be no doubt that in the Fraser Valley health services are, indeed, a very valuable community resource.

* * *

• (1410)

[*Translation*]

MINING EXPLORATION

Mr. Guy Saint-Julien (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, a research bulletin from the *Association des prospecteurs du Québec* has again pointed out that mining exploration, financed under the flow-through shares system, is a profitable investment for governments.

Mining exploration financed under this system from 1986 to 1989 will produce tax revenues of over $700 million for both levels of government, Canada and Quebec.

The results of the past ten years of exploration have started to come into focus. The 90s should be a time for developing this potential further, provided the political will and the human and financial resources required to fully develop this potential will be forthcoming.

Furthermore, these new mining entrepreneurs may play a leading role in developing the industry in Quebec.

Mr. Speaker, the present financing mechanism has proved its worth. Maintaining that system would make it possible to reassess this mechanism with a view to making it part of an integrated system, ranging from support for individual prospectors to the ultimate production stage, a system that would be adapted to the new context of the 90s. Today, the federal government supports flow-through shares 100 per cent.

[*English*]

EDUCATION

Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, ACCESS Education is a made-in-Manitoba program for particular groups that are not well represented. It is funded jointly by the federal and provincial governments.

This program has produced doctors, nurses, teachers, and lawyers. It has been a great success, particularly for women's groups and our aboriginal people. Our first aboriginal doctor in Manitoba came from this program.

It has been a model not only for Manitoba, but for other provinces and for the territories. In fact, other countries have also looked at this model because it has been so successful.

It is now being threatened by the federal government because of its refusal to sign the Northern Development Agreement and, therefore, it risks being lost. It is not just another blow to Manitoba, but another blow to education. We all know that there have been many, many such blows.

I urge the minister to make a commitment today and to renew that agreement now.

* * *

CHALLENGE '90

Mr. Stan Wilbee (Delta): Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure today to rise so that I may inform our colleagues in the House about an exciting new partnership venture between the police and youth of our country.

The Minister of State for Multiculturalism and Citizenship and the Minister of State for Youth jointly announced this co-operative community initiative yesterday. During the coming summer, 90 young Canadians from visible minority and aboriginal communities will be offered a unique opportunity to work with 16 police forces across Canada.

Entitled "Challenge '90", this summer employment project will give these young men and women a chance to become more familiar with law enforcement work. They will also have the opportunity to decide if the police force might be their own calling.

This $326,000 initiative is an expansion of a pilot project initiated through the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police with the Vancouver Police, which was sponsored last year by Multiculturalism and Citizenship Canada.

Several students have since expressed a keen interest in law enforcement, and we can again look forward to much success this year with these minority youth/police employment programs.

* * *

NICARAGUA

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona): Mr. Speaker, recent events in Nicaragua are cause for concern that the United States is not satisfied with democracy having been achieved in that country.

Dissatisfaction remains in Washington with the fact that the Sandinistas are still a major political force and that Violeta Chamorro has had the intelligence and judgment to treat them with the respect that they are due.

Elements within the Contras and within UNO, the anti-Sandinista coalition, seem bent on totally destroying the Sandinistas and their achievements in social and agrarian reform. To this end, it seems they may have succeeded in moving President Chamorro from her original wise and conciliatory approach toward a situation in which, by presidential decrees, she is provoking a kind of unrest that can be used by some to justify further anti-Sandinista strategies and perhaps even American intervention.

In the meantime, promised American aid for Nicaragua is still on hold. There is lots of money for the military in El Salvador, but none for democracy in Nicaragua.

Mrs. Chamorro has committed the real sin of Central American politics. She has had the audacity to have a mind of her own and to put Nicaragua first.

* * *

TRADE

Mr. Ken Monteith (Elgin): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring to the attention of the House the fact that the United States has decided to drop duties levied on

Canadian red raspberries. Our raspberry exporters had challenged the imposition of U.S. duties as allowed under Chapter 19 of the Canada–U.S. Free Trade Agreement.

Mr. Speaker, this case demonstrates the value of the dispute settlement mechanism. It provides for fair application of trade laws on either side of the border.

We can be assured that other cases under review will also be given fair and equitable hearings under this binational dispute resolution process.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[*English*]

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Finance.

Small business has rightly complained that the goods and services tax would be an administrative nightmare.

Bruce Flexman, the senior GST expert at the national accounting firm of Peat, Marwick, Thorne, recently told a Senate committee that the government has been looking into allowing small business to pay an annual tax on revenues instead of collecting the 7 per cent GST.

Is the government planning to do this? If so, how will it live up to its commitment to consumers that the tax would be visible and not apply to basic groceries?

Hon. Otto Jelinek (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, the objective of this—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Jelinek: Do you want an answer or not?

The objective of this government is to try to make the system as simple as possible, which of course is something that the Liberals do not understand. That is why we have been working very hard to come up with simplified methods.

Whether it is what was announced yesterday for the tourist rebate centres to be utilized by duty free shops, or the streamlined accounting system that is already in place in the technical papers, we are constantly consulting and communicating with the business community, particularly the small business community, in an effort to work with them to bring in a system that will build on the streamlined accounting procedures already in place. This will make the system even simpler and fairer, not only for small businesses but for all Canadians.

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of National Revenue has not stated categorically that the government is not considering moving from the GST to a revenue-based tax. The move to a revenue-based tax would be a major change from the GST as presented to this House.

Can the minister assure the House that any changes to the GST or the way it is collected will be brought before this House and Canadians for full and open consideration, and not imposed in secret by Order in Council, by regulation?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, from time to time we have brought before this House changes that we have proposed to the GST. Every time we have had discussions on this, the Liberal party is strangely silent, having absolutely no alternatives, no ideas, nothing that it is proposing as to how to deal with the various considerations on the GST.

As my colleague has said, we are continually looking at ways in which we can simplify the system to make it more effective to meet the needs of Canadians, whether they are small business or consumers, and we will continue to do that.

However, I would call on members of the Liberal Party of Canada to get off their fannies for once and take part in this debate because it is good for Canadians if they do take part in that debate.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, Canadians have already said no to the government's GST.

My question to the Minister of Finance is: When will the government really consider the opinion of small businesses and the great majority of Canadians? When will the government give up its proposed GST and proceed with a real tax reform that is fair and comprehensive?

• (1420)

[*English*]

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I do not know what could be more reformist than moving from one system of taxation which simply is not working to a new system of taxation which by all accounts is going to be a far better system than what we have today.

I remind my hon. friend that there have been five—count them—five different Royal commissions or committees that were appointed in 1940, 1956, 1963, 1976 and 1983. These five commissions have all said: "Change from the existing tax. Reform it and bring in a new type of sales tax".

It is not fundamental reform because there are 48 other countries that have this type of tax. Forty-eight other countries have proven that this type of tax works.

It is certainly reform in removing the bad tax that we have had for the last 65 years and moving to a good tax, the goods and services tax.

Mrs. Diane Marleau (Sudbury): Mr. Speaker, this week the government launched a series of radio advertisements on the GST.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Mrs. Marleau: One of the ads which I listened to states that the GST is not an additional tax.

I ask the Minister of Finance this. Will the GST not be an additional tax on all services previously untaxed? Will it not be an additional tax on home heating fuels and hydro? Will it not be an additional tax on clothing, especially children's clothing? Yes or no?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, let me respond to the hon. member's question.

We are eliminating a tax that raises some $18 billion. We are replacing it with a new tax which will also raise about $18 billion. So there will be no additional tax burden to Canadians as a result of the reform from the federal sales tax today to the goods and services tax after January 1, 1991.

Mr. Ron MacDonald (Dartmouth): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is on the same matter and is addressed to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. It concerns the same misleading and untruthful radio ads on the proposed goods and services tax.

If commercial or private businesses were doing the same thing as this government is now doing, they would have their ads yanked off the aid today. Will the minister immediately instruct his officials to investigate this very serious matter? Or has he also chosen to support this deceitful attempt to mislead Canadians and to use taxpayers' money to do so? Which is it?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I am not quite sure to what the hon. member is referring. If he has a specific reason for saying that the advertising is incorrect, then let him say so. I would like him to be more specific.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Revenue. Yesterday, the national director of the accounting firm Peat Marwick Thorne, who was appearing before the Senate committee, informed us that the government was changing the GST by lowering the rate for small business.

If this information is correct, will small businesses pay less tax or is the government just giving them the impression that they will pay less?

[*English*]

Hon. Otto Jelinek (Minister of National Revenue): No, Mr. Speaker.

First, we are not in the process of modifying or changing the GST as proposed.

Second, what is being discussed in the other place and what the leader of the New Democratic Party is talking about is strictly speculation.

The facts are that we are working with the small business community. We are working to try to enhance and improve, wherever possible, the simplified accounting procedures for all Canadians, but particularly for small businesses.

This should not come as news to anyone. We have said that in this House on many occasions. I said in front of the finance committee on a number of occasions that we are working on simplified procedures. Because we have worked with the business community we have been able

to develop a simple, one page registration form and businesses are now registering.

I can let the House know that because of the simplicity factors that this government is committed to that over 200,000 businesses have already registered in the last couple of weeks. The registrations are pouring in with no complaints.

Therefore I can only conclude that since there are no alternatives and no suggestions coming from the other side of the House, at least we can depend on the business community to help us simplify the system the best we can.

Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the Minister of Finance.

Yesterday in the House the Minister of Finance admitted that he is making changes to the GST in private, without consulting either the members of the House or those who will be directly affected.

The Minister of National Revenue has just said that the Minister of Finance and he are consulting. It took an unelected Senate hearing to make public what the government is considering.

The Canadian Federation of Independent Business confirmed this morning that the government refused to show them its proposed changes. What kind of consultation is this? Why does the government not consult with those who will be directly affected? Why will it not listen to the 80 per cent of Canadians who say scrap this tax?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I cannot think of a more open process of tax reform that any government in the history of Canada has ever conducted.

Let me take my hon. friend back. We first started talking about sales tax reform in 1986. I have the document here that refers to it. I have the white paper of June, 1987. I have the technical paper of August, 1989.

Mr. Gauthier: Order.

Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): It is a document of the House of Commons. Surely, I can hold that up, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Gauthier: You are demonstrating.

Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): We had draft legislation in early October of 1989. We had the committee hearings of the House of Commons that went all last fall. We brought in the final legislation in February of this year, after we had made a number of changes that related to the consultation process following the report of the finance committee.

We have had continuing consultations, as my colleague and I have both referred to today, simply to listen to Canadians to get their ideas. Once we have a specific proposal, then we will put that proposal on the table.

As my colleague has said, we are still consulting and we are still listening before we make a final decision.

Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, clearly the Canadian Federation of Independent Business is concerned that the kind of proposals this government is trying to shove down the throats of Canadians on the GST is what it is going to get.

Last year the Minister of Finance said that the GST would improve the over–all fairness of the tax, and that the GST would be visible. Now the Minister of Revenue has floated an idea that in fact basically changes the premise of what was presented in this House, as the Leader of the Opposition has said.

As early as this morning the CFIB said that the changes that it understands might be forthcoming would be: "No panacea. It does not solve the problem".

When will the minister realize that no amount of changes can change this tax?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I guess my hon. friend is saying: "Let's go back to the old tax". The old tax is a hidden tax. It is totally invisible as far as the consumer is concerned.

Is my hon. friend saying that the GST is not visible? It is 7 per cent. People will see it on cash register slips. They will see it on signs in the stores. They will hear it in advertising. How can she possibly say that it is not visible?

She then went on to say that my colleague floated an idea. My colleague did not float the idea. It was discussed in a Senate committee hearing, the Senate committee that my hon. friend is supporting. This is the Senate that members of the NDP have said that they have absolutely no use for. Yet she turns turtle on this and says: "We like the Senate now".

Where is the NDP on this? What sort of policies do the NDP have? Where are the principles of the New Democratic Party?

* * *

• (1430)

TOURISM

Mr. Bob Wood (Nipissing): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of State for Tourism who is just going to hop in his seat.

In the 1989 federal budget the government announced that it would not be renewing the ERDA subagreements for tourism development. Yet, recent newspaper reports out of Newfoundland say the province will be getting a new tourism subagreement with the federal government.

Will the minister finally tell the House what the government's position is with respect to the ERDA subagreements. If one province gets one, will the same courtesy be extended to every province?

Hon. Tom Hockin (Minister of State (Small Businesses and Tourism)): Mr. Speaker, I would ask my hon. friend to follow a little more carefully the developments in Ontario.

We have through the FedNor program in northern Ontario, which is his part of the world, brought forward a very important new program which we hope will be co-ordinated with the provinces to some degree. Also, we have just announced a new tourism component of FedNor of $14 million which is going to help Ontario enormously, so I do not know what the hon. member is complaining about.

Mr. Bob Wood (Nipissing): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary is to the same minister.

The minister this week said and I quote: "We gain much more than just economic activity and monetary benefits from tourism." In light of the fact that Canada's share of the world travel market has been cut in half over the last decade and the Tourism Industry Association of Canada has called for a promotion budget of at least $50 million, why has this government slashed the tourism promotion budget from $35 million to $20 million?

Hon. Tom Hockin (Minister of State (Small Businesses and Tourism)): Mr. Speaker, here are the facts. From the middle 1970s to 1985—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Hockin: The hon. member should hear this. Part of it he will find interesting and some might disappoint him. From 1975 to 1985 Canada's market share of world and American tourism dropped to half. In 1985 we decided to ask the American market first what was wrong? The Americans told us: "You have no image. We know about your moose, we know about your mountains, we know about your Mounties but after that, we don't know enough about you."

For the last four years Tourism Canada has promoted the image of Canada as an interesting and exciting country with good value for the dollar. We revealed a study last week from Longwoods International which indicates that Americans now believe that Canada is a more interesting and exciting country and better value for the dollar.

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FISHERIES

Hon. William Rompkey (Labrador): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Prime Minister, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister.

Yesterday the Prime Minister met with the President of Spain and received vague promises to study fish stocks which have been heavily overstudied and heavily overfished.

I would like to know why the Government of Canada is satisfied with promises of study from Spain and why it is afraid to take tough and effective action against a nation that is overfishing important fish stocks off the Atlantic coast. Why is that?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, if the hon. gentleman could cite any firm decisive and tough action that was taken in the years prior to 1984, we would be delighted to hear it.

All he did was give 9,500 tonnes of good northern cod within the 200-mile limit to the European community. We have stopped that. We did not renew that.

With respect to yesterday's meeting, *The Toronto Star* says: "The PM fails to secure a pledge from Spain to stop overfishing."

The Ottawa Citizen says: "Spanish PM agrees overfishing must end."

The Globe and Mail says: "Fish stocks needs studies, Spain says."

No wonder the hon. gentleman is confused. What in fact happened was that the President of Spain agreed that conservation must be the central principle governing fishing in the northwest Atlantic. They would like to have joint scientific studies and co-operation so that they can have confidence in our figures just as we have confidence in them.

We are making solid progress with the Commissioner of Fisheries of the European Community. We are undertaking some joint studies and, before the year is out, we hope to see substantial progress.

Hon. William Rompkey (Labrador): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Minister of International Trade.

We could make substantial progress if the government would do something about what is in its own hands. Why is it that the Government of Canada refuses to act unilaterally to extend Canadian jurisdiction over the nose and tail of the Grand Banks, as has been recommended in every credible study that has come before it? Why does it refuse to do that?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, previous governments of Canada never acted unilaterally in these matters.

Previous governments never acted unilaterally when the fish stocks of the northwest Atlantic disappeared. They worked in international circles and in the UN for a number of years before finally, after 10 or 12 years, the Law of the Sea Convention was agreed upon.

We cannot breach international law by unilaterally extending the 200-mile limit, which no other country of the world will observe.

The hon. gentleman may not mind making a fool of himself, but we do not want to join him in that position.

* * *

COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Ian Waddell (Port Moody—Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Communications.

UNITEL announced today that it is going to apply to compete with the phone companies in the long distance telephone system. If this bid is successful, it will mean higher phone rates for 90 per cent of Canadians. Traditionally, long distance in this country has subsidized local rates.

Given that government policy has consistently favoured the business agenda in this area as in other areas, will the minister give a commitment to ordinary Canadians that for once he will stick up for the average consumer and ordinary Canadian against these big interests?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Marcel Masse (Minister of Communications): Mr. Speaker, I am surprised at the hon. member's question because he himself said in the preamble that a telecommunications company has applied to the CRTC for a hearing. He would have me intervene instead of the CRTC. I think that would be breaking the laws passed by this House.

An application was made to the CRTC; the CRTC will hear proposals and counter-proposals and render a decision in due course, without any partisan demagogy such as we just heard. Canadians will then know the position of the CRTC, which is the official agency that is independent of the government in these matters, Mr. Speaker.

[*English*]

Mr. Ian Waddell (Port Moody—Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, pardon me if I am a little suspicious of the government.

Ted Rogers, one of the principals behind UNITEL, gave more money to Conservative cabinet ministers in the last election than I could possibly count.

The country is moving toward one unitary fibre optic network which will be to the 21st century what railways were to the 19th century. I want a commitment from this government that it will not only make telephones but fibre optics and communications in this country available and affordable to average Canadians, not just to its friends in big business.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Marcel Masse (Minister of Communications): Mr. Speaker, with all his eloquence, the hon. member could go to the CRTC and express his point of view.

EMPLOYMENT

Mrs. Shirley Maheu (Saint-Laurent—Cartierville): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the minister responsible for job losses in Montreal, the Minister of Labour.

There have been more job losses in Montreal! The closing of the Gattuso plant in Saint-Laurent will have a disastrous effect on the employees. Why does the government continue with its policy that results in the total or partial shutdown of factories, like Gattuso, VIA Rail, Domtar, Gillette, Vickers and Kraft, to name only these?

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Industry, Science and Technology): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member should know that the government does not make this kind of decision in the place of private enterprise.

However, Catelli has acquired the Campbell Company in the area mentioned by my colleague and as part of the streamlining process—and the pasta market in particular is undergoing a streamlining right now—the company, like other companies, decided to streamline and to make itself competitive in the market, nationally and internationally.

I understand that this concept was not so popular when the hon. member's party was in power, but we are in the situation we find ourselves today because of that, Mr. Speaker.

• (1440)

Mrs. Shirley Maheu (Saint-Laurent—Cartierville): Mr. Speaker, that answer is not going to help 9,000 employees—or their families for that matter—at more than 80 plants in Montreal, who lost their jobs during the past year. When will the government finally act to help thousands of Quebecers who have lost their jobs as a result of this government's disastrous policies?

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Industry, Science and Technology): Mr. Speaker, I must say I am surprised. Although I trust the hon. member, I certainly do not trust the figures she is providing. She should also mention the $250 million contract Canadair obtained today.

An hon. member: In her own riding!

Mr. Bouchard (Roberval): Mr. Speaker, she should mention the amounts we invested in Southwest and East Montreal. Mr. Speaker, I told the hon. member's colleague from Notre-Dame-de-Grâce last week that thanks to the Conservative government's policies, the Montreal region is now recovering from a situation created by the gang of Liberal ministers from Montreal, when they were in power.

An hon. member: The Liberals wanted to close Canadair!

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[*English*]

SCOTIA SYNFUELS PROJECT

Mr. Francis G. LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the minister responsible for ACOA. It concerns the Scotia Synfuels coal liquefaction project in Cape Breton. The project, as the minister knows, will generate up to 2,000 permanent jobs and ensure an environmentally sound future for Cape Breton coal. It has the strong support of the Premier of Nova Scotia and the mayors and wardens in the area. The only delay in proceeding with this vital project is approval by the federal government of a Cape Breton tax credit application and the incentives provided in the Atlantic Enterprise Program.

My question to the minister is this. When will his government give its long awaited approval to this application?

Hon. Elmer M. MacKay (Minister of Public Works): Mr. Speaker, I recently attended a meeting of some wardens and municipal leaders in Cape Breton, as the hon. member knows. He is correct. There is a very strong unanimous feeling that this project should be studied closely. I am not in a position to give him a commitment today, but the matter is under consideration. When I or my colleagues have something to announce, we will make that announcement in due course.

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the same minister.

The minister will know that the downsizing of the coal and steel industries, coupled with the fact that our fisheries in Atlantic Canada are in terrible shape, leaves the Cape Breton economy in a very serious and somewhat precarious situation. The minister also knows that

on April 18, 1990, a unanimous resolution was passed by the Nova Scotia House of Assembly approving of this particular project.

Can the minister explain to members of this House, and in particular to the people of Cape Breton, the delay in approving the investment tax credit which has been on the minister's books and those of his government colleagues for quite some time? Would he explain to the people of Cape Breton the delay in approving this investment tax credit, thereby denying Canadians in that region of the country meaningful employment?

Hon. Elmer M. MacKay (Minister of Public Works): Mr. Speaker, if delay is indeed the deadliest form of denial, no one practised that more effectively than the gentleman opposite when the Liberals were in power.

As the hon. member knows, our government has provided extraordinary means of assistance to Atlantic Canada, and to Cape Breton in particular, with the Cape Breton investment tax credit, topping up and other arrangements. It is nothing to be complacent about, but it is something we have done with a great deal of deliberation. This particular project is one which is under study. It is a good project. If there is an announcement to be made, we will make it in due course.

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INTEREST RATES

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Finance, if I can attract him back to his seat. He seems to be a travelling salesman today.

An hon. member: Every day.

Mr. Langdon: Every day, perhaps.

An hon. member: And a damn good one!

Mr. Langdon: I am not quite so sure I would agree with that.

An hon. member: Is that a traveller or a salesman?

Mr. Langdon: Mr. Speaker, high interest rates have forced the government to finally raise the rate of return for Canada Savings Bonds to 11.5 per cent. This, once and for all, shoots down the credibility of the government's own budget, because it was based on interest rates of 11.1 per cent.

I want to ask the minister if he will admit his high interest rate policy has torpedoed his own budget? I want to ask him, too, if he will agree that as economic managers his government now looks like the Three Stooges?

An hon. member: Whatever you say, Moe.

Mr. Fontana: Which one are you, Mike?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, that uncharacteristically colourful language of the hon. member does not take away from the fact that the record this government has demonstrated over the five and a half years we have been in office that we worked very hard and hold very close to the projections we have set out.

The hon. member has referred to one element of a broad budget projection. I should say to the hon. member that with the higher levels of inflation we are experiencing now, personal income taxes are higher. While interest rates are putting some upward pressure on the deficit, higher personal income taxes have resulted in lower pressures on the deficit.

We are only one and a half months into the fiscal year, so let's not jump to conclusions too quickly.

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the minister. In fact, this decision which affects Canada Savings Bonds goes right to November. So, we are not talking about just the start of the fiscal year.

I ask the minister—

[*Translation*]

My question for the minister is as follows. The government's Budget is a dead duck as a result of rising interest rates. Will the minister change his economic policy and reduce interest rates, not just for the sake of his own Budget but for the sake of thousands of small businesses across Canada that are feeling the impact of this Budget and high interest rates?

[*English*]

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, let me set the hon. member's mind at ease. The change in the CSB rate of one percentage point has the effect of increasing our interest costs by about $120 million. There are offsets, as I have indicated, in higher

personal income tax revenues which fully offset that amount of money as it relates to Canada Savings Bonds.

The hon. member is asking if we are going to change our economic policy. No, Mr. Speaker, our economic policy has served us very well since September 4, 1984, and we will continue to follow that policy because it has produced a healthy economic environment in this country.

The hon. member wants us to snap our fingers and drop interest rates. I, too, would like to see interest rates down. But I know there are underlying pressures in the economy. I will give the hon. member one example. Unit labour costs at the end of last year were rising at the rate of 7 per cent. That increase in unit labour costs is the best example I can give the hon. member of a loss of competitive position. As we lose competitive position, we lose business; as we lose business, we lose jobs. Surely, the hon. member can understand the importance—

Mr. Crawford: Whoa, Mike!

* * *

TOURISM

Mr. Peter L. McCreath (South Shore): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of State for Small Businesses and Tourism. The tourist industry has been telling me that they see themselves as a potential loser under free trade. A report that just came from the Conference Board of Canada states, in fact, that the GST will lead to growth in the tourist industry. I suspect the minister agrees with the latter rather than the former. I would ask him if he would explain how the GST will lead to growth in the tourist industry in Canada.

• (1450)

Hon. Tom Hockin (Minister of State (Small Businesses and Tourism)): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague for not asking an unfriendly question about the GST.

The reason why the Conference Board, not the government, says that tourism is going to be helped by the GST is, as I think my hon. friend understands, that the economy of Canada will be greatly increased during the first year at $9 billion extra productivity, which leads to more tourists.

Second, we have input tax credits. We give back the GST to business travellers, which is great news for the tourist industry. Third, the low income credits will help low income Canadians travel as well.

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ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Ms. Catherine Callbeck (Malpeque): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources.

Last August, the minister said that Canada should lead by example in an international effort to cut carbon dioxide emissions. In March, the minister shifted gears and said we should go slowly. Now the environment minister has also changed his tune and is saying: "Go slow," to the European countries that want to set CO2 limits.

Why are the minister and his colleague changing their minds, and why is this government not leading world opinion on energy and the environment?

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, I find the hon. member's comments interesting.

I can refer to comments similar to what my colleague, the Minister for International Trade said today. Here is one headline from the Toronto *Star* that says: "Canada Attacked for Blocking Gas Limits". If you look at the Ottawa *Citizen*, a paper very loyal to this government, it says: "Canada–U.S. Split on Warming".

Mr. Speaker, you will find that it was exactly that split on which Canada was taking the very lead that the Minister of the Environment said Canada would take. There has not been a shift at all. In fact, there has been reaffirmation of leadership.

Ms. Catherine Callbeck (Malpeque): Mr. Speaker, this is a government that has cut the budget on energy efficiency and diversity by 90 per cent.

It will take a major announcement before Canadians believe that the government is sincere about cutting energy waste in CO2 emissions. I want to ask the minister to make a commitment today that the new spending that he promised for this fall will restore the 90 per cent of energy efficiency and diversity spending the government cut since 1984.

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member will know from the debate we had in committee that I said part of the package, as we look to The Green Plan which the Minister of the Environment will be unveiling later this year, will be energy efficiency. In terms of that package, the hon. member will have to wait.

I say also to the hon. member I will not restore the type of programs the former government had which were funded out of the National Energy Program, over $50 billion which it took out of Alberta and Saskatchewan, and redistributed it through the the CHIP program, for example. It was money that was lost.

Mr. Rompkey: Hibernia.

Mr. Epp: It was not Hibernia, my friend. We'll help you with Newfoundland another way.

Another example is having civil servants in different provinces in CREO offices telling people in the public what the industry already had in place.

What we will do instead is R and D. We will do replacement of energy, for instance alternative energies. Those are the kinds of things we will do. We will not replicate. We will not duplicate.

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TRADE

Mr. Bob Speller (Haldimand—Norfolk): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister for International Trade.

Since this government came to power, U.S. Steel has doubled its share of the Canadian market. We learned today that the same U.S. steel has been subsidized by some $35 billion over the last 10 years. So I ask the minister how his government could stand idly by while the Americans were forcing Canadian producers to restrain their exports into the American market, while at the same time they were flooding the Canadian market with subsidized steel.

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, I assume that the hon. member is referring to a study just released by the Canadian Steel Producers Association which outlines all types of U.S. government assistance, federal, state and local, addressed to the steel sector during the 1980s.

Now I do not need to remind the hon. gentleman that in the early part of the 1980s we had the dubious misfortune of having the hon. gentleman's party in power. In any event, this is a study of the assistance that was given to the steel sector during the 1980s. To be fair, I want to point out to him that it outlines programs that may be deemed to be subsidies within the meaning of U.S. and Canadian legislation. But it also examined a whole broad list of generally available programs which under trade law would not be considered to be subsidies but general assistance to an industry.

Certainly, Mr. Speaker, this is a most valuable study and we will be using it when we start to negotiate with the United States on the question of subsidies and countervail, which we intend to do under the FTA at the end of the year. This is a valuable and informative survey and we will certainly be using it in our negotiations with the United States.

Mrs. Campbell (South West Nova): Be nice to the United States.

Mr. Bob Speller (Haldimand—Norfolk): Mr. Speaker, the minister sold out the steel industry when he signed the free trade agreement.

My supplementary is for the same minister. This government has spent the last year unilaterally disarming itself of subsidies and putting Canadian workers and farmers in unemployment lines and bankruptcy proceedings.

Will the minister tell his U.S. counterpart when they meet this week that Canada considers the U.S. subsidies an unfair trading practice and will he make a commitment to this House today to stop unilaterally disarming Canada of these subsidies?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, I will be meeting with Mrs. Hills on Friday at a meeting of the Canada–U.S. Trade Commission. As a matter of fact I am going to present her with a copy of this study that has been done by our steel producers. I am glad to see them take the initiative and I hope that other Canadian groups will do the same. We have our own research under way as well.

With respect to the free trade agreement, everywhere I look I see evidence of progress under the agreement. "Dupont unit sees rise in exports". "Canadian firms see

global opportunities", executive survey says. I listen today and Ford is going to invest a billion dollars—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

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THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Ross Harvey (Edmonton East): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of the Environment or the Minister of Forestry, I have today a question, I suppose for the Minister of National Health and Welfare.

An hon. member: He comes prepared!

Mr. Harvey (Edmonton East): Why, Mr. Speaker, the pipes, the pipes are blowing!

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Harvey (Edmonton East): Mr. Speaker, yesterday in the House of Commons the Minister of Forestry said and I quote: "Under the new regulations the industry will be required over the next three years to invest another $5 billion to $7 billion, the result of which will be a complete elimination of the emission of dioxins into the river systems". A complete elimination, Mr. Speaker.

Can the Minister of National Health and Welfare confirm that it is the government's intention and belief that at the end of the next three years a situation will exist whereby there has been complete elimination of the emission of dioxins into Canada's river systems.

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I would say to the hon. member I get the sense he is blowing more than his pipes.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: I did not know what I had started yesterday. Perhaps the minister could answer the question.

• (1500)

Mr. Beatty: Mr. Speaker, it is our intention to do everything we can to reduce the levels of these chemicals. Our goal is obviously to have zero amounts of these chemicals in waters.

I will take the question as notice for my colleague, the Minister of the Environment, however, and he will be able to respond more fully.

Mr. Ross Harvey (Edmonton East): Mr. Speaker, if the minister cannot confirm—as obviously he cannot—that the goal and the anticipation is a complete elimination, and if he is thus refuting the words of his colleague, the Minister of Forestry, uttered in the House yesterday, how can any Canadian have any faith in anything any of those ministers say about the environment?

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member continues. I have already indicated that I would take the question as notice for my colleague, the Minister of the Environment. He will be pleased to give a full explanation to the hon. gentleman.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*English*]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

LABOUR, EMPLOYMENT AND IMMIGRATION—GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO SECOND REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 109, I am pleased to table, in both official languages, the government's response to the second report of the Standing Committee on Labour, Employment and Immigration, the refugee claimant backlog clearance.

[*Translation*]

COMMUNICATIONS AND CULTURE—GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO SECOND REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

Hon. Marcel Masse (Minister of Communications): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to the second report of the Standing Committee on Communications and Culture on the Status of the Artist.

[*English*]

PETITIONS

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to several petitions.

[*Editor's note: See today's Votes and Proceedings.*]

* * *

[*Translation*]

ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES READJUSTMENT ACT

MEASURE TO CHANGE THE NAME OF AN ELECTORAL DISTRICT

Mr. Douglas Young (Gloucester) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-305, an Act to change the name of the electoral district of Gloucester.

Mr. Speaker: Shall the hon. member have leave to introduce the bill?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Young (Gloucester): Mr. Speaker, I will be brief. I think it is clear that the name of an electoral district should reflect the people, communities and geography of that district.

[*English*]

The county of Gloucester has had a very long and colourful history as a federal riding. It has been known as a municipality, but much has changed since it was originally named. I propose in this bill, and I hope that it will have the support of the House, that we change the name of the electoral district of Gloucester to the name—

[*Translation*]

—Acadie—Bathurst, because Acadie—Bathurst represents the communities, linguistic groups and geography of this part of New Brunswick.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to, bill read the first time and ordered to be printed.

Mr. Speaker: When shall the bill be read the second time? At the next sitting of the House?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

(Questions answered orally are indicated by an asterisk.)

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, questions 231 and 270 will be answered today. I ask that the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

[*Text*]

MARKETING OF CANOLA UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF THE CANADIAN WHEAT BOARD

Question No. 231—**Mr. Hovdebo:**

1. In the period January 1, 1989 to February 8, 1990, has any department or agency of the government received requests for a plebiscite to be held among canola producers in western Canada to determine if they want canola marketing placed under the jurisdiction of the Canadian Wheat Board?

2. Has the government or the Canadian Wheat Board undertaken any study or review of (a) the impact on canola prices to farmers which would result if canola marketing were under the jurisdiction of the Canadian Wheat Board (b) the possible outcome of any plebiscite to determine if producers want canola marketing placed under the jurisdiction of the Canadian Wheat Board?

Hon. Charles James Mayer (Minister of Western Economic Diversification and Minister of State (Grains and Oilseeds)): 1. Agriculture Canada has noted infrequent requests mainly from individual producers, to hold a plebiscite among producers to determine their position on the inclusion of canola under the jurisdiction of the Canadian Wheat Board. Simultaneously, requests have been received from producers and farm or commodity organizations which call for a continuation of the open marketing system.

2. (a) and (b) No.

A Task Force has been created to examine a range of factors affecting the canadian canola industry, including canola marketing. This group, which is small but representative of the industry has been mandated to make

recommendations to the Minister of Grains and Oilseeds by November 1990.

CFAO 19/20

Question No. 270—**Mr. Robinson:**

1. In each year from 1984 to 1989 and 1990 to date, have many members of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) been released under Canadian Forces Administrative Order (CFAO) 19/20 and, if so (a) what number (b) at the time of their release (i) where were they serving in the CAF (ii) what base were they on (c) what was the gender of each?

2. Are any such cases pending currently and, if so (a) what total number (b) what number have been offered release under CFAO 19/20 (c) what number have refused and are being retained in the CAF pending final review of the policy (d) what is the (i) rank (ii) gender (iii) present location of each such individual?

3. Are any questions asked of potential recruits which deal with sexual orientation and, if so, which ones?

Hon. William Hunter McKnight (Minister of National Defence): 1. From 1984 to 1989 and 1990 to date, members of the Canadian Forces have been released under Canadian Forces Administrative Order (CFAO) 19/20:

(a) 1984—0 released; 1985—18 released; 1986—13 released; 1987—6 released; 1988—8 released; 1989—12 released; and 1990—1 released.

(b) (i) This information cannot be released in order to protect the identity of the individuals.

(ii) This information cannot be released in order to protect the identity of the individuals.

(c) 1985—13 males and 5 females; 1986—11 males and 2 females; 1987—4 males and 2 females; 1988—7 males and 1 females; 1989—6 males and 6 females; and 1990—1 male.

2. Yes.

(a) 19.

(b) 12.

(c) 12.

(d) (i) This information cannot be released in order to protect the identity of the individuals.

(ii) 6 females and 6 males.

(iii) This information cannot be released in order to protect the identity of the individuals.

3. No.

[*English*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The questions as enumerated by the parliamentary secretary have been answered. Shall the remaining questions be allowed to stand?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

POINT OF ORDER

TABLING OF PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, I would like to make an inquiry on a point of order.

The Public Service Commission's annual report was to be tabled today in the House. Sometimes, it is the habit to have what is called back-door tabling. I wonder if the Clerk could tell you, Mr. Speaker, if the report has been tabled. The member for Ottawa West would like to pose a question to the government.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Yes, the report has been tabled at the back door.

Mrs. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West): Mr. Speaker, could I inquire if this report is automatically referred to a standing committee of the House, or if there is some process by which I can ensure that it is so referred?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): It is referred to the standing committee.

Mrs. Catterall: Which one?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): It goes to Government Operations.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY, S. O. 81—AGRICULTURAL ECONOMY

Mr. Rod Laporte (Moose Jaw—Lake Centre) moved:

That this House recognize that Canadian farmers face dire financial circumstances from successive years of drought, low 1990-91 initial prices, escalating interest rates and the international grain trade war's price depressing effects, and call on the government to endeavour to

strengthen the economic position of Canadian producers with a cash injection, with or without provincial participation.

He said: Mr. Speaker, rural Canada today is in a severe state of crisis, a crisis that has been developing for some time now. It is something that we in western Canada are extremely concerned about.

In western Canada, family farms are disappearing. Small businesses in rural communities are closing up. In fact, whole communities are disappearing.

To outline its seriousness, I would like to highlight Saskatchewan as an example and put forth a few facts. Every year approximately 1,000 farm families leave the land in Saskatchewan alone. There are approximately 60,000 farms, so every year we are losing 1,000 out of the 60,000 that presently exist.

Over the last three years, the annual number of business bankruptcies has increased more rapidly in Saskatchewan than in any other Canadian province, and other western provinces are not far behind. Today, over 16 per cent of Saskatchewan families live below the poverty-line and over 64,000 Saskatchewan children are growing up in poverty. That is the reality. That is what is happening.

Since 1985, more than 60,000 people have left Saskatchewan. That is a net loss in a province that now has a population of less than one million. Of the communities, 70 per cent have had a population decline since 1986. These are staggering figures. These are shocking figures. These are represented throughout the prairies in western Canada.

As the fishery is to the Maritimes, agriculture is the economic base for the prairie provinces. Commodity prices are down. In fact, they are at 80 per cent of what farmers were receiving back in 1981. One of the main reasons for this is the trade war that is going on between the Americans and the Europeans which is having a devastating effect on Canadians. At least the Europeans have a goal of maintaining their family farms. In fact, that is their underlying objective. Unlike the Americans, they have said that their underlying goal is to maintain family farms in Europe.

There was a recent announcement by the president that the Export Enhancement Program was going to be increased by several hundred million dollars. What has been the government's response to all this? It has been very disappointing. In fact, it has been embarrassingly disappointing.

• (1510)

Under the Export Enhancement Program, Section 701.4 of the free trade agreement allows the government to file a complaint pursuant to that act when the United States is dealing with a third party that affects our traditional trading districts. Certainly, the have with respect to grain and the Export Enhancement Program. Russia is one of the key examples. The government is subsidizing grain sales to it and that has affected our sales to that nation.

The removal of oats from the Canadian Wheat Board has simply removed one more tool and one more marketing ability for that institution that is in place for farmers.

Producers have suffered high input costs. Statistics Canada has stated that costs for fertilizer, chemicals, and fuel are up approximately one-and-a-half times since 1980. That is why farm income has dropped by some 20 per cent.

Interest rates are volatile. What has been the government's response to interest rates? The Farm Credit Corporation, the farmer's bank, in 1990 alone has increased its rates four times. In fact, to get a shared-risk mortgage, a farmer has to pay 14.78 per cent interest. That is some sharing of the risk. It is a risk that is shared almost entirely by the producer.

As farmers suffer and as farms disappear, rural communities suffer. Businesses in rural communities have no money. They are suffering through high interest rates. In fact, there is a loss of businesses through low inventory and businesses unable to maintain their level of inventory. It is a problem that perpetuates itself. When a farmer goes into a business to buy some goods, if those goods are not available, he will go to a larger centre. When he is in that larger centre, he, she, or the family often buy other goods they require. Therefore, when one business suffers, the whole community suffers. It is an ongoing effect that is multiplying and eating away at the whole heart of rural Canada.

As far as small business in rural communities is concerned, the government's response has been very disappointing as well. Last year, the New Democratic Party introduced a motion for the Federal Business Development Bank to aid small business. It was passed through the House, one of the few opposition motions

that actually went through. However, the government has done nothing with respect to small business.

I was in my own riding yesterday talking with businessmen. Business people are concerned. They say they would like to have lower interest rates.

Mr. Bjornson: And higher inflation!

Mr. Laporte: They would like to have lower interest rates for inventory, for example, or for capital expansion. If they could increase their inventory, then people would stay in those communities instead of driving to a bigger centre.

Mr. Bjornson: Ask the businessman who paid 20 per cent back in 1982 what he thinks of this.

Mr. Laporte: These interest rates are killing small business and the government has done nothing, despite a motion passed by this very House. That was a direction from Parliament for government to act. It has done nothing.

The other item they have been blessed with by this government is the goods and services tax. I wish to quote the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, a quote which I think is very appropriate. It talks about the GST and its effects. As reported in *The Financial Post* of May 14, 1990, it states:

> Our view is that the timing of the GST could not be worse. A lot of analysts tend to treat the GST as if it fulfills the criteria of a theoretically well-constructed, broad-based visible and equitable consumption tax. The truth is, that the GST fulfills none of the above.
>
> Clearly, the implementation of this tax will be horrific, and the bulk of the responsibility falls on us. And if you look at nuts and bolts of the GST, it is too complex from a small business point of view. The government has said it will streamline the accounting process, but if they had a simple tax, we wouldn't need streamlined accounting.

If they did not have the GST, they would not need the streamlined accounting.

Mr. Bjornson: All businesses need accounting.

Mr. Laporte: Business is concerned about implementing the GST. It is one more load that they have to bear, one more expense that small business has to carry and which the government has blessed small business in the country with. Small business in rural Canada simply cannot afford it.

Of course, the other option is to leave the land. Producers cannot even leave the land. They are tied to it because of the policies of this government. According to the Farm Credit Corporation, the prices of farm land between 1984 and 1988 dropped almost 40 per cent in Saskatchewan, 29 per cent in Alberta, some 25 per cent in Manitoba, and 30 per cent in all of Canada. Therefore, farmers have a huge debt load, their equity does not meet their debt, and they are stuck in this position, not knowing where to turn.

This spring has really topped things off. There have been three or four years of bad weather and drought in western Canada. This year looks like there may be some good moisture for a change. If things stay as they are, this year we are going to have a decent crop. Yet we have producers unable to put seed in the ground because they cannot get a loan.

This government recognized that by making an announcement that it was putting up $500 million. It said that it knew farmers needed this money, but it was not going to give it to them. The government is holding out a carrot and saying: "We know you need this, but you try and grab it". The government has recognized that, at the very least, it is only half of what the producers need this year. But instead it is playing political games with the provinces and other Tory governments in the west. The loser is the producer. The producer is the one who suffers the loss in this whole thing. It is a sad commentary on this government's lack of compassion. It does not have a caring attitude toward's rural Canada.

The money is needed now. In fact, it was needed last week. There is a desperate need for those funds, but they will only help in the short term. The money that was needed last week is simply the beginning. It is a short-term measure that the government has proposed for only this spring. It has to bring forward a long-range program. Since 1985, it has been saying that it is going to be putting in a federal agricultural policy. It still has not done it yet. It has all kinds of studies, reports and green papers, but there is still nothing for producers.

We in the federal New Democratic Party have an alternative. We have had it for some time now. We have suggested to the government, and do so again right now, that the government should make an honest commitment to save farming families and rural Canada. That is what the commitment should be. It should not be to agri-business, but to the farming family, to the small community, to the small business people in those com-

munities and to the people who want to live and retire in those communities.

The government should follow that commitment with some policies that have some teeth in them. First of all, through the Farm Credit Corporation, they should be providing loans at lower interest rates.

We are not asking for this commitment for all farms. As I and other members of the party have said, taking western Canada as an example, if you want to farm 10 sections, 15 sections or 50 sections of land, go ahead and farm it, but do not expect the government to assist you. However, we would like to see some assistance provided up to the level of a viable family farm. There should be lower interest rates for that. It should be universal up to a maximum amount.

Taking into account the high input costs that farmers suffer, there should be a commitment to lower costs. There has to be alternatives to chemicals. Biotechnology is very important and there should be money for research and development, which is a whole other speech on what this government has and has not committed to.

While the government is putting money into research and development for biotechnology, there should be a lower price for chemicals. The patent that these chemical companies have on chemicals is really outrageous. It is a licence to print money. There is no need for that type of legislation. It certainly hurts the farmer when he or she is putting in the crops.

• (1520)

We have also said that there should be a minimum price on grain. Not open-ended, but to a maximum. We said in 1988, 8,000 bushels. That would be approximately what it should be, 8,000 to 10,000 bushels, a maximum perhaps geared on the U.S. target price. For spring wheat, I believe that would be something in the area of $5 a bushel. There should also be an option for the producer to buy an insurance policy to ensure a further 8,000 or 10,000 bushels.

Then the producer could sit down in the spring, make a budget and know what he or she is going to grow and what he or she is going to receive for that crop. If they grow that number of bushels, they are going to receive the price for that grain.

I have talked to farmers in the area who have said: "I know I need another granary. I need another facility here. But I do not dare buy it because I do not know what is going to happen with any of the support programs. Those things come out helter-skelter at odd times so I have no way of planning". I have been told that by a number of farmers.

This is a logical approach which would help the family farm maintain itself.

There should also be a commitment to the Canadian Wheat Board. This government is slowly chipping away its mandate. Oats were removed, despite what the government said. There was no consultation with those producers who really counted. A poll came out and while I forget the exact figures, close to 70 or 80 per cent of the producers in western Canada said they would like to see oats remain under the Wheat Board. All the producers were asking to have a vote on the matter. The Canadian Wheat Board is a body that functions on behalf of the producers, by the producers for the producers. The least this government could have done was give the producers that option. The government talks about consultation. Well, it should have consulted with the very people who use the Canadian Wheat Board. There have been those kinds of votes in the past.

It is the same thing with canola. Canola is now a rising product. I know the Minister of Grains and Oilseeds has appointed a committee to look into that area and will be reporting back. But one of the things that should be suggested is the possibility of putting canola under the Wheat Board. If the Wheat Board had control of the sale of canola, it would open up markets, because it can garner large amounts of canola, if it is under the board's jurisdiction, to sell to corporations in the States that are looking for a guaranteed supply and right now they cannot find it. In fact, it is a very good opportunity for the Canadian Wheat Board. It is a very good opportunity for the western producer.

These are some of the things that this government can do. What we need is a short-term solution and a long-term commitment. The short-term solution is to provide the $500 million, and put it out where it can do some good. Instead of sitting on it, the government should be utilizing it.

The argument that the Minister of Agriculture has made many times is that he cannot give the money out

because he has to negotiate with the provinces and they are not going to come across. Well, the time for negotiation is over. He can simply put the money out and say: "We have done our part. Here it is. This is not enough, but it is something". To hang on to that money is showing a callous disregard for the lives and the welfare of families living in rural Canada. That is simply what it is doing. There are families who are suffering in western Canada. They are suffering economically and this government is sitting on $500 million while that is happening.

In Saskatchewan, 16 per cent of the people are living below the poverty line and the government is sitting on $500 million. There are 60,000 people who are leaving the province because they cannot find work and the government sitting on $500 million. People do not understand that because it does not make any sense.

The motion is very simple and straightforward. Let us put the money out where it will do some good, and at the same time let the government make a commitment. We do not need rhetoric. We know that it has put billions of dollars out into the agriculture economy. That is not denied, but it has been misappropriated. It has not done the good that it could have done. It has been basically thrown around during election times to get votes and it had some effect there.

Make that commitment to the people. Make that commitment to rural Canada. Make that commitment to the people in Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Alberta, British Columbia and right across the country, as far as that goes. It is needed and it is needed now because we have a rural Canada whose infrastructure is disappearing, it is collapsing, and it is going to be gone. If we do not do something and do it very quickly a whole way of life is going to disappear. The government can say that the bottom line is important. In fact, that is what this government does say: "We have to look at the bottom line on this issue".

Mr. Speaker, we are talking about people's lives. There is more to life than simply the bottom line. That may be the Conservative attitude, but this is a different Tory government sitting here than the Tory government of John Diefenbaker. It is a new type of Tory. This is a neo-conservative government, that is what that is. It is a bottom line government that is paying no attention to the lives of Canadians.

The Minister of Finance can stand in the House, or in other forums and state: "We have come through economic times and now is time to tighten your belt". I would like him to go out to Saskatchewan or to rural Manitoba and tell some of those people that it is time for them to tighten their belts. They have tightened their belts and there are no notches left. In fact, it is so tight they are leaving for other areas.

I would suggest to the minister that when they talk about the bottom line there is another line there too. As the rural infrastructure collapses, instead of having a viable economy where there are many people working and many people living, we are going to have a barren rural area, with people crowding into urban centres competing with other people who do not have jobs themselves.

There is a fundamental problem with the policy that this government is following. The problem is that the government is not committing itself to the future of a way of life that is important to us all.

I would simply like to close by calling upon this government to make an announcement today concerning its $500 million. The money is needed right now. The government must make the commitment that not only will it spend the $500 million, but that it will make a long-term commitment to rural Canada.

Mr. Dennis Mills (Broadview—Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, I would like to compliment the member on a fabulous speech and a great motion. When I heard the cynicism from the government side when they were heckling during his speech I re-read his motion and I could not understand why he was—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): On a point of order, the Minister of Grains and Oilseeds.

Mr. Mayer: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is accusing the government of heckling. I want the record to show that nobody on this side heckled the member when he was speaking.

Mr. Mills: Excuse me, Mr. Speaker, there was heckling on the other side and there were other people who heard it.

Mr. Friesen: *Hansard* will show you are wrong.

• (1530)

Mr. Mills: Mr. Speaker, the point that I am trying to make is that the member's motion is something that we

on all sides of the House should get behind. I do not see why the government cannot support this motion.

We are all concerned about the family farm and we all know that the government is playing poker with the provinces in terms of the releasing of this money. I would like to ask the member a question about possible diversification.

In my riding right now we are selling a product from the member's home province. It is an environmental product; briquettes made from distressed cereal grains. It is an attempt by a corporation in that province to get on to another mode of production and generating income.

The member is obviously very conversant with his community. Are there are other opportunities for industrial growth there, not unlike the selling of these distressed cereal grains that have been made into briquettes which are much more efficient and environmentally friendly? Do other such opportunities exist there?

Mr. Laporte: Yes, Mr. Speaker, diversification in rural Canada is a very important issue. One of the problems that we have in rural Canada is that farming has become such a specialized area that grain farmers are having difficulty. There is a need for secondary industry. There is a need to provide opportunities in order that family farms can maintain themselves. There is also a need for diversification for rural communities because in the west we have such a dependence on agriculture that when it is suffering, the communities suffer. In those areas where there is secondary industry, the communities are in a much better position.

Yes, there are opportunities. There is a need, though, to provide an environment. In fact, one of the things the government could be doing quite easily is providing some incentives for the smaller businesses to locate in other areas by providing some tax breaks and other opportunities. If the government would provide the milieu for that, they could survive. There are lots of opportunities and that would be well received.

I have talked to many people in my riding who were making suggestions with respect to various opportunities but who say that they cannot get funding and that it is just not viable to locate in some of these small communities. There are many opportunities and if the government would provide the milieu it would do an awful lot of good for rural Canada.

Mr. John Harvard (Winnipeg St. James): Mr. Speaker, I have a short question for the hon. member from Saskatchewan. It relates to the Canadian Wheat Board, an institution to which farmers are emotionally attached. I shudder to think where farmers would be today without the Canadian Wheat Board. We know that in the past year the government took oats away from the Wheat Board and there are concerns about the future of the Wheat Board. Would the member from Saskatchewan like to comment on what he thinks is the immediate future of the Wheat Board?

Mr. Laporte: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. colleague for that question. The Canadian Wheat Board is under a lot of stress. With the removal of oats, the Wheat Board is now relegated simply to wheat and barley. The prognosis for the Wheat Board is not very good. One of the main problems facing the Wheat Board is as a result of the free trade agreement. In the free trade agreement there is a clause that says that if at any time the subsidies on wheat, or barley, which affects the Wheat Board, are equal to or higher than those in the United States, American grain can start coming across the border. That almost happened this year. We came within a few fractions of a percentage point of that happening with respect to wheat.

If that happens, American grain will start coming across the Canadian border and there will be pressure from the Canadian side. Farmers will say: "Look, Americans are bringing grain across. Why can't we take grain across to the American side?" Then the government will say that it has consulted with people, that farmers want this to happen and that it is going to allow Canadian grain to go across the American border. That is a scenario that has been put forth a number of times.

I do not know why the hon. member is looking perplexed, but it exists. When that happens it will mean the end of the Canadian Wheat Board because people near the American border will be hauling their grain to the American side when the prices are high there. When they are low, they will be hauling it to elevators in Canada which will mean that the Canadian Wheat Board will not have the ability to market its grain in the world market and will be relegated to the lower selling price of grain.

When that happens, farmers who live 200 or 300 miles from the American border who cannot haul their grain across are going to complain that they are not getting the pooling price they were getting before because some Canadian farmers who are close to the border are hauling grain across the border. There is then going to be a call to remove the whole Wheat Board.

That is a viable and possible scenario. The free trade agreement would have allowed that to happen this year and it came very close to happening this year. It is going to happen in the future. That is in keeping with the government's lack of commitment to orderly marketing in this country. This is a real scenario.

Mr. Benno Friesen (Parliamentary Secretary to Solicitor General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I would first like to ask the member if he is against Canadian grain farmers exporting their grain to the United States. Do you want to pick and choose and markets you ship to?

I notice that the motion says: "That this House recognize that Canadian farmers face dire financial circumstances" for a number of different reasons. It seems to pretend that nothing has happened since this government came to office, that there has been no attention paid to farmers.

I would like to point out to the member that between the years 1985 and 1988 this government paid out about $3 billion in western grain stabilization payments. In 1987 it paid $1 billion in special grains; in 1988 it paid $1.1 billion; and in 1989 it paid $850 million in drought assistance, which is one of the things to which he is asking us to pay attention. In five years the government has paid out about $6 billion to the grain farmers in western Canada, not counting all the other farmers.

Would it not have been a slight measure of honesty to have put something on the record or in the motion recognizing that this government has, over the past five years, recognized some of the problems that western farmers have faced and given credit for the $6 billion that it has already invested in western farmers?

Mr. Laporte: Mr. Speaker, that was two questions. With respect to the question of marketing grain in the United States, the New Democratic Party is not opposed to farmers selling grain to the United States, but we would like to see it go through the Canadian Wheat Board. When it goes through the Wheat Board, through the pooling system, we believe that the farmer, over all, gets a better price for his or her grain. When the farmer sells it independently, the large American grain companies are able to pick them off. That is pure and simple.

We want to see a strong, viable Canadian Wheat Board marketing grain in the United States and throughout the world. The poll that was done last year indicates that so do about 80 per cent of the producers in western Canada.

With respect to the payments made by the Tory government of the last few years, what the member said is true. If the member had been listening to my comments, he would know that I did make note of that. I did say that this government has put billions of dollars into the agricultural economy, but it has been misappropriated; it has been misdirected.

• (1540)

That money could have been used much more wisely and much more efficiently if this government would have been committed to maintaining the family farm instead of throwing money out at election time, which it does. In fact, the $850 million came out 10 days before the last election. Ten days before the election the government was scrambling around for an announcement on grain. It knew it was going to lose seats in the west, and it did lose quite a few, but it came out with a $850 million announcement of a drought aid program. It did not have a clue where the money was going to go, it just knew it had $850 million, $45 an acre.

The point is that the government has put money into agriculture, yes, but it could have done it more wisely and more efficiently if it had the commitment of maintaining family farms and maintaining a viable rural economy and a viable rural infrastructure.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Questions and comments are now terminated. On a point of order, the hon. member for Sault Ste. Marie.

Mr. Butland: Mr. Speaker, I think we should point out that the hon. member who asked the question of my colleague did not stick around to hear the answer to the question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I do not think that is necessary. The hon. member is probably answering a phone call or watching it on television.

Mr. McDermid: Do you want us to stand up and say there isn't a farmer in the NDP here?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): On debate, the hon. Minister of State for Grains and Oilseeds.

Hon. Charles Mayer (Minister of Western Economic Diversification and Minister of State (Grains and Oilseeds)): Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to hear what goes on across the way. I noticed that the hon. member for Broadview—Greenwood got up. I think it is fair to say that the only thing he knows about agriculture is the fact that he has something green in the name of his riding. When I hear him talking to the hon. member from—

Ms. Mitchell: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. As a member from an urban riding, I would like to object very strongly to the opening comments of the minister. All of us who represent urban ridings care very much about farmers in this land.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): That is not a point of order, it is a point of debate.

Mr. Mills: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I would never, ever want to claim that I knew as much about agriculture as the minister, but I must tell the minister that I have been actively farming for close to 26 years on a full-time basis. I resent his shots. I think they are really cheap and I think that his attitude is such—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Order. That again is not a point of order. It is a point of debate. All hon. members will have an opportunity to ask questions and make comments.

Mr. McDermid: What nonsense. You bought the farm for an investment.

Mr. Mills: You're so smug, John, you don't see what's going on.

Mr. Harvard: So now the Tories are against investment. What a bunch of hypocrites.

Mr. McDermid: Who woke you up?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I was just saying that all hon. members will have an opportunity to question or comment on the minister's speech if we can get to it.

The hon. Minister of State for Grains and Oilseeds.

Mr. Mayer: Thank you very much again, Mr. Speaker. I do not want to impugn anybody in terms of their attitude toward agriculture. What I was merely doing, when I referred to the hon. member for Broadview—Greenwood, was commenting on the observations he makes about agriculture. All I can do is judge people by the way they comment in the House. On the basis of those comments I have to assume, and unfortunately conclude, that he does not know very much about agriculture. When I hear him saying that the member from Moose Jaw gave a fabulous speech, it reminds me of the old saying that what we don't understand we explain to each other. That seems to be what was going on between these two.

The hon. member from Moose Jaw talks about the Canadian Wheat Board losing sales to the Soviet Union. Let me put the hon. member's mind at rest on that. That is not the case. We are in the fourth year of a five-year long-term grain sales agreement with the Soviet Union that calls for a minimum purchase of 25 million tonnes. The hon. member would like to know, I hope, that before the conclusion of the fourth year we will have sold over 20 million tonnes, so we are not losing sales to the Soviet Union as a result of EHP. That is not to say that we are not losing prices, which we are, but we are not losing sales.

The member talks about the Canadian Wheat Board being relegated to selling only barley and wheat. Let me tell you what that means. The hon. member should know that of the three grains that the board handled a year ago—wheat, oats and barley—oats made up one-quarter of 1 per cent of all sales. By volume it is less than one-quarter of one per cent.

In addition, as a result of us removing oats from the Canadian Wheat Board, there has been a considerable amount of investment in western Canada and some jobs have been created. In Portage la Prairie, Manitoba, there is an oat facility going up which is going to process about 100,000 tonnes of oats a year. They are going to spend $17 million. There are three reasons they are building in Portage. First, it is a good location, close to the U.S. The second reason is free trade, better access to the U.S. market. This is a $17 million investment. They are going to process 100,000 tonnes of oats, close to a quarter of Manitoba's annual production, in one facility. The third

reason they are building there is because they no longer have to go to the board to buy oats.

There are similar investments going on in Alberta presently and there are also similar investments being contemplated in Saskatchewan. So when you talk about the Canadian Wheat Board and oats, there is another side to it, Mr. Speaker.

The hon. member referred to a survey which he said found that 70 per cent, and then as he got on in his speech he said 80 per cent, of the producers wanted the board to handle oats. That is true. But in that same survey the producers were asked who they thought would get them the most money, the board or private trade. A majority, I think about 60 per cent, said that the non-board selling of oats is going to get them more money. So, while a lot of people wanted the board to handle oats, a majority said that other than the board would get them more money for their product.

Let me talk a little bit here about the problem in this motion. The motion refers to drought, low initial prices, interest rates, and the international grain trade war. It suggests that we can solve all those things by putting $500 million into the farm economy. By the way, they are not low initial prices, they are low initial payments, if you want to really get technical about it. If the member is a farmer he should know that.

I grew up in the area which the member represents. I lived in Township 28, Range 5, west of the third, so I know a little bit about the member's riding.

Five hundred million dollars is not a lot of money to solve those problems. The hon. member says that we should pay out the money regardless of whether we are going to get the provinces to contribute. That is a little bit of a contradiction. If he worried about getting money to farmers, he should be worried about getting additional money from the provinces. You would think he would have included in his motion the ability to lever, if you will, additional cash from the provinces to give to the farmers. If we are going to put up the money which we have had on the table since the end of March and we are going to be able to get the provinces to contribute some additional cash, you would think that would help the farmers.

Edmund Burke defined a conservative as somebody who believes that nothing should ever be done for the first time and I have to think that that is the hon. member and his party and his policies. They do not want us to try to gain access to a rich market in the U.S. with better rules. They do not want us to go to GATT and negotiate to get better rules. They do not want to be part of the review process. We live in a changing world. The Minister of Agriculture has a major review under way with about 200 people in the industry involved from coast to coast. The hon. member and his party do not want any of those things. They are against all of those things. They are against the GST. The GST is going to benefit farmers to the tune of about $250 million.

Mr. Crawford: You've been off the farm too long, fellow.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Mayer: I got their attention, Mr. Speaker. The crows were back on the prairies and they just arrived in the House.

How can somebody, in all good conscience, stand up and ask that the federal government give farmers $500 million, when he should know, if he does his homework, that because food is exempted farmers are not going to be paying the manufacturer's sales tax or the GST, when it is replaced, on agricultural products. They are not going to pay it on bearings, belts, pulleys, sprockets or antifreeze, on any of the agricultural parts that they now pay it on. They are not going to pay it on half-ton trucks.

• (1550)

Mr. Crawford: Is that a promise?

Mr. Mayer: They don't want to hear, Mr. Speaker. With due respect to the hon. member from Vancouver who made the point that she resents being talked about, there is not a farmer over there so they do not know what they are talking about.

The point is that with the removal of the manufacturer's sales tax and the application of the GST, food items—

Mr. Crawford: Repeat that: "Farmers will not pay GST."

Mr. Mayer: If the hon. member wants to get up on debate, we would be more than happy to hear him rather then have him yelling from his seat like he is. If he does not like what I am saying—

Mr. Crawford: I'm not going to have you stand up there and misquote.

Mr. Mayer: At the end of the day there is going to be no GST paid by farmers. It is going to save them $250 million. Why is the hon. member not supporting us in that? I do not understand this. What they are doing is totally political. We know what the NDP did in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. It put in a land bank and proceeded to buy 1.3 million acres of land when it was in power in Saskatchewan. We know that record. We know what the Liberals did. They had their Prime Minister come out to western Canada to give us the finger and tell us to sell our own wheat. We know what their record is. What is the record of this government?

He talks about the over-all problem—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The member for Kamloops on a point of order.

Mr. Riis: Mr. Speaker, I listened to my hon. friend, the Minister responsible for Grains and Oilseeds, referring to the situation out in the west. I wonder if he could confirm that the most recent projections are that 10,000 farmers in Saskatchewan alone will likely lose their farms this year?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The hon. member will have an opportunity on questions and comments to ask the minister a question.

Mr. Mayer: Mr. Speaker, I have with me projections done by Ag-Decision for the United Grain Growers which have just been released today which show seeding intentions. That might be a little more interesting. The hon. member in whose name the motion stands says that farmers are not going to get a chance to put their crop in the ground because of lack of credit or lack of finances. He might be interested in these figures.

In Manitoba over-all seeding intentions for wheat are up 8 per cent. They are up 3 per cent in Saskatchewan for wheat and up 6 per cent in Alberta. Over-all seeding intentions on the Prairies are up by 2 per cent. In other words, farmers are going to seed 2 per cent more land this year than they did last year.

To say it another way, summer fallow is going to be down. When you summer fallow you do not seed crop. Summer fallow is down 2 per cent and over-all seeding intentions are up. That does not sound to me like an industry that is going out of business.

Admittedly there are problems, there is no question there are problems. But also bear in mind that the motion only refers to grains and oilseeds and a little less than half of the industry is based on grains and oilseeds. It is roughly a $20 billion industry in Canada and a little over half of it is livestock products and other special crops. So we are talking about half of the industry.

I will give you some more interesting figures, Mr. Speaker. The member spoke about the FCC. There is no doubt we are concerned about interest rates. These are loans approved by region to the end of March this year. They are up this year over last year and I will give you the numbers for Saskatchewan. The number of loans is up from 558 last year to 751 this year. In other words, farmers are borrowing money to buy land, to increase their operations.

In Manitoba the number of loans a year ago was 156, this year it is 315. So over-all seeding intentions are up. Moisture conditions are a little better, and moisture conditions are a big part of it, there is no question about that. They are much better, although not universally. There is an area in the southwest corner of Manitoba and the southeast corner of Saskatchewan that still has problems with the weather. But over-all the industry is starting to turn around.

Second, there is no mention at all in the motion about what is going on at GATT. The grains and oilseeds industry is largely dependent on exports. We have to deal with what is happening at GATT. I happen to think that we have reasonable prospects for reaching an agreement at the GATT, for a couple of reasons.

First, this is the first time ever that agriculture has been on the main agenda as far as the GATT is concerned. That is a significant event in itself. These over-all discussions have been going on now for about four years.

Second, we saw a year and a half ago that if we could not get a proper deal in agriculture it was likely to jeopardize the whole round. Those, to me, are two reasons why there is room for optimism that we are going to settle some of these things at the GATT. If we can do that, we will know probably before the end of the year at which time the GATT negotiation period runs out, that is going to be a positive signal as far as the over-all industry is concerned.

So while there are concerns, which there is no question about, to signal that the whole industry is in dire straits, as this motion does, belies the over-all situation of agriculture.

What concerns me as much about the motion as anything is that there really is no over-all indication of what the hon. member and his party would do. We know they would spend more money. I do not know where they would get it. They would, I assume, print or borrow it, but they would spend more money. We have already pointed out that if that is their sole purpose they should be encouraging us to deal with the provinces to get additional money rather than simply saying that we should spend the money federally and hope that the provinces will kick in later.

The reason we should be concerned about this is that in his own province in the last four years, of every $100 of assistance that has been provided to a Saskatchewan farmer $87.75 has come from the federal government. That is not a particularly good record. In Manitoba, my own province, it is even worse. The number is $88.08 according to Agriculture Canada numbers.

If the hon. member is suggesting that we should simply send the money to the provinces and they will to kick in and give additional money to farmers, the past record does not indicate that is likely to happen. That is why if he was really concerned about getting money to farmers he should have indicated in his motion that we should be dealing with the provinces to get them to kick in additional money for farmers.

If the hon. is interested in interest rates I have some more interesting numbers here for him. These are FCC figues and he will know that a big part of the business done in Saskatchewan is with the FCC. Out of 64,000 accounts, 60,000 have interest rates of 13 per cent or less and 52,000 have interest rates of 12 per cent or less, the point being that there are a lot of locked-in interest rates. So as soon as interest rates go up there is not automatically an increase in the interest rate that everybody pays on all of the money they have borrowed.

I will tell you what operating credit amounts to. It is going to be pretty tough for a person to spend much more than $50 an acre this spring. I can go through how much will be spent for nitrogen, for phosphorous, for seed, for chemical for weed control, and for fuel. I think that $50 an acre would catch most farmers. It is certainly a ballpark figure. Knock that down by 10 per cent. Ten per cent on $50 an acre is $5 a year. For six months that is about $2.50 an acre.

I should also point out that fertilizer prices are down a little bit this spring. On my own farm we are buying nitrogen cheaper than I bought it for four or five years, and I think the same is true for phosphorous. So there are some things that are a little cheaper this year than they were.

So there are some thing that have changed in terms of operating costs. In talking about the immediate effect of what is going on with the interest rates you have to take those numbers into consideration. We are talking about lines of credit for immediate cash cost to put a crop in. In a six-month period, which is how most of that is rolled over, we are talking in the area of $2 to $3 an acre. That is a certain amount of money but not enough to put everybody in dire straits.

Let me conclude by laying out what this government has tried to do in terms of agriculture. It is really, if you will, a three-pronged attack. We live in a changing world. We produce some very high quality products in this country. We are taking advantage of those.

They want to talk about the Canadian Wheat Board being threatened. I have never heard such a bunch of nonsense in all my life. This was the government that stood behind the Canadian Wheat Board when three years ago it ran over a $200 million deficit in the pool accounts, contrary to what the previous Liberal government did in the early 1970s when it instituted the Lift program and took our farmers right out of the international market.

With the high-quality products and the changing markets that we have, we are looking to use some of our strong points to continue to sell. The member talked about selling to the United States. Just ponder this for a moment. The U.S. is the largest exporter of wheat in the world. It exports somewhere around 40 million tonnes per year. It has been down to 30 million tonnes and up to 45 or 47 million tonnes, but just take 40 million tonnes as an average. Forty-two million tonnes per year, that is what they export.

• (1600)

Canada used to be the second largest exporter. The Europeans have overtaken us now for subsidy reasons that I will get into in a minute, because that is my second point. We are probably now going to be third. We export somewhere close to half that, a little less than 20 million

tonnes. We do not buy any wheat from the U.S. A little bit comes into southern Ontario, but very little.

Why would the U.S. buy from us if it is the biggest? The U.S. was our fifth largest customer last year. If oilseeds are included, it is fourth largest customer. That says something about the quality of the product we produce. It does not buy from us because it likes us or because we happen to be neighbours. It buys from us because it likes quality of product and the way we perform on contracts and deliver.

For someone to suggest that the Canadian Wheat Board is under threat because of the free trade agreement does not make any sense based on past performance. I would argue that the other way around. It will be more difficult for the Americans to use Section 22 of their ag adjustment legislation, which lets them shut the border literally on 24 hours' notice, with the free trade agreement, than it was previously. It gives the Wheat Board a better chance to sell into a high-priced market.

Second, we are doing our very best to deal with what is going on internationally. In my view, the Europeans amount to international bandits when it comes to agricultural products. They have stolen our markets with subsidies.

Everyone talks about the Americans. The hon. member talked about the U.S. and the president increasing their Export Enhancement Program. I said the Americans are the largest exporters. They export between 80 and 90 million tonnes of all grains per year. They are likely to spend less than $500 million this year, and perhaps considerably less. They have more appropriated, but they may not spend it all. They have $500 million of export subsidy to export over 80 million tonnes.

The Europeans will export about 30 million tonnes and they will spend about $3.5 billion. We have every right to be angry with the Americans. We send them notes to let them know we are unhappy every time they do those things. But, if one is angry with the Americans on what they do with their Export Enhancement Program, we should be 15 times as angry with the Europeans because that is how much worse the Europeans are. That is why we have to get a resolution to this at the GATT process. That is why we are putting so much emphasis on what is going on internationally.

Our Prime Minister has not given western farmers and Canadian farmers the finger and told them to sell their own wheat. He has been leading the charge at discussions to get some of these things resolved internationally. That is a measure of leadership: to take one's responsibilities seriously and to do something about it. When one thinks about how high some of these subsidies are and how reliant we are on exports for markets, the international market is very, very important to us. For example, in the hon. member's province, producers have to export over 80 per cent of the wheat they grow. So, the second thing we are doing is negotiating as toughly as we can internationally.

Third, we have been supporting our farmers through this difficult time. The hon. member mentioned the money we have spent. They can say it was spent wisely. It is not an easy task to distribute 200,000 cheques and we admit the program was not perfect. But, by and large, it was a well-run program. We got a lot of money to producers when they needed it. We have been doing that.

Another thing that is going on is an over-all review of agricultural policy in the country. It is interesting to note how we are doing it. The Minister of Agriculture is not doing it himself, or with the bureaucrats of the department. The producers and the industry itself are involved. We have seven task forces in place involving approximately 200 people: producers, processors, university professors, people who have been involved in the industry and have a stake in the industry. They are the ones who are doing the review. The part of the review that is the furthest advanced is the one on safety-nets. That is what we want to get at as quickly as we can.

Our record on agriculture is a good one, and I say that as a farmer. We are taking advantage of our strong points as far as selling to keep our markets. We are negotiating to have fairer and more even access to international markets because we do not believe that might is right when it comes to international trade in agriculture.

We have increased the amount of direct support to our producers by approximately 600 per cent in the last six years as a measure of confidence in the industry. We believe there are better days ahead if we can solve some of these problems and I believe that we will.

Mr. Dennis Mills (Broadview—Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, first, I would like to correct the minister. The former Prime Minister—and he mentioned this three times during the course of his speech—never, ever gave his finger to the farmers of western Canada. He was on a private holiday with his three boys and he was heckled and harassed—

An hon. member: Salmon Arm, B.C.

Mr. Mills: That is right, it was in Salmon Arm, B.C. His former presence here seems to really rattle members opposite at times.

At any rate, I always thought the purpose of this national government was to lead and to take over when disadvantaged regions or problems could not be met by the provinces. The way the minister talks, it seems as if there is absolutely no problem with the farming community in the country. Agriculture Canada is predicting 39 per cent decreases in agricultural income. He almost comes across as if everything is okay.

At what point does the national government move to help these farmers, regardless of whether of not the province comes in? By the way Premier Devine is acting and speaking on national television, it looks as if he is not about to put his cheque on the table. As a national politician, not a provincial one—and I know that the minister tends to put things off onto the provinces—at what point in time does he act, or does he just let the whole thing go?

Mr. Mayer: I have a couple of comments, Mr. Speaker. Our record has been pretty impressive when it comes to dealing with the provinces of western Canada in support of agriculture. I just gave the hon. member the numbers.

Our responsibility for agriculture is a shared jurisdiction under the BNA Act and our Constitution. I do not have the section in my head, but it is in the same section that refers to fisheries. It is a shared responsibility between the provinces and the federal government. In the last four years, the over-all average for the Prairies has been slightly over 80 per cent direct support from the federal government. It would seem to me that that would indicate our record is pretty good and that would be what we could expect.

We are trying to get as much money as we possibly can into the hands of farmers. If we can get a little extra money from the provinces to distribute, that is going to help the farmers. Our responsibility is there, our money is on the table, and we are going to have to act eventually. In the meantime, we want to get the provinces to own up to some of the responsibilities that they have for agriculture which is a shared jurisdiction.

I did not in any way suggest that it is all rosy in agriculture. What I try to do is put some balance on it, and there is some balance. The cattle markets are not that bad. Hog prices are up a little bit, especially in the last two weeks. If one follows what is going on in North America, it does not look that bad for the livestock industry. A big part of our industry is supply managed. They are not doing too badly. It is a $20 billion industry. About $9 billion of it comes from agriculture and about $11 billion comes from the other parts of it. That other part, by and large, is not that bad.

There are sections in the grain and oilseeds industry that are not that bad. I was trying to put it into perspective. Seeding intentions are up. Farm Credit Corporation loans are up, not significantly but that is better than having them down. I was just trying to put some balance on it. Things are not good in a big part of the grain and oilseed area, but there is a part of it that is doing reasonably well.

We will come good on our responsibility. Our money is there. Again, if through some negotiations with the province we can get a little extra money to the farmers, which is what this motion is about, it would seem to me that the opposition and the NDP should be supporting us in our negotiations with the provinces to get a bigger financial package to present to farmers.

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, I want to say that, in anticipation of the motion today, I made a point of dropping into a number of cattlemen's operations in my constituency over the weekend. In talking to them and, today, talking to relatives of mine from Saskatchewan who are farmers, they acknowledged that there are various programs they find helpful from time

to time, but they said it all pales when one considers what the government is doing in terms of interest rates.

Looking at the facts, one finds that the Farm Credit Corporation has had to increase its interest rates four times this year. My hon. friend is a farmer. He will know that at the present interest rates it is impossible to maintain a farm for any length of time. It is absolutely impossible.

• (1610)

I want to ask my hon. friend if he could comment on what efforts he is making on behalf of the farmers of Canada to convince the Minister of Finance and the Governor of the Bank of Canada to get those interest rates down. If they continue as they have been doing for a number of weeks or months, he knows, as I tried to ask earlier, that literally thousands of farms will go by the board. Thousands of farm families will have to leave the land.

Farm families in my constituency are leaving the land primarily because of interest rates and through no fault of their own. They are hard working and committed. They have the expertise, but they have no control over interest rates. They say they cannot meet their interest rate obligations at these very high levels. Could my hon. friend comment on what efforts he is making to try to convince the Minister of Finance to do the right thing and to move those rates down before we drive everybody off the land?

Mr. Mayer: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member raises a point that the NDP contradicts every day in Question Period.

One of the best ways to get interest rates down is to reduce government spending. The motion calls for us to spend money. I suspect that it would not be bashful about asking us to spend more. The federal government cannot spend more money when it has to go and borrow it. At the same time, the hon. member stands up and says: "Get interest rates down." If he wants interest rates down, he should tell us not to spend the $500 million. The hon. member should make up his mind. He cannot have both.

I know what is going on as far as interest rates are concerned. I farm. I have farmed all my life, and I know what interest rates do to us. I also know that, if we do not deal with inflation, there is a good chance we will go through the same experience of the early 1980s when the hon. member and I were both in opposition. We saw interest rates go up over 20 per cent. If he thinks they are bad now, they are going to get worse if we do not deal with this properly. He will be up again to criticize the government for letting the rates get out of hand.

Dealing with the problems of getting inflation down and our deficit is the best medicine I know in terms of getting interest rates down on an over-all basis. Just to say it again, interest rates are high. Everybody wants them lower. Most of all the Minister of Finance wants them lower because he has to pay the interest on the national debt. That is an incentive for him to keep them down. There are no magic solutions, but bear in mind what I said.

If one is buying livestock, it is a different story. It will be bought on a short-term basis. I follow the feeder market. The feeder market for light cattle in our country is up $1.15 or $1.20 a pound. Prices are not that bad. If cattlemen were scared by high interest rates, they would be backing off on the prices. They factor that into their decision-making process; the more they pay on interest, the less they can pay for cattle. But the price of light feeder cattle is not that bad right now. I sold cattle about two weeks ago for more money per pound than I think I have ever sold cattle in my life.

Second, I make the point that with FCC loans, 60,000 out of 64,000 accounts have interest rates below 13 per cent. The hon. members says the rate should be even lower. Nobody will get locked into higher interest rates simply because they are up for three, four or five months. If the rates go up and stay up for a period of a year or two years, it is a different story. Hopefully, what the Minister of Finance is doing will cause the rates to come down and we will be in a position in which they can come down and stay down, contrary to the experience we went through in 1981-82 when we saw them get close to 25 per cent.

Mr. Rex Crawford (Kent): Mr. Speaker, I have a question of clarification to the hon. minister.

The hon. minister has stated that farmers will not be paying the GST. Am I right? Will farmers not be paying GST?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is that the hon. member's question?

Mr. Crawford: There is more.

He also was elated that the Farm Credit Corporation is lending out more money. In my riding, this would worry me because that is the last resort for a farmer who cannot get money from the bank. It would tell me farmers were in trouble. Instead of going to the bank or mortgage company, they are going to FCC to get their mortgage money.

Also, regarding high interest rates, the hon. minister is quoting $50 an acre netting out at $2 to $3 an acre. In our farming in southwestern Ontario, we are talking about hundreds of dollars an acre. We cannot afford 2 per cent or 3 per cent higher interest rates. They are killing the farmers in my riding. The three questions are these. In the future, will farmers pay GST. Why do you feel that more farmers are borrowing from the Farm Credit Corporation instead of the banks. Last, would he break down the interest rate on farming so that I can understand it because an increase of 3 per cent in my operation would put me under. The average gross for farmers in our riding in Ontario is $120,000, with a net of $4,400. How do you live on $4,400?

Mr. Mayer: In regard to the GST, I said at the end of the day that farmers will not be paying GST on all their inputs that they pay taxes on now. That includes bearings, belts, lumber, hardware, paint, all of those things. They will pay it and they will get a refund. At the end of the day they will not be paying it. I did say there was going to be some exemptions and I think that list is close to being public. You are not eligible now for a refund of manufacturers' sales tax on all the things you buy when you go to a hardware store.

You can smile if you want but a lot of farmers would think that that is not a bad deal. For instances, when you buy a new half-ton truck, you pay the manufacturers' sales tax on it. I do not know what that would amount to but I would expect $1,500 or $2,000. If you use that new half-ton truck in your business, or on a farm, you are going to get the GST back.

I said at the end of the day there will not be any GST paid. This means on some items you will pay it up front and you will apply for a refund. For some of the big ticket items you will be exempted at the start.

The second question the hon. member asked was about FCC. I acknowledge that it is not a great item, that it is not something to be elated about. But I guarantee that if FCC loans were down, members opposite would be standing up criticizing the fact that FCC is not lending money.

Farmers are making a business decision. If they do not like the interest rate at the FCC, and FCC does not think it is a good business plan they are not going to lend money. But it is a little bit of a positive signal at least that arrears are down for FCC and some of their loans are up. I have the numbers here and can share them with the hon. member after.

The third item he talks about is interest. He is absolutely right. I was referring to $50 an acre on the prairies which would be an average variable or input cost for putting a crop in. You go to southern Ontario and I suspect the numbers may be closer to $200 an acre with potatoes and some of those specialty crops. But again if you are talking $200 an acre, let us say you took off 10 per cent of that, which is $20 an acre. For half a year it is $10 an acre. On a crop like potatoes where you may gross $600 or $700 an acre, $10 an acre is no more in terms of a percentage, a factor to you, than $2 or $3 an acre is if you are going to gross $120 or $130 an acre.

But the point is that because interest rates go up immediately farmers do not pay those increased interest rates on all of the money they borrow. It affects livestock producers when they have to buy every time they turn over their cattle. It affects farmers immediately when they go with a line of credit to put their crop in in the spring. But by and large that is not the majority amount of money that is borrowed by farmers. So there is a delayed effect there.

Mr. John Harvard (Winnipeg St. James): Mr. Speaker, I listened to the minister with great interest and noted that he said that he tried to give a balanced presentation, that he tried to put some of the farm issues in context. I appreciate that effort, although I think that he failed miserably at some stages.

I felt as I listened to the minister that there was a touch of unreality to some of his remarks. When he celebrates—and I choose the word carefully—celebrates the taking out of more loans by farmers, whether it is from FCC or from the banks, it is an absurdity with a touch of unreality. I do not think farmers are ever happy to go to the bank or the FCC to borrow money. I am astonished that the minister would use loan figures and

put them in a positive light as if it were something to celebrate. I am astonished.

He also told us about the use of less summer fallow. I was born and raised on a farm. In fact, I lived the first 19 years of my life not too far from the hon. minister's farm. I lived in exactly the same riding that he has represented for a number of years. I think I know a little bit about farming.

• (1620)

When farmers plant more and rely less on summer fallow does not suggest that there is confidence in the air and that farmers are exuberant and enthusiastic about the future. I will tell you what it is. Farmers are human beings, they have a human nature. When they feel the crunch and the pressure is building they will resort to almost anything to increase their revenue. That means planting more and taking more land out of summer fallow. That is exactly what they will do.

There really is a touch of unreality about some of the minister's remarks. He pooh-poohed the remarks of the member from Saskatchewan when that member expressed concern about the future of the Canadian Wheat Board. There is a concern in western Canada about the future of the Canadian Wheat Board. The minister was sort of suggesting that we should not worry, it is not going to be taken over by private interests or it won't be abolished or anything. I have a quote here from the Commissioner of the Wheat Board, Mr. Jarvis. He said recently that an "open border", that is, open between Canada and the United States, "could happen as early as next year, partly because of the 1988 drought. Subsidies are currently $40 and $50 a tonne above Canada's, that the drought of 1988 sharply reduced Canadian crop reduction increasing Canada's per unit subsidies on wheat and barley in the process".

Mr. Speaker, you do not have to take the word of the member from Saskatchewan or my word. Take it from the chief commissioner of the Wheat Board. Things could dramatically change in the very near future.

The other thing, and again I think it has this air of unreality, the minister says with some vehemence and great emotion is that farmers will not pay the GST. I appreciate the fact that they may get GST back that they have paid on inputs but at the same time, farmers are consumers. If the GST is on haircuts, farmers have haircuts and they will have to pay the GST. If the GST is on a pair of trousers, I will bet you dollars to doughnuts that farmers will have to pay the GST on trousers. Somehow the minister is implying that farmers are not consumers, they never buy anything outside of trucks and tractors and cultivators. That is what I mean when I talk about the minister's remarks having a touch of unreality.

I would like to point out a few other things because I am mindful of the fact it is May 16. Here in the capital and back in my home city of Winnipeg, we notice that the sun is getting stronger, the temperatures are getting higher, the landscape is getting greener, kids are thinking about final examinations and getting out of school and having a fun time during July and August. Families and parents are thinking about their vacation plans as well. But what about down on the farm at this particular time, on May 16, 1990? I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that the farmers are in a frantic period. Farmers are in a scramble because this is seeding time. The deadlines for farmers are very tight. They do not have the luxury of planting any old time they want. Of course, the weather can always be a problem. When the farmers have that moment to put the grain in the ground, they do exactly that. We appreciate what farmers are going through at this time, but that is a normal thing. It happens every spring and it goes with the trade, if I can use those words.

It is hardly normal on the farm these days because farmers are being hounded on so many fronts from so many directions. In this debate earlier this afternoon, we heard about the high interest rates, low commodity prices, low initial prices and about the subsidy war between the United States of America and European countries. Canadian farmers on the prairies are still feeling the effects of the 1988 drought, and the 1990 year is still in doubt. We do not know how it is going to be. Is it going to be another dry year, or is there going to be adequate precipitation?

While I am talking about farmers being assaulted on a number of fronts, another assault is on their support programs. I will touch on that if I can in a few moments.

A combination of these factors spells disaster for farmers. Mr. Speaker, you have heard the figures before, but I think they are worth repeating. Farm income will plummet this year. These figures do not come from

opposition members or from someone off the street. They come from Agriculture Canada.

In Saskatchewan, the province that is going to be the hardest hit, it is expected that farm income will drop 87 per cent. In my home province of Manitoba, farm income is expected to drop 57 per cent. In Alberta, the figure is around 46 per cent.

What is the main reason for this expected diminution in farm income? It is the reduction of the farm support programs of the federal government. In fact, the reduction in farm support programs, which is in the neighbourhood of $400 million—a lot of money—accounts for 57 per cent, more than half of the expected drop in farm income this year. That is devastating.

Of course, there is this big hassle that has been going on for weeks about the federal government's so-called $500 million farm aid program. I want to talk about it a little bit more.

I mentioned earlier some of the problems facing farmers including high interest rates. I want to touch on that, because I think you and I know, Mr. Speaker, that the interest rates are skyrocketing. The latest announcement from FCC indicates that some of the rates are now over 14 per cent. That is an enormous burden on farmers who are already in a very difficult situation.

Let me allude to some figures from the province of Saskatchewan. The provincial land security board in that wheat province received 246 notices involving 204 farms in March alone, while the federal Farm Debt Review Board received 193 applications in February. Both of these boards have dealt with more than 7,000 farmers since 1985, and the trend is expected to continue. That is one figure from the province of Saskatchewan which is very disturbing.

How costly and how burdensome are these high interest rates? According to calculations of experts, every 1 per cent of interest cost takes over $200 million in annual debt servicing costs out of the pockets of Canadians farmers. Every time the interest rate goes up one digit, it is tantamount to taking $200 million out of the Canadian farmers' pockets. They just cannot afford it.

• (1630)

The Manitoba Debt Review Board recently reported that it has dealt with farmers facing $300 to $400, or even $600 a day in interest charges alone. Can you imagine up to $600 a day in interest charges, Mr. Speaker?

Since 1985, the Farm Credit Corporation has entered into 2,900 recovery actions, and has captured a total of 2,719 farms.

In 93 per cent of its recovery actions, the FCC has settled by taking the land from the farmer. I find that extremely disturbing.

I know that the minister might accuse us of distorting the issue and putting it in darker terms than warranted. But we have to tell this side of the story because we know we are always going to get the rosy picture from a minister of that government. We have a responsibility to give this side of the story. If we do not, we are going to let a lot of farmers down. They want Canadians to know that they are suffering, and of the vicissitudes that they face in every day life.

I spoke about low commodity prices. The Wheat Board announced this spring a reduction of about 12 per cent to 15 per cent. I wanted to mention something about putting some of these commodity prices in context.

There was an interesting piece written by a gentleman by the name of Murray Fulton, an Associate Professor of Agriculture Economics at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon. Speaking of putting things in context, this is what he said about low commodity prices that farmers have to live with. I will read only one paragraph from his piece which appeared in the May 7, 1990, edition of the *Financial Times of Canada*.

> To set the record straight, the problem is very severe indeed. Grain prices, when adjusted for inflation, are the lowest they have ever been—even lower than during the 1930s. Poor crop quality and yields in recent years have made the problem worse. Agriculture Canada forecasts that this year, Saskatchewan farm income would be one-seventh the average over the last five years.

That gives us some idea of what farmers are facing.

When farmers heard about the lower prices this spring, they were of course shocked. While I am in the mood of quoting people, I would like to pass along a quote from a farmer in my province of Manitoba, upon hearing about the lower wheat prices. He said: "What

terrible news for farmers. It's a deeper cut than I expected". Those are the words of the president of the United Grain Growers.

I would like to say just a few words about this unmerciful subsidy war that is going on between European countries and the United States. It is helping to kill agriculture in Canada because the farmers, beyond their own control, are caught in what you might call a cross-fire. They are almost pawns in a deadly game.

Unlike their counterparts in the U.S. and European countries, Canadian farmers, I must remind you, Mr. Speaker, are not guaranteed a support price. The best they have is a floor price, which is usually well below world prices.

There are programs such as the Western Grain Stabilization Program. Of course that kind of a program helps, but it is far from perfect. The level of support is not known in advance. Worse still, there can be no payments in any given year. This year is an example. That is because payments are based on a moving five-year average. So there can be no payments even after several years of bad crops.

What about the cuts in farm support programs? I mentioned earlier these reductions amounting to about $400 million. Just to enumerate them, they are these. Crop insurance was slashed by $200 million. The grain and flour program was cut by $60 million. The Rail Branchline Rehabilitation Program was reduced by $48 million. Grain and crop advance payments were cut by $54 million, while the dairy export program was cut by $12 million. Commodity based loans were reduced by $15 million, and the Canadian Dairy Commission by $10 million. That amounts to a total of $399 million.

Now I come to the most recent controversy having to do with the federal government's offer of a $500 million farm aid program, a program I suppose designed to get money into farmers' pockets right now. I wish it was happening right now. But all we find is confrontation from the federal government, a bid by the federal government to somehow divide and conquer over the provinces, to break down an understandable common front, particularly put together by the prairie governments.

It has been said over and over again that farmers need the money right now, although somehow or another I think the federal government is not listening. I think it is unwarranted and unfair—it is brutal—that the federal government would say: "Here is the $500 million on the table, but we have all kinds of strings attached. Unless the provincial governments come through, you ain't going to get the money. You're just not going to get it".

I do not think farmers deserve that kind of treatment. If the federal government is really sincere, if it wants to help farmers this way, and it is just one way of helping—it is not the whole ball of wax, and we know that—it would forget about these strings, sever them and release the money because the money is needed now.

Again, Mr. Speaker, you do not have to take my word or the word of the member for Moose Jaw—Lake Centre. Perhaps you would like to listen to the prairie premiers. They do not agree with the federal government.

The prairie premiers, you will note, Mr Speaker, belong to the same political party as does the hon. minister. They are all Progressive Conservatives.

What did they say just a few days ago about this offer? Let me quote what was said because I think it is notable what they said. It is notable because it supports what we have been saying on this side of the House for a long time. This is what the prairie premiers stated in their press release:

> Premiers demanded that the federal government's offer of $450 million of assistance to Canadian grain and oilseed producers and $50 million of assistance to other agricultural producers should be paid immediately and without any strings attached.

The western premiers also stated in their news release:

> The Western premiers noted that the 1990 income deficiency is a direct result of international trade subsidy wars and, as such, must be addressed by the federal government. Provincial treasuries are simply not equipped to take on the treasuries of the United States or the European community.

It is also notable what members of the legislature in the Province of Saskatchewan did. They are totally dissatisfied with the federal government's arguments with respect to withholding the moneys until the provinces come through.

• (1640)

What did this motion that was passed 41 to 0 in the Saskatchewan legislature state? I guess there is a preponderance of Conservatives in that House.

The motion states:

> —this assembly condemns the Government of Canada for failing to provide adequate assistance to Saskatchewan farmers at a time when a sharp drop in the initial price will mean a loss of $500 million to $600 million to Saskatchewan farmers. And, further that this assembly calls on the Government of Canada to provide an immediate direct federal cash payment of $500 million to Saskatchewan farmers, as advocated again by the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool on May 2, 1990, and to implement a sound long term farm income stabilization plan.

In conclusion, the time now is for action and not for rhetoric. That is what the farmers are demanding. It is the least that they deserve.

Hon. Charles Mayer (Minister of Western Economic Diversification and Minister of State (Grains and Oilseeds)): Mr. Speaker, there are many things I could take issue with, but I will pick just three.

Farmers are people. To the extent that that means they are consumers, they are going to pay the GST. When I was talking—and I hope no one misunderstood me—I was talking about farmers as businessmen. That is what I meant when I said that a farmer is a businessman and at the end of the day is not going to be paying the GST. I assumed that that would have been obvious, but apparently it was not.

Second, I would like to give some figures with respect to what has been happening with FCC, and they will give more of a picture. Of all the land that FCC owns, it has leased back about 55 per cent of it, and about 95 per cent of that land has been leased back to the original borrower. If we put it in that kind of a context, over half the people who have had financial difficulties with FCC have ended up, through the Farm Debt Review Board system, leasing that same land back. So all those people are not put off the land.

If we look at the number of hearings that have been held, hearings of the Farm Debt Review Board where FCC has been involved, we see that there have been 6,000 hearings. Some 73 per cent of the farmers in all those cases have continued farming. So there is a little bit of a success story there. Again, I am not painting it as all being rosy, but to get up and say that the FCC owns all this land and by implication the people who did own it no longer farm is not the case.

The last point I would make has to do with the hon. member saying that the decrease in summer fallow is not a good sign. In this business if you do not sow, you do not reap. That is what it is all about. Summer fallow means just that. You fallow it for the summer; you do not seed. I do not see how anybody with some common sense can take a decrease in summer fallow acres as anything but a positive sign. It costs less to look after an acre of summer fallow for a year than it does to crop. It means that farmers are exhibiting a little bit of confidence in the industry because they are seeding more this year than they did last year.

I could go on. There is pretty good evidence around that in some areas summer fallow adds to salinity as far as farm land is concerned. There has been some pretty good work done at the University of Saskatchewan on this subject. It is an indication to me as a farmer, and someone with some common sense, that when summer fallow acreage goes down that is a positive sign for the industry. As I said, if you do not sow in this business you do not reap. What it is all about is producing something so that you can harvest it.

Mr. Harvard: Mr. Speaker, I really think there are more important matters to be talking about than summer fallow acreage.

Let me just try this once again because I think the hon. minister did not hear me very well, or that he misunderstood me.

First, he was the one who mentioned this figure of a 2 per cent reduction in summer fallow acreage. I think it would be reasonable to suggest that 2 per cent is probably within a margin of error. Two per cent is not a lot. I find it astonishing for him to suggest that by taking a small figure of 2 per cent it implies confidence in the agricultural community. At best, it may say nothing at all.

I would also suggest, and this by way of repetition, that my experience on a farm suggests that when farmers feel under pressure they will sometimes take land out of fallow that they perhaps originally did not intend to. They do it because they are going to use every available piece of soil to make a buck, even when in their ideal

moments they would like to take a plot of land, a field and put it in fallow for a year and give it a rest.

For the minister to take this 2 per cent figure having to do with summer fallow acreage and turn it into a confidence factor is absurd. It fits in with my comments related to his. His remarks, in my opinion, have an air of unreality about them.

Mr. Rod Laporte (Moose Jaw—Lake Centre): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for his speech. I want to make a comment and ask a question of the hon. member.

The minister spoke in his speech in glowing terms of how much this Conservative government—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I suggest that the hon. member concentrate on the speech made by the hon. member for Winnipeg—St. James since it is his speech that he is commenting on.

Mr. Laporte: In the past members of the government have made many comments—and this was referred in the hon. member's speech—to the effect that the government has made a major contribution to agriculture in this country and in fact that it has supported agriculture and that agriculture is doing very well. I would just like to throw in a couple of figures here, if I could, and I will focus on Saskatchewan.

From the time that this Conservative government came into power in 1984 the level of farm debt in Saskatchewan rose from about $4 billion to almost $6 billion. Today, the level of farm debt in Saskatchewan is over $6 billion. One-third of the farmers carry 70 per cent of that debt.

As well, since 1984, since this government took power, foreclosures have tripled in Saskatchewan. This year farmers are faced with something like 10,000 foreclosures in Saskatchewan.

Contrary to what the government is saying and contrary to what has been said today, I do not see where the farmers of Saskatchewan are doing so well. I would just like to ask the hon. member if he knows of anywhere in the province of Manitoba, or anywhere else in this country, where the farmers are doing well and where rural Canada is doing well.

Surely, based on what the minister is saying, there has to be some areas in this country where farming is doing very well. I would like to know where that is. Does the hon. member have any idea of where that might be?

Mr. Harvard: I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that an uncle of my wife who lives in the Humboldt, Saskatchewan area feels—

Mr. Friesen: That's heavy research.

Mr. Harvard: That is heavy research. I do not want the hon. member from British Columbia to trivialize my remarks because farmers know what they are talking about. There is an old expression from where I came that goes this way: You didn't come down the river on a bale of hay. I know a lot of farmers and most farmers did not come down the river on a bale of hay. They know their business and they know it well.

What I was going to say about my wife's uncle who lives near Humbolt, Saskatchewan, is that he feels that he is one of the lucky ones. He is a man probably near 70 years of age. He is up there with some other people in this hallowed Chamber. He is lucky because he has been on the farm a long time and is not heavily in debt. In fact, I suspect that he does not have any debt at all. He is in the sunset years of his farming experience.

• (1650)

But what about the young people? What about the young men and women who would like to take up a life on the farm and they are in their early twenties? What do they face?

I do not think I have to tell my good friend from Moose Jaw—Lake Centre the proposition that they face. It is almost impossible, what with the cost of land, the cost of machinery, the cost of loans and these low commodity prices. As I said earlier, when you take inflation into account, these prices are lower than those that prevailed in the 1930s.

It is true that you can find happy stories. You can find successful stories. They are here and they are there. I am happy for that. I am delighted. I wish every Canadian farmer would show a profit. I wish every Canadian farmer could take a vacation two or three weeks every year and feel that he could afford it. But those farmers are few and far between.

The reason I say that is because all we have to do is look at the indicators, look at the statistics. The information is absolutely overwhelming. The farm story is a disturbing one—farmers are in a terrible dilemma. The

future, if anything, is perhaps even worse than what they face right now.

I go back to what I said earlier, that is, farmers deserve something better. Haggling, bargaining and confrontation has been going on between the federal government and the provinces. The farmers deserve better than that.

I do not think there is any doubt about it, but that the federal government has to take almost all the blame. As far as we know it has the money. It says that it is prepared to give it. It says it is on the table, but it will not release it despite the need of the farmers. It will not release it unless the provinces meet certain conditions. That is unfair.

Mr. Simon de Jong (Regina—Qu'Appelle): Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a privilege for me to join the debate today and to have this opportunity to express to the House the plight of many of my constituents in my constituency of Regina—Qu'Appelle.

Over 50 per cent of the voters in my riding live outside the urban area of Regina. Many of them are farmers or living in smaller communities that are very dependant upon the farm economy. Most of them are dry-land farmers. There is some mixed farming and some cattle operation in my district, but most are grain farmers.

As I have travelled around my riding and gone through the coffee shops and talked to farm people in the garages, the town halls and up and down Main Street in the many small communities that make up part of Regina—Qu'Appelle, I have never seen such a depressed mood as I have found this year. There is a sense of hopelessness and of helplessness. There is a sense that nobody is listening to them. They see the value of their lands decreasing year after year. They see the value of what they are so proud to produce, some of the best grain in the world, decreasing. They are some of the most efficient producers in the world. Yet when they sit back and add up the costs of production and what they will get for the produce, it just does not make sense.

When you look at the statistics, Mr. Speaker, particularly for the farm economy in Saskatchewan, you begin to see the dimension of the problem. Saskatchewan has the fastest growing rate of poverty in the country, second only to Newfoundland.

A total of 303 communities in the province have lost population since 1986. A thousand farm families leave the land every year in Saskatchewan and are not replaced.

In 1989, Saskatchewan recorded the highest level of bankruptcies in the history of the province.

Since 1984, more than 60,000 people have left Saskatchewan.

Between September, 1988, and September, 1989, Farm Credit Corporation foreclosures in Saskatchewan on farm families increased by 60 per cent.

Over 10,000 notices of intent to foreclose on land or seize machinery, crops or livestock have been served on Saskatchewan farmers by lending institutions.

Today, agricultural lenders hold over 850,000 acres of Saskatchewan farm land, compared to 121,000 acres in 1987.

Realized net farm income in Saskatchewan is expected to be down some 87 per cent from last year, down $109 million from $910 million in 1989.

The value of farm land in Saskatchewan has fallen dramatically—30 per cent in the last five years.

The depressing statistics go on. People have seen their life savings diminish. The value of the land which was their pension and security in old age has totally dropped. Now, many of these older farmers who want to retire, cannot. Many of their sons, and in an increasing number of cases, daughters, who want to take over the farm operation, cannot, because of high interest rates, the low prices they will get for their commodities and the general insecurity that exists.

The farmers in my district do not want government hand-outs. They want an opportunity to fairly compete with the producers in Argentina, Europe and the United States. The farmers in my district figure they can compete with these countries, that they can produce some of the best wheat in the world. But they cannot compete against the treasuries of the United States and Europe. That is like banging your head against the wall. They cannot win that fight.

They need help. They need a commitment from the Canadian government that it will stand behind them so that Canadian agriculture, particularly agriculture in our

western provinces, will not be destroyed and be victims of the European and American trade wars in agriculture.

This government has failed them. Many of my constituents voted for the Conservative Party in 1984. They ended up voting for me in 1988. In fact I got over 50 per cent of the vote outside of the city of Regina in the last election.

Many of them had some hope and expectation that finally we would get, with a Conservative government, a government in Ottawa that would listen to the needs of western farmers. They had that expectation. Instead what they have received are *ad hoc* programs that are more motivated by political timetables than they are by securing the western farm economy.

I was talking to a farmer earlier this morning from around Edenwold. He remembered that the Minister of Agriculture announced a program in the fall of 1988 just before the federal election. The promise was that the money would be in the hands of the farmers by that Christmas. Indeed, the money was in the hands of the farmers by Christmas, but it was Christmas a year later.

• (1700)

He reports, as well, that there is some optimism at home because of the weather conditions. We are having a good, soggy, wet spring. Even with the drought that has gripped western Canada for the last number of years, at least by the indications of the spring, there is some hope. There is some possibility of getting a good crop this year. He is telling me that farmers are out there, trying to seed but, of course, they cannot afford the fertilizers and the other input costs because they do not have the cash flow.

We have seen this government and the government of Saskatchewan play political football with each other, trying to get some political mileage without spending a red cent. They are trying to tell the farmers back home that, yes, they will support them in getting some money to them to enable them to put a crop in this year. As the associate minister of agriculture and the minister in charge of the Wheat Board said earlier in the House, one cannot reap unless one sows. There are many farmers back home who would like to sow, but they do not have the cash to buy the seeds, the fertilizers, and the fuel in order to put the crop in. They are asking this government for help.

The Minister of Agriculture has said: "We are studying this. We are working on it. We are having meetings." Indeed, they have meetings. The Premier of Saskatchewan, in the Speech from the Throne opening the Saskatchewan legislature, stated that he had an agreement with the federal government. Some agreement! Farmers are still waiting today. They need that money. They cannot afford the political games that are being played between Regina and Ottawa. They have to know now what they can expect so that they can plan. Good agriculture and good farming practices mean planning. One needs this information. The farmers are not getting the information; they will still have to wait.

The minister announced, the other day, in answer to my colleague, that perhaps next week, on Friday when the Ministers of Agriculture will meet again, they will have something to announce. Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, and then, perhaps not. Perhaps the date of some announcement will not be determined by the cycle of the crop, it will be more determined by the cycle of the political career of the Tory government in Saskatchewan.

We have heard a lot from the Tories about what a tremendous job they have done for western agriculture. Yet, as I said earlier in my remarks, the farmers back home feel betrayed because this Conservative government failed to produce a permanent program, a program that has been thought through, and a program that they can depend on that would be like a foundation to western agriculture. They have not received that from this government and that is what they need.

In the 1988 election, we proposed a well thought-through program. It was a program that begins to establish some income stability, at a certain level, to ensure that the family farm size of operation will have a guarantee and that they will be protected from the vagaries of international prices. We proposed, in our program, that we would strengthen institutions like the marketing boards and the Wheat Board and that we would institute programs that would help in the intergenerational transfer of farm lands so that this burden would be taken off the shoulders of every generation. What great stupidity it is that every generation has to pay off the banks in interest payments. This is a burden that we must lift off the shoulders of our farm community, so that we can have the intergenerational transfer of land, without all the interest charges. Those were the pro-

grams and the policies we announced in the 1988 election.

What we have finally seen from this Tory government is a conference earlier this year. Now, finally, we hear from the Minister of Agriculture that he wants some permanent programs. He is tired of these *ad hoc* programs. It has been in power now for almost six years, and it is too long. Why did it not introduce such a program in 1984 or 1985? Where has it been?

When we hear the indications, and we see the signs of where this Tory government is going and where it is leading western agriculture, it scares me even further. When it talks about a permanent program, it means a permanent program where the market has a total determining force. It wants to do away with orderly marketing. It wants to do away with the Wheat Board. We saw this during the free trade debate.

We know where the Tories are headed and what their farm program is. They would strip western agriculture of all those institutions that we have built up over the years, those programs that the pioneers in Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Alberta have fought for. These are the programs that the predecessors of my party, the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, with the co-op movement and the pools have built together. These are what former Tory and Liberal governments, and people such as John Diefenbaker and Jimmy Gardner have made in their days to develop institutions which would provide some protection to our western farmers. The agenda of this government is to strip western Canada and our western Canadian farmers of those institutions that were developed to protect them.

The government says, of course, that it has given all these nice grants. It has given all these nice billions of dollars of bail-out. However, it also fails to mention the increased charges that it has levied on the farm community or the cut-backs to existing programs.

For example, in the province of Saskatchewan this year, farm policy by this government will cost Saskatchewan farmers some $825 million. The drop in initial prices alone accounts for $550 million. The FCC interest rate increases account for $35 million. The loss of two-price wheat accounts for $127 million. The crop insurance premiums account for $55 million. The reduction in federal farm-fuel rebates is $25 million. The increase in grain freight rates is $19 million. The elimination of the interest-free cash advance is $14 million. These add up to a figure of $825 million that will be taken out of the farmers' pockets because of the policies of this government this year.

Do not tell me what a great friend of the farmers these Tories are. They might put some of the change back in one pocket, but, my gosh, they have got the hands in other pocket and they are taking it out of the farmers' pockets at the same time as they are taking it out of the taxpayers' pockets all over.

My colleagues have mentioned the goods and services tax. The minister says that in the end the farmer will get it all back. Let us hope that is true. Is it not ironic that the government is now asking the farmers to collect its taxes? Of course, when they collect its taxes and pay for it, they are not getting any interest on that. In fact, the farmers are giving the government an interest-free cash advance while the government has taken the interest-free cash advance away from the farmers. Is it not ironic that the great friends of the farmers, the people who understand the farmers, are now taking the cash advance out of the farm community through the goods and services tax?

We need a government that is willing to make a commitment and that will stand up for western agriculture. We need a government that will indeed recognize that its policies, whether on international trade or interest rate policies, are having an adverse affect.

• (1710)

I heard the minister responsible for the Wheat Board talk about interest rates and how we need to bring our inflation down. Let me tell him, we do not have much inflation in Regina. We do not have much inflation in Indian Head, Strasbourg or Ituna. Houses there cost next to nothing. The value of real estate in Regina and all those communities has continually decreased.

There is no inflation when it comes to the value of farmland. There might be some inflation in Toronto and Vancouver, but we want a government that also knows the needs of prairie farmers and will devise policies that will help them and that will not stop inflation in Toronto

at the expense of prairie farmers. That is what western Canadian farmers want. That is what they were expecting in 1984. They knew they were not going to get it, and that is why many did not vote for this Tory bunch in 1988. I would suspect that in the next federal election there will hardly be a Tory in western Canada left.

Mr. Terry Clifford (London—Middlesex): Mr. Speaker, I am certainly interested in the debate, representing farmers in southwestern Ontario. Indeed, the member for Regina—Qu'Appelle has visited London—Middlesex in his flights from Saskatchewan.

Is the hon. member in favour of the $500 million being spent by the federal government right away? He seems to be in favour of it. I cannot understand why he is not in favour of the GST, particularly in his province. It will save Canadian farmers $250 million. His own province is a major exporter of agriculture with 70 per cent of its product being exported. There is an expected gain with the GST of 2 per cent in the economy of Saskatchewan. I do not understand where he is coming from.

If the hon. member wants the $500 million, why does he not want the farmers of Canada to benefit directly from the $250 million?

Mr. de Jong: Mr. Speaker, I have some difficulty connecting the $500 million, that has been promised and that we are still waiting for as an interim measure needed to allow the farmers to put the crop in this spring, and the goods and services tax.

The hon. member claims that the farmers are going to save some $200 million. Certainly, I would like to see those figures. Much of what the farmer now buys is exempt from the federal sales tax. If he assumed that the farmers were paying tax and they are going to get a rebate, those are new sets of figures. That does not jibe.

The farmer does not pay all that much in actual sales tax on farm input costs, other than the tax on gasoline for which he used to to get a rebate. The government now is cutting back on the rebates. When the goods and services tax comes in, the farmer will get the full rebate back. That is playing political games.

The government has increased the tax. Two years later it will give it back and say: "Aren't we nice fellows?" That will not wash back home. Farmers are not that dumb. They will see through that number quickly. What the farmers want are commitments right now.

The government knew that western agriculture was in trouble in terms of the cash flow to pay for the input costs necessary to put the seed in the ground. It knew about that last fall. Certainly at Christmas, the figures were out. The projections were out. The government should have sat down and spent January and February with the premiers of Saskatchewan, Alberta and Manitoba devising a program, having it out, and playing the political games. By the beginning of March, they should have announced a program.

Instead, we have seen the government waiting until the crisis hit. Now it is busy working and trying to find a solution. By the time it finds a solution, spring seeding time is over. All we have had is sound and fury from the Tories in Regina and Ottawa. There is nothing substantial in the hands of the farmers that would allow them to put their crops in this year.

Mr. Larry Schneider (Regina—Wascana): Mr. Speaker, I listened to the emotional rhetoric of the hon. member for Regina—Qu'Appelle, dealing with the very serious matter before us, namely, the cash flow problem that currently faces Canadian agriculture.

I heard the hon. member mention the word "betrayed". He said that he felt Saskatchewan farmers were betrayed. If I quote from a document which was prepared by *AgDecision* in May 1990, which is the United Grain Growers prairie crop report, it shows that as of May 7, which is early in the wheat planting year, in Saskatchewan wheat plantings are estimated to be up some 3 per cent.

I ask myself the question that if farmers feel betrayed, why are they investing more in the system? I question that comment as being nothing more than just emotional rhetoric and lacking in substance.

The hon. member went on to say that the NDP would have programs that would strengthen and help farmers. Mr. Speaker, for your information, the NDP did have a program that removed the burden of debt from the shoulders of Saskatchewan farmers. It was a very effective one. It learned from a political philosophy from across the Atlantic Ocean, which meant that it incorporated a land banking system in the province of Saskatchewan.

At the last provincial election, hon. members will recall that agriculture Saskatchewan spoke rather heavily and forthrightly and it told the NDP and the government in the province of Saskatchewan that it wanted to have nothing to do with socialized agriculture. As a result, the NDP were turfed out along with the land bank policies.

There is no question that agriculture is facing tough times in Saskatchewan, but I hardly think that developing a land bank system and having big brother in charge of agriculture is the way to resolve it. Given the experience of the NDP government in Saskatchewan, does the hon. member still think a land bank policy is the policy to follow? If so, why is that not the course that eastern Europe is following?

Mr. de Jong: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for Regina—Wascana for his questions.

First, when it comes to the matter of more acreage being put into production, that can be expected given the spring conditions. There is some optimism and hope because of the growing conditions. Many farmers are recognizing that they have to put every bit of soil and land that they own into production in order to meet their cash and credit demands.

I am sure if the hon. member for Regina—Wascana would take some time to visit some of the farmers in his riding, he will discover that they are not going to be using the fertilizers they normally would because they cannot afford them. For this government to say that it is a sign of confidence that the farmers are planting more acreage, I think it is fooling itself.

In fact, I would even prescribe a motive to that, but I will not. This government knows that the farmers are not going to be using the fertilizers that would enhance and enable them to get a much richer crop out of the land. Yes, they are going to try to press every piece of land that they have into production, but they are not going to be able to invest in fertilizers and so forth, that would ensure a bumper crop.

My hon. friend also talks about the land bank. There were some problems with the land bank. I now talk to farmers who tell me: "I wish the land bank was back." We could have changed some of the administration. Personally, I would like to have seen a dozen or two dozen municipalities forming a larger regional unit and having that unit administer a land bank, rather than perhaps the government doing it from Regina.

One thing I will not fault the previous New Democratic Party government of Allan Blakeney in Saskatchewan for is recognizing a problem. It tried to do something about it. I give it credit for the guts and courage. In 1982, we had the Tories come in and they did away with the land bank. Guess who owns the land in Saskatchewan now? Today, agricultural lenders hold over 850,000 acres of Saskatchewan farm land. The Farm Credit Corporation, the Royal Bank of Canada, the Bank of Nova Scotia—the banks are the largest land holders in Saskatchewan. That is Tory land banking. And that is something we will not accept, nor will the people of Saskatchewan. Just wait until the next provincial election.

• (1720)

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Larry Schneider (Regina—Wascana): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that after one and a half years the opposition has finally taken this time to highlight the plight of agriculture in Canada. It is certainly overdue from their perspective.

It is not the sort of thing that this government has taken lightly. We have attempted to develop some programs in consultation with the agriculture sector which were deemed to be meaningful. However, in terms of a broader agricultural long-term program, I believe that the final resolve to the plight of agriculture still eludes not only this government, but any government. In fact I would suggest that it has a tendency to elude agriculture as well.

There is certainly no question at all that some of our farmers are experiencing great financial difficulties. Their problems are the result of successive years of weather-related disasters, lingering debt and uncertain prices caused, as my colleagues on both sides of the House mentioned earlier, by international subsidy wars.

In 1990, this government has responded to these difficult times by committing $500 million in special assistance. The commitment was made in March along with several other initiatives. This assistance was contingent on provincial participation and as we all know, negotiations with the provinces are ongoing.

I would like to take this opportunity to comment on the Saskatchewan situation. Our Premier, Grant Devine, faced with a debt burden caused during a disastrous decline in world prices for oil, potash, uranium and agricultural products certainly has a tough role to fulfil as is his commitment to the Saskatchewan farmer.

I believe our conditions for a cost-sharing program caused his job to be most challenging. Saskatchewan agriculture will stand to gain more agricultural dollars than any other province in Canada, but at what cost?

That is the difficult question that remains to be answered. However, given Grant Devine's proven ability and the fact that he certainly is no quitter, I am confident that whatever deal he makes with us will be sound and meaningful.

No one is comfortable with the time that this matter has taken to resolve, hence one should appreciate how difficult this problem really is.

By seeking matching funding from the provinces, this government hopes to put even more money in farmers' hands. If the provinces choose to match our $500 million, a total of $1 billion will be available to Canadian farmers in this crop year. This would bring farm income in 1990-1991 in line with the five-year average. Clearly the federal government is willing to do its part to ease the financial problems facing Canadian farmers.

But as we come to grips with the problems now facing our farmers, we cannot lose sight of the long-term picture. That is one of the reasons why our Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Agriculture is leading our agri-food industry through a major policy review. It is the most extensive review of agri-food policy ever undertaken in this country and it involves all the facets of this vital and dynamic industry.

Several government industry groups are at work to ensure our agri-food industry is well positioned to respond to an increasingly competitive world marketplace and can keep pace with rapidly changing consumer demands and technological developments. At the same time we want to maintain our record for safe nutritious food and meet the challenges of increasing environmental awareness.

We also want our producers to have the farm support programs they need. We want to establish programs that are more predictable and permanent. We want to establish an agricultural framework that does not require the *ad hoc* programs that now need to be designed to respond to the crises and difficulties that we experience in agriculture.

Already, for example, we have improved the crop insurance program. Those improvements are in place for this crop year and are the result of extensive consultation with producers and our provincial counterparts.

Both producers and governments need to be operating in a more predictable environment. Canadian producers need security in making their business plans, and governments need security in setting their budgets.

Through the policy review, the grains safety net committee has been working on policy options for a national safety net program for grains and oilseeds. That program has been discussed with federal and provincial agriculture ministers and is being designed to be compatible with a long-term, comprehensive, safety net plan for all commodities and producers.

A federal provincial group is looking at long term safety nets. Its work will be discussed at a meeting of federal and provincial agriculture ministers in Moncton in August this year. The ministers will also be discussing the work of the other policy review working groups. Those groups are putting various policy areas under the microscope. These policy areas include supply management, transportation, competitiveness, sustainable agriculture, food safety, farm finance and management, pesticide registration, research and technology and interprovincial trade barriers.

These groups will be coming up with new policy options which will be weighed against the vision the federal and provincial governments share for the future of Canadian agriculture. That vision rests on four pillars; policy that recognizes regional diversity, increased environmental sustainability, greater self-reliance and more market responsiveness.

These new policy options will take into account regional strengths and advantages. Each region will be encouraged to produce what it can produce and market most efficiently. They will also ensure our food production practices are compatible with the need to protect the environment and conserve our natural resources.

We are also looking at policies that will ensure farmers' production decisions are driven, not by government programs but by market signals. This does not mean that farmers have to live without support against sudden changes in markets or weather. Indeed, we need effective support programs to act as cushions against the unexpected and the unpredictable.

Our policies will also ensure that farmers continue to have the right to market their products in a collective fashion. Through the policy review, we want to ensure that the benefits of supply management continue. At the same time, we want to ensure our agri-food industry is responsive to what the market wants and needs. We want all facets of the industry working together to ensure market opportunities are not lost or ignored.

As my colleague, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Agriculture has said many times, "We are taking this review right from the farmers' gate to the consumers' plate".

This government recognizes that all segments have a role to play in ensuring our agri-food industry grows and expands to its true potential. Certainly, this government's commitment to the industry cannot be questioned. We have always been there in times of need and, through the policy review, we are taking steps to ensure the agri-food industry remains vital and strong. That is a goal I am sure everyone in this House shares and supports.

When I review the motion currently before us, it seemingly comes at us from a non-partisan point of view. It was with that thought in mind that I initially looked at this motion, but after having heard the speeches I began to have my doubts.

The motion in a very honest and sincere way calls upon the Government of Canada to endeavour to strengthen the economic position of Canadian producers with an immediate cash injection, with or without provincial participation.

While I understand where the author of the motion is coming from, it leaves a whole roomful of questions to be answered. The questions and answers do not seem to go together. For instance, if this money is to be made available, to whom will it be available? Will it be made available on a cultivated basis, a crop basis, will it include pasture land, will it consider special crops grown, or will a program, in whatever form it might take, be designed to compensate those that have run through a particularly bad period of years in relationship to those that have run through a period of fairly successful years? Is there any provision at all in such a program, whatever it might be, that deals with the capability of the particular acre of land being considered?

While on the surface it seems like a very easy motion to address, we have found in experience that in order to be fair and equitable to all those concerned, the answer to the very elusive question of how best to resolve the cash flow problems in agriculture remains elusive. It remains elusive, not only from those of us in the House of Commons that have permit books—and I think there are more of us on the government side than on the opposition side—it continues to remain a problem for government as well.

The opposition is long on rhetoric, long on desire, but short on suggestions.

Hon. Ralph Ferguson (Lambton—Middlesex): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to take part in this debate today.

• (1730)

I commend my colleague from Winnipeg—St. James for the very eloquent and understanding speech he made in this debate. His well researched presentation was certainly a credit to one from western Canada who, while he is not an agriculturalist, he certainly understands the problems of those producers in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. My colleague has outlined that very eloquently. I want to go a little step further and deviate from the problem in western Canada, although it is very serious. My heart goes out to those producers, particularly in Saskatchewan and Manitoba, who are losing their farms and their lifetime savings. Because many of these people are in their late fifties and early sixties, a life of retirement that is free of worry and want is not available to them.

I want to deviate for a moment or two and draw the attention of the government to the fact that we also have problems in Ontario at this point. We have been waiting anxiously for the announcement of the initial payments for Ontario winter wheat. The beginning of harvest for this crop is less than eight weeks away. These farmers have to make a very important decision, a decision

caused partly by weather. Fifteen per cent of the winter wheat crop did not come through the winter in very good condition; 15 per cent of it is a wipeout. These producers have to make a decision over the next three or four days as to whether they rip that up and plant an alternative crop, or whether they leave it in hopes of getting some returns, although meagre, from that wheat that was killed over the winter months.

Is the minister to look at this to see if he can speed up the process? Hopefully, he will do that this week. Those producers have to make a decision whether they are going to rip it up in the next few days and plant soybeans, white beans, or one of the other edible bean crops. It has to be a crop that will accept a late planting.

In a letter dated May 16, the Prime Minister has been called upon by the Ontario Wheat Producers Marketing Board to act immediately to make this known. While we realize that the initial payments announced last week apply to western Canadian wheat and the Canadian Wheat Board, this one is administered by the Agricultural Co-operatives Marketing Act. I think it is only fair that the government announce, as soon as possible, what that initial payment is going to be so that farmers can produce their cash flow projections, make their planting intentions immediately and put in those alternative crops.

I also think that the government should be looking a little harder at what it has done and maybe eat a little humble pie and return to looking at the two-price wheat system because the Ontario producers offered to accept a cap on the amount of wheat they would produce that goes into the domestic market. If that cap was accepted by the Ontario producers and they took the export market price for the rest of it, this alone would be a benefit to the farmers of Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Alberta, and Lord knows they need all the help the can get at this time.

I am very disappointed and frustrated about this. I think I should remind the minister of a speech made in this House, when he said: "Whereas the economic problems facing Canadian farmers today are largely the result of government inaction and neglect", and I am sure we all agree with that, "this House condemns the government for its failure to recognize the importance of this agriculture sector and its contribution to the economic growth in Canada, and urges the government to move quickly to expedite to reduce the farm fuel tax", I say that it should be removed altogether, "reduce the red meat stabilization uncertainties, but to introduce the red meat plan and expedite the passage of legislation respecting advance payments and resist the erosion of initial payments to western grain".

That is an interesting statement and I wholeheartedly concur with it today in this House. It was made on May 13, 1984, by none other than the Minister of State for Grains and Oilseeds. If he thought conditions were bad then, they have deteriorated far more.

A few days ago, the Farm Debt Review Board was in front of the agriculture committee of the House of Commons. One of the provincial chairmen pointed out to us that the equity in the farm sector across Canada has seen a continual erosion over the last five years.

I have no idea of the political persuasion of that hon. gentleman, but I know that he was absolutely right when he pointed that out. He is a very astute Canadian. The government should pay attention to the erosion of equity. That is why we are seeing all the foreclosures in western Canada at the present time and why we are seeing the financial institutions as the largest landholders in the province of Saskatchewan, landholders of land that was once owned and operated by the family farmers, their wives and their children. It is a terrible legacy to leave those people, a terrible legacy to leave to all Canadians.

I also want to point out that this afternoon we met with the Dairy Farmers of Canada and the Ontario Milk Marketing Board in the agriculture committee. There is a level of uncertainty there about what is going to happen to that industry over the next few years. One of the statements in committee was that they feel very apprehensive about the fact that they may be being traded off against other interests in Canada, interests that are closely tied to the export markets. These are markets that do not have the level of stability that the dairy industry or the poultry industry has here in Canada. The producers who belong to those industries certainly have a right to some stability and assurances that those industries will continue to prosper the way that they were intended when those plans were set up by the Government of Canada under Liberal administrations. I would like to extend that to include the Canadian Wheat Board which was established many years ago under the

Conservative government. It has done a good job over the years.

Those institutions should be strengthened and enhanced, rather than have the foundations chipped away a little bit at a time. They should be held up as an example to the rest of the world as to how we can produce ample quantities of clean quality Canadian food for the consumers of this country and other members of society.

Having been a farmer for a good many years, this is a time of anticipation. I always make a point of getting out in the fields for a few hours on the weekends. It is a time when life springs up all around us, whether it is the grass that is growing or the wildflowers and the bushes, the birds nesting, or the arrival of new calves. It should be a time of optimism and hope, not a time of despair, apprehension and neglect by governments.

I ask this government to make that initial payment known immediately for the Ontario wheat producers. Let them know that their cash flow projections can be based on the wheat they have left after the winter kill to allow them to go ahead and make alternative planning arrangements.

I ask this government to pay special attention to this major resource industry of Canada whose spin-off effects impact across our total economy.

• (1740)

Mr. Lyle Vanclief (Prince Edward—Hastings): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to stand in this House today and speak on this motion that calls upon the government to endeavour to strengthen the economic position of Canadian producers with a cash injection, with or without provincial participation.

As I have said in this House before, I feel very strongly that as goes agriculture so goes the economy of a country. There are four creators of wealth in the world: fishing, mining, forestry, and farming. The policies of this government do not seem to recognize the importance of those four. The policies of this government have put in jeopardy the future of those involved in those four industries.

I know that there have been *ad hoc* policies and *ad hoc* programs in the past few years but like many people, I feel that they are not the answer. They are a short-term bandaid but that is not what we need. We need recognition by the government, we need recognition by everyone, of the importance of agriculture to any country.

I do not have to remind people in this House, but I remind those who are watching of the importance of the agri-food business. It does over $45 billion worth of business a year. It is responsible for 10 per cent of Canada's domestic product. It provides over 1.5 million jobs, which is over 15 per cent of the jobs in Canada. Fifty per cent of our agricultural production in Canada is exported and that accounts for over 7 per cent of our Canadian exports. The production of much of that export, a big percentage, is grain production. Many sectors of the farm community are suffering right now, but those who are particularly hurting are our western grain producers.

I wonder when this government is going to realize the importance of that industry and stop cutting the feet out from underneath the industry with the removal of such programs that have been management tools by the industry over the years such as the Advance Payments for Crops Act, the at and east grain and flour transportation assistance, the removal of the fuel excise rebates and other moves that have been made. Sure, they put an *ad hoc* program in, but now we have an *ad hoc* program put in place that was asked for, and it was needed, not as big as needed but it is better than nothing, I will admit that, and the government claims it is on the table. Well, that is exactly where it is, on the table.

It is not doing the producers any good when it is on the table. This was requested last fall. The need was outlined many months ago by ministers of agriculture in the west and by premiers in the west, so it was put on the table, but it was not put on the table until it was so late that the producers could not get their hands on it. The supposed purpose was to assist the producers in their seeding expenses this spring, but here we are in the third week in May when the seeding decisions have been made, when the cash flows at the bank have had to be established, when the credit has had to be established and no one knows whether they are going to benefit from this program of $500 million that has been offered to the provinces with the words: "If you match it, you can have it".

The buck has been passed from the federal government to the provincial governments. The provincial governments have to decide what program it is, and the provincial governments in conjunction with the federal

government have to get all of that information out to the producers. The long and the short of it is that the banking and the lending institutions have lost faith because of the way similar programs have been handled in the past with uncertainty and the producer thinking he was going to get a certain amount of money and then finding out later that he did not get that much or it was not coming. The lending institutions are saying: "Show me, then I will assist you in your financial arrangements for another crop year". But the producers cannot say, and they cannot show them, because all they say is that it is on the table. They want to know how they are going to get it in their hands, and they cannot. It is a very frustrating position.

The government is being told, and I wonder if it is listening, that by far the majority of Canadians recognize the importance of agriculture. By coincidence, today in my office I received a letter from a lady in my riding who I believe was born on a farm but who has not lived on the farm in many years. This is from a lady in Prince Edward—Hastings riding, a long way from the Prairies, but I would like to read it:

> I do not make it a practice to write to members of parliament, but I feel very strongly that I should do so. I am quite concerned about our western farmers, feeling that they need more help that our government seems willing to give them. The price of wheat is very low and should be subsidized so that farmers will get a fair price. I am sure that they had expected a fair price and were dependent on that to keep going. The farming industry is one of Canada's most important industries, if not the *most* important! I would hate to see any more farmers having to leave the land because they cannot make a go of it!

We should listen to that. I hope the government listens to that.

We have seen a high interest rate policy and a weak negotiating ability at the negotiating table, as far as agriculture is concerned. It is very nice to be a nice guy, but I can tell you from experience in negotiating that the nice guy does not always win. I do not mean to say that one has to be belligerent or nasty when negotiating, but the friendly approach does not always succeed. It is all well and good to come away from the negotiating table saying that we were nice and we showed the way, but when the other people at that table walk away saying that they got Canada again, it starts to concern me.

Grave concern has been expressed at the meetings in my riding in the last month over our negotiating ability and whether Canada is being firm enough in its negotiations. That inability to negotiate firmly and the low prices and the low yields as a result of weather conditions in parts of our country, including parts of the western provinces particularly with the shortage of rain and the drought, has placed the economic stability and sustainability of thousands of Canadian farmers in jeopardy.

We keep talking of sustainability in agriculture and sustainability in the environment and I feel that they go hand in hand. I do not think there is a group of people in Canada that understands the importance of the environment any greater than our farm community. They know what has to be done. They know what should be done and they know how to do it. However, with the prices and the returns to farmers at the present time that they cannot afford to do it.

We are all going to suffer and we had better soon wake up and realize that if we are going to have a sustainable environment, we will need sustainable agriculture, which in turn requires a sustainable economy. They go hand in hand.

I urge the government to put the policies in place that are necessary for that to happen. We have a great natural resource. We have a great food producing capacity, but I do not think we are paying enough attention to it. I do not think that we are marketing it properly. I do not think we are explaining to Canadians the importance of agriculture. I do not think the assistance that is given to farmers is adequate. First the government should explain how the way it is dealing with this particular industry is for the betterment and for the good of all Canadians.

There is no comprehensive agricultural or food producing policy in this country. There is work being done on it. I encourage the government to develop that policy quickly so that producers and farmers and therefore Canadian consumers know that we have a food security and an agricultural security program in this country.

• (1750)

Mr. David Bjornson (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to be asked to speak on behalf of the government on this particular issue.

Before I get into my remarks, I would like to say that yesterday I had the opportunity to be down in southern Manitoba in around the Emerson and Selkirk areas. The farmers are really working down there. They are in the fields, doing their best. There are tractors all over the place, cultivators are going and everybody is moving quite well.

They had dry conditions yesterday but it is completely opposite today. It is raining. Farmers refer to a million dollar rain, but in the Brandon–Souris area in southern Manitoba, I think we can hopefully call it a billion dollar rain.

There have been a number of comments made today in debate. Some I agree with and some I do not. I think it is important that I remind everybody that the government has been responsive to the various needs of the agricultural community.

Back in 1986–87, we put $2 billion into the agricultural industry via the Special Canadian Grains Program. Also in 1988, we went into the Canadian Drought Assistance Program which was good for $850 million.

Mr. Crawford: A real screw–up!

Mr. Bjornson: At least we tried. It was an effort. Not everything is perfect. You know the agricultural industry. You will know the magnitude of the farmers that requested aid. I think the minister did a fine job of putting this program together as best as he could in the timeframe that was involved. It was not for lack of trying. Any criticism like that is unacceptable on this side of the House.

Right now we have $500 million on the table that we want to put into the agricultural industry. The government is doing the best it can, and $450 million of that is directed towards the grains and oilseeds. It is important that everybody understand that we do want to participate.

Throughout the debate so far today, there has been a lot of comments made about international trade. I would like to address my comments to the fact that Canadian agriculture, the grain industry in particular, is very much influenced by international trade.

Canadian farmers have been forced to watch the giants of the international grain trade, the United States and the European Community, beat each other with their wallets, driving down world prices and seriously eroding traditional grain markets.

At the same time, the huge subsidies paid by the European Community continues to encourage overproduction by the farmers. To protect the European grain industry, the community leaders have thrown up tariffs which effectively shut out our opportunity to get into their markets. We have a significant problem over there. The United States and the European Community have bigger wallets than we have.

We are doing our darndest to support the farmers. We have been doing this by working in GATT. There has been an obvious effort. Probably one of the most obvious efforts was put forward by the Minister for International Trade when he said that we should stop dealing with the past and look to the future. We are trying to deal with the problems of the future.

Once again, it is unfortunate that the Americans in particular said: "No, no we might have to fight with you fellows". Because of their influence, the size of their markets and their wallet, they have said they will stop. So we are back in there and we are trying to be optimistic by dealing with the future and not with the past. The past is done. We are still paying for the past and we are going to do what we can, but we want to make sure that we have a futuristic plan. We have to give the Minister for International Trade credit for some very strong efforts.

There is a lot of inequity caused by the subsidy practice of the Europeans. These examples that I am going to give are based on prices in April, and are in Canadian dollars. At that time, EC producers received $243 a tonne for wheat, while the Canadian farmers received $145 a tonne. Look at the difference. EC farmers received $353 a tonne for their Durum, while the Canadian farmers only received $130. In the case of barley, the EC farmer received $232 a tonne, while Canadians were only getting $97. That is a significant problem.

The Europeans and the Americans eventually have to come to their senses. It is not the agricultural community. The agricultural community in the European countries and in the American states well understand that their survival right now depends on those fat wallets. But what about the consumers, the taxpayers of those countries? When are they going to change? We have to work towards educating those people.

Recently, I had the opportunity to sit beside an Australian and he informed me that the Australian government does not have subsidies. They are playing hardball with their farmers and their farmers are in a difficult situation. They have taken the effort to go into the European countries and try to educate them to the fact that these people are actually paying too much for their goods.

I do not know what we can do to convince the marketplace, the European market in particular, that it is time that they grow up and get into this. I would imagine that it is a mindset. If history serves me right, that mindset goes back to after World War II, when they decided that they no longer wanted to be dependent upon somebody else to provide their food. It is time that the whole world community understand that situations like that are quite unlikely to happen. Maybe it is possible that when we have the opportunity to lower these prices and talk about the level playing field, we could possibly be providing food to Third World countries at a cost acceptable to them.

Mr. Crawford: We would go under.

Mr. Bjornson: Only by hard work and good common-sense farming we will not go under. We can put the crop into the ground and collect it and put it into the marketplace on a level playing field and compete with anybody in the world. We just have to have the opportunity to do it. You are in the industry. Would you not like to have that opportunity?

Mr. Crawford: Certainly.

Mr. Bjornson: Right. I think that is what we are doing. We are going to be open-minded. We are trying to create that. We want the GATT to go forward. That is one of the policies of this government and I think we are reflecting it very well. We are not stepping backward. We are trying to step forward.

We should look at the subsidies for the European countries just 10 years ago in 1979-1980. The EEC was a net importer of 12 million tonnes of wheat and coarse grains. Next year, it is expected that they are going to be a net exporter of 27 million tonnes of wheat and coarse grains, which is a turnaround of 39 million tonnes. In order to maintain their agricultural sector in the European countries, they are providing more money. As they provide more money, the farmers grow more crop, so all of a sudden they are getting into our markets. It is only because of the subsidies that are doing that. If they had to put their crops in the ground, pay their taxes and do everything that our farmers have to do, I am sure there would be a completely different attitude. They would not be rushing out and doing all that.

I do not know what the answer is to resolve that problem. I am hoping that sometime in the near future the European Community will take a look at that. Maybe when Europe '92 comes into play they will sit down and take a long, hard look at how this is going to come together. Maybe that is the time it will happen.

It is most important, as we are working together with this government and the policies we are putting forward, that we are ready to react. We want to anticipate what is going to happen and when that time comes we will react. We cannot be sitting back worrying about 1990 and 1992 and finding out that we are left behind the pack again.

Once again, the attitudes put forward by the Minister of Trade, the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister for Grains and Oilseeds are the proper attitudes. Maybe there is going to be some tough slugging. Right now it is tough slugging. There is a billion dollar rain in western Canada right now and I understand it is coming into Ontario.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): It being 6 o'clock p.m., it is my duty to inform the House that pursuant to Standing Order 81(17), proceedings on the motion have expired.

Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 11 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

The House adjourned at 6.00 p.m.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, May 17, 1990

The House met at 11 a.m.

Prayers

[*English*]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

I am aware that this morning you were given notice of a question of privilege. In the interest of getting Routine Proceedings out of the way, and especially the tabling of the important report of the Meech committee and putting it before the people of Canada, it would be agreeable if we have Routine Proceedings first and then proceed with the question of privilege.

Mr. Speaker: Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*English*]

PETITIONS

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to 25 petitions.

[*Editor's Note: See today's Votes and Proceedings.*]

[*Translation*]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

STRIKING COMMITTEE—TABLING OF FORTY-FIRST REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

Mr. Jim Hawkes (Calgary West): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to table the forty-first report of the Striking Committee.

COMMITTEE TO STUDY A PROPOSED COMPANION RESOLUTION TO THE MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Hon. Jean J. Charest (Sherbrooke): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Special Committee to study a Proposed Companion Resolution to the Meech Lake Accord.

[*English*]

It is the belief of the committee members that the conclusions and recommendations, and there are more than 20 of them, reached after hearing 160 witnesses and receiving more than 800 written submissions, may form the basis for resolving the current constitutional impasse by the June 23 deadline.

Mr. Speaker, your committee concludes that a companion resolution process that formally adds to the provisions of the Meech Lake Accord, without subtracting from it, has the best prospect of solving the current constitutional impasse. I wish to point out that such a companion resolution can only be negotiated by First Ministers.

• (1110)

[*Translation*]

Committee members agree, Mr. Speaker, that negotiations must maintain the perspective of the statement made at the meeting of provincial Premiers in the summer of 1986, to the effect that the constitutional talks should be aimed at bringing Quebec back as an active participant in the Canadian Constitution.

Furthermore, this process—and this was stressed by witnesses who appeared before the committee—must also include recognition of the five proposals made by Quebec.

[*English*]

On a personal note, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the members of the committee who participated in this very difficult task. It is my information that we are probably the parliamentary committee that has travelled the most, heard the most witnesses, and received the most written submissions in the shortest period of time ever. Also, it was a first for the House of Commons to have one of its committees' activities and hearings televised as it travelled all through Canada.

If there is one thing out of this experience that all members of the committee feel very strongly, it is that it was an opportunity for us to learn from each other and to learn from other Canadians.

I also want to thank the staff who supported us in this work and who went well beyond the call of duty in helping this committee and the Parliament of Canada to accomplish its work.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

Mr. Charest: Finally, Mr. Speaker, the report is unanimous.

[*Editor's note: See today's Votes and Proceedings.*]

[*English*]

Mr. Kaplan: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I understand that there is unanimous consent to permit a representative from each of the opposition parties to make a statement matching the statement made by the chairman.

Mr. Speaker: Is there consent?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to have been able to work on this committee and, like the chairman, I am happy that we were able to produce an unanimous report.

We were rushed by our timetable and our fellow Canadians did not have as much of an opportunity to prepare themselves or to appear in front of us as they deserved. On the other hand, I want to acknowledge that we heard a wide cross-section of views covering the waterfront, that no views were excluded, and that we were honoured to have appear before us a number of premiers of the provinces of Canada.

The strongest message that we got in our travels across the country is that the Canadian people want their political leaders to take them through this impasse. The unanimous report is motivated by that strong message.

Why were we called into existence? In the opinion of the opposition, we were called into existence as a committee because of a tactic imposed three years ago by the Prime Minister, against the wishes of the opposition, which prevented real public discussion and input until now.

Some people want to say that what has happened over the past three years can be interpreted—

Mr. Speaker: I know there is consent for a response to the hon. member for Sherbrooke. I am just wondering where this response is taking us. I am concerned about it turning into a debate on matters extraneous to the immediate filing of the unanimous committee report.

I would ask the hon. member to keep that in mind. I would hope that we would not meet with points of order at this point at such a moment in our country. I would ask the hon. member to try to confine his remarks to the committee and to the report that the committee has filed. I do not think it is appropriate to get into a long debate about things that may or may not have happened many months ago.

Mr. Kaplan: Mr. Speaker, I would prefer not to make a statement at this time if I will be denied the opportunity to make a statement equal in length to that of the chairman, giving the views of the official opposition on this occasion.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead on a point of order.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gérin: Mr. Speaker, I would like some clarification. I understand that today, members have a chance to comment briefly on the tabling of the report. This was agreed to earlier by the House. Am I right? My point is, Mr. Speaker, that if a member other than the hon. member for Sherbrooke (Mr. Charest) is allowed to state his views, be it ever so briefly, on the report or the tabling of the report in the House, this automatically

gives other members of the House the same right. It is all or nothing.

Mr. Speaker: I think the situation is clear. With consent of the House, the government, the Official Opposition and the New Democratic Party apparently agreed there would be a statement by the hon. member for Sherbrooke, by the hon. member for York Centre and by another member for the New Democratic Party, but that's all. According to the Standing Orders, statements are not appropriate, except by the member tabling the committee report, unless there is consent. There is no consent for debate, only for a statement by the three parties in the House.

[*English*]

Very reluctantly, I have had to suggest that the commentary in response to the hon. member for Sherbrooke should be confined to the committee report and its contents and the activities of the committee.

I felt that it was not appropriate on this occasion. I have some sense that there may not be even consent for a wide-ranging debate that goes back into matters that led up to the matter.

The hon. member for York Centre has said that he wishes to defer his statements to another time because he feels he has a position to put forward. I think that that is where we should leave it.

The hon. member for Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead wants an opportunity to comment on the report. That opportunity is available by taking steps to put a motion for concurrence on the Order Paper and within 48 hours that matter can be called in the House. If the hon. member wishes to do that, he would be able to start off by having a full 20-minute debate, and other members, of course, could join in. So there is the opportunity to make representations, if the hon. member wishes to avail himself of those procedures.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gérin: Mr. Speaker, thank you for this clarification. You will realize that I refuse to give unanimous consent. I refuse to consent to a debate, even by representatives of the three parties. And if as I see it, the consent of members of this House must be unanimous, it should be obvious to the Chair that consent has not been given.

[*English*]

Mr. Speaker: I think the difficulty is that consent was obtained. I have taken it upon myself to limit the tone of the debate and received co-operation. I will now hear the hon. member for Yorkton—Melville.

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton—Melville): Mr. Speaker, I join with pride the chairman of our committee and the representative of the Liberal party, and on behalf of the member for Burnaby—Kingsway, by saying that today is an historic day in this country.

What we have done with our report is to set the table for what is the constitutional accommodation that will bring Quebec into the constitutional family of Canada, which is extremely important. At the same time I believe that we have addressed the concerns and the suggestions of other people to make one united Canada, which is the most important thing.

• (1120)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, I believe and I hope that we have found national accommodation for national reconciliation. We have respected the conditions set by the Province of Quebec, and we have also considered the concerns of other Canadians across this country.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it is up to the Prime Minister of Canada and the provincial Premiers to act. It is time to act now, Mr. Speaker.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

* * *

[*English*]

PETITIONS

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition today, signed by numerous residents of Sarnia, Ontario and some from Vancouver as well, who are opposed to the goods and services tax.

These petitioners indicate that the government has imposed something like 31 tax increases since it took office in 1984. They object to the imposition of further taxes in the form of the goods and services tax and they call upon Parliament to reject this tax.

Privilege

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, I too am pleased to join my colleague from Kingston and the Islands, in presenting a petition, pursuant to Standing Order 36, regarding the government's intention to proceed with the goods and services tax.

These petitioners from Merritt and Kamloops, British Columbia point out the very detrimental effect this tax will have on their lives and ask the Parliament of Canada to do what it can to encourage the government to back off from this tax.

VIA RAIL

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, on another matter, the petitioners again from Kamloops, British Columbia, point out that they feel the government's decision to cut back on passenger rail service in Canada was a very regrettable step. They are suggesting that the government consider modernizing VIA Rail services so that the second largest country in the world, Canada, can have a more rapid, economical, safe, convenient, environmentally sound and energy efficient alternative to other means of transportation by maintaining our passenger rail service at an advanced level in the country.

[*Translation*]

CANADA LABOUR CODE—PROTECTION OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS

Mr. Guy Saint-Julien (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, today, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I wish to table a petition which concerns the preventive withdrawal of pregnant women from the workplace.

The Canada Labour Code must observe the principle set forth in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and is thus supposed to protect the rights of women.

The regulations on compensation for pregnant women do not consider all the demands of the workplace.

The option of preventive withdrawal from the workplace for pregnant women is one that is both desirable and necessary for women working outside the home.

Mr. Speaker, I myself signed this petition, with residents of Senneterre and Val d'Or who humbly pray and call upon Parliament to give serious consideration to the shortcomings of the legislation when the Canada Labour Code is reviewed and recognize the need for including provisions in the Code concerning the preventive withdrawal of pregnant women from the workplace.

[*English*]

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Joe Fontana (London East): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I wish to present petitions from residents of southwestern Ontario who continue to call upon this government to withdraw its 7 per cent goods and services tax as it will be inflationary and make us less competitive in the world.

I call upon this government to respect the wishes of the Canadian people and withdraw this tax.

* * *

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, I ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

Mr. Speaker: Shall all questions be allowed to stand?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

PRIVILEGE

GOVERNMENT ADVERTISING

Mr. Speaker: I would like to advise the House that I have received notice of a question of privilege, first in point of time from the hon. member for Dartmouth, and a second question of privilege from the hon. member for Sudbury.

In reading the notices which both the hon. members have filed with me, it is not completely clear but I suspect that the issue is the same.

I am wondering if the hon. members could clarify that for me because if it is the same issue, I will hear it as one application. Is that agreed?

Mr. MacDonald (Dartmouth): Yes.

Ms. Marleau: Yes.

Mr. Andre: I will not delay the proceedings, Mr. Speaker. Unfortunately I have an appointment in my office shortly and I will have to depart before I can hear all the comments. I would like to have the opportunity to respond prior to a decision, if you feel it is appropriate to hear a response before making your decision. If you should find that there is no *prima facie* evidence, I would not want to delay that decision. However, if you feel it is

necessary to hear arguments on the other side of the question, I would appreciate an opportunity to give them.

Mr. Speaker: If I feel it necessary to call on counsel, I will make the appropriate arrangements. The hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier.

Mr. Gauthier: Always, Mr. Speaker, without prejudice to establishing a precedent here, but if it is the minister's intention to establish that kind of a precedent, then I would certainly like to have that in our rules, but the Speaker has to decide that more than us, so I leave it to the Speaker to decide.

Mr. Speaker: So hon. members and the public understand, there could be a little bit of a difficulty here. When a notice of privilege is given to the Speaker, it is incumbent upon the Speaker to treat that notice of privilege with absolute confidence. In other words, the Speaker cannot tell other members that there is a motion coming on a question of privilege.

The reason for the confidentiality is that until a member rises on a question of privilege or indicates to the Speaker that he or she is going to rise, the member has the right to stay quiet in his or her seat and at that point the application dies.

The hon. House leader for the government does not have notice, and has heard nothing about this until I rose a few minutes ago. He may not be able to stay here for the full argument, but he wants the opportunity to come back, if necessary, and address the Chair. I do not treat that as a precedent. I treat it as the discretion of the Chair in handling an argument.

On the other hand, the Chair is always in the hands of hon. members. If it suited hon. members to put off the argument of this application to a time when all members on both sides of the issue could be in the Chamber, that is easily arranged and I would be quite prepared to do so. The hon. member for Kamloops.

Mr. Riis: Mr. Speaker, I know that we are anxious to get on with dealing with the health of animals and the plant protection act. Knowing that some people have other commitments, I wonder if there would be unanimous consent to revisit this at three o'clock when there will be an opportunity to have all parties here and able to make representations, if they wish.

Mr. Speaker: I am in the hands of members. It might suit the government side to do that. The hon. member for Dartmouth.

Mr. Ron MacDonald (Dartmouth): Mr. Speaker, I would like to proceed with this matter this morning. I rise today on a point of privilege to bring to the attention of members and Your Honour the issue of untrue and misleading advertising by the Department of Finance which is being broadcast on radio stations from coast to coast.

According to Standing Order 48(2), I bring this matter to the attention of the Speaker in the House at the earliest possible opportunity. I offer transcripts of the ads for the table and the Clerk, and they may, if they choose, read the text of these into the record.

This is not the first time that this issue was before this House, Mr. Speaker. You will recall the representations made by the hon. member for Vancouver Quadra on September 25, 1989, concerning the placement of advertisements in newspapers. On October 10, you delivered a very important and historic ruling. I would like to quote from a section of your ruling found in *Hansard*, of October 10 at page 4461.

> However, I want the House to understand very clearly that if your Speaker ever has to consider a situation like this again, the Chair will not be as generous. This is a case, which, in my opinion, should never recur. I expect the Department of Finance and other departments to study this ruling carefully and remind everyone within the Public Service that we are a parliamentary democracy, not a so-called executive democracy, nor a so-called administrative democracy.

• (1130)

The misleading ads have returned, and the sequel as I will argue is worse than the first series. First, we are dealing with a different medium. As we all know, an ad in the newspaper is a matter of the written word which can be read and reread at the discretion of the individual reader. For instance, a reader can seek—

Mr. Speaker: I think I have the general gist of the hon. member's complaint, and I thank him for giving me a copy of the radio advertisement. In assisting me, I would ask him to direct his argument to where there has been a breach of privilege.

It may have been by way of radio, television or signboard. That may be of some interest if it turns on the question of privilege, which has been breached as the hon. member argues.

Mr. MacDonald (Dartmouth): Mr. Speaker, if the House would allow me a very few moments to unfurl my argument, you will find that I am stating a case of privilege. This is a very important matter. Therefore, I believe it is important to lay the groundwork. I will continue.

For instance, a reader can seek clarification by referring to a specific text. In the case of radio ads, the listener has no such recourse. Therefore, in my view it is a medium which is more easily manipulated because the information is very selective. It is disseminated in a matter of mere seconds, and the first impression is usually a lasting one.

In light of these facts, it is incumbent upon those who use this medium to be responsible and provide an accurate message which should not be deceptive or misleading. I submit the Department of Finance has failed once again to honour this important obligation.

I would like to read into the record the text of an ad which was broadcast to my constituents and other listeners.

An hon. member: Come on.

Mr. Speaker: The ad is short, and there is no reason why it should not be read into the record. Having got it into the record, I want to hear where the breach of privilege is.

Mr. MacDonald (Dartmouth): Mr. Speaker, I will.

The ad mentions a number of things which are inconsistent. I think they are a false reporting of the papers of this place. The ad states: "Number one, this is not an additional tax since it replaces the current federal sales tax." This is simply not true. "We know from records that have been placed on the table that the GST will apply to many services that are now untaxed."

The ad also says—

Mr. Speaker: The difficulty the Chair is having is that this is getting into a continuation of the debate that takes place in the House day after day after day on this.

The government has one version of the facts and others dispute that. They have a different version. That in itself does not create a question of privilege. An application for privilege should be confined to what way this ad has breached an hon. member's privilege or in what way this ad amounts to a contempt of the House. That is what I would have to decide.

I do not think it is appropriate for the Chair to allow this to get into a general, long, broad-ranging debate on different views of what the particular tax does. I give as an example, and I am reading what the hon. member has kindly given me: "It is not an additional tax since it replaces the current federal sales tax." That statement in could invite a great deal of comment one way or the other. I do not think it is appropriate that we get into a debate on that here.

If there is a clear statement here which is so inappropriate that it affects the rights and duties of a member in carrying on those rights and duties in the Chamber, then we have to consider whether that is privilege. If it is so outrageous that it is a contempt of Parliament then that, of course, is what I have to consider.

I would ask the hon. member to remember that this is not a place to get into a general wide ranging debate on the whole question of whether the proposed tax is or is not a replacement of another tax or to the degree that it replaces or does not replace it. I would ask hon. members to keep that in mind.

Mr. MacDonald (Dartmouth): Mr. Speaker, as you are aware, this is the first time I have raised a point of privilege in the House. I have done my best to keep with the record of what is appropriate for points of privilege.

I will shorten my argument considerably. If anyone reads that ad, it is quite clear in my view that the spirit of the Speaker's ruling of October 10 has been violated. At the very beginning of the one-minute ad, the word "proposed" is there. No where else in the ad does it mention that this is a proposed tax that has not passed all the legislative process.

In addition, when dealing with the actual wording, which I think is very important, and I think the Speaker would agree, in situations such as this it does not say that the proposed GST "would", it says that the GST "will". That is quite an important word.

I read through the submission by the hon. member for Vancouver Quadra and I carefully read the ruling of the Speaker. We seem to be in a position where the record of this place is being misrepresented. It may only be by a word, but it is something that must be stopped.

I submit to you, Mr. Speaker, that a careful reading of your ruling of October 10 and a careful reading of what the government is now putting forward will show that it is a legitimate complaint by myself and other members, that this is a misrepresentation of what has taken place in this House, and I believe it is in contempt of your ruling of October 10.

I would submit to you, Mr. Speaker, that it is incumbent upon this place to rule on this type of behaviour. If any other private individual or company did such a thing, there are rules and laws which we pass here, enforced by the CRTC and the misleading advertising section of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

Governments do not come under those particular regulations. I think it is incumbent upon members of this place and the Speaker to ensure that representations of what takes place in this place are true and correct, and do not even lead to the impression of falseness.

Mrs. Diane Marleau (Sudbury): Mr. Speaker, I would like to support the arguments of my colleague as we have both been very distressed by these ads.

I would like to remind you, Mr. Speaker, of comments made in this House in 1980 with regard to misleading advertising by the hon. member for Wellington—Dufferin—Simcoe. On October 22, 1980, he asked this question in the House.

"May I ask the minister", whichever minister it was, "how he can justify his double standard of exempting the government from provisions regarding false and misleading advertising where false and misleading advertising by the private sector would result in criminal charges being laid by the government?"

An hon. member: Isn't he a minister now?

Mrs. Marleau: Yes, he is. Mr. Speaker, I understand that at present there is no body that rules over misleading advertising broadcast by the government. The government could at least be reminded to apply the same standards as apply to the public in the promotion of a service or a product. There is no body to rule on this matter, Mr. Speaker, except yourself.

The integrity of the House of Commons is at stake and the reputation of all of its members. We must protect Canadian citizens. Mr. Speaker, I ask you to rule on this point.

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, I want to read from page 196 of *Parliamentary Privilege in Canada* regarding contempt of the House. It states:

> Contempt is whatever the House finds as contempt—

I think that is the case we are actually making at the moment.

> —any act—which obstructs or impedes—any member—of the House in the discharge of his "parliamentary" duty,—

It goes on to elaborate on that point. To support the point made by the hon. member for Dartmouth, this morning I was listening to one of the country and western stations and heard the ad which said that the proposed goods and services tax is not an additional tax.

• (1140)

The minute I heard that I realized that my constituents, recalling what I have been telling them for the past year, may wonder if I have been telling the truth because I have been saying that on hair cuts, movie tickets and laundry bills they will have to pay a tax, items on which they have never paid a tax before. This is a brand new, first-time tax. The ad says this is not an additional tax, not a new tax. That is a misrepresentation of what this House has actually passed.

I support the point made by my hon. friend from Dartmouth that this tax is not through Parliament. Mr. Speaker, as your ruling indicated, we are in a parliamentary democracy and this legislation is only half-way through the process. I am assuming that the Liberal senators will stop this bill so this will become an irrelevant tax.

However, I want to say I believe there has been a contempt of the House when a finance department advertisement broadcast on radio this morning indicated that this was not a new tax. I, and I am sure my colleagues here from all sides of the House, have been telling their constituents that this is a new tax. We have never seen this tax. I am sure my hon. friend, the parliamentary secretary from Alberta, knows that certainly in that province it will be a new tax. Alberta does not have any kind of sales tax at this point, particularly on service.

I am afraid there is definitely a contempt of the House and I would like to lend my support to the words of my hon. friend from Dartmouth.

Mr. Speaker: I understand the point and I have the transcript. I understand the argument that has been put to me and I will consider the matter and report back to the House as soon as I can. The hon. minister.

Hon. Otto Jelinek (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to comment in response to the House leader of the New Democratic Party. He talked about the fact that there is no tax in this country, that the GST is a new tax. He specifically mentioned Alberta. The hon. member should know, an Albertan should know, that in fact they pay $2 billion a year in tax and—

Mr. Speaker: I must ask the co-operation of the House and ask hon. members to remember that what I have to determine is whether there is a *prima facie* case of breach of privilege or contempt of the House. That is the sole issue. I have heard enough argument to be able to make that decision one way or the other and I have indicated that there is no need for further argument on this. I would ask members to co-operate with me. I will report back to the House on this matter as soon as I can.

The hon. parliamentary secretary on a point of order.

Mr. Cooper: I do not wish to enter into the argument. I just wish to draw the attention of the Speaker to citation 62 of Beauchesne's Sixth Edition.

Mr. Speaker: I thank the hon. parliamentary secretary.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

HEALTH OF ANIMALS ACT

MEASURE TO ENACT

Hon. Gilles Loiselle (for the Minister of Agriculture) moved that Bill C-66, an act respecting diseases and toxic substances that may affect animals or that may be transmitted by animals to persons, and respecting the protection of animals, be read the second time and referred to a legislative committee.

Mr. Milliken: In respect of this bill, C-66, and the next bill, C-67, I believe there is unanimous disposition on the part of the House that the two be referred to the same legislative committee.

While the motion may not have to be changed on this particular bill, I wonder if on the next one it could be made clear, and perhaps the Table could assist on this, that when the question is put it is by unanimous consent that after the bill receives second reading, it is referred to the same legislative committee to which Bill C-66 is referred.

Mr. Cooper: Madam Speaker, I would just like to indicate that indeed we agree with this sensible proposal and would support it. I think it is a good idea.

Mr. Riis: Madam Speaker, I too want to suggest that there have been discussions. We felt that this was a way to deal most expeditiously with these two related bills. I support the suggestion made by my hon. friend, the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I thank all hon. members. We will make sure that when we do present the next bill whatever needs to be done will be done.

Mr. Murray Cardiff (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to present to the House for second reading legislation amending the Animal Disease and Protection Act.

The current act has provided a sound base on which Agriculture Canada implemented its national animal health program, but it is showing the afflictions of age and time has exposed some weaknesses. Technological advances and public demands for the highest standards in agricultural products, increased competition in the world market-place, and the introduction of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms have produced a new urgency for legislation that will guide us into the 1990s.

The amendments before the House will revitalize our animal health legislation. They reflect national demands for a continued high level of animal health, consumer demands for top quality products, and international demands for world-class agricultural products.

The current Animal Disease and Protection Act, originally passed in 1869 and last amended 14 years ago, has been revised to meet the demands of the next decade. The act has been substantially improved to control animal diseases that may be passed to people and to ensure toxic substances do not contaminate domestic

livestock. More than ever producers and consumers are concerned about the dangers to people from tainted animals and animal products. Many animal diseases such as salmonellosis in poultry, trichinosis in pork, and rabies can cause serious human illness. The act has been amended to prevent, control, and eliminate animal diseases that can harm the public.

A second substantial change in the act prevents the introduction and spread of toxic substances. Increasing consumer concerns about residues in food prompted this revision. The authority to deal with animals in relation to pesticides, hormones, and antibiotics is currently embodied in a separate piece of legislation: the Meat Hygiene Act.

The Meat Hygiene Act applies only to animals after they arrive at a registered slaughterhouse. Provisions in the Animal Disease and Protection Act that deal with the importation, movement, disposal, and control of diseased animals will also refer to animals and animal products contaminated with toxins.

One of the provisions of this new act will provide for cost recovery mechanisms by Agriculture Canada. The cost of conducting inspections, taking samples, issuing permits to those who import animals, isolating animals at quarantine stations, and providing other services under the Health of Animals Act will be eligible for recovery.

Industries are demanding more assistance from the department and, where appropriate, these costs will be borne by the industry and importers who seek the department's services or those who, by their negligence, jeopardize the health of people or livestock. The public purse will not be obligated to pay for facilities to inspect for animal disease. New provisions will provide the minister with the authority to require operators of air, road, rail, and sea terminals to allocate at no cost to the Crown space and facilities for the administration of the act.

The revisions I have mentioned so far address urgent matters, but the bill before the House also addresses other important areas. The cumbersome system that now compensates producers when diseased animals are destroyed has been replaced by a more flexible and equitable system. Cost to producers will be recovered in cases where the government decides that affected animals should be treated rather than destroyed.

• (1150)

In addition to the new compensation system, the Health of Animals Act will make it easier for producers to comply with quarantines and other orders issued by Agriculture Canada. These modifications remove the obligation of an inspector to declare any premises "infected" where the inspector finds or suspects disease. This obligation causes hardships for producers who must comply with the strict requirements imposed on infected places.

Clarification of the compensation system is another improvement. Under the previous act appeal procedures for compensating producers when the department orders their animals or animal products destroyed were vague or referred to in other legislation. The Pesticide Residue Compensation Act and procedures to appeal compensation claims are now provided in the new act.

A new section in the act authorizes the department to provide financial and technical expertise to foreign countries. The current acts force the government to bide its time, waiting for the problem to reach Canadian shores. This new provision, however, will allow Canada to assist another country to eradicate serious animal diseases before they arrive and jeopardize the health of our domestic animal populations.

Under the current mandate inspectors cannot stop and search vehicles on the highway, even when they have reason to suspect that they carry animals that may be diseased or otherwise pose health problems. The lack of authority is rectified in the revised act, and there are other amendments specific to the act.

The department's powers to seize or detain animals and animal products have been extended to close loopholes. Currently inspectors may only order the return of animals or products if they are removed from an infected place. They may not, however, seize and detain animals and/or their products.

This legal gap seriously hampers the inspectors' efforts to control disease, and a new section will authorize officials to seize anything that contravenes the act or its regulations. Another amendment establishes a new national identification system for animals. This system will identify an animal's most recent owner and location. When a diseased animal is found it can be quickly traced back to a specific farm, helping the department to ensure

that other animals at the farm do not spread the disease. The department will be given the authority to conduct surveys to help determine if a disease is present and the extent of economic loss that results from an outbreak. Statistics on animals will be readily available.

The new act also recognizes that disease and pests can enter Canada indirectly. Garbage generated on international ships entering Canadian waters or on aircraft landing on Canadian soil presents a serious risk of introducing animal diseases. The new legislation will continue to ensure that garbage is properly handled and disposed of when it is discharged on our shores. The department has new powers to control animal disease vectors: insects or other animals that can carry disease from one organism to another.

One new section in the Health of Animals Act specifically empowers the department to dispose of vectors. Another section provides for regulations to control importing and exporting vectors and also specifies the method of treating, destroying and separating them from healthy animals.

One of the weaknesses of the current act is that necessary controls are assumed or are simply not clear. Now the obligations and duties of anyone handling animals and their products, including diseased cultures, are written in more detail and in a style that is readily understandable.

Amendments also update and simplify legal requirements. The penalties for contravening the act have been updated. The new penalties include ticketing for minor offences. This procedure is similar to that of a police officer handing out tickets for traffic violations and avoids the current procedure of having the accused appear before a judge, even if the accused is pleading guilty.

The revised act protects the rights of individual citizens as guaranteed in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. An inspector may not enter a dwelling place without the occupant's consent or without a warrant issued by a magistrate. The powers of the Governor in Council, the minister and inspectors have also been recast to ensure they are compatible with the charter.

The new act is the culmination of experience. All public and private groups directly affected by this legislation have been consulted. Provincial governments, the departments of the environment, revenue, and health and welfare, the trade negotiations office, industry, and interested members of the public had input into the contents of this bill. All agree that amendments are necessary, and all continue to support the principles of this bill.

The Health of Animals Act has several benefits. Agriculture Canada will be better able to control animal diseases. The department will be sensitive to changes in technological and trade practices and thus react reasonable to them.

The department will be able to enforce the act and its regulations, ensuring that there are few infractions. It will be possible to recover costs for certain services and programs. The department will be ensuring the rights of individual citizens as required by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Amendments to this legislation reaffirm the government's commitment to safe and healthy livestock. The act has been revised to clarify responsibilities, reinforce controls, and take into account modern technology. This bill ensures that our animal industries, so vital to this nation's well-being, will be successful in the competitive world markets for animals and their product.

Hon. Ralph Ferguson (Lambton—Middlesex): Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak on Bill C-66 which is an upgrading of the Health of Animals Act. However, I have some concerns that I want to make very clear at this time.

First, once again the government is pulling away some of the support systems to the Canadian agricultural industry. It is bringing in a user-pay concept in terms of inspections that cannot be added to the costs of the animals when sold. Individuals who reside within a five-kilometre area of a herd being placed under quarantine may have to go through a series of blood testing or other tests to examine whether or not their herd is infected with tuberculosis or any other diseases that are prevalent in livestock, particularly in cattle: tuberculosis, brucellosis, or even a recent outbreak in Britain that has created panic throughout the livestock industry. They

estimate that millions of cattle will have to be slaughtered because of a very serious epidemic of what they call the mad cow disease or, in the official terminology, they call it bovine spongiform enephalopathy.

Having been a farmer for longer than I care to think about we have gone through the blood testing procedure with livestock on many occasions in our own operations. There is a huge expense connected with it, even in terms of the producers, let alone the services of the veterinary involved or the veterinarians for Agriculture Canada.

Agriculture Canada has some excellent veterinarians, not only out in the field in the various counties or areas they serve but also here in Agriculture Canada in Ottawa. I certainly give them my full measure of support for the excellent work they are carrying on.

When I look at this piece of legislation that will impose another cost on producers at a time when the profit margins are very low, or in many cases do not exist, I think the Government of Canada has an obligation to provide those services to protect the health of animals, particularly those that may be subjected to diseases which come into this country with animals from Europe or other nations where there may be diseases such as the one I just mentioned from Great Britain: the mad cow disease.

In spite of the fact that we have high health standards in Canada, I remind the parliamentary secretary and the ministers who are in the House that last year we had an outbreak of brucellosis. Carriers of brucellosis were identified as coming out of one of the prairie provinces where there was a dispersal sale of an infected herd. The animals from that dispersal sale were sold across North America and, in fact, some of them came into Ontario and created havoc among producers here who had what we thought were clean herds.

• (1200)

When such an animal comes into an area and a quarantine is placed on a five-square-kilometre surrounding area, is that cost to be borne by the people within that area whose herds are clean but have to be tested to reaffirm that status? Or is that cost borne by the person who imported the animal that was infected?

I think we have to make that very clear. Clause 60 (2) says:

> The fees, charges and costs are recoverable jointly and severally from the owner or occupier of the place or the owner of the animal or thing and from the person having the possession, care or control of it immediately before its inspection, treatment, segregation, detention, forfeiture, quarantine, testing analysis, identification, storage, removal—

Based on what the bill states, if someone brings into an area an exotic pet or another exotic animal that could be a carrier, it looks as though all the people in that five-square-kilometre area would be responsible to pick up the cost of testing if an outbreak did occur.

I recall that, in 1952, we had an outbreak in Canada of foot and mouth disease. While the outbreak was arrested, the loss was enormous. Thousands of cattle which could not be replaced were quarantined and slaughtered. Even though there was compensation paid to those producers under this legislation, a lot of those animals simply could not be compensated for because of the genetic strain and the breed lines they represented. The losses were borne by the producers, as well as the Government of Canada. To add on additional cost at this time is not appropriate.

We have heard a lot of comment about the bison herd in Wood Buffalo National Park. A lot of people think that it should be wiped out. Last September the hon. member for Kent and myself flew over that park. People do not know what they are talking about when they say they are going to eliminate that herd. They are not familiar with the terrain of the area where that herd grazes.

I suggest that there are outside influences putting pressure on the government to eliminate that herd, because there are grazing grounds there that may look very enticing to other interests. There may be people with ambitions to set up buffalo burger outlets featuring the carcasses of these animals. They say that 33 per cent of them are infected.

Having had experience in blood testing animals for brucellosis or tuberculosis, I know that one has to take a blood sample. I suggest to the House that those blood samples have been taken from infected animals and, consequently, the results show a higher percentage infected than if a cross-section of the whole herd had been taken.

My rationale for making this statement is that if one is going to take a blood sample, does one take it from some rambunctious, 2,600-pound bull that measures seven feet at the shoulder and that is liable to chase one up the

nearest tree, or from a sick, dozy animal that cannot keep up with the rest of the herd and is not going to put up much a fight? Madam Speaker, I suggest to you that I know from which those blood samples will be taken. It would take a lot of fortitude to tackle one of those 2,600-pound bulls that is liable to chase you up the nearest tree and then shove over the tree to get to you.

There are a lot of things we have to look at in terms of infectious diseases in the country. While I support most of the provisions in this bill, I do not believe in imposing additional costs on producers who could be innocent victims of an imported animal spreading disease or an outbreak that could be carried by migrating water-fowl stopping over. It could occur as a result of bringing in some birds or animals from another continent.

In the 1960s and early 1970s, we had an outbreak of a contagious poultry disease in southwestern Ontario. I believe it was Newcastle disease. It was learned that a particular hatching operation had imported baby chicks, supposedly from Ireland, because Ireland was listed as a clean vicinity. They had been trans-shipped from another country to Ireland and then on to Canada.

The outbreak did not occur in the area immediately surrounding the area where these birds were reared, but rather some 50 miles away in the constituency of my colleague, the hon. member for Kent. It occurred there because the same feed truck that serviced farms in that area serviced the hatchery these birds came from. Consequently, two breeding flocks of turkeys in my own neighbourhood were wiped out because of this supposedly innocent act of importing from Europe by way of Ireland baby chicks that were carriers of this disease.

The farmers were not paid ample compensation for these two breeding flocks under this particular legislation because it did not provide for compensation other than for the sale of the birds for meat purposes. Those losses were very heavy and I would like to see something done to compensate for that.

My main concern about this bill is that the government is trying to proceed on a cost recovery basis. The government has a responsibility to make sure that the consumers of Canada have high quality, clean food available to them that is not infected by these diseases from other nations. But it also has an obligation to make sure that, if the owners of the livestock are willing to test to maintain that high quality, clean food, and they volunteer to test, then they should not have to bear the costs of the veterinarians who do that. They have their own costs of round-up, handling, and equipment and, of course, always at risk of injury.

As I said, this bill has some very important provisions that we think are good, but that is one aspect that I want to make sure the government is very much aware of and prepared to deal with in committee.

There is another concern that I think I should raise here on the floor of the House today because of this outbreak in England. The United States, the EEC, and the Soviet Union are among those that are banning imports of beef from this area. I hope the government will act immediately to do the same thing. When we ban those imports, we must be very careful to catch all the shipments and not allow some that may be trans-shipped to another country to end up in Canada, the country of origin undivulged to the consumers.

• (1210)

While it does not appear that this particular disease can infect humans, it is suspected of infecting a cat. The autopsy was performed at the University of Bristol. It seems to be a comparable disease to that found in cattle. This disease had been identified only in sheep, but it is obvious that the infected cattle originally contracted it by eating a protein supplement partially composed of meat scraps and meat meal that came from some infected sheep.

I hope that the government will act very quickly to make sure that shipments of beef into the country are curtailed immediately until this outbreak is cleaned up.

The British Government is funding a $30 million research program, but scientists say it could be several years before they understand how the disease is passed on and they perfect a fool-proof test. In the meantime, this dread disease will continue to spread throughout British cattle herds. As a result, many British consumers have simply stopped buying the product.

It would be a disaster in the industry in Canada if we ever had an outbreak here. I think we have to impose the most stringent regulations possible on imported meats coming into the country until this risk is removed.

We, on this side of the House in the Official Opposition, do support most of the provisions in this particular bill. However, I again want to place on record that, in terms of cost recovery in the areas I have outlined, we do want the government to re-evaluate the position it has taken. I say that in view of the low returns to producers and in view of the fact that innocent farmers within a quarantine area could be forced to make huge expenditures as a result of a disease that came into that area through no negligence on their part but through occurrences beyond their control.

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to have an opportunity to make a few remarks at this time for two reasons. The first is to welcome you to your new position. We have appreciated the work you have done in your position over the last number of months and look forward to working co-operatively with you in the future to ensure that the House of Commons works as it ought to work, in terms of a balanced approach to legislation and an opportunity for all members to be heard. We offer our co-operation always with the Chair.

I am also pleased to have this opportunity to speak to the provisions of Bill C-66 regarding animal diseases. I have waited some time for this. I must say at the outset that my hon. colleague from Moose Jaw—Lake Centre was also hoping to participate in the debate today, but at the moment he is held up in committee work. So, I have an opportunity, in his stead, to make some remarks about Bill C-66.

I want to begin by suggesting that one of the items that concern members of the New Democratic Party is the extra charges that will be attached to the livestock industry as a result of this legislation. I do not have to remind members of the House of Commons that these days the livestock industry is being challenged on virtually every front. Costs are continuing to increase while prices—although they are holding in some parts of the country at this moment—are not increasing in the same way. There is a financial crunch being felt by the livestock industry, to say nothing of what high interest rates do to the industry.

The legislation before us clearly points out that the user-pay concept, the extra charges, and the cost recovery that will be involved will mean added cost to livestock producers. When it is perceived that there is disease in your herd, there is a lot of cost involved in the round-up and assembly of the animals and, in some cases, the transportation of animals. In addition to those costs, the livestock producer will have the cost of service charges attached to the attempt to eliminate, eradicate or check out the disease. I want to flag that as an item that we will be raising in committee.

I should say at the outset that we support this bill. It is a housekeeping bill in a lot of ways. That is not to say that there are not concerns and shortcomings that we will want to raise in committee. We believe that modification to the legislation would make it better, both for the Government of Canada and for the livestock industry.

I believe that the fines involved for a summary conviction are appropriate. The ticketing proposal is a good one. It will allow a streamlining in dealing with infractions. Prior to this bill, Agriculture Canada had to rely on the Criminal Code for any punishment for offenders. Now it has its own authority through the issuance of tickets, much the same as for a speeding offence. If you admit you are guilty, you do not have to go to court and go through a long process. I think this streamlining is in the best interests of the Department of Agriculture and the industry itself.

The purpose of the bill before us is to control diseases and toxic substances in animals and products. It also strengthens Canada's ability to prevent the entry of diseases in animals which have serious economic impacts attached to them, and also to control or to eradicate outbreaks of a variety of diseases. The act broadens the mandate under the scope of diseases. Prior to this Agriculture Canada could destroy an animal if it had tuberculosis, rabies or brucellosis, for example, because the disease was affecting the animals. Now it can destroy an animal if whatever it has is also transmittable to humans. To accomplish this, the inspectors will have greater powers and the department can control movement by blocking roads and ordering the disinfection of certain vehicles.

Regarding compensation, the act will allow Agriculture Canada to set a maximum for compensation across the board for all species and all programs. We have some concerns with this because, for example, the current

maximum fine for brucellosis is $1,500 which, of course, does not cover the cost of replacing valuable purebred animals.

I suppose cattlemen could always take out additional insurance to cover the differential costs, but Lloyds of London is the only insurer which will cover an animal for government slaughter. It is expensive, about 1 per cent or 2 per cent of the value of the animal, and likely the insurance would have to be taken out in conjunction with mortality insurance which is about 5 per cent of the value. Therefore, it is obvious that a producer would be looking at a yearly premium of 6 per cent to 6.5 per cent. Needless to say, this could cause serious problems with certain producers.

The act will allow Agriculture Canada to pay for treatment instead of slaughter. This would be appropriate for anaplasmosis in horses. It makes a good deal of sense that the government has been flexible in dealing with the situation and is prepared to support a treatment.

It would be helpful to go through some of the points raised in the legislation. I think this legislation was last amended in 1974. Of course a lot has changed since then in terms of the way animals are transported and dealt with which makes it, in some cases, easier for diseases to be brought into the country and, once into the country, to expand.

• (1220)

The legislation will confirm the authority to control, eradicate and prevent the entry into Canada of diseases of animals which constitute a threat to human health. This has to be seen as a major step forward.

The legislation also gives authority to control animals and their products exposed to or contaminated by toxic materials in order to prevent their entry into the animal or human food chain. With the continual entry of toxic substances into our environment this has become a problem which hitherto had not existed to the same degree. But I think we would all recognize that the ability to control animals exposed to contaminated toxic materials is becoming increasingly a problem that we have to address.

The bill also allows the Governor in Council to regulate the movement of people, animals and vehicles in respect of places or areas infected with serious animal disease. Perhaps this would be an appropriate point to take a moment or two to point out that the Canadian Federation of Humane Societies has made a number of recommendations to Agriculture Canada in terms of the transportation of livestock. As the second largest country in the world geographically, with a livestock industry in virtually all areas, transportation is a critical feature in the industry.

The Canadian Federation of Humane Societies has flagged a number of issues that I think warrant mention at this point. It suggests, for example, that all weigh stations close to provincial borders should be manned by individuals who are authorized to enforce the Animal Disease and Protection Act and that they should be encouraged to inspect vehicles and enforce the transportation provisions. That is an excellent recommendation.

The Canadian Federation of Humane Societies says that Agriculture Canada should make an immediate commitment to get back into the day-to-day monitoring of livestock transportation and enforcement of its transportation regulations. Consideration might be given, they suggest, to expanding the role of existing staff such as the meat hygiene staff. In an effort to curtail expenses we made reductions in inspection which have been raised from time to time in this House and elsewhere and are causing sectors of Agriculture Canada serious concerns.

It is also recommended that Agriculture Canada should join with provincial departments of agriculture and animal welfare groups across the country in a multi-disciplinary committee based on the British Columbian model to utilize all available resources in addressing the transportation issue. Animal welfare groups, particularly farm animal welfare groups, are now becoming more vocal in the matter of livestock transportation. The multi-disciplinary approach that has been experimented with in British Columbia is certainly worth considering on a national scale and also would encourage those provinces that are not participating in this type of approach to do so.

The Canadian Federation of Humane Societies also suggests that veterinary inspectors from the federal government should be available at all major U.S. border crossings during the day or at times that coincide with inspectio]n hours in the United States. It suggests that stations without regular inspection should have a veterinary inspector readily available on an appointment basis.

If that cannot be accomplished, Agriculture Canada should consider establishing designated animal importation stations fully manned by Agriculture Canada inspection staff. These stations should be established at points which currently handle most of the animal traffic into the country.

I think this goes without saying. I know that my hon. friend, the Minister of National Revenue, is concerned about improving the flow of traffic across our borders. He has indicated a number of potential improvements and this would be one that ought to be considered with that because we do not want to have diseased animals entering the country.

There is a whole set of other recommendations. I think I have made the point that when it comes to transportation of livestock across our provincial or international borders there are obvious improvements that ought to be made.

The legislation is receiving our support because it provides authority for a national identification system for animals for the purpose of determining the presence of and controlling or eradicating of animal diseases. That is fundamental and it is for that reason we want to see this bill proceed expeditiously.

It also establishes an authority to provide assistance to other countries in order to control or eradicate animal diseases. We have already heard today concerns about the importation of diseased animals from other countries using the indirect routing of livestock. While we might prohibit animals coming in from a certain country, if they are detoured via another port, it is sometimes impossible to regulate that. We are concerned about that for obvious reasons.

The legislation will allow recovery for the cost of inspection, treatment and other services previously provided free. I think we have to revisit this whole concept. Obviously, the government is trying to introduce a user-pay process. That certainly has merit and at first glance people will say it makes sense. However, if we are going to expect people to co-operate fully in attempting to eradicate livestock diseases, we do not want to place roadblocks in their way. We want to encourage them to come forward and participate in these eradication programs. We have to determine whether assigning extra charges or fees would discourage people from taking this matter as seriously as they should.

There are a number of other items in the legislation that are equally significant. I think I have said enough in terms of the major portions of the legislation and the reasons we want to support it.

I want to conclude by saying that this legislation does allow for greater flexibility in terms of controls when it comes to transportation of animals. We have been approached by a number of animal welfare groups which are concerned about the cutbacks in inspectors to enforce the transportation provisions of the act. They are concerned about abuses with regard to the length of time animals spend in transit and about the lack of removal of cattle that have deceased enroute. When this bill gets to committee we will have an opportunity to raise these critical issues to representatives of the government.

This is major housekeeping, long overdue. It addresses some of the major issues with which we have been concerned. We have some concerns, but they can be dealt with appropriately once the legislation goes to committee.

Mr. Steve Butland (Sault Ste. Marie): Madam Speaker, this is not a topic of which I know very much. I will make that admission.

The lack of inspectors at border crossings is a concern of mine as well. At the steel mill in Sault Ste. Marie, as a result of the lack of inspectors to address the problem, we are assured, even by Revenue Canada, that Third World and European seamless tube is coming into the country. There is a problem in steel and I notice that there is a problem in this area as well. Is this a common problem along many lines where there is just not enough personpower to address situations like this?

Madam Deputy Speaker: As the hon. member knows, I did make a mistake. Normally at second reading the first three speakers do not benefit from the period for question and comments. However, I think we may allow the hon. member to answer his colleague's question.

Mr. Riis: Madam Speaker, I am pleased to respond to my hon. colleague. Obviously, we are all well aware of the problems with seamless tube which he has raised once again. It is a matter that has been raised many times both indirectly and directly in the House. The seamless

tube issue is one that has caught our attention in the past as a result of problems at border crossings.

• (1230)

When it comes to meat or livestock inspections at the border, there are also problems. The fact is that Agriculture Canada is recommending that steps be taken, and I think I mentioned some of those specifics steps, to ensure that appropriate inspectors are available, at least on an on-call basis.

I think it is fair to say that we should be designating certain border crossings as those crossings where livestock crossing take place with appropriate and adequate inspection services available at all times. I think the international transportation of livestock products and live animals is sufficiently problematic that this is a safety precaution that we ought to consider. This will be one of the points that will be raised when the matter gets to committee.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Bob Kilger (Stormont—Dundas): First of all, Madam Speaker, I would like to take a few moments to congratulate you and wish you good luck in your new duties as Chairman of the Committees of the Whole House and Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons.

[*English*]

I am pleased to have this opportunity to speak today on Bill C-66, the Health of Animals Act.

I know that Canadians, and especially our agricultural producers, are proud of the fact that Canada has one of the best animal health records in the world. Our country has managed to avoid experiencing some of the very serious outbreaks of animal diseases to the extent sometimes witnessed in other nations. This success is due in large part to the commitment over the years of Agriculture Canada, national and provincial organizations and individual producers to be ever vigilant in the fight against animal diseases.

The establishment of preventive measures and detection procedures have played a major role in maintaining our animal health record. However, as the case of the so-called mad cow disease currently being encountered in England proves, we must continue to do all we can to avoid such a devastating outbreak of animal disease.

A large outbreak of disease would not only have an impact on farmers, but could also be a potentially serious health hazard to the public. In addition, a large outbreak may affect the high reputation of quality that our agricultural exports enjoy abroad. Therefore, it is necessary to create the most prudent and efficient measures we can to protect human health in this vital industry.

Madam Speaker, Bill C-66 proposes to improve upon Canada's ability to detect and control diseases and toxic substances which may affect animals or be transmitted by animals or animal products to humans. The bill also provides for the strengthening of Canada's ability to prevent the importation of animal disease, while at the same time preventing, controlling and eradicating any outbreak of disease which may indeed pose serious health risks to Canadians or create economic difficulties which result from them.

The objectives of Bill C-66 are certainly worthy of support, both by members in this House and throughout the Canadian agriculture community.

There have been cases where animal diseases have surfaced both in terms of the disease being brought into Canada or it being domestic in origin. In some of the more severe cases a number of animals had to be destroyed. Only the quick action taken by farmers and agriculture officials prevented the spread of these diseases.

In terms of disease threatening our exports, everything must be done to ensure that Canada does not sell infected animals abroad. Certainly, for us to transport a disease to a country or, even worse, to a country that does not have a history of that particular disease, the damage would be considerable in both financial and product reputation terms. The only policy is to be as sure as possible that our exports are disease free.

Bill C-66 provides a number of measures that would be helpful in efforts to combat domestic and foreign animal diseases. In Canada, the bill enables the Ministry of Agriculture to designate qualified animal inspectors and to provide them with appropriate powers to execute their duties effectively.

The bill would enable an inspector to declare any property within five kilometres of an infected area to be deemed temporarily infected. This would assist in preventing the spread of a disease or toxic substance.

If an inspector believes that a larger quarantine area is necessary, the ministry could permit an even larger control area to be declared for a longer period until the situation is resolved.

Bill C-66 also strengthens important rules such as prohibiting individuals to possess or dispose of an imported animal or item known to be in contravention of the act. To accomplish this, the animal inspectors can examine or detain any animal or animal thing which may be diseased or contaminated until a thorough inspection has been conducted.

If the inspector has reason to believe that the animal or thing is contravening the act or could be infected, the inspector may require it to be removed from Canada or forfeited and properly disposed of.

In terms of exportation regulations, Bill C-66 requires all exports of animals, animal products or associated things to specifically meet the certification standards of the importing state. This measure would be effective in enabling Canada from unintentionally exporting a disease or toxic substance which would have damaging repercussions to our international reputation in animal health safety and also cause concern over maintaining our external markets.

This bill does, however, possess an aspect which is worthy of further deliberation in committee. This relates to the issue of cost recovery. Bill C-66 would permit the government, through the animal inspectors, to recover the costs of inspections, treatments or any other necessary services which have previously been provided free of charge.

I believe this matter deserves closer examination so far as this additional cost may have a significant financial impact on some farmers, especially during periods of depressed market prices. I hope that this matter will be discussed in detail during committee stage.

Inspectors able to charge service fees for inspections and treatments reflects a policy similar in nature to privatization. It must be ensured that the quality of these services remain consistent throughout the country.

This additional concern should be given further thought with regard to bird stocks. This bill would allow the Governor in Council to make regulations to maintain or improve the quality of poultry and control or eliminate diseases or toxic substances among birds. I believe that such authority, if exercised properly, would be most beneficial to Canadian poultry producers.

It is also a positive step for this bill to permit the Minister of Agriculture to provide assistance to individuals or governments outside of Canada to aid them in controlling or eliminating a disease or toxic substance which either affects or could affect people or animals within Canada. This measure would indeed be of value in preventing any future cases of disease or toxins from entering Canada.

While the capability to diagnose and control animal diseases and toxins have improved considerably, there is still cause for concern in cases involving foreign animals. Therefore, this foreign assistance is certainly justifiable.

In terms of penalties provided by this bill, the proposed legislation would increase the amount by which individuals are fined for violating the act. It has been determined that existing penalties are not sufficient enough in deterring individuals from repeating an offence.

Bill C-66 allows the Minister of Agriculture to enact regulations permitting the issuance of tickets for minor infractions of the act and regulations. This ticket system gives inspectors the power to issue a ticket, thereby avoiding the often long and expensive court proceedings which are currently required.

The ticket system is, however, worthy of further consideration. Such a system should operate under specific guidelines. The system should be closely examined to ensure that the new enforcement powers assigned to inspectors do not have an unduly negative impact on farmers, particularly small-scale producers. If the ticket system proceeds, then tickets should be issued for reasonable cause and not be too expensive for minor infractions.

With regard to the issue of compensation for farmers who suffer losses of animals due to disease or toxic substances, Bill C-66 provides for the establishment of a new system of compensation. The type of compensation permitted is to be based upon the species and maturity of the average Canadian animal. The maximum compensation available, however, would be set at an amount which would not bankrupt the animal health program. There may of course be cases where the maximum compensa-

tion permitted would not be enough to cover the animal or animals in question. Thus owners would have to carry adequate insurance coverage. This, unfortunately, may add to the additional input costs of farmers.

• (1240)

It is important that consideration be given in committee with regard to the amount of compensation the farmer would receive should a disease inflicted animal be destroyed. The bill should provide farmers sufficient compensation to replace their high valued animals.

In general, Bill C-66 attempts to provide measures that encompass a wider variety of animal diseases and harmful toxins. It endeavours to strengthen import inspection to keep out foreign diseases. It also provides for more effective legal control over diseases and adds to the ability to enforce legislation.

Aside from the benefits the bill has for the protection of animals and this sector of our agricultural industry, it plays an important role in protecting the health of farmers who come into contact with animals and the Canadians who eat meat, eat eggs or drink milk.

This legislation assists in the eradication of diseases which can be harmful to humans, such as in the case of salmonella. The bill also provides the powers to detect chemical residue contamination such as in the serious case of PCB contamination, by broadening the scope of disease definition.

For all these reasons, I believe the bill is worthy of support. I would hope that some of the aspects of this bill are given further study in committee and that these matters which I have referred to are given due consideration when the committee examines this bill in greater detail.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and referred to a legislative committee.

* * *

PLANT PROTECTION ACT

MEASURE TO ENACT

Hon. Gilles Loiselle (for the Minister of Agriculture) moved that Bill C-67, an act to prevent the importation, exportation and spread of pests injurious to plants and to provide for their control and eradication and for the certification of plants and other things, be read the second time and, by unanimous consent, referred to the legislative committee considering Bill C-66.

Mr. Murray Cardiff (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Madam Speaker, I want to indicate at the outset that we have agreed to have this bill, as well as Bill C-66, dealt with by the same committee because the two pieces of legislation are very similar in many ways.

The title of this revised act is the Plant Protection Act. The more appropriate name reflects the new and more vigorous action this government is taking to protect Canadian plant-based industries from the economically disastrous effects of plant pests, which include both insects and diseases.

Since the first formal pest control act was passed 80 years ago, Agriculture Canada has accepted responsibility for safeguarding the health of our agricultural plants and our forests. The government revised this mandate when new technology, advances in research and changes in the world market for plants, plant products and other things demanded better legislative controls.

In 1952, for example, Canada responded to growing international concerns over the spreading of pests by signing the International Plant Protection Convention. Signatories to this convention agreed to certify that their plants, plant products, and other things destined for the shores of member countries were free of plant pests. The legislative mandate of Agriculture Canada was subsequently extended to reflect this international commitment.

Since 1968 when the Plant Quarantine Act was introduced many changes in Canadian law and in the world market-place have started to erode its power. Many sections are no longer productive.

Seven years ago Agriculture Canada vigorously reviewed its plant protection programs. Experts from the department, with the help of those from provincial governments, industry and the public, assessed the impact on our programs of the new technology, changes in the market-place, and the recurring problems that have resulted from applying the current legislation.

This bill results in part from those amendments. It ensures that Canada's superior standards of plant protection are preserved. We are removing those facets that inhibit the department from doing its best to prevent the spread of pests. We have reworked sections to make them more productive. We have taken steps to ensure that Canadian plant based industries will continue to prosper in the world market.

The revised legislation deals with three major areas. First, it incorporates several provisions found previously only in the regulations. These provisions grant Agriculture Canada authority to issue permits to persons importing plants, to designate where and under what conditions products will be inspected, and to move, place in quarantine or dispose of plants, plant products or other things that are infested. Moving these provisions from the regulations to the act leaves them less open to challenge.

Second, the onus is no longer solely on the department to prove that individuals deliberately spread pests. The current act states that no person shall knowingly introduce or admit into Canada any pest, plant or plant product, or anything else that is infested or likely to be infested with a plant pest. This clause has been a legal hindrance to the government's efforts to keep plant pests from entering or spreading within the country.

Steps to prevent plant pests from entering Canada or spreading have bogged when individuals challenge the department to prove that they deliberately spread the pests.

The purpose of this legislation is to control and eradicate plant pests, not punish people. The bill therefore separates the control and eradication of pests from commission of the offence.

The third major provision of the bill will ensure that technological progress does not outstrip legislative controls. The controls in place today cannot keep pace with the expected rapid change in methods of transporting plants, products or other things, and in methods of controlling or eradicating plant pests.

The department needs some mechanism to ensure that it can keep up with the new technology. Currently, authority to revise control provisions rest with the Governor in Council. The revised act allows the Minister of Agriculture or officials to deal with matters of a technical nature, such as the packaging and transportation of material that is likely to be infected with plant pests.

The act is also being amended to provide for cost recovery for some services. In fact costs can now be recovered for services like conducting inspections, issuing permits to those who import plants, and for providing other services under the Plant Protection Act.

These costs will be borne, where appropriate, by the people who seek the department's services or by those whose negligence threatens the health of plants.

The costs for facilities to inspect and test for plant pests will also not be shouldered by the public. Two new sections of the act provide the Minister of Agriculture with the authority to require operators of land, air, rail and sea terminals to allocate, if required, at no cost to the Crown, space and facilities for the services provided for in the act.

As well as providing these major benefits, the amendments also clean up other problems associated with the previous act. For example, they clarify obligations and eliminate unnecessary hardships on people. They also confer new powers on the department to perform its work more efficiently. They ensure that the new act respects the rights of citizens as guaranteed in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

The scope and intent of many sections have been crystallized in the new act. The duties and obligations of

the people are now entrenched. Where the Plant Quarantine Act left responsibilities unclear, new sections will clarify the obligations of people.

Procedures and responsibilities of the department have also been clarified. The process of declaring places to be infested and the powers of the minister and inspectors in this action have been spelled out. The process and authority to prohibit or regulate the introduction or movement of plants, plant products or other things are also clearly laid out.

• (1250)

For example, this bill allows for the designation of an infested place by an inspector. The designation by an inspector of an infested place ends after 90 days. Under this designation people must adhere to rigorous movement or propagation controls. A period longer than 90 days might severely hamper a person's efforts to meet financial obligations. Therefore, if 90 days is insufficient time to control the infestation, only the minister may extend it.

Clarification of the compensation system is another improvement which will help Canadians. When it came to setting out the procedures for compensating people when the department ordered their plants or other things disposed of, the previous act was vague or referred to other legislation. The new act specifies under what conditions the department will pay compensation and sets out how people can appeal compensation claims.

In some situations our safeguards were inadequate because legal controls were lacking. Under the current legislation, inspectors cannot stop vehicles on the highway, even when they have reason to inspect the vehicles may carry plants, plant products and other things that are likely to be infested with a plant pest.

When departmental officials have the legal mandate to inspect things, it often happens that inspectors are forced to conduct their investigations under poor physical conditions. A dimly lit warehouse, for example, can seriously undermine the official's best effort to detect plant pest infestations. The lack of authority in these matters is rectified in the Plant Protection Act.

The act also extends the period that material coming into Canada may be detained. The current 90-day limit rules out using sophisticated testing techniques that can take as long as a year or more to complete. The new legislation increases the period to 180 days or longer. With this extension the department will be confident that it has the time to discover the presence of certain viruses or other plant pests that are not easily detected.

There are two new safeguards in the revised act to prevent infested material destined for Canada from leaving the shores of the foreign supplier. Many plants, plant products or other things come from countries where plant pest infestations are widespread. If the department has reasonable grounds to believe that the goods are infested, it can inspect them at the origin before they are shipped to Canada.

Another new section authorizes the department to provide financial and technical expertise to foreign countries. The current act forces Agriculture Canada to bide its time, waiting for infested materials to reach Canadian shores before it acts. The Plant Protection Act, however, will help eradicate foreign plant pests before they arrive and jeopardize the health of agriculture and forestry industries.

Other amendments update and simplify legal requirements. The penalties for contravening the act have been restructured to make them more effective. The new penalties include ticketing for minor offences. This provision will eliminate the need to go through lengthy and costly courtroom proceedings to prosecute those who plead guilty to minor infractions.

The revised act also protects the rights of individual citizens as guaranteed in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The inspectors may not enter a private dwelling without the occupant's consent or without a warrant issued by a magistrate. The powers of the Governor in Council, the minister, and inspectors have also been updated to ensure they comply with the charter.

The Plant Protection Act is the culmination of much labour and learning from the lessons of past experience. We have consulted all public and private groups directly affected by this bill. Provincial governments, appropriate federal departments, industry and other interested groups have studied and responded to the proposed changes. All agree that the amendments are necessary and all support the principles of this bill.

The Plant Protection Act will add needed substance to our plant based industries. All sections of the previous acts have been amended to clarify responsibilities, reinforce controls, and take into account the urgent needs of modern technology.

This new legislation will ensure that agriculture and forestry, two of Canada's most important economic sectors, will be able to compete in what is a very competitive world market-place.

Mr. Lyle Vanclief (Prince Edward—Hastings): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise today to make a few comments on Bill C-67 respecting the Plant Protection Act. As the parliamentary secretary has said, this is a bill respecting the updating of the previous act known as the Plant Quarantine Act that has been in place since 1967. I agree that it is long overdue and that an updating of that bill is taking place now.

Basically this is good bill. I look forward to seeing the bill in committee where we can have further discussions on some of the particular aspects of it.

However, this bill will assist Canada's plant industry to avoid the economically disastrous effects of insect pests and diseases while maintaining Canada's foreign markets by preventing the spread of plant pests into foreign countries and from them coming into Canada from foreign countries.

If there is any hope of prevention or control of plant pests, the first essential is to be able to detect these pests at the early stage and deal with the problem in a responsible and expeditious manner. The amendments that this bill provides should enable the Department of Agriculture to react more quickly and efficiently to any emergencies in plant pest outbreaks that take place.

The proposed legislation as well, as the parliamentary secretary has stated, would help any person or government to establish a pest control network in order to control or eradicate pests outside Canada.

If there was an outbreak of a plant pest or disease in another country in the past, we in Canada, unless we did it through a project sponsored by an organization such as CIDA which could take some time, were not able to jump in quickly and help solve the problem. I can think of one situation in which we had a lot of transplants purchased from the southern United States come into Canada. This allows us, if necessary, to go in there and assist in order to provide better and safer plant material coming here for our producers.

The bill should also improve the compensation provisions since compensation would be paid not only for destruction of a plant or a thing, not only for prohibition of sale or restriction of use of the property, but also for any treatment to a place, to a storage area or to a crop. That availability has not been there before for compensation by Agriculture Canada or by the government. I am sure such a provision will be welcomed by the agriculture industry.

However I have a few concerns as well. This legislation also gives the the ability to the Governor in Council to make regulations which would provide an inspector with the power to issue tickets for minor infractions of the act. I feel that should be and must be carefully reviewed so that the inspectors new enforcement powers are not overly extensive.

The ticketing mechanism this bill puts in place is not all bad. It allows inspections at border crossings or on site within the boundaries of Canada to take place and a ticketing process so that even though one is guilty one does not have to go before a judge. They are ticketed, they are fined, and they pay the fine.

However we must be very careful that process is not trivialized so that someone who is an offender does not say: "Well, that is fine. I will pay my ticket and I will go on". I think we must spend some time in the legislative committee to make sure that the regulations are written so that we take that into account. It is a useful tool that can be put in place, but we must be careful that it is used properly.

Another point that I feel should be questioned is the power provided to inspectors regarding the size of areas which they can declare as being infested. The area capable of being declared infested has a limit of time. It can be done for 90 days and, if it is to be extended, it has to be extended by the direction of the minister. However the size of the area is not dictated. That will be done depending on the situation which might arise.

I feel we have to be very careful. It could be the corner of a shed. It could be a farm. It could be a facility where plant material is being grown, being handled or passing through. The minister can revoke any inspector's declaration of infestation, in which case the place would cease to be infested. However we must ensure that standardized levels of service are provided across Canada so that

Canada does not lose uniformity in the inspection process.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The hon. member will be recognized right after Question Period to complete his remarks.

[*Translation*]

It being one o'clock, I do now leave the Chair until two o'clock this afternoon.

At 1 p.m., the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S. O. 31

[*English*]

NATIONAL TOURISM AWARENESS WEEK

Mr. Walter Van De Walle (St. Albert): Mr. Speaker, May 14 to 20 marks Canada's fourth National Tourism Awareness Week.

Tourism is the most rapidly evolving and exciting industry in Canada today. In fact, tourism in Canada is a $24 billion industry, employing over 630,000 Canadians. Tourism is Canada's second largest earner of foreign revenue at about $7 billion. Last year, 15 million tourists visited Canada.

A large portion of tourism revenues goes toward municipal, provincial, and federal governments in the form of taxes. This builds roads, schools, and arenas and supports social programs—all the services that we have come to expect from our governments.

I salute the one million people involved in Canada's tourism industry and invite all Canadians to celebrate National Tourism Awareness Week. In Alberta we say: "Smile, you are a tourist attraction."

* * *

NATIONAL CAPITAL COMMISSION

Mrs. Beryl Gaffney (Nepean): Mr. Speaker, in 1987, the National Capital Commission announced the winning design and developers of the Daly Building on Rideau Street. Appraised for $50 million in 1984 and vacant for 15 years, work was to begin that summer. One of the developers went bankrupt and the project was put on hold.

After numerous technical problems, we learned in September the project was to commence again, that the architect had been fired, and that the general contractor had not begun work because the developer was unable to post a bond that would satisfy the contractors.

Finally, this past December, work did begin on the interior of the building. Incredulously, last week at the Consumer and Corporate Affairs Committee, the Chairman of the NCC told me that the building was still on schedule and she made no mention of the latest snag.

The developers now want to demolish the Rideau Street portion of the building and replace it with a replica.

The National Capital Commission must settle the problems with the Daly Building and begin to take steps to ensure that these problems never arise again. Time is money and, again, the NCC has wasted a lot of both.

* * *

ZEBRA MUSSEL INFESTATION

Mr. Steve Butland (Sault Ste. Marie): Mr. Speaker, the U.S. government has taken concrete action to address the infestation of zebra mussels in the Great Lakes. American congressmen say that the U.S. should spend $47 million to fight the mussel nuisance before it causes billions of dollars in damage to water intake systems and to sport fishing. Senators Glenn and Heinz have introduced Bill 4214 in the House of Representatives which deals with such aquatic nuisances.

This is a common problem for states and provinces and begs various aspects of co-operation between the two federal governments. I am reminded of the successful binational control agreement for lamprey eel in the Great Lakes. This is a similar problem and demands similar binational action.

The Ontario government and the Canadian Coast Guard suggest that a soft-line voluntary compliance with controlling ballast water is sufficient to control the proliferation of this nuisance. Guidelines are not enough. I urge the government to introduce immediate discussion with the U.S. government to initiate a binational co-operative agreement to address the problem of

the zebra mussel before the Great Lakes are mussel-bound.

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[*Translation*]

BILL C-21

Mr. Guy Saint-Julien (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Chamber of Commerce has urged the members of the Special Senate Committee on Bill C-21 to recommend forthwith that Bill C-21 be passed.

The Canadian Chamber of Commerce supports the bill, which it considers a step in the right direction. Unemployment insurance coverage should be provided for employees who are suddenly and temporarily out of work, said Tim Reid, President of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Reid also said that the uncertainty caused by the present deadlock among employees and employers and the damaging effect on the lives of average Canadians have become intolerable.

Mr. Speaker, it is high time the Senate passed Bill C-21.

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[*English*]

HEALTH

Mr. Joseph Volpe (Eglinton—Lawrence): Mr. Speaker, an estimated 30,000 Canadians are sufferers of myalgic encephalomyelitis, more commonly known as chronic fatigue syndrome. As a health and economic threat, it is second only to AIDS.

It is a total body disease with significant acquired functional and circulatory brain injury causing major cognitive, intellectual, and physical impairment.

The majority of patients incapacitated are highly educated, high functioning, productive professionals and their immediate families, people involved in jobs of high contact with a potentially ill public or a public recently vaccinated or immunized.

The majority of cases start with clear evidence of infectious illness which develops as a severe, chronic disabling disease.

Yet, except for Australia, no government is funding research and treatment of the serious and debilitating viral-immunological illness.

A symposium on myalgic encephalomyelitis, sponsored last weekend in my riding by sufferers and their families, called on the Government of Canada to devote resources to research and treatment of ME. I urge the Minister of National Health and Welfare to heed that call.

* * *

STATUS OF WOMEN

Mr. Iain Angus (Thunder Bay—Atikokan): Mr. Speaker, any doubts I had about how the Conservative government's agenda is affecting Canadian women were resolved this past month.

I have heard from hundreds of women in my riding and the message is clear. Free trade, the GST, cutbacks, and broken promises add up to bad news for the women of Canada.

Here are some of the things they asked me to tell the Prime Minister: Affordable, accessible child care is a must. Restore educational funding; women need education or face poverty. End restrictions on social assistance funding. Tax big business, not the poor. Stop violence against women. No new abortion law; make it a health care item with equal access for all. Naming a few high profile women to patronage posts is not enough; we need equality in the workplace and in decision-making now. Equal pay for equal work.

And, finally, the message that to me sums it up, we need a new Prime Minister and a democratic country.

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[*Translation*]

NATIONAL TOURISM AWARENESS WEEK

Mr. Jean-Guy Guilbault (Drummond): Mr. Speaker, May 14 through 20 is National Tourism Awareness Week.

Tourism is the fastest growing industry in this country. In 1988, it generated $24 billion in revenues, of which $17 billion was spent by Canadians visiting their own country and $7 billion by visitors from other countries.

With 631,000 employees and 577,000 Canadians who depend on tourism for part of their income, the industry is also the fastest generator of new jobs in this country.

S. O. 31

Mr. Speaker, the riding of Drummond has many activities and tourist attractions, including the World Folklore Festival which last year attracted more than 750,000 visitors and was proclaimed the tourism event of the year in Quebec. There are many historic sites to delight the visitor, such as the *Village québécois d'antan*, the *Parc des Voltigeurs*, the *Domaine* and the *Manoir Trent*, the *Moulin Blanchette* and many more.

I therefore want to take this opportunity to invite Canadians to my beautiful part of the country.

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[*English*]

CORPORATE TAXATION

Mr. John R. Rodriguez (Nickel Belt): Mr. Speaker, today the corporate welfare bum of the week honours friends in high places. Our three nominees each gave handsome donations to the Liberal and Conservative parties in 1988.

Our first nominee is the Bank of Nova Scotia which gave $80,000 to both the Liberals and the Conservatives.

Our second nominee is the Bank of Montreal which gave $80,000 to the Conservatives and $80,510 to the Liberals. Who says there is no competition among the banks?

Our third nominee is Wood Gundy which gave $67,000 to the Conservatives and $25,000 to the Liberals.

The envelope, please!

The winner is Wood Gundy. Wood Gundy remembered its friends in the Conservative government in 1988 after it made $31 million for underwriting the sale of Air Canada in 1987. For keeping its friends in high places, Wood Gundy is the corporate welfare bum of the week.

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport): Mr. Speaker, increasingly, politicians are expected to act in the face of scientific uncertainty. This is why the precautionary principle is increasingly being accepted in political circles.

The reasoning goes like this: To do the right thing in the environment, we must anticipate and prevent. We must attack the causes of environmental degradation at the source, and before the problems become too big to handle. In addition, where there are threats of serious or irreversible damage, lack of complete scientific certainty should not be used as a reason for postponing measures to prevent environmental degradation.

There is also recognition of the fact that many measures urged on behalf of the environment make good economic sense as well. To achieve sustainable development, policies must be based on the precautionary principle which was widely endorsed at the just concluded Bergen Conference on Sustainable Development.

We urge the Government of Canada to put this principle into practice.

* * *

• (1410)

ALLERGY AWARENESS MONTH

Mr. Stan Wilbee (Delta): Mr. Speaker, allergies to natural substances and to chemical compounds can be a severe irritant to some people and life-threatening to others. In fact, more and more people seem to be affected by allergies in our modern and fast-paced way of life.

Awareness and understanding of allergies and their causes, a knowledge of ingredients of everyday products, such as food, clothing, and household cleansers, as well as the preservation of our environment are all keys to living safely with allergies.

The month of May marks Allergy Awareness Month and I wish to take this opportunity to salute the Allergy Information Association. For over 25 years, the Allergy Information Association has alerted Canadians to the hidden dangers of living with allergies by promoting awareness, lobbying for accurate food and textile labelling, and providing authoritative advice to Canadians who may suffer from allergies.

On behalf of the Minister of National Health and Welfare, I express our gratitude to the many dedicated volunteers of the Allergy Information Association.

DISABLED AND THE HANDICAPPED

Mr. Maurizio Bevilacqua (York North): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my warmest and sincerest congratulations to *The Disability Network*, the winner of the first ACTRA "into the mainstream" award, in recognition of its positive portrayal of visible, audible, and disabled minorities in Canadian movies, TV and radio.

Produced by the CBC and the Toronto Centre for Independent Living, *The Disability Network* airs Saturday afternoons as a news and information magazine for the disabled and other minorities.

While we celebrate this impressive achievement, we all must be reminded that there are many barriers confronting disabled Canadians. *The Disability Network* brings to light the fact that many of the issues raised in government reports or reports made by local organizations, such as the Community Services Council of York Region's "From Gaps to Option" report, remain unanswered.

I believe that we must practise the principle of inclusion, rather than exclusion. I urge the government to take all necessary steps to bring about full economic, social, and cultural integration of disabled Canadians.

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SOCIAL PROGRAMS

Mr. Ken James (Sarnia—Lambton): Mr. Speaker, recently I have made a number of statements calling for our government to continue leadership and stewardship in the restraint of government spending.

On this same theme, I recently read some interesting facts prepared by one of our deputy ministers. How many members of this House are aware that each month Supply and Services Canada sends out something like 8.5 million cheques for old age security, guaranteed income supplements, Canada Pension Plan, and family allowance?

If one assumes that the public cost of each of these cheques was 39 cents, this translates into roughly $40 million a year. I ask then, should we as a government not consider other means through which cheques could be delivered? In this day and age of technological advances, there must be alternatives which could be more efficient, not as capital intensive, and in the end less expensive. The idea of direct-depositing is one that comes to mind.

On the surface, this appears to me as one avenue through which we could further reduce our spending and improve our over-all efficiency.

* * *

HOUSING

Mr. Joe Fontana (London East): Mr. Speaker, under this government, affordable housing has become an increasingly unobtainable goal. Forty per cent of all single parents in Canada are raising their children in unacceptable housing conditions.

With interest rates climbing to over 14 per cent, there are only 270,000 potential buyers of the average home, compared to 475,000 buyers two years ago when interest rates were only 10 per cent.

The government's response has been to ignore the housing crisis and exacerbate it by introducing the GST, cutting out RRAP, and cutting a total of $175 million from the social housing budget.

The Liberal Task Force on Housing released its report Monday with 25 recommendations for federal action. The key to this report is federal action, leadership, and co-operation with other levels of government and housing groups.

A national vision requires national direction. It is necessary for the federal government to co-ordinate a national housing strategy now by providing much needed funding and setting new directions for housing policy.

* * *

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Lee Richardson (Calgary Southeast): Mr. Speaker, in meetings in my constituency this past weekend and in several weekend meetings over the past few months, a question that keeps recurring is: Will manufacturers pass on to the consumers savings that occur as a result of the removal of the 13.5 per cent manufacturers' sales tax?

I asked the same question of witnesses during finance committee hearings in every province in Canada. Here are some of the answers.

Professor John Crispo stated: "Very few manufacturers of significance are going to be able to pocket the reduction in the MST. Competition is going to force them to pass it on to us".

The Economic Council of Canada stated: "The reality of the world market-place will force business people to pass through the great bulk of the tax".

The Canadian Construction Association stated: "The selling price for all kinds of construction, in our analysis, is found to be lower under GST than under the current tax system".

This week in the consumer affairs committee the same question was asked and the same answer comes. The Consumers Association of Canada said: "Consumers should benefit from the elimination of the MST. GST does a better job of collecting revenue than the old tax it replaces".

From hundreds of witnesses across Canada we are getting the same answers; consumers will benefit from the savings, manufacturers will pass on the savings when the 13.5 per cent manufacturers' sales tax is removed.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[*English*]

MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Deputy Prime Minister.

The special committee studying the proposed companion resolution presented its report earlier today. I want to commend members of the committee for their efforts.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Gray (Windsor West): The unanimous report which they have presented may well provide a basis for resolving the present constitutional impasse.

Therefore, can the Deputy Prime Minister tell the House if the Prime Minister invited all the provincial premiers to a conference for discussions for which the report tabled today will provide a basis? If so, can he tell this House and Canadians exactly when this conference will take place?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, of course, I and my party want to associate ourselves with the words of the Leader of the Opposition in complimenting all members of the committee on the very important work they have done and the manner in which they carried it out.

The members of the committee had a very challenging task. They demonstrated the highest level of co-operation, dedication and commitment. Indeed, all Canadians and all members of this House will be eternally grateful for the excellent work that they have carried out.

As the hon. Leader of the Opposition knows, the report has just been tabled today. The Prime Minister and the minister responsible for intergovernmental affairs will be discussing this with all the premiers. It is hoped that the report will provide the mechanism for those who have found it not appropriate to support the Meech Lake process to do so as a result of the recommendations made by the committee.

As soon as there is some indication that progress can be made in that regard, I am sure that the Prime Minister will take the necessary appropriate action.

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, in the context of the present constitutional impasse—some have even called it a crisis—the committee in its unanimous report found that the June 23 date is a political reality. Canadians have said that they want their political leaders to roll up their sleeves, get to work and lead the country out of the present constitutional impasse. Surely this is the message of the committee's unanimous report.

I ask the Deputy Prime Minister, why is the Prime Minister losing precious time? Why is he insisting on having some type of advance agreement before calling a First Ministers' Conference? Why will he not announce an early First Ministers' Conference today?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition knows that the report has just been tabled. The necessary and appropriate work will be done toward ensuring that all the players within this very important exercise will, in

fact, be contacted so that the next steps can be agreed upon on a multilateral basis.

But let me remind him and the House that in a speech last night that the Prime Minister delivered to the Canadian Advance Technology Association and the Canadian Information Processing Society, he stated:

> As Prime Minister, I intend to spare no effort to develop a consensus and break the deadlock, if at all possible. I have begun to speak to each Premier personally and in the next few days, Senator Murray will again visit provincial capitals at my request.
>
> It is clear that a First Ministers' Conference will eventually be necessary to achieve an agreement. But I will only convene such a conference if there are reasonable prospects of success. The deadlock can only be broken by the exercise of Canadians' proven talent for reasonable accommodation, for working things out together.

All members should applaud the efforts of the Prime Minister in bringing this very important issue to this stage at this time. Of course, we very much want to commend the work of everyone, particularly the members of the special committee.

• (1420)

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, in quoting the Prime Minister's speech, the Deputy Prime Minister seems to be saying that there may not be a First Ministers' Conference before June 23. If that is the case, I say to the Deputy Prime Minister, Canadians will be very disappointed. They will feel that the Prime Minister and the government have let them down.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, the report tabled today provides a good starting point for helping us out of the present constitutional impasse. Again, I want to ask the Deputy Prime Minister why the Prime Minister, at this point, doesn't think it would be useful to call a First Ministers conference as soon as possible, even without first consulting with the provincial Premiers. Why?

[*English*]

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I wish the Leader of the Opposition would not try to twist words. The Prime Minister has never indicated that he would not call a First Ministers' Conference. Obviously, there has to be preparatory work done, and he has said that when it is appropriate, a First Ministers' Conference will be held.

Let us get the work done that needs to be done leading up to the First Ministers' Conference. If and when it is appropriate, I am sure that one will be called. I hope it will have the support of the hon. Leader of the Opposition.

* * *

[*Translation*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Alfonso Gagliano (Saint-Léonard): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister. Yesterday, another environmental disaster occurred at Saint-Amable where nearly four million tires burst into flames, spreading a toxic cloud as far as 20 or 30 kilometres and spilling toxic oils that may contaminate the water supply.

Since this is the third fire at a tire dumpsite in Canada in less than three months, what does the federal government intend to do to prevent another ecological disaster?

Hon. Gerry Weiner (Secretary of State of Canada and Minister of State (Multiculturalism and Citizenship)): My colleague, the Minister of State responsible for Fitness and Amateur Sport, whose riding includes the town of Saint-Amable, just spoke to me about 15 minutes ago, and he is watching the situation very closely.

The Government of Quebec is responsible for coordinating emergency measures. Yesterday afternoon, Quebec asked us for technical assistance. Environment Canada immediately went to the site to do air quality analyses and provide meteorological data. All this was done to ensure public safety.

Mr. Alfonso Gagliano (Saint-Léonard): Mr. Speaker, since there are tire dumpsites across this country and this has become a national problem, will the government implement a national tire storage policy to prevent environmental disasters like the ones at Hagersville, Sainte-Anne-des-Plaines, and now at Saint-Amable, from happening again? It's all very well to say the government was on the spot, but it must find a way to prevent these things from happening!

Mr. Blais: This is provincial jurisdiction.

Hon. Gerry Weiner (Secretary of State of Canada and Minister of State (Multiculturalism and Citizenship)): At their meeting on March 20, 1990, the Canadian ministers of Environment set up a task force to identify and examine possibile solutions. Since then, they have started to collect as much information as possible. I may add that Environment Canada has already started its work, and at the next meeting to be held in July, we will be able to continue the process.

* * *

MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Mme Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister.

Yesterday, the Special Committee on the proposed companion resolution to the Meech Lake Accord tabled its report and I would like to congratulate the members of this committee for it. This report was unanimous and I believe that it is the necessary first step to break the constitutional deadlock. It is now up to the first ministers to prepare an acceptable companion resolution.

My question for the Deputy Prime Minister is this: Can he report to us on the consultations which the Prime Minister has had with the provincial premiers and can he tell us what he specifically intends to do to get out of the impasse?

[*English*]

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I can only confirm to the leader of the New Democratic Party that this process is ongoing. He is engaged in discussions directly with the premiers.

As well, the minister responsible for intergovernmental affairs will be contacting the premiers and the other government members who are involved to get a firsthand assessment of the report. It is hoped that the dissident provinces will find it necessary to come on side and support the major recommendations of the committee and, in so doing, lay the groundwork for the next step, which will probably be the holding of a First Ministers' Conference.

As I indicated to the Leader of the Opposition, this preparatory work is necessary in order to set the stage. Hopefully, as a result of the consultations, we will be able to proceed with the calling of a First Ministers' Conference.

Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, I agree that the holding of a First Ministers' Conference is very important. I hope that the Prime Minister is not waiting for a guarantee of success. Obviously a guarantee of success is just a photo op. I hope that the Prime Minister is prepared to take the leadership to call that First Ministers' meeting to ensure that we can begin the dialogue for which this committee's report has provided the basis.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Ms. McLaughlin: It has been said about the report that the committee has set the table for a First Ministers' Conference. I want to point out to the Deputy Prime Minister that one of the items on that table has been the rights of the women of Canada which have been outlined as being important so that the women of Canada can be assured that their rights are protected.

Will the Deputy Prime Minister commit today, on behalf of the women of Canada, and on behalf of his government, that he and his government will ensure that this time women's rights are guaranteed.

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I simply remind the Leader of the New Democratic Party that the Meech Lake Accord was signed by the Prime Minister and 10 provincial premiers. They, in their wisdom, believed that it was an appropriate document.

However, since that time there have been other developments. Three provinces have stated some reservations, which has resulted in the recommendations of a parallel accord and the work of this committee. Of course, much of the success will depend upon the position or the response that Manitoba, Newfoundland and New Brunswick make towards advancing the process.

What is necessary now is to ascertain the positions and the responses of the dissident provinces. Hopefully they will find sufficient latitude within the recommendations for them to come on board and support the process, at which time a First Ministers' Conference could be held and we could get this problem resolved once and for all.

• (1430)

Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, I will assume that the Deputy Prime Minister is not referring to the women of Canada as dissidents simply because they are putting forward their point of view and wanting to protect their rights.

I also want to ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he knows that Manitoba is required by its constitution to hold public hearings before any constitutional amendments can be signed. The premier of the province has said publicly that the province will hold 10 days of hearings and 10 days of debate. I would suggest, as Mr. McKenna has in his proposal, that all Canadians should have the opportunity to examine the companion resolution.

I would ask the Deputy Prime Minister if his government is prepared to ensure that all Canadians have the opportunity to have information on this companion resolution, using the same amount of time and effort it has put into ensuring that every Canadian household has something on the GST. I think the Constitution is important to the country. I ask the government today to say that it will put the same amount of effort into explaining this companion resolution to Canadians.

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I wish that the Leader of the New Democratic Party would not attempt to distort what I said. I did not refer to women as being dissidents; I referred to the three provinces that chose to take another course of action.

With regard to the other point in the question, I heard comments at the press conference today, and indeed in the House, that this was probably one of the most thorough committee processes we have gone through in this country for a long time. I think there were 160 witnesses who appeared. It has been a broad-based public hearing on the issue. What is at issue today is the responses of those provinces which have chosen not to support the Meech Lake Accord in its original form.

I am not in any position to dictate to the province of Manitoba, the province of New Brunswick or the province of Newfoundland what process they may want to set up in terms of how they want to deal with this. I would hope that the hon. member was not suggesting that in the context of her question.

* * *

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Russell MacLellan (Cape Breton—The Sydneys): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and concerns the document the government has sent out entitled: "Some straightforward answers about the goods and services tax and what it means to you".

This flyer tells consumers and I quote: "Once this new system is in place the price of many manufactured items will drop".

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. MacLellan: This is very interesting because the Department of Finance has already said that 76 per cent of consumer and commodity categories will actually show an average increase in price once the GST is in place.

I want to ask the government, and the minister, how they can possibly justify sending out this misleading propaganda at the taxpayers' expense.

Hon. Pierre Blais (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs) and Minister of State (Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I am a little bit surprised because the hon. member sits on the Standing Committee on Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Government Operations.

Last week and this week witnesses from Sears, Ford and GM appeared before the committee and said that they are going to pass the reduction in tax from 13.5 per cent to 7 per cent on to Canadians. Even the president of the Consumers' Association of Canada, Mr. Murray, said that he is satisfied with the way the government managed the situation.

We should ensure that Canadians are well informed on the situation and have the facts. They will then be able to make their own decisions. We are sure they will benefit from the changes in the tax which we will have at the beginning of January.

Mr. Russell MacLellan (Cape Breton—The Sydneys): Mr. Speaker, the government is informing Canadians all right, but it is giving them the wrong information.

Yesterday in this House the Minister of Finance said there will be no additional tax burden on Canadians from the GST and that the tax would be revenue neutral.

A recent government radio ad states:: "The GST, the new tax will provide a more reliable source of revenue which will help to reduce the national deficit."

I would like to ask the minister: Which is it? Is it revenue neutral or is it a tax grab?

Hon. Gilles Loiselle (Minister of State (Finance)): Mr. Speaker, I will explain once more, as I have in this House quite a few times, what is meant by revenue neutral.

At the present time, we have a tax which is hidden. It is a disaster for our economy. We want to remove it. The present federal sales tax has an additional weakness. It is easy for companies to avoid it. It is a tax which is porous and tends to disappear as we raise the rate. By replacing it with a tax that is more modern and more efficient, we will have more guaranteed income to pay for the programs that Canadians want.

The tax will be neutral, but it will be a better system. As we go on, fewer companies will be able to avoid it.

Mrs. Diane Marleau (Sudbury): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of State for Finance. It deals with his government's latest attempt by radio ads to mislead Canadians about the impact of the goods and services tax.

The text in one ad says: "The GST is not an additional tax." How can the minister possibly justify that statement when in fact his own documents show that thousands of goods and services never before taxed by the FST are now included in this goods and services tax? Why does he not come clean with Canadians, stop this misleading propaganda and—

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member has put her question.

Hon. Gilles Loiselle (Minister of State (Finance)): Mr. Speaker, I must admit that I do not have any great confidence in the capacity of the Liberal opposition to add or subtract in view of the debt they left this country in a few years ago.

I would like to explain to the hon. member that one minus one is not two. We are removing one tax. We are replacing it with another one. It is not an additional tax.

Mrs. Diane Marleau (Sudbury): Mr. Speaker, perhaps the minister should ask every householder who is going to pay 7 per cent on his or her heating bills next winter how they feel about it.

This same radio ad, which is aimed at consumers, implies that the GST will actually lower prices to consumers. Mr. Speaker, can you believe this kind of statement? His own documents clearly indicate that the GST will raise the Consumer Price Index by 1.25 per cent. The documents say it.

Will the minister withdraw these untruthful ads and apologize to Canadian taxpayers for this latest attempt to buy this—

Mr. Speaker: I think the hon. member has put the question.

Hon. Gilles Loiselle (Minister of State (Finance)): Mr. Speaker, once again it is obvious that the hon. member has not understood or does not want to understand what this reform is all about. There are many aspects to it.

The hon. member will look at the CPI, but she fails to read the part in the technical document which states that this reform will increase the economy by $9 billion, bringing additional jobs and additional prosperity. This is what is meant by the increase in our economy. She should look at that. By removing from our exporters the additional weight they have to carry now, we will allow them to improve their performance and the performance of the Canadian economy.

* * *

[*Translation*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Phillip Edmonston (Chambly): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister and concerns what is happening in Saint-Amable, which is 15 kilometres from my riding. Between 10 and 20 million tires are burning there. I give you this figure from statements made by the owner of the Saint-Amable tire dump; he himself has admitted it.

It is so serious that today I ask, Mr. Speaker, when the federal government will meet its responsibilities—

Mr. Blais: It is a provincial matter.

Mr. Edmonston: —when the federal government will stop abandoning responsibility for its jurisdiction by saying that it is still up to the provincial government. It is a matter of joint jurisdiction, Mr. Speaker, which is obvious from the fire control regulations. When will we see real leadership from this government, Mr. Speaker?

Hon. Gerry Weiner (Secretary of State of Canada and Minister of State (Multiculturalism and Citizenship)): Mr. Speaker, we responded immediately when the Government of Quebec, which is responsible for coordinating emergency measures, called us. We responded immediately.

As I said, we are on the scene, we are coordinating federal activities and I can assure you that we have implemented measures to coordinate all federal activity involving Health and Welfare, Agriculture Canada, Emergency Preparedness Canada and National Defence forces that are already there.

• (1440)

Mr. Phillip Edmonston (Chambly): Mr. Speaker, Quebecers and Canadians would rather see prevention and leadership on the part of the federal government, something it has not shown so far. It dawdles and talks endlessly instead of showing leadership, and we are sick of it. My question is this, and I want a straightforward answer: When will we see some leadership? What are you going to do to prevent this problem? Not only in my riding, in the city of Saint-Amable, but throughout Canada, because there are hundreds of places like this, including Hagersville, and you know it.

Hon. Gerry Weiner (Secretary of State of Canada and Minister of State (Multiculturalism and Citizenship)): Mr. Speaker, I clearly said that a task force was set up by the Council of Canadian Environment Ministers on March 20, 1990. This task force is collecting all the information and will have the opportunity to analyze it at the beginning of July. At the moment, ensuring public safety is paramount and that is what we are doing.

* * *

EMPLOYMENT

Mr. Jim Peterson (Willowdale): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister. On March 4, 1987, the Prime Minister said: "We must make our manufacturing sector more competitive." Mr. Speaker, this year, because of this government's policies, we have lost 71,000 manufacturing jobs.

An hon. member: Shame!

Mr. Peterson: Today, the Minister of Finance increased once again our prime rate which is now 5.6 points higher than the American rate.

An hon. member: Shame!

Mr. Peterson: How can we compete with the Americans when we are at such a disadvantage? When will this government stop listening to its Minister of Finance and start listening to Canadian manufacturers?

[*English*]

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, as recently as last week, or two weeks ago, the International Monetary Fund complimented Canada on its economic policies. This was following compliments by the OECD, following compliments by the World Economic Forum and following evidence over the last five years of a growth rate in Canada unequalled in the rest of the world.

The hon. member is worried about our competitiveness figures. I have the latest statement of Canadian international trade for the month of March showing that exports, for example, of automotive products registered the largest growth in March, increasing by more than $600 million compared to February. Over all, Canada's trade balance in March posted a $471 million surplus and was up $418 million in February. We are not doing that badly, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Jim Peterson (Willowdale): Mr. Speaker, if we are doing so well, why have we lost 71,000 vital, key manufacturing jobs in four months?

We have seen the collapse today of another Canadian firm, one of Canada's largest real estate firms, with a loss of 300 jobs. Chartland's owner said and I quote: "The government is killing us." Just how many more homeowners, farmers, workers and businesses is this government going to sacrifice on the altar of high interest?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, there has been a net increase in new jobs so far this year in the order of 100,000.

I just refer to a random selection: Bell Northern Research is starting construction of a $100 million extension to its main research complex this summer in Nepean.

"Quebec's export sales rise 3.2 per cent, Caccia attributes growth to high-tech companies".

"GM gives Quebec plant new lease on life": the new assembly plant for General Motors at Ste. Therese, a billion dollar investment.

A billion dollar investment by Ford in Oakville.

"Thrifty Canadian firms are fighting fit: StatsCan". It says:

> Canadian businesses enter the 1990s saving and investing more than almost any other competitors in the industrialized world, a new report by Statistics Canada says.

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FISHERIES

Mr. Lawrence MacAulay (Cardigan): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister.

Considering that the long-awaited fisheries aid package does absolutely nothing for the lobster fishermen, could the minister explain what short-term measures he will take to aid the lobster fishermen in Atlantic Canada so they will survive these low prices?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, I believe I answered a similar question yesterday on behalf of the minister of fisheries.

There is a greater supply of lobsters than there is demand. That is the problem with the lobster situation in the world today. We are making special efforts to market lobsters in countries that don't yet appreciate the value, the taste, the texture, and the deliciousness generally of the Canadian north Atlantic lobster.

The government has entered into a $2.5 million promotion program with two of the far-seeing provinces to help and assist in the marketing of lobster. Those are the steps that have been taken with reference to lobster so far.

The minister of fisheries will continue to watch the situation carefully to see if there is anything that we can or should do further to help in this situation. It is a market situation and of course all parties in this House, except the NDP, believe in the market.

Mr. Lawrence MacAulay (Cardigan): Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind the minister that we are aware they are delicious, but they are also way too cheap. My supplementary question is for the same minister.

Will the minister announce immediately a price support package for lobster fishermen so that they will be able to cover their cost of production and remain in the lobster industry?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is making a representation. I know that he is concerned about lobster fishermen, just as I am. I represent lobster fishermen as well. I will pass that representation on to the minister of fisheries. I had better not say any more than that, but I will certainly pass it on to the minister of fisheries.

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HEALTH

Mr. Chris Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the minister of health.

Last week the federal government sent a representative to join the worshippers at the church of privatization in Saskatoon. Among other recommendations at the conference on privatization, we heard about the glories of private health care from American experts. Among the many advantages of the American private system is that 37 million people do not have any health insurance and that it is the most expensive and inefficient health care system in the world.

Will the minister confirm that his government is opposed to privatization of health care and will he end the widespread speculation across the country that this government is committed to return to profit medicine in Canada?

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, the only people who are spreading that sort of concern is the NDP. I can't recall anybody on this side making that sort of comment.

I have had the opportunity to read the report in today's *Regina Leader-Post* about the shenanigans of the provincial NDP at the conference in Saskatoon. Obviously what

it was attempting to do was to create unjustified fear on the part of residents of Saskatchewan.

• (1450)

These fears are unjustified and it is unfortunate the hon. gentleman should foster those himself.

Mr. Chris Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing): Mr. Speaker, if indeed they are unjustified, perhaps the minister could stand in the House today and tell us that while he is the Minister of National Health and Welfare there will not be a return to user fees in this country, there will not be a return to extra billing in this country. Can he stand in his place today, if he is so convinced that he is not in favour of privatization of health care, and make that commitment to Canadians?

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member who is health critic for his party should be aware of the provisions of the Canada Health Act, which are quite explicit on this matter.

This is exactly the same party that went around Canada during the last election campaign trying to scare the sick, the elderly, and the poor by telling them they were going to lose their benefits. It was false then and it is false now.

* * *

[*Translation*]

DAIRY INDUSTRY

Mr. Jean-Guy Guilbault (Drummond): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State for Agriculture and concerns dairy producers in my riding who disagree with the Canadian Dairy Commission's recommendation to keep the target price of milk at its present level. They claim that this conclusion was reached by the Commission because of a change in methodology.

Could the minister give the House and the producers the assurance that uniform and compatible methods and procedures for data collection will be used, so as to reach a decision that is fair to all concerned?

Hon. Pierre Blais (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Minister of State (Agriculture)): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for his interest in the matter. My colleague, the Minister of Agriculture, and I asked the task force to look into the whole dairy question. Mr. Speaker, our long-term dairy policy expires next year, and we are making sure it will be renewed and will be fair to dairy producers across Canada. With respect to the specific point raised by the hon. member, it is clear there is some difference of opinion about calculation methods.

That being said, my colleague, the Minister of Agriculture, and I have asked an independent agency, an independent audit firm to look at these figures. They are to report on the matter around the middle of June. At that time we will consider the report and see what transpires. However, I can give the hon. member the assurance that we will continue to co-operate very closely with dairy producers in order to get the best possible deal for them, Mr. Speaker.

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[*English*]

TRADE

Mr. Bob Speller (Haldimand—Norfolk): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister for International Trade.

In the last four years this government has allowed subsidized U.S. steel to more than double its share of the Canadian market from 4.5 per cent to 10 per cent, while at the same time the Canadian share of the U.S. market has hovered around its traditional 3 per cent.

We all know that the U.S. has created an informal trade barrier by applying countervail every time our exports in the U.S. climb above three percentage points.

How can the minister honestly say that we have free trade in steel when these practices are still occurring?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, we have not allowed U.S. steel companies to do anything. It is up to U.S. steel companies to do whatever they can to sell their product in any part of the world that has a free market, such as we do, or are members of the GATT system.

They are quite entitled to sell in Canada, just as we are entitled to sell into the United States. If any private Canadian firm has a complaint against a U.S. steel company alleging that it is receiving trade distorting subsidies or whatever, the company can go to the appropriate tribunal here and lay a complaint. It can lay

a charge of anti-dumping and proceed just as firms in the United States can do the same *vis-à-vis* us.

So grow up and live in the real world and don't ask silly questions such as are we allowing—

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Haldimand—Norfolk.

Mr. Bob Speller (Haldimand—Norfolk): Mr. Speaker, they sure could not apply for that because they knew you didn't have the guts to stand up for them.

We all know that the Canadian steel industry is far more efficient than its U.S. counterpart and that we could easily compete if there was truly a level playing field.

Why does the government not act now, stop this unfair trading practice and allow our Canadian steel companies that same open access to the U.S. market?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, our steel companies have free access to the U.S. steel market.

As a matter of fact, the fairness of the way our steel companies operated was recognized by the United States when it did not try to require Canada to become subject to a voluntary restraint agreement such as many other countries had to enter into.

With respect to my guts, usually the complaint is that they are too large.

* * *

EDUCATION

Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of State for Finance.

Since the minister and his government refused to cancel the goods and services tax as it applies to education and refused to restore the transfer payments to education, will the minister change student aid to ensure that Canadians are not denied an appropriate education and to ensure that the student debt is not increased?

Hon. Gilles Loiselle (Minister of State (Finance)): Mr. Speaker, I believe the hon. gentleman is getting carried away.

Our transfers to the provinces this year will increase. We are going to transfer more money this year than last year. Where we are capping in Canada Assistance Program, for example, we are doing it only in the provinces that do not receive equalization payments.

Not only do we provide many billions to the provinces to apply to their own priorities—it is not for us to decide how they should spend their money—we also provide them with equalization payments which they again can apply to their own priorities. We do not choose their programs for them.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the same minister. Since neither the minister nor his government wants to do anything about the GST as it affects education or to cancel the huge cuts in education funding or to improve financial assistance for students, is he prepared to restore the number of summer jobs for students to the same level as in previous years?

Hon. Gilles Loiselle (Minister of State (Finance)): Mr. Speaker, first of all, I do not accept the member's statements claiming that we are cutting and decreasing. We are reducing the growth. We are doing so in order that this government and this country can maintain their ability to help those in need. If we did not take this action, as we did in the budget, paying special attention to the disadvantaged and the poorer provinces, we could quickly let this country drift into an intolerable financial situation, as you did when you formed the government, which would prevent us from giving our support. We will continue to support the provinces massively for all the programs of which you spoke.

* * *

[*English*]

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Defence who recently attended a NATO meeting in Kananaskis.

Many Canadians were disappointed with that meeting and that the minister of defence, on behalf of the government, did not show any Canadian leadership on the issue of the modernization of nuclear weapons.

Why is the government not listening to its former ambassador for disarmament who has called for Canada to oppose the modernization of nuclear weapons?

Why is the Canadian government not taking a stand against all forms of modernization, not just the elimination of ground based missiles but air launched and sea launched cruise missiles?

Why does the minister think it is a good idea to keep pointing these weapons at the populations of East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and all the other countries that have become democracies and are struggling to become part of the international community? Why does he think that is still a good idea?

Hon. Bill McKnight (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, I am amazed that my colleague did not pay closer attention to the meeting that was held in Kananaskis.

We, along with the other allies, welcomed the decision that was made by President Bush to no longer modernize the Lance and to no longer modernize nuclear artillery.

The hon. member join with the allies in supporting the initiative that has been taken by the President of the United States, along with his commitment that he would be prepared to enter into negotiations when the CFB talks are concluded and signed.

I am sure the hon. member understands, although he does not seem to from the way his question was phrased, that we will not be able to disinvent nuclear technology. As a mix of deterrents in the defensive alliance, NATO, we have to maintain the mix that has been successful in keeping peace in Europe for 45 years.

• (1500)

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona): Mr. Speaker, I think the minister's answer says it all. Canadian consciousness with respect to this is either welcoming or approving, or some other response, to decisions made elsewhere, in this case in Washington.

When are there going to be Canadian decisions? Why is it not possible for Canada to take a decision to not participate in certain forms of nuclear weapons testing, particularly the short-range nuclear weapons which continue to be pointed at eastern Europe? Why is there this insistence on maintaining a mix of weapons against a people who are no longer our enemies, if they ever were?

Why does he refuse to consult the Canadian people? When are the Canadian people going to be consulted about this review of defence policy that is going on? Why does he not take the Canadian people into his confidence for once? Maybe they will tell him to show some leadership and not just listen to President Bush.

Hon. Bill McKnight (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, I know there is division within the New Democratic Party as to whether or not it would continue to belong to the NATO alliance. Canada happens to believe, and so do the Canadian people, in the opportunities that are provided to a non-nuclear nation such as Canada, which has not made the decision that we will impose our views upon allies. By belonging to NATO, we have, as have other non-nuclear countries, an opportunity to be involved in the decision making.

I do not suggest that it is deliberate, but the hon. member is misleading in suggesting that Canada has been taking part in nuclear weapons testing.

Mr. Blaikie: What about the cruise missile?

Mr. McKnight: The hon. member obviously does not know what the cruise missile is. It is testing of a guidance system—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. McKnight: No, no. Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is suggesting that Canada has been testing nuclear missiles. Canada has not been and the New Democratic Party should become honest with the Canadian people.

* * *

PRIVILEGE

GOVERNMENT ADVERTISING—SPEAKER'S RULING

Mr. Speaker: Earlier today the hon. member for Dartmouth and the hon. member for Sudbury rose on a question of privilege to complain about a radio advertisement relating to the goods and services tax legislation now before the Senate.

The hon. member for Dartmouth very kindly provided for the Chair the transcript of that radio ad, both in French and in English.

For the record, I will read that and it will go into the judgement. The radio ad said:

> The proposed goods and services tax will be a tax on the sale of most goods and services in Canada. It is not an additional tax, since it replaces the current federal sales tax.
>
> The GST has three objectives: First, to improve the overall fairness of Canada's tax system. Second, to lower costs so that our products will be more competitive in international markets, and here in Canada. That means more jobs. And finally, to provide a more reliable source of revenue, which will help to reduce the national deficit.
>
> The GST is an important change for Canada. If you'd like more information on how the GST will affect you, call toll-free—

That is the advertisement complained about.

The essence of the argument put forward by the hon. member for Dartmouth and the hon. member for Sudbury is that they do not agree that the advertisement I have just read is correct, and both of them indicated that they felt strongly on that issue.

The difficulty the Chair has is that it may very well be that an advertisement, statement, or publication might draw different views from different members, depending on where they sit in this Chamber, or even from the public. It may be that an advertisement may seem to be very accurate from one person's point of view and less than accurate from somebody else's point of view. But that is, by and large, a question of debate.

I point out that in this particular case the ad does start off with the comment that it is the "proposed goods and services tax". The hon. member for Dartmouth asked me to consider whether the next words, that is, "will be a tax" in any way denigrate from the opening words, "the proposed goods and services tax". While one might argue the semantics of it, I am inclined to think that it does not in any way take away from the clear intention of the words, "the proposed goods and services tax".

In connection with the substance of the ad—or perhaps I should say the content of the ad, because the substance of it is very much a matter of dispute in this chamber—I find that while there may be disagreement as to the ad, I do not think it is possible for the Chair to find that this ad in any way infringes on the capacity of an hon. member to do his or her duty as a member of Parliament. That is the test, of course, which the Chair has to apply in determining whether or not there is a question of privilege.

The hon. member for Kamloops eloquently supported the argument of the hon. member for Dartmouth and the hon. member for Sudbury. The Minister of National Revenue rose and indicated that he was not in entire agreement with some of the arguments that had been put forward with respect to the facts of the general situation surrounding the proposed goods and services tax. At that point, I asked hon. members to let the Chair consider the matter because, clearly, we were in danger of getting into a debate which went beyond the procedural argument.

As I say, I have heard the arguments. I have reviewed carefully the transcript of the advertisement and brought it to the attention of the House and the public, but my ruling must be that I can find no basis upon which the Chair could make the *prima facie* link with parliamentary privilege or contempt. Hon. members may wish to dispute the facts or pursue the matter through further debate, as indeed was done today in Question Period, but I cannot, on the evidence submitted, give this complaint consideration as a matter of privilege.

I appreciate the fact that I was well informed in advance and I appreciate also the courtesy and co-operation of all hon. members throughout the debate.

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BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

WEEKLY STATEMENT

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, on Thursdays it is the custom for the opposition House leader to ask the government House leader what legislation the House will be called upon to study for the next few days. Would the minister give us chapter and verse of the legislation that we will be looking at tomorrow, Tuesday, and, possibly, next Wednesday?

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, tomorrow it would be my intention to call Bill C-34, dealing with the establishment of a management centre, and Bill C-57, dealing with copyright protection for integrated circuits. Hopefully, both bills can proceed through report and third reading stages tomorrow. I understand there has been discussion among the parties and some agreement in that regard.

Monday will be a holiday.

Tuesday and Wednesday of next week will be report stage on Bill C–43, the abortion bill, for which there is a House Order providing that we will have extended sittings on both days until 9 p.m. to give an opportunity for all members who desire to speak to speak, with votes on report stage on Wednesday at nine o'clock.

Thursday, we will continue with third reading of the abortion bill, again under the House Order on Bill C–43. The vote on that will be postponed until the following Tuesday.

I expect to call Friday of next week an allotted day. That will take care of next week.

Mr. Gauthier: Mr. Speaker, on a minor but nevertheless important detail, we have not, as of now, had all the amendments to Bill C–34. I do not think that either the government House leader or myself could make the undertaking that we would pass the bill at report stage and third reading tomorrow. I have not seen what the members of the House are going to bring in terms of amendments to the bill tomorrow. I think we should reserve on that one. If there are no unusual amendments, then I can give the undertaking.

• (1510)

Mr. Andre: I was not expecting a firm commitment in that regard, but I understood that there may be a minor typographical error. Where the word should have been "officers", it is "affairs". That is the extent of the amendment. Discussions will be undertaken among parties and, if no agreement is possible, so be it. Hopefully, an agreement will be possible.

Mr. Gauthier: Mr. Speaker, just to make sure that everybody understands, we have until six o'clock tonight to table amendments to that bill. I do not know if members have additional amendments. I just want to make sure that everybody's right to table amendments is protected and that members do not think that we are going to pass the bill come rain or high water.

Mr. Andre: Certainly, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker's Ruling

PRIVILEGE

HOUSE OF COMMONS STATIONERY—SPEAKER'S RULING

Mr. Speaker: On Monday, April 23, 1990, the hon. member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell rose on a question of privilege to draw our attention to a letter circulating in the United States which had been the subject of at least one news article in this country.

The letter in question was written by a former hon. member of this place and bore his signature. The text clearly indicates that the writer is no longer a member of Parliament. The opening sentence, directed to an American audience, reads:

> I bid you greetings from Canada where, for eight years, I served that nation as a Member of Parliament until 1984.

This is followed by the declaration: "I chose to give up my seat in Parliament as a protest". Finally, the signature block refers to the writer as: "Member of Parliament (ret)".

[*Translation*]

Beyond noting those indications in the text that bear on the fact that the former hon. member was not misrepresenting his current status, I do not think the Chair should comment at all upon the content of the letter.

[*English*]

When the issue was first raised in the House, the Chair said: "The question is whether or not it is appropriate to send (the letter) out—under the guise of House of Commons stationery", and "The point I have to decide is whether whoever put this out has done something which breaches the privileges of the House".

The writer of the letter who is, as I have said, a former hon. member of this place, has, in a letter addressed to your Speaker, the House leader and several other hon. members, categorically denied sending this letter out on House of Commons stationery. This denial is supported by the statement of the president of the group which claims responsibility for the mailing at issue. According to that statement, the group took the writer's draft, which was on plain white paper, transferred it to a composite made up of two or three samples of parliamentary letterhead, and mailed it in a similar composite envelope.

Speaker's Ruling

In our discussions on April 23 last, it was, I think, made clear that our former colleague not only bore no responsibility for the misuse of House of Commons letterhead, but that he took considerable pains to explain his position in this matter to this House at the earliest opportunity. Furthermore, it was, I believe, conceded that this House was in no way misled as to the status of the former member.

[*Translation*]

That being so, I must confine my considerations to the question, is this unsanctioned use of House of Commons letterhead by an American group a serious enough matter to warrant setting aside the regular business of this House?

In this connection, I would remind all hon. members of the limited function ascribed to the Speaker in ruling on a claim of breach of privilege by citation 84(2) of *Beauchesne's Rules and Forms of the House of Commons, Fifth Edition*. I want also to repeat what I have said so often in the past, that the Speaker does not rule on whether a breach of privilege or a contempt has in fact been committed. The Speaker only determines whether an application based on a claim of contempt or breach of privilege is, on first impression, of sufficient importance to set aside the regular business of the House and go forward for a decision of the House.

[*English*]

The hon. member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, in his remarks, referred me to a decision of May 6, 1985, wherein a former member of Parliament was identified as a member in a newspaper advertisement. In that case, the Speaker stated in finding it was a *prima facie* case of privilege, "anything tending to cause confusion as to a Member's identity, creates the possibility of an impediment to the fulfilment of that Member's function".

The Chair also indicated in that case that the only tangible evidence was that provided by the hon. member who raised the question of privilege. That case is certainly not on all fours with this one, as in this case it was established that there was no confusion as to the identity of the former member and, further, the former member established by documentary evidence at the first opportunity that he was not responsible for the misuse of House of Commons stationary.

The hon. member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell stated:

> The point is that that material, in several thousands of copies, has been distributed to individuals, misleading them to believe that in some way the House, or a representative of the House, was associated with it. In that way—the privileges of the House collectively have been affected.

The hon. Minister of State, the government House Leader, felt that it was obviously unacceptable for anyone to use House of Commons stationary in a fraudulent manner and assert a claim of official status for it. While he asserted that the person responsible for the mailing most certainly had abused the privileges of the House, he queried whether we could enforce those privileges beyond our borders.

The hon. member for Kamloops, who had also filed notice of his intention to raise this matter, noted that the hon. "government House Leader said that yes, indeed, he agrees the privileges of the House had been breached".

The hon. member for Kamloops referred to Maingot's work *Parliamentary Privilege in Canada* which, at page 195 in the English edition, describes one class of contempt as being "the interference with the corporate rights of the House".

"Surely", the hon. member for Kamloops continued, "the House of Commons shares the same corporate rights as other corporate bodies, including the important right to claim sole use of our Coat of Arms, stationary, and freedom from the misrepresentation of our views by others".

[*Translation*]

I listened intently to the views of all hon. members who spoke on this matter and I have reviewed the facts with a great deal of care. There would appear to be a unanimous sense of outrage directed at the perpetration of this affront. There also appears to be agreement, on all sides of the House, that the privileges of the House, in the broadest sense of that term, have been breached.

[*English*]

The Chair, however, must still determine which of the specific privileges of the House have been breached. I must admit that the action complained of does not fit neatly under any of the headings under which the rights

and immunities of individual members or the rights and powers of the House as a collectivity are categorized.

The difficulty in categorizing the purported breach of privilege led the Chair to consider whether perhaps the action at issue was not a breach at all but rather a contempt; broadly speaking, an offence against the authority or the dignity of the House of Commons.

The Chair has found that no breach of privilege exists but that it is at least arguable that there is a contempt at issue. The finding is of little practical significance however, because the next question which the Chair must address, in either case, is the same. That is, is this matter of sufficient importance to be afforded privilege treatment. In other words, should it be put to the House immediately?

Were I to respond to that question in the affirmative the hon. member who raised the question of privilege would be invited to propose to the House a motion referring the matter to the Privileges and Elections Committee. The motion could then be debated, amended and voted upon. Depending on the outcome of that process, the matter might then be considered by a committee and reappear before the House if and when the committee reported.

It is with a full appreciation of the whole complex process entailed in according privilege treatment to any matter that the Chair must decide whether or not to find a matter is *prima facie* a question of privilege or contempt.

The case at hand involves a misuse of a facsimile of House of Commons stationary in a pathetic attempt, presumably, to lend some sort of official status to the perpetrator's cause. Furthermore, the offence has occurred in the United States where neither the House nor its committees could exercise any authority. The Chair is most reluctant to accord to a case of this nature the importance that would undoubtedly attach to it were I to find a *prima facie* case of contempt and accordingly I refuse to do so.

[*Translation*]

In concluding my remarks on this matter, the Chair wishes to express its appreciation to the hon. member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, the hon. member for Kamloops and the Government House Leader for the calibre of their contributions to this discussion. All three performed in the best traditions of the place in focusing on the procedural question involved and in avoiding argument on the content of the letter at issue.

[*English*]

The Chair is most conscious of the restraint exercised in this regard. There is a danger always that under the guise of defending our privilege we would provide a platform for those who espouse opinions repugnant to our own. That danger has been neatly averted in this instance and the Chair is grateful for the co-operation of all hon. members in this respect.

• (1520)

EDITORIAL—THE MIRROR

Mr. Jim Hawkes (Calgary West): Mr. Speaker, I am sorry that I have not had time to give you notice, but some five minutes ago a member of my caucus handed me an editorial from *The Mirror* of Morinville of Tuesday, April 10, 1990. Morinville is a town in Alberta and *The Mirror* is, I believe, a weekly newspaper. The editorial is entitled: "MP Grey decries "goon tactics" to pass GST". It is not the headline I am concerned about.

In the last five minutes I have had an opportunity to talk to the member for Beaver River just briefly and to show her this editorial. I would like to read into the record one particular paragraph of the editorial because I think it brings the House into contempt and certainly this member into contempt. I understand from the member for Beaver River that this is not the kind of remarks she made, although the editorial writer seems to attribute them to her. The word "she" in the article refers to the hon. member for Beaver River. It reads:

> She also pointed out the damages made to democracy when members of Parliament are "bribed" to vote for the GST or lose lucrative life-time pensions. Ms. Grey noted the government whip, Jim Hawkes, dangled an extra $7000 tax-free allowance for them if they vote for the government rather than their constituents.

I want to take this opportunity to assure the House and the people of Canada that I have dangled no such offer in front of anybody in an attempt to get them to vote for the GST. I find it abhorrent that any editorial writer in this country would consider that members of Parliament are bribable in any way, shape or fashion in terms of the public interest. I do not think that is true. It is a crime, according to the Parliament of Canada Act. This editorial accuses me of having committed that kind of a crime.

I bring this to your attention. The member for Beaver River is in the Chamber and I think she can assure the House that the editorialist is not quoting her. I believe that these kinds of assertions in a weekly newspaper do constitute a contempt of this member, for sure, and a contempt of this Parliament. They are simply not true.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member who has raised this question of privilege has made no comment about being prepared to move the usual motion. I wonder if that was an oversight.

Mr. Hawkes: Mr. Speaker, with my 11 years in the Chamber, I should not have forgotten that. If you were to find a *prima facie* case, I would certainly be prepared to move the appropriate motion.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Beaver River.

Miss Deborah Grey (Beaver River): Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that in conducting my spring tour in my riding in the week of the final GST vote I was consulting with several people in many areas in my riding. Of course, it was a huge area of concern for Albertans in general that two of the members of the Tory caucus were removed from their caucus because of their vote on the GST.

When I talk about bribery I know that money is involved. Generally, it was the timing of this particular per diem expense coming out of committee that was, perhaps, made reference to. As far as I can remember, I clearly did not say that the party whip was bribing them with money. Those were two concurrent situations that just happened to take place at the same time.

I did make reference publicly in Alberta and across Canada in the media to comments made by the member for Edmonton Southeast vis-a-vis some of the things that were going on in the Tory caucus. I think it is quite clear to this Chamber that Canada realizes that I certainly am not privy to what goes on in the Tory caucus. I made general comments about that and people were voicing their concerns.

I certainly am prepared and happy to immediately retract that statement, if such was made. But I can say with clear conscience that I may have used the idea of pressuring, but certainly not the idea of bribery. I will be happy to retract that if, in fact, it was said.

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, I have just heard both the issue raised by our colleague across the way, the hon. whip for the government, and also the clarification given to us by the hon. member for Beaver River. Notwithstanding any retraction, if a retraction is necessary, it should still be remembered that the article in question is still out there and so long as it is in the public domain, and the newspaper story in question remains unretracted, I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that the privileges of our colleague across the way have been offended individually. We are all wearing the same uniform in here. When such accusations are made, to a degree the privileges of the House as well are similarly offended in my view.

To that extent, Mr. Speaker, I hope that the issue would be investigated further, perhaps by means of reference to the parliamentary committee in question, so that the House itself can obtain redress from the serious accusation that was made, regardless of who made the accusation. Notwithstanding any withdrawal by one individual, if such a withdrawal is warranted, the other withdrawal must occur as well in order for this House to obtain redress, in my opinion.

Miss Grey: Mr. Speaker, my staff has just researched this for me and I see that on April 5, 1990, I was quoted as saying how damaging it is to MPs that they are bribed to vote for face losing when the government dangles these tax-free allowances.

Mr. Speaker, I will admit that I did say that, having now seen it in print, and I will retract that. To be fair to *The Mirror* of Morinville, that was my quote and I do stand corrected in the House of Commons. I was certainly trying to take it deeper than that. I was not referring particularly to the hon. member but was making comment about the particular system. I do stand corrected. I retract that and I will certainly bear no ill will to *The Mirror* of Morinville. I will take the advice of the Chair.

Mr. Jack Shields (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, on this very important point of privilege I would just like to add that this has not just appeared in *The Mirror* of Morinville. My riding of Athabasca neighbours that of my friend from across the way. This same quote has been carried in a number of weekly newspapers in my riding. I would suspect it was pretty generally quoted throughout Alberta. I do not know what your decision will be but I do

believe that a reference to the proper committee is in order by way of clearing all members of Parliament of this accusation.

Mr. Speaker: First of all, I thank the hon. member for raising the matter and I thank the hon. member for Beaver River for her frankness which is in the best tradition of this place. I want to consider carefully the comments of the hon. member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell. The editorial, I think, has to be looked at from two points of view; one, what an hon. member in this place may or may not have said and, second, the content of the editorial itself, unless of course the hon. member for Calgary West wants to remove that aspect of it from his presentation.

However, I took it that his presentation and his claim of breach of privilege extended to the content of the editorial and not merely to an hon. member who may or may not have been quoted correctly. Am I correct in that?

Mr. Hawkes: Mr. Speaker, since I rose some five minutes ago the situation has broadened with the comments of the member for Athabasca. I had no idea that those kinds of comments were out and about. I thought this was an isolated case.

• (1530)

We might be well advised to take the matter under advisement for a day or two to give the member for Beaver River, and other members who have weekly newspapers in their ridings, a chance to look into it, to get a better sense of the degree to which that quote was used or abused, depending on the interpretation. Perhaps the House would be best served by leaving it at that stage for a few days, and then bringing it back to the floor of the House with some further information and evidence that might be of assistance to Your Honour in reaching a judgment.

Obviously I would like to stop the spread of the damage caused by the incorrect assertions. I am not quite sure what the best method to do that might be. That would give the member for Beaver River a better chance to search all the files. She seems to have a very good staff, judging by what they have produced for her in such a hurry. We might be best served with a little delay.

Mr. Speaker: Given the tenor of this, I do not want to leave it hanging too long. I wonder if the House would indulge me a moment. I would like to see the editorial. Would the hon. member for Calgary West have a Page bring it up to the Chair?

SPEAKER'S RULING

Mr. Speaker: Given the circumstances and the frankness of the hon. member for Beaver River, I am going to rule now.

I do not know what has been published in other newspapers, but this is the one that is presently in front of me.

This is far more an article purporting to report what the hon. member for Beaver River said than it is an editorial. It is a column in *The Mirror*, of Tuesday, April 10, 1990, on page 21. I am indebted to the hon. member for Calgary West for sending it to me so quickly so that I could look at it.

The position we are in is one in which we should apply our traditional balance in this place. The hon. member has come in front of her peers in this House and said: "Well, I seem to have said it. I completely and utterly withdraw and retract it". I really think that that is where the matter ought to end.

I have properly made similar rulings, I think, on other occasions when there is an unequivocal withdrawal by an hon. member. That is my ruling.

With that ruling, the matter is closed.

The hon. member for Beaver River seems to be seeking the floor. It will not necessary for her to address this matter any further, unless she has something she wants to say to members on a point of order. The ruling is now made.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

PLANT PROTECTION ACT

MEASURE TO ENACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Mazankowski that Bill C-67, an act to prevent the importation, exportation and spread of pests injurious to plants and to provide for their control and eradication and for the certification of plants and other things, be read a second time and, by unanimous consent, referred to the legislative committee considering Bill C-66.

Madam Deputy Speaker: When the House rose for lunch the hon. member for Prince Edward—Hastings had the floor.

Mr. Lyle Vanclief (Prince Edward—Hastings): Madam Speaker, when we recessed for lunch I was in the midst of some comments on Bill C-67, an act entitled the Plant Protection Act. I would like to take a few minutes to continue those comments.

I was in the midst of discussing the powers of inspectors and their ability to establish the quarantine areas that will be allowed under this bill, if it is passed by the Parliament of Canada.

The bill improves the effectiveness of control measures that could very well be necessary in controlling pests, diseases, et cetera, involving plants. In the past, a quarantine area could be established. However, there were not effective measures to allow the restriction of the movement of vehicles and people in and out of the quarantine area. This bill will allow such restrictions to be enforced and put in place.

I explained to the House, and I stress this, that we must be very careful in doing this. When we establish a quarantine area the other thing that this bill does is it enables an inspector to make, if necessary, a fairly large quarantine area. We have to remember that many, if not all, the products produced by the agriculture industry are perishable, and some are more perishable than others, but they are all perishable.

When a quarantine area is established that means product cannot move in or out of that area. If it is a very perishable crop being talked about at the farm level, then a very serious economic effect can take place as far as that farmer's livelihood is concerned, or the livelihood of a business if it happens to be a business, for example, a greenhouse business or something like that.

We must be very careful to realize that there is no provision in this bill to allow for the compensation of revenues that might be lost by someone else within a quarantine area. That can only be done by an ad hoc program that can be put in place by a minister. If a plant or crop has to be destroyed, or if a program has to be put in place to correct the damage that has been done, there is provision for compensation to allow for that.

We must keep in mind that there could very well some detrimental affects to others within a quarantine area who are victims of a circumstance beyond their control. It could, as I say, be very costly to those people.

Another point that I feel we must look at very carefully in this legislation is the government's cost recovery proposal. It would permit the government to recover from any person or any business any of the costs, charges or fees incurred by the government in fulfilment of this bill.

I bring to the attention of the House that this is enabling legislation that gives the minister and the Department of Agriculture *carte blanche*, a blank cheque, to set fees for services performed and to recover those fees. We must keep in mind what such a provision could do. It is not impossible, and I hope it would not happen, that an over-zealous inspector could move in a case where there was a disease or a pest—and there is a good new definition of pest in the bill—on to a site, a farm or business premise and carry out a number of inspections, a number of activities and then later have the opportunity because of this bill to send that person or business a bill.

That is all well and good, if it is an isolated situation where someone has brought something into their business from across the border into our country, for example, plant material that is carrying a disease or a pest that needs to be looked after. I will give a couple of examples on that point.

There are a tremendous number of tomato transplants that are brought into Ontario from the southern United States each year. In 1988, after they started to arrive, even though they had been inspected in the southern states at their place of origin and place of growth, and even though they had been inspected upon their arrival here in Canada, it became known a few weeks later that there was a problem with a bacterial canker in those plants. Federal inspectors did have to go on to farm sites and into fields to inspect to see what damage was there. The job they did had to be done. My concern is that with the fee recoverability in this legislation, the fees for carrying out those tasks could be sent to the grower. I agree that the task that they were doing had to be done. It was a job that they were doing for the total industry

and therefore for the good of the agricultural industry in general.

• (1540)

My concern is this. Let us make sure in the regulations that someone is not unjustly charged because they happen to have control of the site where something happened and would therefore have to bear the whole cost.

Again, in 1989, in the tomato processing industry in Ontario a tomato spotted wilt virus was detected a few weeks after some plants came into Canada. They were planted and were growing in the field. Inspectors had to go into the fields and check them.

What I am saying is who bears the cost? I do not feel it is fair that the individual farmer should have to bear the cost of such inspections. There are some things being done in similar cases, whether it is food inspection or something else, that the Government of Canada and the taxpayer want done. Because it is for their benefit I feel that they should contribute toward the payment of those costs.

I remind the House that primary producers in particular in the agricultural field are price takers. They are not price setters. They do not have the ability to pass those costs, if they are given to them, to the buyers of their product. They produce a perishable product that must be marketed when it is ready to go to market. They have to take the price that is established by someone else.

The other concern that I feel we should take a good look at when this bill goes to committee is the allowance in it for the government to hire private individuals or private firms to carry out some of the duties that are provided for in this bill, whether it be with respect to inspections or laboratory tests that need to be done. I am afraid this may very well be a move by the government to further privatize some of the work done presently by inspectors and by the staff of Agriculture Canada. There is a danger that these people may not always be properly trained. We may also very well lose some of the uniformity of inspection and enforcement of regulations that in the past have been done so well. I look forward as well to discussions on that when we get to the legislative committee.

In closing, I would like to state that we must, as we have in the past in the updating of Bill C-67 and Bill C-66, be very strict. We must watch what is happening here. We must watch what is going out of our country as far as plant products are concerned and what is coming into our country in terms of plant products so that we do not allow insects, pests or diseases to come in which can be detrimental not only to the agri-food industry but to all Canadians in general. We must be careful and take a very good look at the regulations.

Therefore I strongly suggest that when this bill goes to the legislative committee that if at all possible we have a copy of the regulations, at least in rough draft, so that we can review them at that time to see that they are going to be handled and written in a manner that is beneficial and which will give all the necessary safeguards to all sectors of the industry.

With that, I look forward to further discussion of Bill C-67 at the legislative committee for further clarification at that time.

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Madam Speaker, I am privileged to have a chance to speak on Bill C-67 which, in a sense, is companion legislation to Bill C-66 which deals with concerns regarding diseases with animals.

We are now considering the matter of plant protection legislation to ensure that plant life in the agricultural sector, as well as in the forestry sector, will be protected from incoming pests, meaning insects or diseases. This means that we also control plant material leaving Canada in terms of ensuring that we are not infecting other parts of the world with pests or diseases that may have originated here.

Basically, we are trying to control or eliminate plant pests of one kind or another in the country. It is time that we deal with this issue. This is updated legislation. It replaces the Plant Quarantine Act that has been in obvious need of change for decades. This is an opportunity to do that.

I want to say at the outset that we in the New Democratic Party support this legislation. We feel that it is a good initiative. It will assist the agricultural community, as well as the forest industry, in making Canada more insect and disease free when it comes to the infestation of our plant life.

Since we are dealing with this in principle there are, however, two or three points I want to mention as we move this bill into committee. Once the legislative committee examines Bills C-67 and C-66, there are a number of areas we need to look at.

One of these areas concerns the incredible powers that are given to the Minister of Agriculture as well as agriculture officials. When you read the bill, Madam Speaker, you will notice that the Minister of Agriculture almost becomes a czar and is able to move in and deal quickly with an area that has been infected by insects, pests or diseases of one kind or another. It is good to have a disease SWAT team, a disease commando unit, to move in quickly to deal with a problem as early as possible. The earlier these issues are dealt with, the more chance there is to successfully eliminate them or deal with them.

However, we also realize that an over-zealous minister or an over-zealous official could cause problems. As my hon. friend who just spoke indicated, it would be appropriate and absolutely necessary to have at least draft regulations for the committee to consider at the same time that we are dealing with this legislation. Those regulations will lay out the parameters in terms of how the minister and agriculture officials will respond.

I also want to give some indication of a concern regarding the fees, charges and costs associated with the inspection, containment, quarantine initiatives and so on that will be taken. The bill indicates that in a sense we are attempting to introduce a cost-recovery initiative where the cost of a particular initiative, looking into a diseased plant area, would be borne largely by the producer.

I want to ask if that is reasonable. Is it not in all our interests as a society to ensure that our crops and our forest lands are disease free? At times, this would require an initiative on behalf of the producer to recognize that there appears to be a problem and we ought to deal with it. It may cost the producer his crop, or a portion of it.

If the entire cost of this analysis is being borne by the producer, there may at times be less than an immediate response to deal with this. We have seen and we are aware of instances in the past where producers have simply overlooked what was a problem, something which became a serious problem later. If we are going to encourage people to volunteer to deal with this, I think we should do so with some recognition that society as a whole will benefit and perhaps society as a whole should carry some of the costs.

I also want to say that I am pleased to see that the act grants authority to issue tickets, similar to traffic tickets, to violators of the act and the regulations that will be attached to it. This is a progressive step. Again, we can deal effectively and efficiently with those people who from time to time may violate sections of the Plant Protection Act.

• (1550)

I also want to suggest that what appears to be an effort here to privatize the inspection service raises some concerns with us. We recognize that we must have a more comprehensive inspection team with more of an ability to provide the necessary on-site inspections, but whether or not the seeking of private firms to carry out this inspection process is necessarily the right way to go is something I question.

I question that because Canadians expect protection. They expect a high level and a high degree of protection. They assume that the appropriate inspection processes are always being carried out. We know, unfortunately, that is not always the case.

When it comes to a country as susceptible as we are from time time to plant diseases coming in, it is important that we have a very high degree of inspection. That has been done extremely well by Agriculture Canada in the past. I would like to think that we will continue on with that tradition and not see this as an opportunity to simply privatize a number of first-class government services that we have known in the past. This is a question that we will obviously be pursuing at the committee stage.

On balance, we support the legislation. We are pleased that the government has brought it forward now. We look forward to dealing with it in committee and raising some of the appropriate concerns there. We again appeal to have as much of the regulations in place as possible for consideration when this bill gets to the committee stage.

Mr. Joe McGuire (Egmont): Madam Speaker, we are all well aware of the devastation that can occur when animals are introduced into an environment where there are no natural enemies to control their population. A world famous example of this is the introduction of the rabbit into Australia. That country has spent millions of dollars, if not billions of dollars, over the years to try to control an animal which had no natural predators to control its population.

The same thing has happened and will happen again if strict means are not taken in the national interest to control accidental importation of pests and diseases not native to Canada. Dutch Elm disease in Ontario and in my home province of Prince Edward Island is one example. There are many more.

It is in the national interest that strict inspections take place, not only in Canada but in the place of origin, the place of importation, in order to control the importation and the export of plant pests and diseases to other countries.

Therefore all parties agree, I believe, to having a good enforceable act so Canada can protect its farmers and citizens from the huge costs that can result from a weak act. This bill is certainly one which strengthens the existing act.

We are labouring under a certain handicap here today in that we have no knowledge of the regulations which are going to be available or passed which will govern the different aspects of this bill. For example, we do not know to what extent farmers can or will be compensated for a pest or a disease which is introduced to their farm through no fault of their own. We do not know the extent of the arbitrary powers that the inspectors will have when they are inspecting the premises and discovering contraventions of the act.

We do not know to what extent an over-zealous inspector, as was mentioned before, can really cause a lot of irreparable damage to a farmer's financial position by issuing tickets on an *ad hoc* basis. The farmer must have a way to appeal these ticketing violations in order that he might be able to state a case of his own.

We also do not know the extent or the cost of the privatization of the inspection service. We do not know if there are private people available in Canada who are trained well enough to do inspections. We do not know if we will have enough civil servants or what the government's intentions are in regard to Agriculture Canada officials. Are they going to be reduced and the number of private citizens increased to do these inspections? Of course we do not know how many of these civilians are available to Agriculture Canada, what training they have and what authority they will actually have in the inspection of plants coming into or leaving our country.

We do not really know from this bill where the national interest begins and where the local responsibility leaves off. We will have to determine that point because many people could be left in dire financial straits if through no fault of their own a disease or a pest happened to be introduced to their farm. Hopefully, at the committee stage we will be able to get the answers so that we can improve this very important bill.

[*Translation*]

Madam Deputy Speaker: 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 Cape Breton—East Richmond—Child care; the hon. member for Haldimand—Norfolk—Trade; the hon. member for Trinity—Spadina—Immigration.

[*English*]

Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and referred to a legislative committee.

* * *

[*Translation*]

INCOME TAX ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

The House proceeded to consideration of the report stage of Bill C-51, an Act to amend the Income Tax Act, as reported (without amendments) from a legislative committee.

SPEAKER'S RULING

Madam Deputy Speaker: For the report stage of Bill C-51, an Act to amend the Income Tax Act, the *Notice Paper* indicates only one motion to amend, in the name of the hon. member for Essex—Windsor. This motion is in order. The House will now proceed to consideration of motion numbered 1.

[*English*]

MEASURE TO AMEND

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor) moved:

Motion No. 1

That Bill C-51 be amended in Clause 1

(a) by striking out line 39 at page 2 and substituting the following therefor:

"November 6, 1989 by the Minister of"

(b) by striking out lines 46 to 48 at page 2 and lines 1 to 3 at page 3.

He said: Madam Speaker, this bill which is in front of us is of course a fairly straightforward bill which simply attempts to tighten up the wording of the Income Tax Act so as to make it clear that the federal government has the right to take action in the case of a bankrupt firm, or in other circumstances, to recover deductions made by that firm from its employees' wages for income tax, unemployment insurance, the Canada Pension Plan and so forth.

There is no question that we support the thrust of this bill. We voted for it at second reading. However there is a serious problem with the bill as it presently stands and that is the problem I am trying to correct with this amendment. The reason the bill was brought in by the government was a legal decision in the Alberta Court of Appeal which said that the original wording of the amendment put through in December 1987 was not sufficiently clear to establish the priority of the federal government to take action *vis-à-vis* other creditors of a bankrupt firm.

• (1600)

When that court ruling took place the federal government decided eventually to appeal it. It attempted to take its appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada and in December 1989 the Supreme Court of Canada said that the federal government did not have a case which could be taken to appeal. In other words, it upheld the decision of the Court of Appeal in Alberta.

This legislation attempts not just to correct the wording of the government's original mistake in 1987 with this piece of legislation which was put into effect with a Ways and Means motion in November 1989. It attempts to say that this improvement in the wording shall apply retroactively from December 1987 to November 1989, despite the fact that the Alberta Court of Appeal had decided that the original wording in force during that period was considered to be unsatisfactory.

On principle we find this kind of attempt to rewrite history, to apply a new piece of legislation backward to cover up a mistake which has been made, to be unacceptable and completely abhorrent in a democratic society.

Just as seriously, we had testimony before the legislative committee which looked at this bill from the Desjardins movement in Quebec. It indicated that this was not simply a philosophical issue about which we should be upset for reasons of principle, but that this was something which would cost various caisses populaires in the province of Quebec significant sums of money.

The committee heard testimony from the Desjardins movement which indicated, for example, that the Caisse Populaire St. Charles Borromée would experience a loss of at least $260,000 if this retroactive application of this change in wording were allowed to go through. In fact the person who was before our committee representing that particular caisse populaire indicated that when lawyer's fees and other payments were taken into account the loss might be as high as $400,000 for that particular caisse populaire.

[*Translation*]

Need I say, Madam Speaker, that credit unions are small financial institutions which, because of their size, cannot absorb such losses without considerable difficulty. I therefore believe that as members of Parliament we have a duty to listen to the representatives of these credit unions and to say that it is just not possible to implement this retroactive application. That is why we have proposed this amendment. It is very straightforward, like most amendments to money bills. This legislation should not be retroactive. If this principle is rejected, I think it does not abode well for the future.

[*English*]

If we look at the testimony of representatives of the Canadian Insolvency Association that deals with these questions of bankruptcy, they made precisely the same case in the legislative committee. They stressed that, as they put it, it did not seem fair somehow to deprive those claimants who waited for their day in court. At the very

least, if this bill is to be enacted, it should be enacted at a date to be proclaimed and not retroactively.

I raised these questions with finance department officials in the legislative committee. Those officials were not able to respond to these concerns satisfactorily. They were not able to point out any way in which this bill was not retroactive in its application. It is for that reason that I very strongly urge the House to accept this simple amendment which will see to it that a good piece of legislation does not contain a principle which runs counter to the democratic traditions of this House and of this country.

• (1610)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gaby Larrivée (Joliette): Madam Speaker, Bill C-51 contains two corrective measures regarding unremitted source deductions.

As my colleague just pointed out, the mistake in the bill passed in 1987 allowed a 1989 Alberta court ruling regarding an institution which has since deprived the government of $100 million to $200 million in revenues.

I am quite in favour of the point my colleague was making about the Caisses Populaires, but this mistake affects not only the Caisses Populaires but the whole country. My colleague stated that the Caisses Populaires are small institutions, but I must tell him that they form a very big movement in Quebec. Together, all these small enterprises make up a very big institution.

It is true, as my colleague has said, that representations were made by a Caisse Populaire about a money-losing case. It is obvious that any financial institution that lends money runs the risk of losing some.

However, when the bill was passed in 1987, we were in a position to know there was a risk since the law was in place. The ruling came much later in Alberta. In the case of the Caisses Populaires, the Desjardins Movement in Quebec, the law in place was clear and enabled them to assess the risks. Unfortunately, financial institutions sometimes make bad loans.

Today, Madam Speaker, our colleague wants the bill to be retroactive. It is one way of looking at things but I think there is another way. However, we cannot pass the bill today and say it will apply retroactively as of last year or two years ago. The law was there and financial institutions knew how things worked. They continued making loans and probably took the measures required to protect themselves.

Today my colleague is telling us the government would penalize the Caisses Populaires by applying the law as it should have been applied in 1987.

As far as I am concerned, Madam Speaker, by correcting this mistake, if we failed to implement the law as it should have been implemented in 1987, we would be penalizing Canadians since we are talking about money in trust so to speak, about source deductions, about money belonging to the government and, therefore, to all Canadians and which should be returned to them.

For this reason of equity, Madam Speaker, I think my colleague's amendment is unacceptable.

[*English*]

Mr. Dan Heap (Trinity—Spadina): Madam Speaker, there is one point here that I think should be further considered. This bill is a necessary bill and, with my colleague, I do not oppose the sense of the bill.

This bill is necessary to correct what the courts found was a flaw in the previous law. The question is, how far back will this bill be effective? The government has asked that it be effective from the date on which the bill was first introduced as a ways and means bill.

At the time it was introduced, it was not law. It was, perhaps, a notice to the public that a law might be passed. In the meanwhile, in the practical sense the public, which includes small institutions that may extend credit and lawyers who are not members of this House, understands that the law had been stated by the court, in this case, the Supreme Court of Alberta, and that the Supreme Court of Canada had declined even to consider overruling it.

In the opinion of the courts of the land, the law that had been passed earlier in Parliament was flawed, it was not a clearly written law and, therefore, the decision of that court was that the government could not claim the money under that law.

Our colleague across the way has said that it was imprudent for the caisse populaire to lend money on the basis of court decisions, or with the court decision in mind. That means, if at any time a bill is entered into Parliament, it should be regarded as law, which would be

quite absurd. We have had a ruling by the Speaker on that point.

Certain advertisements were taken in the newspapers of this land purporting to say that a certain tax is law when, in fact, that tax was proposed to become law. It was understood that it was inconsistent with the privileges of the House that a bill, which is before the House, should be regarded during that time as law.

Therefore, Madam Speaker, I think it was reasonable and just to consider that those who acted on the decision of the court, namely that the government did not have the right to recover this money, notwithstanding that the government had indicated that it was going to change the law if Parliament agreed. Nevertheless, the law had not been changed.

Parliament no doubt will agree to the law in a general sense, but it is not law yet. It may be law very soon, but it is not law. It is a proposed law and, therefore, I believe it would be undermining the country's respect for our courts if the government took the stand that the decision of the court was null and void.

I think the government has a perfect right to say it does not like the decision of the court and that it will now institute a law which will give a different result from the court's decision in future cases. This is not to say that the court did not make the decision, or had no right to make the decision that the Supreme Court of Canada upheld implicitly by declining to hear an appeal against it.

• (1620)

When I was a boy growing up in my father's family and he argued civil cases in the courts of Winnipeg, we sometimes had disputes at the supper table over the difference between what is legal and just. As far as I can remember, my father always won the arguments. He said: "The court has to try to do what is just. It has to make a decision within the facts that it has." Therefore, one could say that the court's decision is approximate justice, even if it is not perfect justice. It is not possible to get perfect justice in practical situations. We can only get closer to perfect justice.

The decision of the Supreme Court of Alberta was an attempt to get justice, because as the law stood it was unclear. That does not contribute to justice. A decision was made, and no doubt that decision prompted the action of the government in undertaking to change the law. That is all well and good. It is a reasonable thing to do, and we support it.

But to say that the court had no right to make its decision, that it was wrong to make its decision when it was upheld by the highest court in the land implicitly, or that the court's decision should be ignored and that caisse populaire and any other lenders should have ignored the court's decision and not acted on it in the proper conduct of their business, seems to say that any court decision of the land could be found worthless, not by the decision of a higher court but by a later, retroactive piece of legislation. Certainly, it would undermine the respect we hope people will have for the courts of this land and the respect they should have for the decision of a court when it is upheld at the highest level. People should act according to the decision, rather than waiting to see if some day some government will pass a law that will wipe out that decision retroactively.

If the government is not able to collect the money in this retroactive way, I would ask all my hon. colleagues across to consider that the loss of revenue to the government and to taxpayers is much less serious than the loss of the public's respect for the courts. It would be more serious in the long run for the public to lose confidence in a court's decision being the law of the land to the extent of the power of that court.

It would be much better to adopt the amendment my hon. friend has introduced. Then, the law will be an improvement on its predecessor.

Ms. Lynn Hunter (Saanich—Gulf Islands): Madam Speaker, before I begin my comments on this issue, I want to extend my congratulations to you in your appointment as Deputy Speaker.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Ms. Hunter: Sometimes we have an opportunity in the House to consider and speak on a relatively obscure bill or on an amendment thereto. This is such an occasion.

The principle behind the amendment of the hon. member for Essex—Windsor is very important. As a

mother, I try to tell my children that they have to be responsible for the actions they take. The same could be said about the government. The government has to be responsible for the actions it has taken.

If the government made a mistake in drafting the legislation in 1987, it should not be possible to go back to rewrite history, wiping away that mistake. Just as my children are learning the lesson that one cannot erase behaviour, so the government should not have the ability to erase its mistakes. Although this is a relatively obscure bill in the big picture of debates giving ferment across the country, it is an important principle that the rewriting of history should not take place here.

The House of Commons has a lot of power and, when that power is used disproportionately, it becomes an abuse of power. Such an incident is about to take place if the government does not agree to support the amendment of the hon. member for Essex—Windsor. We cannot go back and rewrite history. We cannot do it in our own personal lives, and we should not be doing it in the life of our country.

Government members say this is the government's money, it should be accruing to the government and it is all the taxpayers' money. That is true but, as each of us know, we have to be responsible for our own money. If we misspend it or if we make a mistake with it, we cannot go back and rewrite history. I cannot go to my bank and say: "Oh, excuse me, I did not mean to withdraw that $200 two years ago. Could you please put it back?" The government should not be able to do that either.

This is an important principle. The government is trying to rewrite history to make it retroactive, and it will have an impact on those caisses populaires in Quebec and across Canada. Those caisses populaires are membership-owned. If $260,000 to $400,000 is lost per small caisse populaire, it is a significant amount of money. Where does it come from? It comes out the pockets of those people who invest in those institutions. Members of those institutions should not be responsible for cleaning up the government's mistakes.

Our party is often accused of not being good fiscal managers. It is one of those myths is that social democrats cannot quite manage financially. This is an opportunity for me to say that the hon. member for Essex—Windsor has brought a very good point. He is not prepared to support this bill, neither are we in this party prepared to support this bill, if the government thinks that it can rewrite history.

The government has made a mistake in the drafting of the bill and it should be responsible for it. We are prepared to support the bill if the government supports the amendment.

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Madam Speaker, I, too, am privileged to have an opportunity to make some comments on Bill C-51.

On balance, Bill C-51 is a very good bill. Certainly, its principle has been discussed already and we are now having a chance to discuss it further as a result of the amendment put forward by the hon. member for Essex—Windsor. We believe in the general thrust of the bill.

It gives clearance for the federal government to have the right to take action, in cases of bankrupt firms, to recover deductions made from employees' wages to pay income tax, unemployment insurance, Canada Pension, et cetera. In such action, the federal government will have priority over all other creditors, since the money in question was not an asset of the firm but held in deemed trust on behalf of the workers involved.

• (1630)

Therefore, in a bankruptcy proceeding where the creditors have to divide up the assets in an effort to reclaim their losses, I think it is fair to say that monies that were held by the company involved on behalf of its employees for unemployment insurance or for Canada Pension and the like are not assets of the company and ought to be passed along to the federal government. That is the point of this legislation. For years and years, that has been the approach in dealing with bankrupt firms.

There is something almost sinister in this bill, because the government is saying that not only is it going to make these changes today, which we support, but it is going to reach back into the past and apply them retroactively.

I remember when the members of the government were in opposition. At that time, the Liberal government decided to move on some aspects of the National Energy Program with policies that were somewhat retroactive. The members of the opposition, the Conservative Party in those days, said that this was unreasonable and

unacceptable. History cannot be rewritten simply by passing legislation.

I remember a number of my hon. colleagues almost being unable to express themselves with indignation and outrage at this incredible grab by the federal government to impose retroactive legislation, which is certainly not fair. They said it was like changing the rules of the game, moving the goal post half way through the game.

Now the government is doing just that. I have not heard a clear response yet from the government that it supports retroactive legislation, not going back to 1989 or 1988, but in fact right back to 1987. You will recall, Madam Speaker, that the government was taken to court by the Alberta Court of Appeal saying that the government did not have the right to have priority when it came time to divide up the assets of a firm during bankruptcy proceedings. I think it was Lloyds Bank that made the case and won the case, saying that indeed the wording was insufficient to give the federal government that priority. It was unfortunate. This legislation will now do that, and that is why we support it. However, I cannot support legislation that attempts to rewrite history, that attempts to impose retroactive regulation.

What signal does this send to the business world? The government is essentially saying to a business, if it went bankrupt two years ago, that it now wants to go in and upset the proceedings to ensure, if the business had taken employees' moneys that were being held in trust for pensions and unemployment insurance premiums and the like, that it would get its fair share. Well, you cannot do that.

The most astounding testimony came from the Insolvency Association of Canada that opposed this very strongly when it heard that the government was going to impose this in a retroactive fashion. You can imagine where this leads us, if we were to say that we support this notion.

I might say that the caisse populaire from Quebec made a compelling argument in committee. It stated that this was not only a philosophic case or a case of principle on which it was arguing, but that it would cost members of the small caisse populaires hundreds of thousands of dollars, if this particular retroactivity was introduced and allowed to go ahead.

I can only say that when they stated that they could lose up to $300,000 as a result of this retroactive application of the law, I assumed they were telling the truth and that is what it is going to cost. That is a lot of money to a struggling caisse populaire.

I have yet to hear any argument in favour of retroactivity. I read the committee minutes carefully. I read the reports from the various witnesses. Even those in the Department of Finance could not offer what I would consider a satisfactory explanation for the use of retroactivity in this bill. I think we are on pretty shaky ground here.

If we say to the government that it can impose retroactive legislation today, what will it do tomorrow? Tomorrow will it decide to change taxes, and rather than having a personal tax rate of 26 per cent, maybe it should be 40 per cent and we will make that retroactive seven or eight years. Where does this end?

We are in very dangerous territory when the Parliament of Canada changes regulations and changes laws retroactively.

There is enough fuss in the country when on budget day the government states that it is going to change a number of tax measures and that they are effective immediately and then the legislation takes place six months or two or three years later. People ask if the government has the right to impose tax changes or the imposition of other levies without legislation. Yes, Madam Speaker, that is a custom and a tradition that we have developed in this country. But we have not developed a tradition where legislation can be imposed retroactively. That does not exist.

We are now breaking into some very questionable areas when we allow this to occur. That is why my hon. friend from Essex—Windsor has done the most honourable thing and has said to the House of Commons that we want to support this in the future, because in a bankrupt firm, of course, the funds held on behalf of employees are not to be considered part of the company's assets.

When I consider the number of bankrupt firms that we are experiencing these days, I begin to shudder. Bankruptcies are up again and the policies of the Conservative government are adding to that number. Every

month they go up. We are now into thousands and thousands of bankruptcies. It is a very serious situation. We really need this legislation, but let us not do it retroactively. I do not think it is an appropriate step at all. For that reason, we should support the motion put forward by my hon. colleague from Essex—Windsor.

Mr. Steve Butland (Sault Ste. Marie): Madam Speaker, I was not going to speak, but my hon. colleague from Kamloops inspired and motivated me to proceed to speak to the bill.

I will speak only to the principle of the bill, because that is the concern that I have. This bill may seem to be innocuous and inconsequential to the hundreds of thousands of Canadians out there who are listening, because they probably have no idea what we are talking about. Nevertheless, if they knew the details they would be concerned.

I suggest that this is government by *ad hoc* legislation. It is back to the future, in reverse. I am reminded very much of Bill C-28, where the government introduced 125 amendments to a bill that were all ruled out of order. I guess this points to the inefficiency of the government itself.

The very thought of retroactivity applicable to any law is totally unacceptable. I think of all of the bills that come before this House. If there were any suggestion, even a hint that we were going to go back to 1987, as in this case, why not go back to the 1960s or the 1940s? We could rewrite history.

It would not be bad, if we were able to rewrite the last five years of history with this government, but that is the kind of precedent that this government is setting.

I notice that you are a little restless, Madam Speaker, and I have strayed a little bit from the topic here, but I sold a house in 1975 for $60,000. It is now worth $500,000. I would like to go back and get my lawyers to say what a mistake I made. I want it back now. It is a retroactive concept that I thought up. It is not a bad idea, and I guess that is what the government is saying, that this is a good idea. The long arm of the government will reach back into history and pick some money out of your pocket.

My hon. friend from Windsor—Essex has a legitimate and sensible amendment that members across should be actively supporting, because the principle of this idea of retroactivity is totally unacceptable and I am sure Canadians who are listening would agree with the New Democratic Party.

• (1640)

Mr. David Berger (Saint-Henri—Westmount): Madam Speaker, I would like to join in supporting this amendment, as I did during the debate in committee.

Before the legislative committee on Bill C-51, we had a witness from the *caisse populaire de Désjardins* in Quebec, in particular, from one of the caisse populaires on the south shore of Montreal. These witnesses indicated to us that they stand to lose some $260,000, if this bill is passed in a retroactive fashion. They were opposed to this legislation.

This bill was presented to us in somewhat of an innocuous fashion. We were told that this bill would simply allow the government to get moneys that were rightfully owing to the government, namely, deductions at source for unemployment insurance, premiums under the Canada Pension Plan, or income tax deductions. In other words, money that was deducted from employees and would be payable to and property of the government.

However, we learned in the debate in committee that the matter is not that straightforward. We were given the example by the caisse populaire of a company which is owed an account receivable, let us say by Hydro Quebec, and this account receivable may be payable in six months' time. The company, on the basis of the accounts receivable, could go to a financial institution, a caisse populaire, and borrow money for its operations.

At the time that this loan is contracted, the company is in good financial health and totally up to date in its payments of deducted premiums to Revenue Canada. It could even be that the financial institution verifies with Revenue Canada to ensure that indeed that the company is up to date in its payments. On that basis, a loan is made to the company and the financial institution, the caisse populaire receives an assignment of this particular account receivable.

What this particular section of the Income Tax Act allows Revenue Canada to do is to step into the shoes of the financial institution to seize that payment, a payment that is to a secured creditor. In the words of the Income Tax Act: "to a secured creditor who has a right to receive the payment". This is acknowledged under the act.

So the monies that we have been told are monies that were deducted from employees and are owing to the government, are not at all the monies that Revenue Canada is putting its hand on. It is putting its hand on an account receivable that is owing, in essence, to a third party. In the case of the witness who appeared before our committee, the third party was the caisse populaire. It will lose some $260,000 if this bill is passed in a retroactive fashion, and ultimately the members of the caisse populaire who are workers, perhaps heads of families, ordinary people, will ultimately have to make up this loss.

I want to support this amendment, which at least would overcome one of the more reprehensible aspects of this legislation, which is intended to overrule a decision of the courts. Canadians have the right to rely on the courts. When they go to the courts to seek a decision in a matter like this, and when the courts say that the government does not have the power to do what it claimed it had, it is not right for Parliament to pass legislation retroactively, overruling a court decision and depriving people of the recourse that they are entitled to have.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

Madam Deputy Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

Madam Deputy Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

Madam Deputy Speaker: In my opinion the nays have it.

Motion No. 1 negatived.

Hon. Shirley Martin (for the Minister of Finance) moved that the bill be concurred in.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

An hon. member: On division.

Motion agreed to.

Madam Deputy Speaker: When shall the bill be read a third time? By unanimous consent, now?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

An hon. member: No.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is there not consent for third reading? The Chair would like to be sure that there is consent from the New Democratic Party. The hon. member for Essex—Windsor.

Mr. Langdon: Madam Speaker, clearly some discussion has taken place among the various parties on this issue, and for this reason there is consent. Nevertheless, it is unfortunate that a piece of legislation with a very poor principle within it is going to go quite so quickly through this House.

Madam Deputy Speaker: There is unanimous consent at this time?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

• (1650)

[*Translation*]

Hon. Gilles Loiselle (Minister of State (Finance)) moved that Bill C–51 be read for the third time and passed.

Mr. Gaby Larrivée (Joliette): Madam Speaker, Bill C–51 is not an elaborate piece of legislation, but it nonetheless has its importance in the general frame of things to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of our tax system. I therefore welcome its impending approval.

The bill contains corrective measures regarding two problems with respect to unremitted source deductions.

The first one was raised following a June 1989 ruling from the Alberta Court of Appeal in a case involving the Lloyds Bank of Canada and the International Warranty Company Limited. The court ruling gave rise to concerns about the enhanced garnishmee procedures used by Revenue Canada. Bill C–51 dispels those uncertainties.

These procedures were implemented in 1987. They apply solely to the collection of source deductions. Since

they have been in force, they are the main mecasnism enabling Revenue Canada to collect unremitted source deductions.

I should of course indicate that, through garnishment, Revenue Canada can intercept payments which, while being payable to a tax debtor, are made instead to the creditor of the tax debtor under a guarantee agreement such as the assignment of receivables.

In the case of a person who failed to remit the required source deductions, after the enhanced garnishmee letter has been served, the amount seized has to be paid to Revenue Canada instead of the secured creditor.

The financial implications of the Alberta Court of Appeal were substantial. The unremitted source deductions have reached 100 to 200 billion dollars a year in the past few years. Therefore, we decided to pass legislation to dispel uncertainties.

I want to point out an important aspect of this amendment. This bill simply confirms the initial purpose of those procedures. It does not give Revenue Canada new powers and really changes nothing in that some courts have recognized the initial intent of the bill. However, the amendments to the bill will prevent unecessary litigation.

The second situation which Bill C-51 remedies is the result of a mistake which was made when Bill C-139, an Act to amend the Income Tax Act, was adopted during the last session of Parliament. When the time came to amend the sub-sections to Section 227, a correlative amendment was inadvertently left out. Therefore, the rules preventing Revenue Canada from taking recovery action in connection with an unpaid income tax amount within 90 days after the day on which the notice was mailed to the taxpayer or until such time a tribunal has ruled on all issue surrounding the responsibility concerning payment of these taxes, became applicable to the unpaid income tax collected at source.

That was not intentional. It had been expressly stated that these rules, when they came initially into force, would not apply to such amounts. This bill, therefore, re-establishes the rule whereby Revenue Canada is prevented from taking recovery action in connection with the amounts in controversy, do not apply in the case of unpaid income tax deducted at source.

Before I conclude, Madam Speaker, I should like to comment on two issues which the Committee has addressed.

When the Committee considered Bill C-51, the clause concerning the coming into force of the proposed amendments to the extended measures for garnishment was hotly debated.

The proposed amendments will apply after December 17, 1987, in the case of moneys Revenue Canada seeks to recover after mailing a notice of garnishment after that date, except if the legal recovery procedure were instituted following that date and before the Government indicated its intention to make amendments, specifically on November 6, 1989.

This provision is adequate because the amendments only confirm the intention that the legislator wanted to give it initially. It is to be noted that in respect of the Courts, the amendments do not apply to matters pending before the November 7, 1989 announcement. The clause governing the coming into force in this bill should discourage any useless lawsuit.

It should be noted that the enactment provision does not penalize employers who willingly paid the deductions at source in accordance with their understanding of the law or of the intention of the legislator.

Quite obviously they had no intention of appealing the validity of garnishment procedures, as evidenced by the fact that they did not take legal action between the time the Alberta Court of Appeal rendered its decision in June 1989 and November 7, 1989 when the ways and means motion was tabled.

Another issue raised in committee had to do with the impact of the legislation on the granting of credit. In this respect I ought to point out that the bill only confirms the original intention of the legislator. These are not new provisions. In any case, since the provisions came into force in December 1987, there is no indication that enhanced garnishment has had a negative impact on the granting of credit.

[*English*]

Mr. Jerry Pickard (Essex—Kent): Madam Speaker, I rise today to state my concerns with regard to Bill C-51. Basically, it is a very good piece of legislation. It re-establishes the garnishment authority that our gov-

ernment had before the ruling of the Alberta Court of Appeal.

The bill reinstates the ability of our government to be able to collect UIC premiums, Canada Pension Plan premiums and income tax owing by corporations that are going into bankruptcy, but which have not been passed on to the Canadian government.

When we realize that many of these payments have been made by employees in good faith to the employer, and as a result of a bankruptcy or another problem incurred within the business, that employer has used some of those funds in order to keep the business going, then I believe that funding should definitely go back to the Canadian government. This bill allows the Canadian government to receive those payments which it could not receive before because of technicalities within the ruling of the Alberta Court of Appeal.

Garnishment authority had been given to the Canadian government under Section 224.2 of the Income Tax Act in 1987. In June, 1989, the Alberta Court of Appeal ruled against the authority of the federal government to receive that money. Therefore, between June and today, approximately $100 million has been lost by the Canadian government. On an annual basis, the government is projecting that cost to be in the neighbourhood of $240 million.

When we stop and consider it, if those taxes are not collected, they must be made up from another source. The only source is the average Canadian taxpayer. As a result, if a piece of legislation is not put in place whereby the Canadian government may regain its ability to collect those garnisheed amounts, it will, in fact, lose $240 million, which will have to be made up by tax increases or spending cuts. I feel the person who suffers if this legislation is not passed is the taxpayer, the average Canadian citizen.

• (1700)

The government is not asking for new abilities to tax under the Income Tax Act and under Bill C-51. It is asking to regain the ability it had previously. In that case, it is re-asking for the taxpayer in Canada a $240 million loss to go back into the Canadian government.

Liberals in many cases have differing viewpoints and those viewpoints have been stated on certain issues. I could not support a situation where I felt that a major problem may occur to small businesses. I think within the bill there is room to make a caution and I think that caution should be brought forward.

I expect that within this piece of legislation the government would not take actions to bring a great deal of pressure on small business, or businesses in general, which may not be solvent, and would not apply extra pressure to force them into a bankruptcy situation.

There have been concerns voiced in that area. I would hope the government would use its discretion in a very sophisticated way in order to make certain that a small business or someone in the country is not pushed over the brink into bankruptcy.

Through the revision of legislation the concerns of all Canadians need to be protected. In part this legislation does that. The average Canadian should not have to pay for debts that were not passed on to the Canadian government through a bankruptcy act and those extra taxes should not be forced upon each individual.

The bill ensures the garnisheement letter from Revenue Canada would transfer to Revenue Canada claims or priorities over secured creditors in the case of bankruptcy.

The bill states that legal actions to collect unpaid source deductions cannot begin until 90 days after Revenue Canada rules on the taxpayers' appeal of their assessment, if an appeal is made. If a taxpayer launches a court appeal of their assessment, no action can be taken by the government until the court appeal has made its final decision.

By giving Revenue Canada the enhanced collection powers proposed in Bill C-51, we are attempting to ensure that businesses with severe cash flow problems and which face possible bankruptcies do not use the unpaid deductions as a source of emergency funding which may not be collected by the Canadian government in future times.

The principle of the bill is supported strongly by many members of our caucus. It guarantees that the Canadian taxpayer is protected from doubly paying these issues. The only further situation I think we should bring forward is the fact that we do have some problems within our bankruptcy legislation now.

The Department of Finance has suggested that its officials will present to the House within the year amendments to the bankruptcy legislation that will clear up the entire problem of bankruptcies and take a 1990s view of what is happening within the Bankruptcy Act. We need to upgrade that legislation, bring it forward, and

handle it in a more global sense than just with what is presented within this bill. I encourage the government very strongly not to stop at Bill C-51, but to move forward and bring these amendments to the House as early as possible so that we can deal with the global sense of bankruptcy.

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Madam Speaker, if I could make up for my oversight at report stage in this more formal setting, I wish you all the success and congratulate you very warmly on behalf of my party and myself on your selection as Deputy Speaker. I think it is a very wise and much-deserved appointment.

I would like to turn to the subject matter of this legislation we supported at second reading because we saw it as important and useful. It would see to it that money deducted from working people was forwarded to the government, as it should be, to cover unemployment insurance, Canada Pension Plan and income tax. It seemed a very clear, straightforward and sensible principle.

We said at report stage that there is within the details of this bill a contradiction of democratic process and a contradiction of the rule of law. It is not possible for our party to support this legislation as it finally stands in front of this House.

We support its principles, but its detailed implementation has within it such a glaring error that we can simply not accept it. That glaring error is to take this sensible legislation which was brought to the House of Commons on November 6, 1989, and to say that despite the fact that it was brought before us in late 1989, we are going to make it apply from December 1987.

I see various Conservatives who are lawyers. As lawyers, I wonder what they think of the application after the fact, the backward application of laws. I wonder what the Minister for International Trade would think if the United States were to pass a law which said that their countervail laws in the future were to take a certain form which would be detrimental to Canada and was were going to apply those laws backward for two years. With the principles of this government in standing up for us against the United States, it is possible that the Minister of International Trade might support such legislation. I hope that he and his government will see that such an attempt to rewrite the legal regime which affects us as a country retroactively is simply not acceptable. Yet, that is precisely what is happening with this legislation.

• (1710)

I guess it is now the junior Minister of Employment, is it? I wonder how the former junior Minister of Transport, I think that is right, as she sits and thinks about this question and the legislation in front of us, would react if the Government of Ontario were to put into effect legislation which attempted to apply to trucking companies in the province of Ontario not just a tax on tires from the day the tax is brought in but a tax on tires back two years previously. I am sure she would be outraged.

[*Translation*]

I look at the Quebec members who are in the House. I look at them and I wonder what can be said about Quebec members who do not listen to the Desjardins movement, who did not listen to the caisses populaires—

Mr. Larrivée: How about the Royal Bank?

Mr. Ricard: We listen. But we are in favour of justice.

Mr. Langdon: —who did not listen to the Quebec caisses populaires management when they said to the legislative committee that it would not be possible to have such retroactive action.

Mr. Ricard: I agree with that.

Mr. Langdon: The hon. member says he agrees with that. For his sake I hope he is prepared to vote against the bill under consideration.

[*English*]

I must say that I was especially interested to hear the Liberal spokesperson who just put the Liberal position, which I took to be a position which supported this legislation. I guess I was especially amazed to hear the Liberal position because in committee, the Liberal position was against this bill.

I know that the Liberal party has many times attempted to straddle the fence, but this is the first time that I can remember where it has taken one position in committee, voting against this bill, and taken the contrary position in the House on third reading, suggesting that it was in favour of the bill. This takes inconsistency. It takes contradictory positions to a new depth. I must

say that straddling the fence like that is very dangerous; it is dangerous for anybody but it is especially dangerous for a political party. It is likely to lead to sterility, and sterility in a political party is perhaps the worst of all possible fates. Perhaps it is something that we can look forward to in the future for this Liberal party that sits here in opposition, because it is a Liberal party which, on this important point of principle, this question of whether it is possible to apply laws retroactively, really does not care.

I have to admit that in my youth, misguided as it was, I actually was sympathetic to the Liberal party. I actually at one point went—

Mr. Milliken: I thought you were a member.

Mr. Langdon: No, I never went that far. Somebody suggested I was once a member of the Liberal party. My sins, I am sure, have been great but they have never sunk to those depths. However I did once attend a Liberal party convention. In fact I have to confess I even took part in a demonstration for a Liberal party leadership candidate in the province of Ontario.

Mr. Milliken: You should go to Calgary.

Mr. Speller: Repent.

Mr. Langdon: Fortunately that candidate—it was Joe Greene, by the way, a former member of this House—did not win and so problems with potential schizophrenia in my life were avoided.

At the very heart of the Liberal party of Lester Pearson, the very heart of the Liberal party of those days, the very heart I thought of the Liberal party led by the member for Vancouver—Quadra, was a commitment to small *l* liberalism. At the heart of small *l* liberalism is a belief in the rule of law, a belief that we cannot through Parliament, a place where we believe in democracy, rewrite law for the past. We cannot pass legislation which will apply two years before that legislation even saw the light of day in the House of Commons. Yet, that is what this piece of legislation does.

Frankly I cannot understand my colleague from Essex—Kent, who comes from an adjoining constituency, presenting such positive comments with respect to this legislation. I can only hope that another member of the Liberal party will get up and say I was mistaken and say that in fact the Liberal party is still a party that does have at least some principles which it holds dear. One such principle is the principle which the hon. member shared with me in committee, the principle that one cannot rewrite legislation two years into the past.

I look forward very much to hearing the member from Montreal. I hope he will be speaking next on behalf of the Liberal party and will make quite clear that the strong words he spoke against retroactivity in the legislative committee were in fact on behalf of his party and that his party will be voting against this retroactive piece of legislation just as our party will be, just as the member for Laval indicates he will be voting against it.

Mr. Ricard: I didn't say that.

Mr. Langdon: Oh, I am sorry. I must have misinterpreted the member. He said that he too was against the retroactivity within this bill.

Mr. Ricard: I did not. I said I was for it.

Mr. Langdon: But he is still prepared to vote for the bill.

Mr. Ricard: Probably yes.

Mr. Langdon: Probably yes. Oh, dear.

• (1720)

[*Translation*]

It is very difficult for those Quebec members, they simply cannot take position and vote for important principles, for small caisses populaires in the Province of Quebec.

M. Ricard: That is not what I said. I said there was existing legislation.

[*English*]

Mr. Langdon: Seriously, this is an important point of principle which we are going to vote against in this party. It is a point of principle which leads us to vote against this legislation, because we do not feel that it is right to rewrite history.

I had a discussion with the hon. member for Trinity—Spadina who was talking about the importance of not rewriting history. If we look at some of the problems that affected the Soviet Union—

Mr. Crosbie: History is rewritten all the time. What tripe.

Mr. Langdon: The Minister for International Trade has finally been brought back to life. Above all, he is someone who would like to rewrite history. He would like the world to forget that he used to be a Liberal.

Mr. Milliken: He used to be on the straight and narrow.

Mr. McGuire: He was divided.

Mr. Crosbie: I was a socialist when I was eight or ten.

Mr. Langdon: If one reads the rumours correctly, it is possible that when he deserts that party he will want people in the future to forget that he was at one time a Conservative.

It is important not to rewrite history, either historically or in terms of law.

Mr. McGuire: What an inflammatory speech.

Mr. Langdon: I can see that the flames of rebellion are starting to burn at the very roots at the Liberal party. I can hear the concern. I can see the sense of outrage at its spokesperson's position.

When the hon. member from Montreal stands up, he will take a position against the retroactivity within this bill. I hope that position will be a strong one because we are trying—and I have dealt lightly with it at times—to get across to members of this House just how important the point of principle is in front of us. We are trying to get them to break through reading their briefs, to break through signing their letters, and to recognize that the point before us is one that cannot simply be casually passed through the House of Commons without a thought. Instead, this bill is at the very heart of our democracy and the rule of law, that is, the question of not passing legislation in this House that applies to the past. Who can tell?

There might be legislation when we have a New Democratic Party government, in the very near future I expect, which will indicate that the free trade bill was never even passed in the House of Commons, that it was not abrogated on six months' notice. A piece of legislation will be brought before this House by the New Democratic Party finance critic, trade critic, or Prime Minister which says that in 1988 we did not pass a free trade bill, that in 1990 we did not pass a goods and services tax, that this was something that never happened in the House of Commons. If that is really the principle we want to see applied, let me say that it will not be a principle put in front of the House by a New Democratic Party government, because we will not rewrite history. I urge the House not to rewrite the past, not to put a retroactive piece of legislation into effect.

[*Translation*]

I should hope so for the sake of the caisses populaires of the Province of Quebec.

[*English*]

For the sake of our principles across the country we will reject this bill and tell the Department of Finance to go back and rewrite it as it should have been written: as something to take effect at the time of a Ways and Means motion just like every other piece of financial legislation that comes before this House.

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Madam Speaker, I listened to the hon. member's homily with great interest. He appears to have taken the usual very righteous tone that members of the New Democratic Party take when they are about to shift gears and change their principles.

We have heard quite a lot of that in their support for the Senate, which of course I am delighted to see. Nevertheless that party urged for so long the abolition of the Senate, but its leader stood this week and said that she wanted the Senate, that undemocratic, unelected institution against which she and her predecessors used to rant, rail and rave and say how awful it was. As stated in *The Globe and Mail* this morning, "some of the former leaders must be rolling over in their graves at the words of the leader of the New Democratic Party". The sudden shift of principle, we are told, is not a shift of principle, but it was uttered in those same pious tones that we hear today from the hon. member for Essex—Windsor, which indicates to me that there has been a very substantial change in principle here.

The hon. member pointed out that perhaps our party had changed its view on this bill from the time in committee. I will go back to April 11, 1990, as reported at page 10502 of *Hansard*, when this bill came up for second

reading. The question was put on that day without further debate and the motion was carried, not even on division. No one from the New Democratic Party objected to the bill. It is evident from *Hansard* that NDP members were in the House but apparently none of them objected to second reading of this bill.

To anyone who is listening and does not know, second reading means approval in principle. For all the ranting and raving we heard today in the speech of the hon. member for Essex—Windsor about their great opposition to this bill and how determined they have been in fighting this legislation tooth and nail from day one, where were they on April 11? Why was he not here to object to the bill when it carried and it was not on division? This is the bill they have been fighting tooth and nail and they were not here to say that it went on division.

It is absolute rubbish that we have been listening to from the hon. member. It is one of those homilies that perhaps would be better preached in a church than here. I suggest that all his pious utterances about the Liberal Party changing its position is just so much nonsense. Certainly we opposed the bill in committee. Certainly we had concerns with the clauses in this bill. There is hardly a bill that this government introduces in the House that we do not criticize, as I am sure is the same with the New Democratic Party.

We recognize that some bills on balance are reasonable, so sometimes we will go along with them as reasonable, not perfect, far from it, especially the bills that are drafted by hon. gentlemen opposite. We know they are fraught with difficulty from the day they are brought in. The ministers who are here know that. I suspect they realize they are not perfect, but they do not like to admit it.

We do not claim perfection. We are not a party that shifts principles right, left and centre. We accept that things are less than perfect in the world and recognize that fact. We have matured. I urge the hon. member for Essex—Windsor, before he starts hurling stones at the Liberal party for having allegedly changed its position, to look at *Hansard* of April 11. People living in glass houses ought not to be throwing stones. The New Democratic Party is in a green house and is at great peril on this one.

• (1730)

Mr. Langdon: Madam Speaker, I have to say that I prefer piety, if that is what it was, to clichés.

If the member for Kingston and the Islands had been here for my speech in its entirety, as he suggests he was, he would have heard, as other members in the House can attest, that I indicated very clearly that we supported this bill in principle at second reading because we thought that its basic thrust was useful and important. But I also indicated that after our attempts to change this very serious problem of retroactivity, which his colleague from Montreal and myself both fought against in committee, and which I moved an amendment on few minutes ago in the House, certainly our view is that the failure of the government to accept a straightforward, consistent and absolutely clear amendment meant that we could not support it as the bill now stands.

The member also made some interesting comments with respect to our position on the Senate. I have to assure the member that our deep and abiding faith in the Senate of Canada remains as abysmally non-existent as ever. We challenge the Senate to put up or shut up because we know perfectly well that the Senate and the Liberal majority within the Senate will not listen to the majority of people in this country, will not defeat the GST as it should and will not see to it that democracy holds in this country. I challenge all of the Liberals who are here to make as much use as they can of their contacts with their fellow Liberals in the Senate to try to prove me wrong.

If I am proved wrong, despite my piety I shall be ever so pleased to get up in the House and apologize to the Liberal Party in the Senate for ever having distrusted their lack of will. But let me put it clearly at this point. I think that will does not exist and I think time will prove us correct in that.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Guy Ricard (Laval): Madam Speaker, first I congratulate you on your new appointment. I did not have the opportunity to do so publicly and I think that the tradition in the House is to congratulate you and wish you every success.

I should like to direct a question to the hon. member for Essex—Windsor (Mr. Langdon). In his remarks he indicated that the member for Laval would support the bill but finds such a retroactive motion unacceptable. I agree with him to some extent because a piece of legislation adopted today should not apply retroactively two or three years before. The one thing he did forget to

mention in his speech is that there was already a law in the statute books and bankers knew that. I wonder why he did not raise that point in his remarks and why today, as we are about to passe this legislation, he is against it. Nobody is supposed to ignore the law. I would like him to tell me why he failed to point out that the legislation was in force and that nobody supported the legislation when the allegations were made.

Mr. Steven Langdon (Essex—Windsor): It is a very important question Madam Speaker. The Alberta Provincial Court declared in its ruling that the existing act was unacceptable. Small and medium sized financial institutions based their decisions on that ruling. They decided to grant loans to companies. After such a court ruling, we cannot give a two year retroactive effect to the act. I submit that such a retroactive measure is unacceptable in a democracy like ours.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The time allowed for questions and comments is now over. On Debate. The hon. member for Saint-Henri—Westmount (M. Berger) has the floor.

[*English*]

Mr. David Berger (Saint-Henri—Westmount): First of all, Madam Speaker, I cannot intervene in this debate without replying, at least very briefly, to the comments made by the member for Essex—Windsor. He referred to the positions taken by members of my party in this debate at report stage and at third reading and said that it takes inconsistency to new depths. He said this leads to sterility.

I would like to assure him that there is no problem of sterility on our party. On the contrary, I think that perhaps the different viewpoints that he has heard expressed here today indicate vigour and that there is some thinking going on in our party. It indicates that there are some of us who are willing to ask questions. It indicates a certain restlessness. It indicates that policy matters are not always straightforward.

I would say that, on the contrary, what we see from his party is more likely to indicate sterility. It is, generally speaking, a viewpoint which is unequivocal, which does not allow for any shades or differing viewpoints and is, as I say, an indication of sterility.

I would like to point out to the member for Essex—Windsor that the position that he himself took in committee and in the House today indicates such sterility. His comments were directed simply to the retroactive aspects of this legislation which, yes, we oppose, and which I spoke against earlier. When the vote was put on division my colleagues in the House indicated that we could not support the retroactive aspect of this legislation. So on that point he is quite mistaken.

I would like to draw to your attention that the objections of the member for Essex Windsor were only focused on the question of retroactivity. On the overall principle and overall design of this law he had no questions to ask.

I would like to suggest to him and to the members opposite in the government party that this bill is not just a matter of motherhood and apple pie. It is not as straightforward as we have been led to believe.

I would like to refer to the speech of the parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Finance on April 5, at page 10243 of *Hansard* when he said this bill applies only to recovery of payroll deductions and was designed to overcome a recent court ruling which thwarts the effectiveness of the improved garnishment provisions which came into force in 1987 and which he said applies only to the recovery of payroll deductions. In the very next sentence, the parliamentary secretary said:

> The enhanced garnishment enables Revenue Canada to intercept the moneys owing to a tax debtor but paid to one of his creditors pursuant to a security agreement such as an assignment of accounts receivable.

• (1740)

Right there, in the words of the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, we see that we are not talking simply about the recovery of payroll deductions. No, we are talking about allowing Revenue Canada to intercept moneys or an account receivable that has been assigned to a lending institution, a financial institution, in a security agreement.

I understand that the member for Essex—Windsor does not have a lot of sympathy for the banks. We had a witness who came before our committee from the *Caisse*

Populaire Desjardins. The Caisse Populaire Desjardins, as we know, is not a bank. It is a financial institution, though, that is affected by the legislation that we are debating here today.

We were told what the effect of this kind of legislation is on such financial institutions. I want to read from the testimony of the representatives of the caisse populaire before the legislative committee. They brought to the attention of committee members what the stakes would be for members of the caisse populaire. I quote:

[*Translation*]

> For several of our caisses, such a loss can make the difference between a surplus that can be distributed among members and a deficit that forces us to draw from our reserve. Incidentally, we have with us today Mr. Pierre-Paul Couture, general manager of the Caisse populaire Saint-Charles-Borromée in the Montreal area, one caisse that will be severely affected if the bill is adopted. The Caisse approved a credit line of $1,7 million for a business which later became insolvent. If Revenue Canada doesn't benefit from a super-priority, the caisse will lose about $690,000 but it stands to lose about $950,000 if such a priority is granted retroactively, a difference of $262,000.

That is not all, Madam Speaker, because we had been told in committee that that loss could go up to some $350,000 since there also some $70,000 in legal fees involved in this case.

We were told that Mr. Couture could provide us with more details. But what must be stressed is that the Caisse had no effective means to protect itself against such a loss. Because of this provision, it will have to use up its entire reserve that it took years to build up and to call on *Confédération Desjardins's Corporation de fonds de sécurité*, a financial support institution financed trough the contributions of every caisse in the province. So, the 4,500,000 members of les Caisses Desjardins will have to make up for that loss which will be shouldered, for the most part, by members of the Caise populaire Saint-Charles-Borromée.

As you can see, Madam Speaker, this bill, if passed, will not only affect the banks, the big financial institutions of this country, but also the 4 500 000 members of the Caisses Desjardins.

[*English*]

But if that itself was not enough to concern the member for Essex—Windsor or the members of the government party, they could have referred to a decision of a British Columbia court in the case of Concord International Travel.

In this particular case Revenue Canada argued that its priority, the priority which we are debating here today, should take precedence over a claim for unpaid wages of employees. In his judgement Mr. Justice Sheppard of the British Columbia County Court, I believe it was, pointed out that a travel agency in Vancouver had experienced financial difficulties resulting in a debt to its employees of $12,025.38 in unpaid wages. Revenue Canada came along several months after the fact and claimed that its claim should take precedence over the unpaid wages that had been claimed by the Director of Employment Standards under the British Columbia legislation.

If members took a moment to consider this particular decision, they would realize that it is not just a matter of the Government of Canada, acting on behalf of all Canadians and all Canadian taxpayers, trying to get monies which are rightfully owed the Crown and, therefore, which benefit all Canadian taxpayers and which will take precedence over big financial institutions. It is not as simple as that because we see here that there is a decision which said that Revenue Canada, under the legislation the way it was drafted, should not be able to assert a claim which would take precedence over the actual wages, some $12,000 that were owed to employees of a travel agency that had gone out of business.

As a result of the testimony we had before the committee I was able to come to the conclusion that we have here a very complex situation which should not be resolved in the manner the government is proposing here today. On this point I want to stress and repeat the remarks that were made by my colleague, the member for Essex—Kent, earlier today, that only a reform of the bankruptcy legislation will probably be able to sort these questions out and see that justice is ultimately done. We are obviously talking of a situation where, in the event of insolvency or bankruptcy, there are not enough dollars to go around, there are not enough assets to go around.

The government has recognized in recent years in a number of reports, that the Crown priority should not always take precedence. There has been talk of abolishing the Crown priority in the reform of bankruptcy legislation. I think there is a recognition there that the Crown, the public at large, the taxpayers of Canada, are perhaps better able to support certain financial losses than ordinary individuals, wage earners, workers, even in some cases, financial institutions. I guess it is because there are more people backing the Crown. All the Canadian taxpayers, the whole country, is backing the

Crown, which puts it in a better position in many circumstances to absorb losses.

We have to understand that the effect of this legislation will be to contradict one of the other stated objectives of this government, which is to ensure that credit is readily available to businesses that wish to expand, invest in our economy and create jobs.

• (1750)

We were told by witnesses before the legislative committee that if financial institutions, including caisse populaire, cannot count on the assignment of an account receivable under a security agreement as collateral for the loan that they have extended, then they will have to require other guarantees. They are going to have to go to the small business operators and tell them that an account receivable of $200,000 or $500,000 or whatever it is, is not sufficient because the government can come in and grab that if they get into some kind of financial difficulty.

Therefore, they will require other kinds of guarantees. They will require personal guarantees. They will require other assets extended as collateral which the small business operator may not have and which, therefore, will limit credit, stop businesses from expanding and will defeat one of the stated purposes of this government which is to see that the economy expands and that jobs are created.

So, Madam Speaker, on the basis of the testimony that we had before the legislative committee and on the basis of reading some of some of the decisions of the courts of Canada on this case I can only support those witnesses that appeared before our committee and say that I am opposed to this legislation. I believe that it is a blunt instrument and that the government has to come in with much more sophisticated measures to enable it to recover what is owed to it in terms of unpaid source deductions.

I also want to reiterate that the retroactive aspect of this legislation is particularly reprehensible. The government presented flawed legislation to this House in 1987. I think the people of Canada had a right to rely on a court decision. Canadian taxpayers do not like retroactivity. Canadian voters, Canadian citizens, do not like retroactivity. They do not like it when the Government of Canada uses its majority to overrule a court judgement which people, I believe, are entitled to rely upon.

When I was sitting in that legislative committee it was ironic to see the Conservative members who were elected in 1984 and again in 1988 on a platform of going to fight big government, of getting the heavy hand of government out of the affairs of the people of Canada, of standing up for the little guy, of protecting the interests of ordinary Canadians. Here we had the Conservative members of the committee ramming through this piece of legislation in the face of the unanimous testimony of the witnesses who appeared before us who were opposed to it and indicated to us what the deleterious effect of this legislation would be on businesses and the Canadian economy.

For the record I would like to point out that we had representatives before the committee from the Canadian Insolvency Association. We had, of course, representatives of the Federation caisse populaire Desjardins. There were also other communications sent to committee members on behalf of witnesses who could not make it to the committee and perhaps realized that it was hopeless because the Conservative majority was in no mood to listen. They sent written submissions to the committee, which I—

[*Translation*]

And I would bet anything that government members did not even bother to read it.

[*English*]

Again, I find it very ironic that the government members, who I am sure go to their constituents every weekend and tell them how they are there to fight for their interests and to protect the little guy, the ordinary taxpayers of Canada, could support legislation of this nature which, on the basis of the evidence before us, is clearly flawed.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Questions or comments? The hon. member for Essex—Windsor.

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Madam Speaker, first I would like very much to congratulate my colleague from Saint Henri—Westmount for a good speech and for an excellent fight within the legislative committee. I have not talked about that in our discussions here in the House. There is no question that the member for Saint Henri—Westmount was extremely active in putting forward his concerns on this piece of legislation. He made it quite clear to Conservatives on

the legislative committee that there were major flaws within the legislation. I congratulate him on his speech today and on the position which he has taken in the House.

I still would like to clarify exactly what this means with respect to the Liberal Party's position on third reading of this legislation. My colleague from the legislative committee talks about his position of standing up for the taxpayers in the country and therefore that he has many concerns with this piece of legislation. My friend from Essex—Kent talked about how he was in favour of the legislation on behalf of the taxpayers of this country.

I have to ask for an unequivocal answer from the member for Saint Henri—Westmount. Would he be prepared to tell this House whether he is in favour of this legislation as it now stands or against it? Will he vote for it on third reading, yes or no?

Mr. Berger: Madam Speaker, I think it should be fairly evident from my comments and even from the comments of my colleague from Essex—Kent that we have serious reservations about many aspects of this legislation. I chose to emphasize certain aspects in my speech and my colleague from Essex—Kent pointed out some of the problems that he has with the bill in his speech. I am sure that our position on third reading will be the same as his party's. I believe that there is a—

[*Translation*]

— a feeling for passing this bill on division, of course, and I suppose the opposition parties are against it. I believe our party is against the passage of this bill as it is before us now.

[*English*]

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Mr. Langdon: I have another question, Madam Speaker.

Madam Deputy Speaker: As it is six o'clock, I am prepared to put the question if the House was ready. Obviously, the House is not ready if the hon. member for Essex—Windsor is rising again on questions and comments. I will have to go to the adjournment motion. The hon. parliamentary secretary.

Mr. Cooper: Madam Speaker, I have had conversations with the two parties on the other side as well as my own party and it was my understanding that we had come to an agreement to complete this bill this afternoon. If the hon. member just wants a minute or two to pose another question, could we agree not to see the clock? Certainly, we on this side have no problem with the member posing his question and the hon. member responding. We could then have the question put and complete our business for the day.

Mr. Langdon: I rise on a point of order, Madam Speaker. My House leader and myself have had discussions about this. It is our understanding that there was absolutely no such agreement that this legislation would come to a vote this afternoon. We certainly did not intend to permit it to come to a vote. We think it deserves important consideration.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I thank the hon. member for the clarification.

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[*English*]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

CHILD CARE

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond): Madam Speaker, on October 18, 1989, I posed a question to the Minister of Employment and Immigration. It was concerning the subject matter of child care and particularly it had to do with the conditions which child care givers find themselves in across this country.

At that time I alluded to the fact that child care workers in this country earn 30 per cent less than the average industrial wage, 50 per cent less than a teacher at the elementary school level and 30 per cent less than animal care workers on government farms.

I raised this issue in the broad context of a national child care program. For quite some time the Govern-

ment of Canada has been alluding to its profound concerns for those individuals who are seeking new child care spaces as well as for those who are care givers.

In 1984 the government promised an action program with regard to child care. That promise was reiterated in throne speeches in 1985 and 1986. It was promised again during the 1988 federal campaign and shortly thereafter it was reiterated in the throne speech that followed.

At every opportunity which the Government of Canada has had to do something with regard to child care, it has elected in good faith, in good conscience, to do absolutely nothing.

I know that members opposite will stand in their places and come up with the phoney excuse that they are studying the matter. They state that they are not certain which way they should go in providing the necessary services for which Canadians from coast to coast have been asking. They talk about tax credits. But members opposite know that they are not the most effective measures to be used in creating new child care spaces.

They know that these various tax measures do not provide each and every Canadian who has children and who wishes to avail themselves of that particular tax credit that they cannot do so.

It does very little for the poor Canadian who cannot provide or does not earn sufficient income in order to take advantage of the tax provisions as indicated by the Government of Canada.

Of course the other argument that they use is this. "We can provide child care through the auspices of the Canada Assistance Plan". What a wonderful neo-Conservative way of addressing the situation.

• (1805)

A province like Newfoundland would have to come up with 50 cents on the dollar for the creation of a child care space. I suggest, with respect, that it, as well as my own province of Nova Scotia, not to mention New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and, indeed, other provinces do not have the financial wherewithal to create the necessary spaces for child care.

The argument that there are numerous opportunities under the provisions of the Canada Assistance Plan just does not hold water, in my view, nor does it give a real opportunity for us to create new child care spaces.

I know the parliamentary secretary agrees with that. I hope that when she stands in her place she will tell us in more detail to what the government at least hopes to do before the next federal election, other than make hollow promises to Canadians who are in desperate need.

I want to conclude with some remarks and observations which are key and germane to any national child care program, namely, quality child care. If we want to have high quality child care in this country, yes, one has to create spaces, that is very true. But one must also have care givers who are equipped with knowledge, know-how and skills and who are compensated accordingly for providing that child care. In my view, we do not need new buildings on a grandiose scale to provide necessary child care. But we need new spaces, new accommodations, alternate accommodations and we need people as care givers receiving good compensation.

I believe the Government of Canada has fallen down in that regard by not providing leadership and by not providing programs, whether it is under the basis of Community Futures or a whole host of programs which are available to the Government of Canada.

I hope that the parliamentary secretary will stand in her place today and provide some real and meaningful hope to those thousands of Canadians who are care givers and wish to continue to give care to young children, as well as to parents who are absolutely beside themselves at the lack of action by the government in regard to initiating any new child care programs.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Lise Bourgault (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Health and Welfare): Madam Speaker, the national child care strategy which had been unveiled in 1987 stemmed from a commitment to establish a genuine national child care program.

It is rather ironic in any event— When the hon. member for Cape Breton—East Richmond takes the floor to speak to this issue he gives me yet another opportunity to remind him that two major pieces of government legislation were stalled in the Senate, the first being the national child care strategy. We would not be talking about it now because the national strategy

would have been implemented, but the elections did intervene and then the government was faced with a serious deficit problem.

To this day still the same Senate—friends of our distinguished colleague on the other side of the House—is sitting on an outstanding piece of legislation for women, Bill C-21 which extends maternity leave precisely to help women care for their children before sending them to day care centres.

I do not understand the hon. member. He must have been reluctant to rise because he knew full well I would refer to these two issues. Well, it does provide me with an opportunity to remind him that the government to which I am honoured to belong is proud of the achievements that have highlighted the last five years with respect to equity for women: our legislation on employment equity; our initiatives concerning family violence and child sex abuse; the famous Bill C-21 which I just mentioned and which extends maternity leave; measures to enforce maintenance and support orders; and legislation to improve women's access to training programs.

• (1810)

Moreover, we have put in place programs to encourage business women, we have taken initiatives to support women farmers and we have opened to women virtually all positions and occupations in the Canadian Armed Forces.

Madam Speaker, I will tell the hon. member for Cape Breton—Richmond-East that our prime minister and our governement have indicated clearly their intention to fulfill their commitments towards child care before the end of this mandate and this time, hopefully, the hon. member will tell his collegues in the other place that he will not tolerate again either that the Senate opposes such an important bill for Canadian women.

[*English*]

TRADE

Mr. Bob Speller (Haldimand—Norfolk): Madam Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to return the attention of the House to the matter I raised last October.

I pointed out at that time that trade statistics pointed to the fact that there was a great imbalance between the trade balance of the U.S. and the trade balance of Canada. The figures released that month showed that our trade surplus was in sharp decline. Our exports to the U.S. had increased by some 3.4 per cent, while our imports from the U.S. had doubled to almost 7.5 per cent.

I wish I could say that things had changed for the better since that time but, quite frankly, they have not.

There was another decline in the real merchandise trade trade balance in the fourth quarter of 1989. In fact, Canada posted a deficit of some $1.9 billion in its real merchandise balance of trade. It was the first such deficit since the end of 1956.

At the time I asked my question, the Minister of Finance responded with his usual response that our falling trade balance was caused by our increased imports of machinery and equipment from the United States. The minister's response failed to tell the whole story and failed to give adequate consideration to the concerns that Canadians voice when they see these types of figures.

Canadian imports from the U.S. are up, while our exports to the U.S. are down. In February of this year Canadian exports to the U.S fell by $12 million, while imports from the U.S. rose by some $353 million. That same month our monthly trade balance with the U.S. worsened by some $365 million. While Canada's trade balance deteriorates, the U.S. monthly trade balance has improved to its best level since 1983.

What is happening to the Canadian economy is troublesome. But what is happening to the Canadian worker is just unfair. We are posting declines in our trade surpluses and, in some cases, outright trade deficits, the likes of which have never been seen since 1982 and, in some other cases, not since 1956.

These figures have a lot more to do with the free trade agreement than the government would like to admit. There was a recent article on the free trade agreement in the *U.S. News and World Report* which put it like this: "On the trade front, America appears to have won the first round".

In the first round, hundreds of Canadians have lost their jobs. In the first round, Canada has become a nation of take-overs, mergers and acquisitions. In the first half of 1989 alone take-overs soared by some 31 per cent.

In the first round, hundreds of farmers have lost their jobs.

In my own riding of Haldimand—Norfolk, the local economies are really starting to feel the pinch. Tomato farmers in my riding were told in December that after 25 years of having contracts with the Campbell Soup Company, they no longer need their tomatoes. Why? They do not need them because they can go to the United States and, because of the free trade deal, get paste from the United States instead of buying local tomatoes grown in my area.

There are stories like this all across our country. Company after company is closing down and returning to the United States. U.S. parent companies are closing up Canadian shop, while Canadian companies are bringing financial booms to American cities like Buffalo, where they can find low wage rates, low taxes and much cheaper land than they can in the Niagara Peninsula.

For other companies, the threat of closing shop in Canada is enough. Workers at Borden Company Limited in Montreal have been forced to accept wage cuts and reduced benefits because the U.S. parent company had threatened to close the plant unless workers took concessions to make the plant as efficient as its U.S. plants.

• (1815)

So this is round one. Workers lose their jobs or are forced into wage cuts while their government raises taxes and cuts vital programs and reneges on election promises to bring in the world's best adjustment programs.

We are not seeing these programs. They are nowhere to be seen. Canadians are afraid to imagine what sellouts and devastation round two will bring.

Even before the subsidy negotiations have begun, the government has trimmed, cut and chainsawed its way through Canadian programs. This government is unilaterally disarming itself of programs aimed at protecting and helping Canada's unemployed, workers and farmers. The list goes on.

As I questioned the Minister for International Trade in the House yesterday and today, he gave no assurances to the steelworkers in my riding, and those of Hamilton, Sudbury and Cape Breton—indeed, the steelworkers all across this country—that he would protect their jobs when he meets Carla Hills, his American counterpart tomorrow. He gave no assurances to this House that he had any programs that could be directed toward helping our Canadian steelworkers.

Let us take a quick look at the list of programs the Canadian government identified as agricultural support programs in Schedule 2, Chapter 7 of the FTA. The list reads like an obituary column: Western Stabilization Act, payments through the Special Canadian Grains Program, expenditures of the Canadian Grain Commission, advance payments and crop insurance.

What programs have the Americans cut? That is right, Madam Speaker, they have cut no programs.

The government sold out this country during the free trade agreement. It said it would give Canada access to the U.S. market and guard Canadians from U.S. protectionism.

Now we have Peter Murphy, a former U.S. negotiator for the FTA, saying that Canadian businesses had better make their presence known in the U.S. because the FTA is no guarantee that we will not be subject to U.S. protectionism.

In closing, in October I asked the government the following question. I asked: "Will the government admit that free trade is not working for Canadians and that the FTA has cost Canadians more than they have gained?". Canadians are still waiting for that answer.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Lise Bourgault (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Health and Welfare): Madam Speaker, I will say outright to the hon. member that he should rely more in the capacity of Canadians not to fall behind, since the preliminary report on foreign trade for February 1990 which Statistics Canada released on April 18, indicates that for the first two months in 1990, Canada had a surplus of over $900 million.

During the first two months of the year, Canada maintained a major trade surplus of $12.1 million with the United States while in 1989 Canada had a trade surplus with the United States of $10.4 billion.

Madam Speaker, the Free Trade Accord makes it possible for Canadian corporations to have a secure access to the most important market in the world, and Canadian corporations are responding well. They increased their investments in machinery and equipment. Their capital costs in 1989 increased by 10.7 per cent. Imports are responsible to a great extent for outlays in

machinery and equipment, which explains why we could have an unfavorable trade balance over the short-term.

However, a shor-term decrease in Canada's trade balance is not a bad omen. In fact, both our productivity and competitivity are improving.

Madam Speaker, the Free Trade Accord does not rule out the possibility that the United States could apply countervailing or antidumping duties against Canadian exports. Canada is now seeking changes to the countervailing and antidumping duties within the framework of the Uruguay Round multilateral negotiations which are being held under GATT.

Finally, it would be wrong to suggest that the Free Trade Accord is not working. As a matter of fact, there is currently a leadership convention and not many of the leading candidates are talking it nowadays. The hon. member should check this, because not one of them has ever suggested he would scrap the Free Trade Accord. Trade with the United States is significant. Our industry is sound. Our automobile industry is thriving. Our available capital is stable and we have a secure access to the most important market in the world. I hope the hon. member will agree with that, Madam Speaker.

• (1820)

[*English*]

IMMIGRATION

Mr. Dan Heap (Trinity—Spadina): Madam Speaker, on May 7 and May 8 I questioned the Minister of Employment and Immigration about the practice of the Department of Immigration administering drugs to deportees without their consent. I am happy now to have an opportunity to clear this matter up further.

On May 7 the minister implied by her answer that the practice of this government is to allow the drugging of deportees without their consent. She did not say it in so many words. My question was:

> Will the minister confirm that it is the government's policy to administer drugs without consent to make deportation easier?

She replied, in part:

> From time to time, a medical attendant is required when people are being deported. It is a practice that has to do with the safety of the person involved and the safety of other passengers.

Everybody in the House and everybody listening understood instantly that by avoiding the answer no she was conveying yes.

When I questioned her the following day she then attempted to be more evasive. To my question she answered:

> If someone who is to be deported and in the eyes of an immigration official requires medical treatment of any sort whether it is because they are diabetic or have a heart condition, they then call in a medical examiner.

In other words, she tried to suggest that it is only a matter of the deportee's health and handled of course exclusively by a doctor.

In fact she really tried to pass the blame for the decision on to the doctor or, as she said more vaguely, "medical attendants" rather than her department that has employed them.

When I questioned her again and asked her if she would put a halt to the practice of compelling deportees to be drugged, she said:

> Whatever treatment is to be administered is determined by a medical examiner, a doctor. It is not determined by myself. It is between the doctor and the person being examined.

She also ignored my request that she place before the House the guidelines which her department uses to govern its conduct in these cases.

There is no possibility of the minister and the department escaping the public understanding of the fact that deportees are being drugged with sedative or tranquillizers against their will in certain cases and contrary to both ethical and legal standards.

The Interchurch Committee for Refugees, a well-known Canadian organization, reports that the action of the immigration officials and the doctors are in direct contravention of the United Nations Principles of Medical Ethics, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the United Nations Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials, and the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners.

But a little closer to the point, Dr. Cluga of the Canadian Medical Association, its director of ethical practices, adds that not only the physician would be

responsible but that "the authority who ordered a physician to undertake or even contemplate such an action would also be acting unethically. The fact that someone follows an unethical order or request does not exonerate the person who gave that order".

• (1825)

So the minister and her officials are not excused from the unethical action of a doctor in administering those drugs. There is nowhere that the air carrier security regulations provides that drugs are to be acceptable as a means of transporting prisoners or detainees. They allow restraints, but not drugs.

I have checked the Ontario Mental Health Act. It too asserts that it is illegal to give someone drugs without that person's prior consent. The only exception is if the person is mentally incompetent.

In the case that were considering of Mr. Said, he had been found mentally competent by Dr. Philip Berger who examined him and said that his response to a situation was the response of a sane man.

I am very sorry that the minister still declines to give us the guidelines that were issued and were used by her department as early as last August, as has been admitted by certain officials.

I have to conclude that the government does not wish us to know the truth about the practice of administering sedative or tranquillizer drugs to people it wishes to deport who are sane, who are not mentally incompetent, but who perhaps are difficult to deport.

Prisoners are transported in this country without the use of drugs, since to use drugs in the transportation of convicted criminals when it is necessary in public aircraft or public vehicles would be contrary to the Ontario Mental Health Act, at least as far as Ontario is concerned.

I am asking again that the minister, if she believes she is in a clear position, table those guidelines that govern the action of her officials in these connections and not hide behind excuses about maybe somebody had diabetes or maybe somebody had a heart condition.

The matter has to be cleared up and brought out into the open so that the laws of this country and the laws of the medical association of this country are honoured by the Minister of Employment and Immigration.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Lise Bourgault (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Health and Welfare): Madam Speaker, it is important that the government's position on this issue be clearly understood.

Whenever a person is in immigration custody, immigration officials are responsible for that person's well-being. Immigration officials also have an obligation to effect removals from Canada in a manner which protects the safety of the person concerned, as well as the safety of the travelling public and any immigration or medical personnel involved.

They are very few cases, where a medical attendant must accompany a person who is being removed from Canada. The decision that a medical attendant is required, and what, if any, treatment is necessary, is made by a physician according to the laws of the province in which the case occurs.

This is not a procedure that we established recently. In fact, the use of medical escorts, although rare, has been part of the removal process for many years.

Immigration officials do not administer drugs to persons who are being removed from Caanda, nor does this government have a policy concerning the sedation of persons being removed. Such decisions can only be made by qualified medical practitioners and rightly so.

It is clear however that there are legitimate concerns about the administration of any drug during a deportation. The minister of employment and immigration (Mrs. McDougall) recognized the seriousness of these concerns.

For this reason, Madam speaker, immigration officials have been instructed that all medical removals are to be reviewed by senior officials at immigration national headquarters before the person concerned is removed from Canada.

I believe, Madam Speaker, that in the circumstances the hon. member from Trinity—Spadina will be satisfied with the answer I just gave to that important question.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The motion to adjourn the House is deemed to have been adopted at this time. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

The House adjourned at 6.30 p.m.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, May 18, 1990

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

CANADIAN CENTRE FOR MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT ACT

MEASURE TO ENACT

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill C–34, an act to establish the Canadian Centre for Management Development and to amend certain acts in consequence thereof, as reported (with amendments) from a legislative committee.

SPEAKER'S RULING—MOTIONS IN AMENDMENT

Madam Deputy Speaker: There are six report stage motions set down in the Notice Paper in amendment to Bill C–34, an act to establish the Canadian Centre for Management Development and to amend certain acts in consequence thereof.

Motions Nos. 1 and 2, standing in the name of the hon. member for Ottawa West, will not be selected for debate. These motions were moved, debated, and, by unanimous consent, withdrawn in committee.

[*Translation*]

Motion No. 3 standing in the name of the Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Agriculture is in order. It will be debated and voted on separately.

[*English*]

Motion No. 4, also standing in the name of the hon. member for Ottawa West was moved, debated and, by unanimous consent, withdrawn in committee.

The hon. member is moving the same motion at the report stage, but adds the following words: "by giving effect to the principle that employment equity means more than treating persons in the same way, but also requires special measures in the accommodation of their differences".

[*Translation*]

The Chair has examined the new words carefully and is of the opinion that they merely qualify what is stated in the earlier part of the motion and this does not constitute sufficient ground to allow the motion to be put to the House.

[*English*]

I wish to bring to the hon. members' attention the note on page 41 of the Standing Orders. It relates to Standing Orders 75 and 76, which deal with report stage, and read as follows:

> The Speaker will not normally select for consideration by the House any motion previously ruled out of order in committee and will normally only select motions which were not or could not be presented in committee.

Members should be aware that this note was incorporated in the Standing Orders by order of the House. Consequently, it is with regret that I must inform the hon. member that her Motion No. 4 will not be selected.

• (1010)

Motion No. 5, standing in the name of the hon. President of the Privy Council, seeks to correct a technical error in the English version of the legislative committee's report which was tabled in the House on Friday, May 11, 1990, and is in order. It will be debated and voted on separately.

[*Translation*]

Motion No. 6, standing in the name of the hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier is in order. It will be debated and voted on separately.

[*English*]

To recapitulate, Motion Nos. 1, 2 and 4 were dealt with in committee and will not be selected. Motion Nos. 3, 5, and 6 are acceptable and each will be debated and voted on separately.

[*Translation*]

I will now put motion No. 3 to the House.

[*English*]

MEASURE TO ENACT

Mrs. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West): Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I thank you for your ruling and compliment you on your first day fully in charge of the Chair at the head of the House.

I would like to put forward an argument that Motion No. 4, dealing with employment equity, be allowed by the Speaker on the basis of the note contained in the Standing Order. I will quote from that:

> A motion, previously defeated in committee, will only be selected if the Speaker judges it to be of such exceptional significance as to warrant a further consideration at the report stage.

I would like to put forward the argument very briefly on the significance of this motion. It relates to the functions of the Canadian Centre for Management Development, its programs, operations, staffing, and those who are included in its courses and in the composition of its board. In all those functions, the consideration of equality of opportunity and employment equity should be front and centre.

If given the opportunity, I would refer the House to the submission to the legislative committee of the Human Rights Commissioner. He is responsible for safeguarding human rights for all Canadians. I am quite prepared to quote from his statement to the committee which made it extremely clear that a comprehensive inclusion in this bill was necessary to safeguard the protection of human rights and equitable opportunities in the Public Service of Canada.

If there is further need, as the Standing Order says, to demonstrate the exceptional significance of this motion, it is certainly in the task force report on barriers to women in the Public Service that was tabled in the House very recently. It made clear that employment equity is an idea that the Public Service and the government subscribe to. Still, a great deal needs to be done to change our management practices, the culture, and values on which the Public Service operates at the most senior levels, if employment equity is to become a reality rather than an ideal.

I would make the argument that employment equity is a fundamental principle and that in the training and development of the skills of our managers, it must be a central consideration that is integrated throughout.

Mr. Ross Harvey (Edmonton East): Madam Speaker, I too, would like to add my congratulations to those of the hon. member to you, on your first full day in the Chair. I know it will be a worthwhile experience for all concerned.

I would like to say on behalf of my colleague that we would support the submission of the hon. member that, if at all possible, this matter be reconsidered and Motion No. 4 be allowed. We believe it to be of significant importance that the House be given the opportunity to decide whether or not that organization which, after all, will be the organization that fosters the head of the Public Service—its brains and its direction—will reflect the society that that Public Service is intended to serve. We consider that to be a key principle and one eminently worthy of consideration by this House, regardless of whether or not it was dealt with in committee.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I thank the hon. for Ottawa West and the hon. member for Edmonton East.

After listening to arguments from the hon. member for Ottawa West and her colleague, I may say that this amendment can be considered of very exceptional significance and warrants further consideration at report stage. I will accept this motion.

We will start with Motion No. 3.

Mr. Murray Cardiff (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture) moved:

Motion No. 3

> That Bill C-34 be amended in Clause 5 in the English version by striking out line 16 at page 3 and substituting the following therefor:
>
> "(c) cooperate with other persons and bodies engaged in man-".

He said: Madam Speaker, this amendment as originally formulated in committee, mentioned co-operation with others. Our legislative advisers have indicated that the wording could be interpreted as limiting the scope of the co-operation rather than broadening it, which was the original intention of the amendment. They have suggested that "persons" and "bodies" would convey the

intention more adequately. I would ask the House to consider that, please.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to.

Mrs. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West) moved:

Motion No. 4

That Bill C-34 be amended in Clause 9 by striking out lines 28 to 30 at page 4 and substituting the following therefor:

"Chair, there are

(a) equal numbers of persons who are employed in the public service and persons who are not so employed;

(b) of the governors employed in the public service, equal numbers of persons who are managers and persons who are not managers;

(c) persons who reflect the diversity of Canadian society."

She said: Madam Speaker, let me thank you for allowing the motion on the basis of its exceptional significance.

I thank my colleagues on the committee who took the time to listen to a number of witnesses, many of whom were focusing particularly on this issue. They were invited to speak to the committee on the issue of employment equity and the important role the centre will play in the future management of the Public Service and in the advancement of some significant public policy objectives. Employment equity is one. Though only one, it certainly is one of them.

A few amendments were accepted by the committee. I am grateful for the patience and understanding of my colleagues who served on the committee, in adopting some of those amendments put forward, both by myself and my colleague the hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier.

I want to make it quite clear that the wording in the motion, is taken exactly from the Employment Equity Act which applies to all employers federally regulated in Canada. It has applied now for a number of years so that private employers as well as Crown corporations and other federally regulated agencies must live by the principles established in this motion. It is of such significance that it is placed at the very beginning of the Employment Equity Act before even the titles or the definition in the bill.

• (1020)

The motion ensures that in all of its operations, the Canadian Centre for Management Development conveys to all employees at all levels the fundamental principle that the Public Service of Canada recognizes people for their merit. This applies to selection for training, what the training incorporates, and staffing and is the message to be communicated by all levels of managers who have undergone training and skill development.

We appoint, hire and promote people based on what they can do, their talents and abilities, and nothing else. Superficial consideration such as gender, colour, disability, or whether one is or is not an aboriginal Canadian, will not be a factor in the management and the progress of people who work for the Public Service of Canada.

I cannot stress how important I feel the attitudes of managers are, and this is a centre we are setting up specifically to train managers. This centre will, in the words of the legislation brought forward by the government, foster the values and traditions of the Public Service.

What has become evident through a number of things that have become public, most strikingly and most particularly the report of the task force on barriers to women in the Public Service, is that people do suffer a disadvantage because of characteristics which have absolutely nothing to do with their ability to do a job, that in fact women are not represented in the management category in proportion to their representation in the public service. They are drastically under—represented, as aboriginal Canadians are. People of colour do not have the same opportunities to be hired or promoted, and people with disabilities certainly do not.

That is not the vision we have of our nation, but the values that many of us carry with us are that only certain kinds of people are really capable and able to do certain things. It is going to take a long time to get rid of those attitudes and values. We have seen from the statistics on

employment, on hiring and firing, and on promotion that in reality we are a long way from achieving those values.

The centre has a budget this year of $11.5 million to develop our managers. That is three times what the budget for executive training was just a few years ago, in fact just a year ago. It is vital that if one is talking about values and traditions, respect for the individual, regardless of their superficial characteristics, be fundamental to that training. The Commissioner for Canadian Human Rights said when he appeared before the committee that this is integral to everything the centre does.

As the task force on barriers to women also said this is a management problem because there is a large pool of people from whom to choose for various positions for promotions to management. If one only looks at a portion of that pool, generally the non-female, non-native Canadian, non-coloured and non-disabled population, one is overlooking good talent. One is failing to promote and to use the best that our quarter of a million public service employees have to offer.

The committee, in its deliberations, heard from a number of organizations. We heard from three members of the task force on barriers to women in the Public Service, the Employment Equity Network, native Canadians, the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, and the Commissioner of the Canadian Human Rights Commission.

I would like to refer to some comments of the commissioner of human rights before the committee, which he was kind enough to provide us in writing. He said if the Canadian Centre for Management Development is to be effective in promoting excellence in the Public Service, it must incorporate full recognition of all these changes—and we have been talking about human rights and the importance we give to human rights—into its operations, every bit as much as it tries to incorporate the latest management theory or economic model. Human rights principles must be an integral part of a manager's approach to problem solving, not an add-on to be trotted out for inspection on appropriate occasions.

He goes on to say that employment equity has been government policy for some years. Successive governments' commitments to the ideas of employment equity and multiculturalism has never wavered and now appears stronger than ever. At the same time, despite commitment to these ideas, progress in their implementation has been discouraging.

Further, he says that the over-all result is not satisfactory. He goes on to quote figures as to why the performance in the Public Service is not satisfactory.

How can the Canadian Centre for Management Development play a part in dealing with this situation. Again, I am quoting from the commissioner of human rights. "I submit that employment equity can be incorporated into the operation of the centre in several ways: as one of the objects of the centre in the composition of the board, in the staffing of the centre itself, in the research program and course offering for the centre and, finally, in the rules which govern access to the training offered by the CCMD."

The motion before the House today is based exactly on that statement from the Canadian human rights commissioner. It incorporates the fundamental principles of employment equity as only one of the objects of the centre as it relates specifically to all the areas mentioned by the human rights commissioner in his statement to the committee and reaffirmed in our discussions with him. He goes on to say that the centre must therefore orient managers toward an appreciation of the importance of employment equity and must reinforce the idea of service to a diverse population. I would like to close by saying that about five years ago the Government of Canada decided that employment equity was a valid thing that should be imposed by legislation on private sector employers. I think this morning is the time to recognize that in the training of our managers, the Public Service of Canada is prepared to impose the same standards on itself.

Mr. Jim Hawkes (Calgary West): Madam Speaker, I want to compliment the member opposite for her concern about the principles inherent in the motion.

It is my understanding that in committee the motion was originally withdrawn in favour of other motions which were unanimously agreed to by committee members.

I have in my possession the minutes of the committee for May 3 where the whip of the Official Opposition said, "and I can vouch to you we will not reintroduce motions that have been withdrawn in this committee". So, alluding to the fact that we have another debate in the House, once the motion is withdrawn, it is withdrawn. I do not want to hold anybody to that statement although generally those kinds of things are held to in the House. I

think the debate may have been useful, the chance to express a point of view, but government members intend to vote nay on this motion because we think it has been handled in other ways and we think there was unanimous agreement in the committee to handle it in other ways. Therefore, I would encourage government members to vote no on this motion.

• (1030)

Mr. Ross Harvey (Edmonton East): Madam Speaker, let me begin by congratulating you on your earlier ruling. I think it was a most auspicious beginning to your first day in the chair and I commend you for it.

To respond briefly to what the government House Leader just said: I am sorry, I was not at that committee meeting. I did not read the transcript of the committee meeting. I had no knowledge of what proceeded in the committee. However, I am delighted that, regardless of the agency, this amendment is now before this House because I think it is an important and valuable one, one certainly worthy of the attention of this House. If its coming here distresses some members who feel that that is in some fashion improper, that is indeed regrettable. I think nonetheless that it is a good thing that this amendment be here because it addresses in some senses what will lie at the heart of this Canadian Centre for Management Development.

If I may, Madam Speaker, I would like just briefly to note the nature of the clause that the amendment seeks to amend. It reads:

> Appointments under section 8—

That is the section that allows the governor to appoint people to the board of the centre.

> —shall be made so that, of the governors other than the Chair, there are equal numbers of persons who are employed in the Public Service and persons who are not so employed.

That is the sole restriction set out in clause 9, the clause of the bill that the amendment seeks to amend.

The amendment would have the effect of adding certain other criteria, those criteria being, and I am quoting from the amendment now, that there would be: "equal numbers of persons who are employed in the public sector and persons who are not so employed". That remains. Then it goes on: "of the governors employed in the Public Service", in other words of that half employed in the Public Service, "equal numbers of persons who are managers and persons who are not managers", and third and finally, and in some senses most important, "persons who reflect the diversity of Canadian society".

As the subclause now stands, it would be in no wise inconsistent with the bill to have the board of governors composed entirely of management personnel, half of them drawn from the Public Service and half of them drawn from the private sector, perhaps at the suggestion of the Business Council on National Issues. In fact, it would be utterly consistent with the bill to have a board composed entirely of middle-aged, white, male managers from the Public Service and middle-aged, white, male managers from the private sector. That would in no way conflict with the bil, except when we read in clause 4 of the bill the objects and powers of the centre.

I would like to recall a couple of those objects to the attention of the House here. They are:

> 4(b) to help ensure that managers in the Public Service have the analytical, creative, advisory, administrative and other managerial skills and knowledge necessary to develop and implement policy, respond to change, including changes in the social, cultural, racial and linguistic character of Canadian society, and manage government programs, services and personnel efficiently, effectively and equitably;

Clause 4(d) reads:

> (d) to develop within the Public Service and to attract to the Public Service, through the Centre's programs and studies, persons who are of high calibre and who reflect the diversity of Canadian society,

These are tasks with which this Parliament proposes to charge this Canadian Centre for Management Development. Yet, in the board that this bill will establish to oversee the operations of the centre, there are no substantially similar criteria.

I am not saying, Madam Speaker, that the board will be unable to meet these objects if it is not required more adequately to reflect the diversity of Canadian society, indeed to reflect the diversity of those groups that require and rely upon an efficiently functioning Canadian Public Service, well and effectively managed by well-trained, well-developed managers who are familiar with the needs, the aspirations, the desires and the

capabilities of all the diverse elements of Canadian society.

It is possible that the board could still function comprising entirely white, male, middle-class managers in the Public Service and white, male, middle-class managers from the private sector. But it is my contention, and it is certainly the point of this amendment as I understand it, that the meeting of those objects will be rendered greatly the more likely if the board itself reflects to some substantial degree that diversity which the bill proposes to foster.

I must say, Madam Speaker, that I am rather distressed at the remarks of the previous speaker, the government member who appears to reject this commendable amendment solely because, in his opinion at least, it violates some previously struck procedural deal. I would counsel him and his colleagues on the government benches to set aside those questions, however reasonable they may be, however warranted his concern in that regard, and concentrate instead on the merit of the amendment itself, which I commend to the House.

Mr. Bill Domm (Peterborough): Madam Speaker, I wonder if you would be kind enough to inform the House whether we are debating the amendment now.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Yes, we are.

Mr. Domm: I would like, in that case, to point out that there was an agreement in the committee. I was acting as chairman of that legislative committee and there was an agreement in the committee that the amendments that were withdrawn in committee would not be brought forward and debated in this House.

I think the member will acknowledge that fact. I also think that the opposition House leader would want to acknowledge it since it was his statement that we would not go through this procedure twice. It was agreed that if there was unanimous consent to withdraw, and the member proposing this amendment did give her consent to that withdrawal, that amendment would not be brought forward at the report stage in this House of Commons.

I call upon the House leader of the Official Opposition to stand up and confirm that in order that we can move along to new business, new debate, which was the understanding of not only the House leader but the member who is proposing this amendment. It was pointed out at the committee that this would be a complete waste of time. It was agreed to by the Official Opposition and the government in committee that we would not do this.

I would hope that we could move along in a more orderly fashion in getting this bill out of the way. I bring you that information as chairman of that legislative committee in order that we can get on with more productive work in this House of Commons.

• (1040)

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the said motion?

Some hon. members: No.

Mr. Hawkes: Negatived on division.

Mr. Gauthier: On division.

Motion negatived.

Madam Deputy Speaker: We will proceed with Motion No. 5.

Hon. Robert de Cotret (for the President of the Privy Council) moved:

Motion No. 5

That Bill C-34 be amended in Clause 12 in the English version by striking out line 13 at page 5 and substituting the following therefor:

"duct and management of the affairs of the".

Mr. Murray Cardiff (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Madam Speaker, very briefly, this is strictly a technical point to bring back the wording as originally formulated. It was the intention of the committee to put forward an amendment to have the board of governors responsible for the conduct and management of the affairs of the centre and not the officers of the centre.

Members will note that the French version reads correctly. It was just a technical error that needed to be corrected.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier) moved:

Motion No. 6.

That Bill C-34 be amended in Clause 15 by striking out lines 8 to 27 at page 6.

He said: Madam Speaker, this amendment concerns clause 15 of Bill C-34 on the government's plan which, I may add, is supported by the opposition. We think it is an excellent idea, and we will certainly support the establishment of this centre.

My amendment is almost one of a technical nature. I will not take use the time of the House to give all the reasons why I think it is time we were consistent and logical when formulating policies on hiring public servants.

Madam Speaker, my amendment stems from the fact that I see a big difference between giving a contract to a person and hiring that person, according to the merit principle, as a public servant, in a federal institution like this one.

In my view, clause 15 creates three classes of public servants. There are those who will be hired under clause 15(1) of Bill C-34, which refers to public servants who are subject to the Public Service Employment Act. The second category is those who will be hired under clause 15(2) and 15(3) of Bill C-34, and who will enjoy the same benefits as federal public servants hired under clause 15(1), because they are subject to the same legislation, the same pension benefits, fringe benefits, insurance plans, and so forth.

Those who are hired under clause 15(2) will have a different status. They will not be subject to the same strict selection system as most public servants are. There will be no competition, no evaluation and no selection according to the merit principle. The decision will be up to the director of the Centre, and Madam Speaker, this bothers me. It means that people hired under clause 15(2) will have rights and privileges but not the responsibilities and not the usual screening that takes place when public servants are hired.

However, those hired under clause 16, which is not before the House but which nevertheless has a considerable impact on this legislation, and I am referring to those hired on contract, will not have the same benefits as public servants. A real contract does not include the same social or fringe benefits a public servant usually receives when he is hired under the Public Service Employment Act and subject to the Public Service Staff Relations Act.

I asked our top public servant, Mr. Tellier, who is responsible for the Public Service in the Privy Council, to explain the difference and why, in Bill C-34, a distinction is made between a person hired without going through the usual procedure and what is provided under clause 15(2). Mr. Tellier's explanation was that apparently the policy would allow people to work at the Centre who were reluctant to enter the Public Service as such. That is the argument he made. In other words, a professor who does not wish to become a full-time member of the Public Service of Canada could have a contract with the Centre that would give him special status, as it were, because he is then entitled to the same benefits he would have as a public servant, but without being subject to the same hiring conditions. I find this double standard somewhat difficult to accept. If someone wants to enjoy the benefits of working for an organization, he should be willing to go through the usual screening process and meet the customary hiring conditions.

I have therefore suggested that this provision be deleted.

[*English*]

I move that the motion delete that double standard allowing certain people to work for the centre and be in receipt of the same conditions of employment as regular public servants. I do not think that it is proper.

I make a distinction, a fine one but an important one, between a contract for services and a contract of services. The operative words here are contract for services. That is a contract given to somebody for specific services in research, possibly, or in other fields. Somebody who has the expertise and knowledge can ask an employer for a sum of money to do work, that is, the services of that person are taken and, in exchange for sums of money, a report or a study is given.

The contract of services is altogether different. A contract of services is a contract for a specific person's abilities, knowledge, and expertise, and she or he has with the employer an employee–employer relationship. I have a long–standing concern that the Public Service of Canada has a contract of services with people for their knowledge, their expertise, and they are selected according to the best way that I know, that is, on the merit principle as to whether or not they can better accomplish the functions required of them.

The contract for services is a concept completely different from the contract of services. That is the gist of my amendment. I am trying to make it understood that if there are certain processes that have to be accepted before employment, then that goes for everybody. In my book you hire public servants on merit and you give contracts for services to people who can better do that but do not want to have an employee–employer relationship and therefore will give you the benefit of their knowledge.

• (1050)

That is essentially the gist of subclause 15(2). I am trying to make that understood. I am not trying to do anything other than make sure that the concept of contractual obligations works that way in the Public Service. It is fine to hire yourself out for work on an employee–employer relationship, but then you accept also that you have to go through a certain screening process including selections and competitions.

On the other hand, for a contract for services it is different. I think I have made my point, and I will rest my case on that.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

Mr. Hawkes: Negatived on division.

Motion negatived.

Hon. Robert de Cotret (for President of the Privy Council) moved that the bill, as amended, be concurred in.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. de Cotret (for President of the Privy Council) moved that the bill be read the third time and passed.

Mr. Murray Cardiff (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to introduce Bill C–34, establishing this Canadian Centre for Management Development, at third reading stage.

The creation of the centre was announced by the Prime Minister on April 14, 1988 as an institution dedicated to excellence in teaching and research into public sector management. More specifically, the centre's mission is to strengthen the management capacity of the public sector, particularly the senior levels, with a view to improving the quality of government and to enhancing service to the people of Canada.

I consider this bill to be of great importance in today's context where a competent, highly motivated Public Service is essential to cope adequately with the growing complexity of a world–wide competitive economy and of a fast changing society in a time of limited resources. The creation of the centre is also an important part of the revitalization of the Public Service which the Prime Minister announced recently and which is being pursued in the Public Service 2000 project.

Let me briefly summarize the chronology of events that led us to the third reading of Bill C–34. Its predecessor, Bill C–148, was tabled in Parliament on August 15, 1988. It received unanimous approval in the House of Commons and was under review by the Senate Standing Committee on National Finance when it died on the Order Paper at dissolution of Parliament in the fall of 1988.

The bill now before us, Bill C–34, was introduced in the House of Commons on June 27, 1989. This bill incorporates revisions made as a result of questions raised during the Senate review on the independence and accountability of the centre and its principal. More specifically, the status of the centre has been changed from a department under the direction of a minister to a departmental corporation in which the board of governors composed of chief executive officers from the private sector, senior members of the academic community, and deputy heads of federal government departments has the responsibility for the management and conduct of the affairs of the centre. The bill also designates the principal as the chief executive officer of

the centre and makes him or her accountable to the board of governors.

Upon completion of the second reading of the bill on February 16 of this year, a legislative committee was established to examine Bill C–34. Between March 6 and March 10 the committee held 11 meetings and heard 12 witnesses or groups representing the viewpoints of employment equity target groups, academics, and officials of the Public Service. In the course of this review the witnesses all expressed strong support for the concept described in the bill and confirmed the need for an organization devoted to management development in the public sector.

Witnesses also formulated recommendations to incorporate into the bill measures to have the centre explicitly recognize the social, cultural, racial and linguistic diversity of the Canadian society in its structures and programs and to highlight the responsibility of the Public Service senior managers toward the creation and maintenance of co–operative and equitable relationships with their staff members.

As a result of the clause by clause review the following amendments were incorporated in this bill. In addition to the mission already outlined in the previous version of the bill, the objects of the act, clause 4, now reflect that the centre's activities aim at helping managers in the Public Service establish a co–operative relationship with staff members and ensure that managers develop the skills to respond to changes in the social, racial, cultural and linguistic character of Canadian society and manage personnel as well as programs and services efficiently, effectively and equitably, and that the centre will attract persons of high calibre and reflective of the diversity of the Canadian society.

In order to avoid duplication of efforts and resources, clause 5 dealing with the powers of the centre specifies that the centre will co–operate with other bodies and persons engaged in management and personnel development.

Under clause 12 the mandate of the board of governors will include its responsibility for the management and conduct of the affairs of the centre.

In the context of the centre's activities, a specific mention in clause 13 now indicates that the principal shall take into consideration the policies of the Government of Canada as well as its management training needs and priorities.

A review and report clause has also been incorporated whereby every five years the board of governors shall cause a review and report to be prepared on the activities and organizations of the centre. That report will be tabled in Parliament within the first 30 days that the House is sitting.

Finally, the references to chairman and *le president* have been changed to chair and *la presidence* throughout the act, with the exception of the chairman of the Public Service Commission which will presumably by modified when the Public Service Employment Act is revised.

Madam Speaker, I firmly believe that as a result of these amendments Bill C–34 is an even better instrument to guide the Public Service in what constitutes one of its most challenging functions: the professional development of its management cadre.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Eugène Bellemare (Carleton—Gloucester): Madam Speaker, first of all, I take the opportunity to congratulate you on your appointment as Deputy Speaker of the House and Chairman of Committees of the Whole. I must say that the government chose well; it chose someone good, someone distinguished, someone who makes everyone on both sides of the House feel at ease, who has the right approach and often helps members during the debates. Please accept my congratulations.

[*English*]

Bill C–34 is legislation to establish a Canadian Centre for Management Development and to amend certain Acts in consequence thereof.

[*Translation*]

This bill establishes the Canadian Centre for Management Development and amends some Acts accordingly. I must first remind the House that the originator of this idea is none other than the hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier, who a few years ago thought it would be good to have a management development centre for public servants. I must congratulate the government for naming Mr. Manion the first principal of this institution. Mr. Manion has an incomparable reputation.

S. O. 31

[*English*]

Thank you, Madam Speaker, for giving me the opportunity to speak on Bill C–34, an act to establish a Canadian Centre for Management Development. Today, however, I would like to stress the importance of employment equity in the Public Service. Mr. Maxwell Yalden, chief Commissioner for the Canadian Human Rights Commission, appeared before the committee on April 26 and said:

> Service to the public through an impartial professional Public Service continues to be our goal. But in the changing Canadian context we need to make special efforts to achieve it.

[*Translation*]

Madam Deputy Speaker: I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member. He can continue his remarks after Question Period.

It being eleven o'clock, pursuant to Standing Order 30(5), the House will now proceed to Members' Statements, pursuant to Standing Order 31.

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S. O. 31

[*English*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Girve Fretz (Erie): Madam Speaker, I spoke few weeks ago to this issue, the subject of zebra mussels.

While I appreciate that the Ministry of Transport has issued new guidelines with respect to the dumping of ballast prior to ships entering the Great Lakes system, it is imperative that action be taken to control and destroy the infestation of the zebra mussels in the Great Lakes.

In 1990, it will cost Niagara regional taxpayers about $700,000 to control the zebra mussel infestation of intake pipes at the region's water treatment plants. Ontario Hydrdo expects to spend $10 million this year to protect intake pipes used for cooling at power stations. The damage that this pest can create in dollar terms is proportional to its ability to multiply. An adult female can produce more than 30,000 eggs annually. There is every likelihood that this pest will continue to spread into our inland waterways and lakes in a very short time.

Therefore, I call on the federal, provincial, and American authorities to take action very quickly on this problem.

* * *

FISHERIES

Mr. Lawrence MacAulay (Cardigan): Madam Speaker, I would like to address an issue faced in my district of Cardigan, and in Prince Edward Island in general.

Groundfish in Prince Edward Island belong to the same biomass as those fish in Newfoundland and Nova Scotia. This means that P.E.I. is also experiencing a serious stock depletion.

I would also like to express the concern of the Island groundfish fishermen that the recently announced fisheries aid package was aimed at the needs of other provinces, with little mention of in–shore fishermen in these areas or in Prince Edward Island.

I urge the government, while undertaking its consultations with the regions to determine how this package is to be spent, that it also include the groundfish fishermen of Prince Edward Island.

* * *

TOURISM

Mr. Rob Nicholson (Niagara Falls): Madam Speaker, this has been National Tourism Awareness Week. There is no more important industry to my riding of Niagara Falls than tourism. It puts millions of dollars into the economy of Niagara Falls and Niagara–on–the–Lake. That is why, this week, I was pleased to have the Minister of State for Tourism in my riding.

Among other things, he met with the members of the Niagara Falls Visitor and Convention Bureau. He discussed the topic of the GST and indicated his intention to make rebates for foreign tourists as simple and expeditious as possible. Tour operators will be able to apply for rebates on behalf of their non–resident clients, and I was especially pleased to have the minister announce that instant cash rebates will now be available through duty free shops.

These are steps in the right direction. Tourism will continue to grow in 1991 and beyond. This was confirmed by the Research Institute of the Conference Board of

Canada. There will be 71,000 jobs created in 1991. By 1992–93, growth will be faster than forecast without the GST.

Let me repeat for members of the Opposition who are trying to talk the tourist industry into a recession, we are talking about growth next year and beyond—not recession—growth.

* * *

[*Translation*]

MISSING CHILDREN'S DAY

Mrs. Shirley Maheu (Saint-Laurent—Cartierville): I rise in the House today to commemorate Missing Children's Day, to be observed on Friday, May 25. It is a problem of family violence which is misunderstood and does not receive the attention it deserves. The Missing Children's Network is the best-known organization in Quebec that is working hard to reunite families with their children.

[*English*]

I also rise to honour the fact that the Missing Children's Network is joining with various other organizations in Paris, London and Brussels to form the first international coalition dedicated to the recovery of missing children.

I urge all members to join me in remembering those children who are often forgotten in our society, but children who are never forgotten by their families. I urge members of this House to join me also in congratulating the network, at this time, for the dedication it has shown to this just and noble cause.

* * *

[*Translation*]

ANTISEMITISM

Mr. Dan Heap (Trinity—Spadina): Madam Speaker, vandals have again desecrated Jewish graves in Canada, this time in Sainte-Foy. About twenty tombstones in the small cemetery were smeared with swastikas. As the president of this Jewish community said, "It is not only an act against Jews, it is an act against all humanity". That is true.

We who joined the Canadian army to fight the Nazis in the Second World War know that the terror against the Jews began before the war. Then it was the communists, socialists, trade unionists, Christians and finally all those whom Hitler did not like.

Whether it occurs in Germany, the Soviet Union or Canada, an attack against the Jews is an attack against us all. Canadians must show their indignation—not only those directly concerned, but all Canadians. They must say that they will not tolerate such acts, in Sainte-Foy, Montreal, Toronto or anywhere else. It must not happen again, for the good of Jews and of humanity.

* * *

ARTISTS' STATUS

Mr. Guy Saint-Julien (Abitibi): Madam Speaker, the arts community gave an enthusiastic reception to the announcement by the Minister of Communications, the hon. member for Frontenac, that a bill recognizing the special status of the artist will be tabled next fall.

The President of the Union des artists, Mr. Serge Turgeon, called the federal decision an historic one.

The legislation will recognize the right of artists to associate and to negotiate minimum working conditions. The federal government will also amend the Income Tax Act to allow for the particular working conditions of artists.

Madam Speaker, many thanks to our Minister of Communications who kept his promise and, by improving the situation of a large number of artists in Canada, is helping to promote the arts in this country.

* * *

[*English*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport): Madam Speaker, the Minister of the Environment has made a commitment to freeze Canada's carbon dioxide emissions at 1988 levels by the year 2000.

This is an important first step on the road to combating global climate change. There is fear that this announcement may compromise the independence of the public consultations on The Green Plan but hopefully participants will reinforce the minister's decision and suggest how to go further.

Unfortunately, the minister of energy, a key figure in the Canadian response to global climate change, has repeatedly stated that in his view even freezing carbon dioxide emissions is moving too far too fast.

Does the minister of energy now agree with the statement by the Minister of the Environment? The environment minister is, so far, alone in his conviction and his announcement does not mean much until cabinet supports him. Time is of the essence.

* * *

[*Translation*]

ANTISEMITISM

Mr. Jean-Marc Robitaille (Terrebonne): Madam Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to express before the House the indignation felt by all of us today after the desecration of the Jewish community's cemetery yesterday in Sainte-Foy, near Quebec City.

I am sure I express the general feeling in this country, Madam Speaker, when most strenuously I condemn these outrageous and inhuman acts. Those responsible have violated values that are fundamental to this country, and I am referring to respect for human rights and tolerance.

The fact that these racist acts were committed in Quebec certainly does not mean, Madam Speaker, that the Jewish community is not held in high esteem.

This is, without a doubt, an isolated incident that all Quebecers and Canadians unanimously condemn.

In concluding, Madam Speaker, I propose that all members of this House express their solidarity with the people affected by this incident as well as their sympathy with the entire Jewish community in Quebec and Canada.

* * *

[*English*]

HEALTH

Ms. Lynn Hunter (Saanich—Gulf Islands): Madam Speaker, a report released yesterday by the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women stated that too much money is spent on expensive technological fixes for infertility, while not enough is spent on basic reproductive health promotion.

Instead of tackling the problems that cause infertility, such as sexually-transmitted diseases, the federal government has poured funds into research on new reproductive technologies. In 1988, $3.5 million went into such research, while a mere $400,000 was spent on public health and research activities related to reproductive disorders.

• (1110)

The success rate of procedures such as *in vitro* fertilization is very low. Moreover, such procedures carry an unacceptably high emotional and physical risk to women who undergo them. The desperation these women feel is understandable. The government's failure to address the causes of infertility is not.

The report released yesterday points out that there are relatively inexpensive and simple methods to help prevent infertility. Surely, it is in the best interests of women for the government to promote prevention rather than to submit them to experimental procedures of dubious value.

* * *

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Jim Jordan (Leeds—Grenville): Madam Speaker, a serious drop in real estate sales has traditionally been the most reliable and the most consistent indication that this country is moving into a recession. The continuing high interest rate policy, coupled with the effects that the proposed goods and services tax is going to have on the economy, is starting to be felt in the real estate industry in our various communities.

When is the government going to realize its high interest rates and high tax policies are not working, and announce a new approach to our economy with which ordinary Canadians can live?

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Lee Richardson (Calgary Southeast): Madam Speaker, let us hope that the Minister of the Environment is not being too optimistic by promising, as he did in Norway this week, to freeze carbon dioxide emissions at present levels to the end of the decade. Canadians eagerly await the details of how this commitment would be kept.

Reducing carbon dioxide emissions will not be easy. Canadians are growing more conscious of their energy consumption and of alternate forms of energy.

Earlier this week, Alberta took a large step in that direction when Energy Minister Rick Orman announced the creation of the Alberta Office of Renewable Energy Technology. This new office will play a key role in promoting province-wide support for renewable energy

technologies that can protect the environment, create new industries and lead to further diversification of Alberta's economy.

Albertans applauded this move which will provide an important focus for encouraging the development and use of renewable energy sources that are safe, economic and environmentally acceptable.

* * *

[*Translation*]

REPUBLIC OF ZAIRE

Hon. André Ouellet (Papineau—Saint-Michel): Madam Speaker, recently in my constituency constituency office, I met representatives of the Zairian community in Canada and more specifically representatives of the Union for Democracy and Social Progress.

All these people told me that the most serious opponents of President Mobutu were all systematically arrested, jailed or persecuted. They think that the most basic human rights in that country are being continually violated.

Ebua Marcel Lihau, president of the UDSP (Union for Democracy and Social Progress), who met with Canadian officials yesterday, told us that he cannot go back to Zaire unless minimum conditions for his security are assured.

I therefore call on the Canadian government to ask the Zairian authorities, especially President Mobutu, to respect their citizens' rights to freedom, since Zaire will host the next Francophone Summit.

I think that Canada should not attend this summit without assurances from the President of Zaire that he will respect the rights of Zairian citizens.

* * *

[*English*]

ANTI-SEMITISM

Mr. Benno Friesen (Parliamentary Secretary to Solicitor General of Canada): Madam Speaker, I too want to join others and speak out against the desecration of the Jewish cemetery yesterday at St. Foy.

It is difficult for decent Canadians anywhere to understand vandalism of any kind. When it is desecration of a cemetery it is particularly revolting, and when that desecration is pointed at any particular ethnic community it strikes fear in the hearts of all Canadians.

The Jewish community has been singled out. We have to understand and believe it is not just a cemetery that has been desecrated. It is also pointed at the living community. The Jewish people have suffered enough humiliation, fear, persecution and death in their lifetime.

It is time for us to build bridges of kindness and understanding. It is time for us to realize that when this is directed at the Jewish community, it is also directed at other minority groups.

I call upon all Canadians to build bridges of understanding and caring for all people and, in this case, particularly for the Jewish community.

* * *

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mr. Cid Samson (Timmins—Chapleau): Madam Speaker, the Conservative government has sunk to a new low in its disregard for the Canadian democratic process. Once again the Tories are enforcing legislation which has not passed into law.

Yesterday, before the Standing Committee on Labour, Employment, and Immigration, the Minister of Employment admitted that Revenue Canada has urged employers to deduct the higher premium rate contained in Bill C-21. The higher premiums are voluntary, but the minister admitted that many workers and employers are not aware of this fact. Further, she cautioned the government would go after any premiums that are still owing since the higher rate would be retroactive to January 1, 1990.

It is interesting to note that, while the collection of premiums is retroactive, benefits such as parental leave are not. New parents who have paid these higher premiums will not be entitled to 10 weeks of parental leave if their child arrives prior to the passage of the legislation.

Canadians are tired of paying for a government which enforces legislation not passed and governs to suit its own warped agenda at the expense of the fundamental principles of democracy.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[*English*]

MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister.

Yesterday, after the report of the special committee on the companion resolution was made public, the media showed a favourable reaction by provincial premiers to the idea that a First Minister's Conference on the constitution would be useful at this time.

In view of this reaction, will the Prime Minister call a First Ministers' Conference on the constitution and, if so, will he tell us what its date will be?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I have spoken with the premiers, yesterday and last evening, about this possibility. All of them are interested in the prospect of a First Ministers' Conference. Some are concerned about the timing, and some have concerns about some of the substance of the report. I have decided, as I have indicated, to send Senator Murray urgently to visit with all the premiers. He should be through those visits within a matter of days. As soon as that is done, I will be in touch with the premiers in respect of a first ministers' meeting.

I have always said that I would be happy to hold it if I were of the view that there was a prospect of resolving a very serious constitutional impasse. I will wait for Senator Murray's report within the next few days and make that decision.

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, at least when it comes to the reports of the media, both in the press and on television, no premier has said that he is unfavourable to the idea of an early constitutional conference.

Do I take it from what the Prime Minister has said that in spite of this reaction, the public reaction at least by the provincial premiers, it is possible that the Prime Minister will not call a First Ministers' Conference before June 23? If so, does he think this is a constructive approach to this matter, in view of the fact that the special committee of the House on the companion resolution found unanimously that the date of June 23 is an important date and as the committee put it, a political reality?

• (1120)

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Yes, indeed, Mr. Speaker, I think that all members of the House would want to congratulate members of that committee from all political parties for the very constructive work they did in bringing forward a report of this nature in quite record time. I join in congratulating all members of the committee who took part.

The committee did not recommend that a first minister's conference be held at any given time. The reason for that presumably was, given their knowledge of the country, that they thought this was a value judgment that should be made by the Prime Minister at an appropriate time, given certain circumstances, which is precisely what I propose to do.

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, others who have read this report have taken a somewhat different interpretation of the conclusions of the committee. Surely, the point of the report was that the ideas in it should, could, and must be addressed by first ministers. Surely, that is the point of the report.

[*Translation*]

Madam Speaker, I want to ask the Prime Minister why he no longer thinks that calling a First Ministers' Conference as soon as possible would be the best way to get out of the constitutional impasse? Why is the Prime Minister wasting precious time when the future of our country is at stake?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, sometimes I find the comments made by the Leader of the Opposition a little confusing.

Hurriedly calling a conference of First Ministers at this time, which would hardly produce a satisfactory solution, might be the worst thing a prime minister of Canada could do.

That is why I intend to make a very careful assessment of the statements of the Premiers and the results of Senator Murray's interventions. If the Premiers are called to discuss this all— important national question, at this crucial moment in our history, the conference must succeed. That is what I want. I want a conference

that will succeed. I don't want to call a First Ministers Conference for the pleasure of their company, although I am always glad to meet them.

* * *

[*English*]

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Jim Peterson (Willowdale): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister.

Yesterday, the Conference Board of Canada announced that the government's high interest rate policy and the inflationary impact of the goods and services tax have, and I quote, "created a major risk of recession".

Since a large portion of the inflationary increases are a direct result of government tax increases, when is the government going to stop punishing Canadian consumers, businesses, and workers for its own economic mismanagement?

Hon. Gilles Loiselle (Minister of State (Finance)): Madam Speaker, I suppose that the doom and gloom that we get from the honourable gentleman is nothing new.

Mr. Milliken: Not much doom and gloom there. Simple facts.

Mr. Loiselle: I suppose he will probably be disappointed to discover today that the inflation rate, the CPI, has gone down from 5.4 per cent to 5 per cent.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Loiselle: If the hon. member looks at the Canadian performance on trade, he will also understand that there are some good sides to our economy. We recognize that the economy is slowing down. It is doing so particularly in the manufacturing sector and less so in the service sector. But there are still very high inflationary pressures which indicate that we must continue on our course and make sure we defeat inflation.

Mr. Jim Peterson (Willowdale): Madam Speaker, that is exactly the point. Our interest rates are going up at the same time as our inflation is coming down. Look at the United States.

Mr. Mulroney: That's what is supposed to happen. First inflation comes down, and then interest rates come down.

Mr. Peterson: Let us look at the facts. Inflation in the United States is 4.7 per cent, which is about the same level as in Canada. The interest rates in the United States are 40 per cent lower than ours.

Whose interest rate policies are misguided or misdirected? The Americans' or ours?

Hon. Gilles Loiselle (Minister of State (Finance)): Madam Speaker, the hon. gentleman would like to win on both sides.

High interest rates cause money to be more expensive. Therefore, people buy less, the pressures come down, and inflation comes down. This is a first indication that our policy is giving results. These signs have to be there for a period of time before we can see interest rates come down and stay down.

Surely, we would not want high interest rates to remain with us forever or reach the levels they reached when the Liberal party was in power. We want them to come down and stay down. We are working with the monetary policy and with the fiscal policy in a responsible manner to make sure that this country heads for another five years of good economic progress.

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[*Translation*]

MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. Since the beginning of the debate on the Meech Lake Accord, there has been a problem of communication with the general public. However, when the government wants, it is quite capable of putting together an information campaign, as it did for free trade and as it is now doing for the GST.

Can the Prime Minister tell us what he intends to do to ensure that this time the public will be informed of what the companion resolution contains and will also be kept abreast of developments in the negotiations on Meech Lake and the resolution?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, as for—

Some hon. members: Madam!

Mr. Mulroney: Excuse me, Madam. Congratulations on your election as Deputy Speaker.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Mulroney: The House has such a high opinion of you, Madam, that you were elected while you were away, and I congratulate you.

To Madam the Leader of the New Democratic Party, I just say that the Committee made a quite laudable effort by visiting almost all regions of the country, including the Yukon and the Territories, to solicit Canadians' opinions. With the publicity surrounding the information sessions of the Charest Committee, it is harder and harder to imagine Canadians who are not aware of what Parliament or the First Ministers are trying to do. You just have to turn on the television; that is all they talk about, day and night. So I think that everyone is making a reasonable effort to inform all Canadians, but we can always do more. And if the New Democrats' Leader has specific ideas about it, I would pleased to hear them.

[*English*]

Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): I have a supplementary question, Madam Speaker.

Clearly, my question to the Prime Minister was simply that Canadians need to know what is happening in the constitutional process. Certainly, the polls have indicated that people are not aware of what Meech Lake was all about. We cannot allow that to happen again.

I am simply suggesting to the Prime Minister that he, as leader of the country, has a responsibility to ensure that the public has the information to make its own decisions and conclusions.

On another matter, I want to ask the Prime Minister this. I am assuming that at some point there will be a First Ministers' meeting. I hope that there will be, if we are to have this issue really move along.

• (1130)

Will the Prime Minister ensure that the committee's recommendations on aboriginal rights, which have been of such grave concern and which were highlighted in the report, will in fact be reflected in a companion resolution?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, I cannot predict what the results of these various consultations with the First Ministers will be.

As I understand the committee's report, it contains a number of important elements. It appears to me that should the First Ministers decide to get together it will be the equivalent of a legislative menu whereby they will decide among themselves how to propose to deal with these legitimate concerns.

First, the report recommends that the conditions of the Meech Lake Accord be accepted as they are, with the companion resolution. The companion resolution appears to contain some issues of clarification, as well as some issues of substance. I think that this is what the committee sought to have us discuss when the First Ministers get together.

With respect to the very important question of aboriginal rights raised by my hon. friend, I had the privilege under the previous constitutional provisions to chair two meetings of First Ministers in respect of seeking a constitutional amendment for justice for native peoples.

It is my view that had the province of Quebec been a signatory to the Constitution, and had the province of Quebec therefore been present at those constitutional negotiations, then given its very favourable disposition to aboriginal issues we would have achieved a constitutional settlement for aboriginal peoples. We came very close to doing that. Had Quebec been there we would have achieved it.

That is why it is so indispensable not only for Quebec and the rest of the nation but for our first peoples to have this matter resolved. Only with all the provinces around the table can the native peoples achieve the justice that they so richly deserve.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Madam Speaker, I realize that the Prime Minister cannot speak for the premiers of the provinces. I am not asking him to do that.

I remind the Prime Minister that he has a special responsibility for aboriginal people. He also has a special responsibility for the northern territories, the Yukon and the Northwest Territories.

I am asking about the Prime Minister's commitment to aboriginal issues, to ensure that they are addressed in a companion resolution that may come out of a First Ministers' meeting.

I am asking for the Prime Minister's commitment that the recommendation on new provincehood for the Yukon and the Territories, in other words the pre-1982 arrangement, will be part of the companion resolution.

Will the Prime Minister invite the leaders of the government of the Northwest Territories and the premier of the Yukon to this First Ministers' Conference?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, may I say with respect that it is precisely this kind of attitude, these kinds of questions, that have given rise to some of the difficulties that the Meech Lake Accord and the process have sustained over the past number of years. We have to presume some good faith on behalf of the other.

The hon. member asks about my attitude and the attitude of my government in respect to aboriginal questions.

Ms. McLaughlin: Your commitment, not your attitude.

Mr. Mulroney: She asks for a commitment. Had she been in the House in 1984 and 1985 I think the member would have been pleased with the manner in which the federal government chaired that aboriginal conference with a view to seeking justice for aboriginal peoples.

If she needs a more recent indication of my commitment and the commitment of my government to that kind of justice, she has only to look at the land claim settlements that we have made in the Northwest Territories, which are the most important and the most generous in the history of Canada in favour of our aboriginal peoples.

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SOCIAL PROGRAMS

Ms. Albina Guarnieri (Mississauga East): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister in the absence of the Minister of National Health and Welfare.

Catherine Graham, editor of the Carleton University report entitled *How Ottawa Spends*, writes that despite the Prime Minister's commitments to the contrary, universal child benefits have effectively disappeared without public debate and that the economically disadvantaged in the country are in tough times. She states that it is a case of the have-nots continuing to do without for the sake of the haves.

Will the Prime Minister come clean with this House and admit that the Tory answer to fiscal responsibility is to target existing social programs?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, I have not had a chance to read the report to which my hon. friend refers. If she is characterizing it fairly, then it is pretty silly stuff.

The fact of the matter is that since this government was sworn in in 1984, 757,000 Canadians have been removed from the poverty rolls. That includes 229,000 women and 259,000 children.

Apart from that, the best, most important social policy statement in many cases is a job. This government has proceeded with the creation of 1.6 million new jobs in five and a half years, 85 per cent of them full-time and 60 per cent of them going to women.

Ms. Albina Guarnieri (Mississauga East): Madam Speaker, the Prime Minister does himself a disservice with that answer.

Perhaps I should remind the Prime Minister that according to Statistics Canada there are over 3.3 million Canadians living below the poverty line.

In these days of high interest rates and a declining economy, how can the Prime Minister justify his policies of ending universality of social programs and introducing unemployment insurance legislation that hits directly at the disadvantaged? What is he going to say to these 3.3 million Canadians?

Mr. Peterson: Let them eat cake.

Mr. Dick: That's the Liberal way.

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, after striking out, the impoverished member from Willowdale returns for a discussion on poverty.

I agree with my hon. friend, obviously, that any degree of poverty in an industrialized country is too much.

The object of the exercise of all government policy should be to remove people from the situation of poverty and to give them the opportunity to work their way into greater prosperity, which is why changes are proposed for $800 million more for training under the Unemployment Insurance Act. If my hon. friend wanted to be helpful, she could prevail upon her Liberal friends in the Senate to pass that piece of legislation as quickly as possible. That would help people get out of poverty.

I indicated that while not perfect, under this government 757,000 fewer people are in poverty than in 1984. I did not out of politeness point out that under her government 734,000 people between 1980 and 1984 fell into poverty.

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TRANSPORT

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Acting Minister of Finance.

In its insatiable appetite for imposing yet new taxes, it is now reported that this government wants to impose, of all things, tolls on highways to squeeze out another $13 billion from Canadian taxpayers.

Can the minister stand in his place here and now, put and end to this and tell us that there will not be such a thing as highway tolls in Canada?

Hon. Bill McKnight (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member knows full well that the majority of the responsibility for highway financing rests in the hands of the provincial governments.

• (1140)

The hon. member should also be fully aware that just last week the federal government removed the last federal toll on the Champlain Bridge in Montreal.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McKnight: Anyone who is suggesting that the federal government would either have the ability or the desire to impose tolls is not recognizing reality.

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Madam Speaker, I do not think the minister should be saying that about the Assistant Deputy Minister in charge of transport.

[*Translation*]

My supplementary is for the minister who answers on behalf of the Minister of Transport or the President of the Treasury Board.

Last December, in announcing these cuts, the President of the Treasury Board said that the government would disclose in the future other ways of collecting revenues and charging fees.

Will the Minister tell us now if what we are seeing today is just another way of digging into the pockets of Canadian taxpayers?

Hon. Robert de Cotret (President of the Treasury Board): No, Madam Speaker. I must say to my hon. colleague that, as the Minister of National Defence mentioned, we recently decided to remove the tollbooth on the Champlain Bridge.

I did not read the article that my friend from Glengarry—Prescott—Russell (Mr. Boudria) is referring to—I will do it later—but I can tell him we have no such plan.

* * *

[*English*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Phillip Edmonston (Chambly): Madam Speaker, 90 per cent of American toxic waste is imported to Canada. CBC television has informed us that the Prime Minister's ambassador to the United States has actively lobbied against an American control bill on toxic waste, essentially to loosen the standards so that we in Canada can get as much toxic waste from the United States as possible.

When we are fighting acid rain emissions coming into Canada, and we have fought somewhat successfully, how can the Prime Minister's government reject the charge that it is not the utmost in hypocrisy to be asking at the same time for as much toxic waste from the United States as we can get?

Hon. Frank Oberle (Minister of Forestry): Madam Speaker, there has been over time a flow of waste materials, including toxic waste, both ways across the Canada-U.S. border.

New regulations have virtually eliminated such movement of waste. In fact my hon. friend would know, particularly in the province of Quebec, that new regulations were put in place back in 1989, if I recall correctly.

The new standards which were imposed then to deal with the cleaning up of hazardous waste sites had a commitment of $100 million of federal money. There were three components, one being the cleaning up of orphan sites which were to be cleaned up in a co-operative effort between the provinces and the federal government.

To get to the hon. member's question, the flow of hazardous materials across the border has been virtually stopped.

Mr. Phillip Edmonston (Chambly): Madam Speaker, I am talking about 150,000 tonnes of toxic waste that come in to Canada annually. We are not talking about a small amount of toxic waste. We are talking about 90 per cent of toxic waste produced by the Americans.

How can we say that we wish to protect the Canadian public when at the same time the ambassador, on the Prime Minister's orders, is lobbying to weaken U.S. legislation so that we can get as much toxic waste here as possible?

Hon. Frank Oberle (Minister of Forestry): Madam Speaker, of course I question the numbers that have been cited by my hon. friend.

The arrangements that have been entered into with our friends in the United States state that there should be no movement of toxic waste across our borders.

It does not help the situation for my friend to cite numbers that he simply cannot substantiate.

Mr. Fulton: What's the real number, Frank?

Mr. Oberle: It is perhaps true that over time we will have to rely on materials from the United States for recycling in our pulp mills since with the new regulations concerning recycled paper being legislated on the print industry in the United States, it will be very difficult for our industry to gain access to enough waste materials to meet those new guidelines. Thus there will always be a flow of waste materials. But toxic materials are no longer allowed into our country.

THE SENATE

Mr. Bob Horner (Mississauga West): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State for Finance.

My constituents, and I think they are fairly representative of all Canadians, are fairly frustrated and angered that every bill that is passed by this democratically elected House that goes to the Senate is held up and delayed.

Will the Minister of State for Finance tell me, and by so doing inform all members of this House, what will be the consequences of the Senate's attempts to amend rather than pass the income tax changes arising from the April 1989 budget, which are contained in Bill C-28?

Hon. Gilles Loiselle (Minister of State (Finance)): Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his very good question. It is a very, very important question.

The government's position with respect to money bills was made very clear when we discussed Bill C-21, which concerns UI reform. I believe that everyone will agree that the government was elected to manage the fiscal affairs of the country, among other things.

By blocking, as it is doing, numerous bills and government legislation the Senate is threatening to rip a huge hole in our fiscal framework.

In the case of Bill C-28 for example, the deficit will be $200 million higher in 1989-90 than it would have been if the bill had been passed expeditiously.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I think the hon. minister has answered the question.

The hon. member for Gatineau—La Lièvre.

* * *

[*Translation*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Mark Assad (Gatineau—La Lièvre): My question is for the Minister of the Environment. Because of the fire in Saint-Amable, the whole area's underground water system could be contaminated. Will the minister of the Environment ensure that everything possible is done to prevent the toxic oil from the burning tires from contaminating the underground water in the area, taking

into account the fact that the present methods used to soak up the oil are clearly insufficient?

Hon. Marcel Danis (Minister of State (Youth), Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House): Madam Speaker, I would like my hon. colleague from Gatineau—La Lièvre to know that I have been on the site since the outset of this unfortunate incident until 6:30 this morning. The federal government has cooperated fully with the Quebec government. Officials from Environment Canada were on site on Wednesday, as well as officials from Health and Welfare Canada, Agriculture Canada and the Department of National Defence. We have answered favourably to all of the requests made by the Quebec government.

Mr. Paradis tells us is keeping us informed regarding the pumping of the oil, and the hon. member will know that we are dealing with a provincial jurisdiction here. The Quebec government is therefore trying its best to contain the oil within the limits of the area where the tires are. But, if it were to ask us for further help, we would be there on behalf of the federal government.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Mark Assad (Gatineau—La Lièvre): Surely the minister will agree that the government's tire recycling research assistance program falls short of the mark. We now have proof. Will the minister set up a real program to boost research into and development of new used tire recycling technologies?

Hon. Marcel Danis (Minister of State (Youth), Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House): Madam Speaker, I should like to take this opportunity offered by the hon. member to thank the volunteer firemen who have now been working non-stop for three days at Saint-Amable.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Danis: Madam Speaker, I also noticed a rare occurrence—several firewomen battling the blaze.

An hon. member: Hear, hear.

Mr. Danis: In answer to my colleague's question, Environment Canada officials will meet with their provincial counterparts to draft a policy. Even though the matter falls within provincial purview, I suggest that in the interest of Canadians everybody should get involved, and the Minister of the Environment is doing his best to solve the problem. He has done an excellent job until now and I am sure he will maintain his performance.

• (1150)

[*English*]

Ms. Catherine Callbeck (Malpeque): Madam Speaker, my question is to the Prime Minister.

The Minister of the Environment has now made a commitment that Canada will stabilize its carbon dioxide emissions at 1988 levels by the year 2000. The Minister of Energy, however, has said that it is premature to set these levels.

Which minister speaks for the government?

Hon. Frank Oberle (Minister of Forestry): Madam Speaker, as we know, the Minister of the Environment attended a very important international conference in Bergen, Norway. He made some very important contributions to that conference in statements and commitments on behalf of Canada which establish targets with regard to the control and elimination of carbon dioxide emissions into the atmosphere.

It is the Minister of the Environment who spoke for the government at the conference. These are federal commitments.

Ms. Catherine Callbeck (Malpeque): Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the Prime Minister since I did not get an answer to my first question.

Will the Prime Minister please tell Canadians his government's position? Is it to stabilize carbon dioxide emissions at 1988 levels by the year 2000, as stated by the Minister of the Environment, or is it to go slow, as stated by the Minister of Energy?

Hon. Frank Oberle (Minister of Forestry): Madam Speaker, certainly the initial steps will require the industry and others that emit carbon dioxide into the atmosphere to develop new systems, techniques and processes in manufacturing and other areas to arrest the growth and expansion of the emission of such gases, and then to operate and work collectively with the rest of the world to establish targets for the elimination of harmful gases.

That will include the planting of trees, the reforestation of vast areas around the planet, which are necessary to absorb harmful greenhouse gases. That cannot happen in two weeks or a month. There needs to be long-term plans and strategies of the kind that were discussed in Bergen, Norway.

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TRADE

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister.

Yet another Windsor company, Stanley Home Automation, has decided to shift its manufacturing operations to the United States. The president has announced that free trade is a factor because tariffs are being cut to zero in this product category.

This means another 68 jobs to be added to the jobs lost in Kelsey Hayes, SKD, Sheller-Globe, Bondy Cartage and Wayne Bus. Plant after plant has seen shifts to the United States.

Is the Prime Minister now prepared to suspend the operation of the free trade deal to safeguard manufacturing jobs in this country in an industry which has seen 48,000 jobs disappear in the last month?

Hon. Tom Hockin (Minister of State (Small Businesses and Tourism)): Madam Speaker, the hon. member mentioned some closures. Of course the government is concerned about any closures, whether they involve 68 employees or whatever.

I have to remind the hon. member that an aerospace company moved from Detroit to Windsor in the last two months, creating over 100 jobs.

Last week, I enjoyed being at the opening of a joint GM-Suzuki operation where 3,000 new jobs have been created.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hockin: Since it is so close to the hon. member's riding, I would like to mention that Freightliner opened in St. Thomas with 1,200 jobs.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hockin: When we ask about the free trade agreement, we have to ask of course what the effect is on our trade surplus. I saw in *The Toronto Star* this morning that the jump in the trade surplus shows that the economy is very, very perky.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Madam Speaker, let us look at the whole picture for a change. Unlike what the minister has done, I have given a complete picture of what is taking place in my community.

Let us look at the most recent statistics released this week concerning the labour force. Just last month there was a decrease of 45,000 manufacturing jobs throughout this country.

Is his government aiming to destroy the manufacturing heart of our economy? Does it not recognize that the manufacturing base of any economy is crucial to build exports for the future? Does it not recognize that the high tech future for this country depends on that manufacturing base?

Is this government not going to do something to get back those manufacturing jobs?

Madam Deputy Speaker: I think the hon. member has put his question. The hon. minister.

Hon. Tom Hockin (Minister of State (Small Businesses and Tourism)): Madam Speaker, the hon. member speaks about the manufacturing base of the Canadian economy. The biggest impediment to the manufacturing base of the Canadian economy is the manufacturers' sales tax.

What we are doing is removing that tremendously unfair burden that for over 66 years the Canadian manufacturing sector has had to participate in. We are removing the manufacturers' sales tax, which is especially good news for Windsor and for Canada.

I know the hon. member is an economist. He and I have talked about the big picture, as he puts it. He will be interested to know that a mutual friend of ours, Richard Caves, a professor of economics at Harvard, said the following: "My findings suggest that the Canadian manufacturers should respond well to increased competition under the free trade agreement". He predicts a very good future for that sector.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

House of Commons

UNEMPLOYMENT

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of State for Finance.

Early this month Croydon Furniture Systems announced the closure of its plant in Smiths Falls, Ontario, leaving 130 people out of work as of June 29. The rise in the value of the Canadian dollar and the removal of tariffs as a result of the free trade deal have eliminated the company's traditional profit margins, and this in a riding represented in this Parliament by the Minister of Supply and Services who supported these very policies.

Does the minister not think it is time to scrap the high interest rate policy and the free trade agreement and help those Canadians who are losing their jobs?

Hon. Tom Hockin (Minister of State (Small Businesses and Tourism)): Madam Speaker, the hon. member speaks out of a framework of thinking which is right out of the 1950s and 1960s. He should realize that tariffs set at a high level can produce huge profits for companies when they are sheltered behind those huge tariff walls, but that in the long run those companies will disappear.

What we must do is put in place a framework through lower tariffs which will make a more competitive manufacturing sector. Removing the manufacturers' sales tax will also help.

That is the answer for the future of Canada, not hiding behind a big wall of protection.

Madam Deputy Speaker: A very short supplemental.

• (1200)

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Madam Speaker, it may be that that kind of answer is good for some parts of Canada, but for the area of Smiths Falls and Lanark County it must be a bit of a disaster.

The president of the company said, and I quote him: "A substantial capital investment is needed to make our plants competitive in the new environment. Given the way the economic future looks in Canada, we cannot afford to make that kind of commitment".

Does the minister not realize that it is his government's disastrous policies that have created the economic mess described by this president and that have resulted in these people and hundreds of others in eastern Ontario losing their jobs?

Hon. Tom Hockin (Minister of State (Small Businesses and Tourism)): Madam Speaker, I was in Smiths Falls just two days ago and I spoke to a number of industrial representatives. They are very bullish on the Smiths Falls economy. I do not know why the hon. member is so obsessed with one particular example.

The more general point he raises is more fundamental, and that is that the shape of the Canadian economy has been hobbled and circumscribed by a manufacturers' sales tax. By removing that we are going to unleash in the first year alone of the GST a $9 billion strong economy. That will be good for Smiths Falls and for Canada.

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[*Translation*]

HOUSE OF COMMONS

SPEAKER'S ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Madam Deputy Speaker: Now that Question Period is over, I would like to ask the House to bear with me while I make the following comments.

During the past two days, representatives of all parties have been addressing words of praise and congratulations to your humble servant. I would like to take this opportunity to thank each and everyone of my colleagues and also to express the disappointment and embarrassment I felt on Tuesday afternoon, when I realized it would be physically impossible for me to be present in the House when the Prime Minister was to move for concurrence in the motion conferring on me the honour of becoming the Deputy Speaker of this House and urging me to meet the challenges of my new responsibilities.

[*English*]

May I assure each and every member of the House of my complete co-operation. With the Speaker's support and with the knowledge and experience so kindly shared by the Clerk and our table officers and with your help and understanding, I hope to walk successfully in the footsteps of my friend and predecessor and fully deserve the respect and friendship that you are demonstrating today.

Some hon. members: Bravo, bravo.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I have received notice of two questions of privilege. I will recognize them in the order in which I have received them. First of all the hon. member for Calgary West.

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PRIVILEGE

COMMENTS OF MEMBER FOR BEAVER RIVER

Mr. Jim Hawkes (Calgary West): Madam Speaker, I would like first of all to make available to the Chair a press release issued by the member for Beaver River on May 17, yesterday afternoon after a discussion in this Chamber and a previous press release which was not available yesterday, dated April 5, 1990, from the same member. I would like to make those available to the Chair.

On April 5 in this Chamber, which is something I did not realize yesterday, the member for Beaver River spoke. Her comments on page 11564 of *Hansard*—

Mr. Riis: Madam Speaker, on a point of order—

Madam Deputy Speaker: I am listening to a question of privilege now. I will recognize the hon. member for Kamloops as soon as I have heard the hon. member.

Mr. Hawkes: In those April 5 comments the member for Beaver River stated:

> We know that other members are being bribed to vote for the GST or risk losing precious lifetime pensions.

I would like to bring to the attention of the House the Criminal Code of Canada. Under *Corruption and Disobedience* in that code, Section 119.(1) says:

> Every one who
>
> (a) being the holder of a judicial office, or being a member of Parliament or of the legislature of a province, corruptly
>
> (i) accepts or obtains,
>
> (ii) agrees to accept, or
>
> (iii) attempts to obtain,
>
> any money, valuable consideration, office, place or employment for himself or another person in respect of anything done or omitted or to be done or omitted by him in his official capacity, or
>
> (b) gives or offers, corruptly, to a person mentioned in paragraph (a) any money, valuable consideration, office, place or employment in respect of anything done or omitted or to be done or omitted by him in his official capacity for himself or another person,

> is guilty of an indictable offence and liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding fourteen years.

Madam Deputy Speaker: If I may, I have been made aware of the press release issued by the hon. member for Beaver River yesterday, and I am quite aware of why the hon. member for Calgary West is now rising in the House.

I would think at this point that it would be wise for the House to adjourn this debate and wait until the hon. member for Beaver River is present so that she can respond, as she did yesterday, to the hon. member.

I think it would be unfair and unwise to pursue the debate at this point, but of course the hon. member will have the possibility of raising it again when his colleague is present.

Is there anything else from the hon. member for Calgary West?

Mr. Hawkes: Yes, Madam Speaker. In sending the letter to the Chair this morning, I did phone also the member's office and indicated to that member's office that I would be quite happy to wait until the member was back.

I also communicated to officials at the table that I would have no difficulty in waiting. I thought that when you called the question of privilege you had decided you wanted me to proceed. I would be quite happy to wait until the member returns. I would think the member will probably be here next week.

[*Translation*]

Madam Deputy Speaker: I have received another notice from an hon. member who wishes to raise a question of privilege. I will now recognize the hon. member for Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead (Mr. Gérin).

CHANGE OF PARTY AFFILIATION BY MEMBER FOR MÉGANTIC—COMPTON—STANSTEAD

Mr. François Gérin (Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead): Madam Speaker, I wish to join all members in congratulating you on your appointment as Deputy Speaker of this House.

I also wish to inform you of my intention to sit from now on as an independent member.

Despite present and past problems, the Prime Minister and the government have made some outstanding achievements. These are memories I will cherish. In fact, it was the Prime Minister who gave me a chance to serve

Quebec and Canada, and I am thankful for that opportunity.

I deeply regret leaving the Quebec caucus at this time, a caucus profoundly divided and disturbed by the constitutional question. In 1984 and 1988, I was elected under the flag of the Progressive Conservative Party. I regret that I must leave, especially in these difficult times. It is not because of the problems that the polls are now starting to recognize. I do not have that kind of temperament. I also believe in the party system. I believe it is much easier to serve as a member of a political party than as an independent member. The problem is realizing when all this becomes irreconcilable. At what point is it no longer possible to keep working within a political party?

If the dissent of a member, and mine in particular, on a matter as fundamental as the constitutional question cannot be freely expressed within a party and outside, that is a situation I can no longer accept. I cannot accept being asked to remain silent on an issue that is so fundamentally important to Quebec and Canada. I have expressed my dissent in the past. In some instances, my dissent started in isolation and later managed to rally almost everyone shortly before the election, as evidenced by grass-roots financing. I could go on as usual. But not on this issue.

The constitutional question is far too important. The Meech Lake Accord was an extraordinary attempt at national reconciliation. It is not just a legal formality. It is a symbol for Quebecers who expected Canada, the other provinces, to say an unconditional yes to Quebec.

• (1210)

As the Prime Minister said in Sept-Îles in 1984, "With honour, dignity and enthusiasm". Today and for the past few weeks I have seen in my government and the Prime Minister quite a sharp turn in position as compared to the nationalistic stand the Prime Minister had taken in a speech he delivered in Sept-îles shortly before the 1984 election. Quebec has been negotiating the constitutional issue for over 25 years. Today, the Meech Lake accord is dead, if not technically, at least in the hearts of most Quebecers. Moroever, the Progressive Conservative Party is no longer offering Quebecers the guarantee they need to achieve their fundamental goals. The Meech Lake Accord may not be dead here in this House for those who are willing to accept it at any cost, but Quebec men and women deserve and demand more. Above all, they insist on a straightforward position.

The role of a Quebec member here in Ottawa is being challenged. Personally I am first and foremost a Quebecer and I am here to serve my fellow Quebecers. That is what I have learned. That is what I have been taught over the past six years. Today, I am told differently. I just do not think that I could speak from both sides of my mouth at the same time. As a great many Quebecers, I now believe basically, in my heart of hearts, as well as with my guts and brain, that the future of Quebec and Canada lies in the sovereignty of Quebec and a new association with its Canadian partners or the partners of other Canadian regions.

Since 1984, I have looked after a number of major issues, public financing has been one of them, since 1986. There were elements of ethics and democracy involved, as well as the openness of party and a government. I had wished that tool we could provide this decentralization and framework necessary for participation, especially this call and these overtures to our young people both in Quebec and the rest of Canada. Unfortunately, I must recognize that it did not work out, just as in the case of my concern for a deficit reduction and a balanced budget.

Yesterday I completed my basic assignment on the Special Committee on the Parliament of Canada Act. I am proud of this job which lasted for over six months and was not easy and I hope my colleagues will be able to complete it.

As to my future, Madam Speaker, I must say that my political career will be determined by my constituents. For a long time I have been telling them that I take orders from no one, except from them. They insist that I must follow the dictates of my conscience, that I must tell them the truth and act on their behalf. It is therefore with honour, dignity and enthusiasm, the very words the Prime Minister used in 1984, that I am asking to be given a new seat from which I will be able to stand up exclusively for Quebecers and a sovereignty association deal for Quebec.

Madam Speaker, long live Quebec and its people!

Mr. Marcel Prud'homme (Saint-Denis): I believe, Madam Speaker, that sometimes in our political life we can not let moves like this one be made without a single comment being made, a nice one that is. I mean that the

hon. gentleman making such a decision at this time came as quite a surprise. It is not for us to discuss the merit of such a decision. I nevertheless want to let him know that, as a Quebecer, I am sorry. I think that, under the circumstances, there was still room for negotiation. The hon. gentleman has engaged upon that road today. I would have preferred that he wait. In any case, as a parliamentarian and a personal friend, I had to take the first opportunity to tell him that, while respecting his decision, I regret it.

I hope time will tell that he was wrong to make such a decision, but we shall see. I believe it was appropriate for a parliamentarian to make a friendly gesture for a friend who has made a very difficult decision. It is clear for a parliamentarian as fond of the Parliament as I am that it must have been very difficult indeed.

I will now, without further comment, analyze his statement word for word. All the same, I wanted him to know that I truly regret his decision.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I want to thank the hon. member for having given us notice of his intention to raise a question of privilege.

As is the procedure, the Chair will see to finding him another seat in this House.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*Translation*]

STRIKING COMMITTEE

PRESENTATION OF FORTY-SECOND REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

Mr. Jim Hawkes (Calgary West): Madam Speaker, I have the honour to present the forty-second report of the Striking Committee.

[*Editor's Note: See today's Votes and Proceedings.*]

* * *

PETITIONS

TAX BENEFITS FOR NORTHERN AND ISOLATED AREAS

Mr. Guy Saint-Julien (Abitibi): Madam Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I am today tabling four petitions from Chibougamau, in the riding of Roberval,

further to the recommendations of the Task Force on Tax Benefits for Northern and Isolated Areas.

Madam Speaker, the signers of three petittions of these petitions reject the conclusions of the Task Force on Tax Benefits for Northern and Isolated Areas and ask that Chibougamau be recognized as an isolated area under the present tax benefits plan.

[*English*]

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to present a petition pursuant to Standing Order 36 and certified correct by the Clerk of Petitions. The petitioners come from Kamloops, Chase and Logan Lake, British Columbia, and are concerned that the government's goods and services tax is going to cause them considerable financial pain. They point out that a tax on home heating fuels, transportation, on virtually everything, is going to increase the amount of money that they pay in taxation and reduce their purchasing power. They are asking the Government of Canada to rethink proceeding with this tax.

VETERANS AFFAIRS

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to present a petition signed by numerous residents of Kingston, Gananoque, Harrowsmith, Sydenham, Battersea, Napanee, Verona and Joyceville, Ontario among others. These persons have signed this petition to indicate their opposition to the changes the government has announced in its budget, whereby it reduces services for housekeeping purposes for veterans and increases the cost of long-term care for Canada's veterans.

The petitioners call upon Parliament to reject those measures contained in the government's unfair and nasty budget.

* * *

[*Translation*]

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

(Questions answered orally are indicated by an asterisk.)

Hon. Marcel Danis (Minister of State (Youth), Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Madam Speaker, I suggest that all remaining questions stand.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Shall the remaining questions stand?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[*English*]

Madam Deputy Speaker: On a point of order, the hon. member for Calgary West.

• (1220)

Mr. Hawkes: I understand that one of my colleagues was to present the legislative committee report on Bill C-69, but was inadvertently absent from the Chamber at the moment that item was called.

If there is unanimous consent, it might serve the House best to revert to that item to allow the presentation of the committee report.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is there unanimous consent to revert to Reports from Committees?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

COMMITTEE REPORTS

BILL C-69—REPORT OF LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Mr. Lee Richardson (Calgary Southeast): Madam Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the fifth report of the Standing Committee on Finance on Bill C-69, an act to amend certain statutes to enable restraint of government expenditures.

[*Editor's Note: See today's Votes and Proceedings.*]

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

CANADIAN CENTRE FOR MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT ACT

MEASURE TO ESTABLISH

The House resumed consideration of motion of Mr. Mazankowski that Bill C-34, an act to establish the Canadian Centre for Management Development and to amend certain acts in consequence thereof, be read the third time and passed.

Madam Deputy Speaker: When we proceeded to Statements by members, the hon. member for Carleton—Gloucester had the floor.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Eugène Bellemare (Carleton—Gloucester): Thank you, Madam Speaker. It is too bad that my speech was interrupted by Question Period. But I suppose that we must follow the procedure and that it probably was much more interesting to listen to Question Period.

Therefore I continue the debate on Bill C-34, an Act to establish the Canadian Centre for Management Development. The Liberal Party approves of this bill, which, as I said, concerns the Canadian Centre for Management Development that was the idea, really, of the hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier. It is a centre to develop management skills and abilities, for better management in the Public Service, an institution that would develop management techniques in Public Service managers. Of course the Liberal Party agrees with establishing such a centre. As I just said, I congratulate Mr. Manion, the first principal of this institution.

I was just referring to Maxwell Yalden, the Chief Commissioner for the Canadian Human Rights Commission, who appeared before the Legislative Committee on Bill C-34.

[*English*]

I agree with Mr. Yalden that the Canadian Centre for Management Development should reflect a Canadian reality. Therefore, it should be flexible and open to the changes of our society. The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, as well as the Employment Equity Act and the Multiculturalism Act, should be present at all times in the minds of the future managers.

The Charter and the acts should be part of every single activity in which the managers participate, and should not only be used when there is a complaint.

Though human rights, employment equity and multiculturalism have been endorsed by government policy for quite some time, it seems it is only recently that these notions become more accepted and especially needed.

As Mr. Yalden pointed out:

—progress in their implementation has been discouraging.

> One need only consult the government's latest report on its own employment equity situation for the four designated groups—women, aboriginal peoples, members of visible minorities, and persons with disabilities. This report indicates that while the government's policy looks good on paper, and while some positive efforts are being made, the overall result is not satisfactory.

The Canadian Centre for Management Development should and must orient managers toward an appreciation of the importance of employment equity and train them in its daily application as part of their job. To ensure employment equity is totally respected by the Canadian Centre for Management Development so that it can effectively represent the federal Public Service and the diversity of the Canadian population who should receive the services it needs.

I believe the Liberal amendment presented in committee was absolutely necessary. This specification should have been the object of the centre. I am disappointed that the government turned down that most important amendment. Unless human rights and employment equity commitments are specifically included in this bill, I doubt they will be an integrated part of the over-all commitment of the centre.

I hope the government will respect the centre's objectives found in clause 4, especially 4(a), (b) and (d).

[*Translation*]

I would like to outline, Madam Speaker, the Centre's objects and powers as defined in the bill.

> 4. The objects of the Centre are
>
> (a) to encourage pride and excellence in the management of the Public Service and to foster among Public Service managers a sense of the purposes, values and traditions of the Public Service;
>
> (b) to help ensure that managers in the Public Service have the analytical, creative, advisory, administrative and other managerial skills and knowledge necessary to develop *and implement* policy, respond to change, *including changes in the social, cultural, racial and linguistic character of Canadian society,* and manage government programs, services *and personnel* efficiently, effectively and *equitably*;
>
> (d) *to develop within the Public service and* to attract to the Public Service, through the *Centre's* programs and studies, persons *who are* of high calibre *and who reflect the diversity of Canadian society,* and to support their growth and development as public sector managers committed to the service of Canada;

[*English*]

I can assure the government that the opposition feels it is its responsibility that the Canadian Centre for Management Development clearly respect its objectives. It is only in attracting qualified people to the Public Service and making the Public Service a highly respected place of work that the public and the Public Service will fully benefit from top quality service.

Ms. Lynn Hunter (Saanich—Gulf Islands): Madam Speaker, it is a privilege to rise to speak to Bill C-34, an act to establish the Canadian Centre for Management Development.

This centre has four specific objectives: developing the knowledge and skills of managers, developing the service ethic, originate research into practical solutions to the problems faced by public administrators, and advancing the commitment to public sector management excellence. These are worth-while objectives and, as such, we in the New Democratic Party are proud to support this bill.

At the outset I would like to say that this centre is an idea whose time has come and that, in the proper context, it can help those who run the Public Service deal with the fast pace of change in today's world. It will help them cope with fast-breaking issues and new technologies. It will serve to keep the Public Service on the cutting edge of change rather than following in its wake trying to catch up.

The Canadian Centre for Management Development is a response to a world-wide change in management practices. Today's managers must be able to question the status quo. Where once unthinking obedience to hierarchy was required of managers, today they must be able to think, to analyse and to conceptualize. Today's managers must focus on people rather than bureaucracy. These are changes that I applaud.

I worry that this centre is also a response to other less beneficial changes in our country; namely, the effects of six years of the Tory agenda.

• (1230)

Mr. Jack Manion, the principal of the centre, has often linked the centre to the government's right-wing agenda for the Public Service. In his words, that agenda is to "decentralize, deregulate, deburden and debureaucratize". This means that the centre will be geared to

getting its managers to squeeze out more performance with fewer people and less money.

On a similar note, the centre is frequently connected with Public Service 2000, a shadowy effort also intended to strengthen the hand of upper management under the mantra of letting managers manage, even at the expense of collective bargaining rights.

Given the centre's $11.5 million budget, money obviously is not a problem for upper management. One-third of the permanent staff earn of average of $86,000 a year and the centre is not required to recover costs through tuition fees. That this occurs at a time of fiscal restraint illustrates one of the key problems with the Public Service. Top-level managers invariably choose to make cuts at the bottom of the totem-pole, leaving the fat at the top intact. The totem-pole is tottering. It is top-heavy with managers who have been securing their own jobs while cutting those underneath them. Those managers have been increasing their own salaries while letting salaries in general fall behind the cost of living. If the government is committed to reducing bureaucracy, it should start at the top and work down, rather than cutting the services that directly affect the lives of Canadians everywhere.

I share the concern that this centre is to some extent a reflection of that philosophy, and that it will further isolate mandarins in an ivory tower of their own, safe from the storm clouds emerging as a result of the cutbacks they are being trained to administer. Unless those workers on the front lines have a say in how the Public Service is managed, then no amount of academia will serve. It is the customs officials, the NRC scientists and CEIC receptionists who know what Canadians want and expect from the Public Service, and their voices should echo through the halls of power.

I would caution the government that our support for C-34 is not an endorsement of privatization, contracting out, and downsizing—activities that have cut close to 10,000 jobs from the Public Service in the last five years. No amount of managerial training can heal the wounds this has caused. There is widespread demoralization throughout the Public Service caused by stalled careers and staffs cut to the bone. Pretending that poor performance is a management problem rather than a budget problem is a little like not giving a sea captain a rudder, but all the training needed to go down with the ship.

The real problem is not management, but the ability of the government to hack and slash without regard to the effects on the Public Service to carry out the important roles expected of it, including the protection of health and safety of the average person. The Treasury Board, the Privy Council, and the Public Service Commission control 10 per cent of national expenditures and a workforce of a quarter of a million. Yet, no committee of the House routinely studies the cumulative social costs of all of this budget cutting.

I worry that this centre will accelerate this tendency to see costs-benefits analysis in purely economic rather than social terms. Mr. Manion, for example, has been actively soliciting the influence of corporations, putting the CEOs and chairmen of major corporations on the centre's board of governors. Will the up-and-coming managers of tomorrow be required to think of government as just another bottom-line business, rather than as the defender of those who have fallen through the cracks of our profit-oriented society? This is especially critical in that Mr. Manion envisions his centre as an influential voice in the shaping of over-all government policy and procedures.

When reports such as *Beneath the Veneer* reveal the extent of the obstacles faced by women in the Public Service, it is important that such an influential centre be more than just a training school for Ottawa's mandarins. We cannot allow the centre to become another old boys' network, perpetuating the same elites from the same families, from the same parts of the country. Those same people all too often end up at the top. Room must be made for those who have traditionally been frozen out of the power structure: visible minorities, women, aboriginal people, and the disabled.

Mr. Manion has said that "to give priority to access over good management could be detrimental to the fundamental objective of the centre, which is to produce quality management". I find statements such as that worrying, especially since the bill also aims to "foster among Public Service managers a sense of the purpose, values and traditions of the Public Service". We in the House are aware, I am sure, that these purposes, values and traditions are largely white and male, set in a context dominated by white men. I am sure that Mr. Manion would agree that talent knows no racial or gender

boundaries and we can have fair participation of all minority groups without jeopardizing quality.

When only 12 per cent of senior management is female, 0.8 per cent aboriginal, 1.5 per cent disabled and 1.8 per cent members of visible minorities, one can only wonder how many talented people are out there whose skills could be helping to build this country, but whose talents are instead untapped because of the blindness of our prejudices.

We hope that the centre will serve to change the attitudes of the influential decision-makers it trains. This can be done by exposing what is essentially a homogeneous population to people of differing races and cultures. It will be only by working alongside the disabled, women, aboriginals, and visible minorities, that we can overcome our biases toward them. I hope the centre will make good on its promises to include target groups on its board, in its classrooms, and teaching at its podiums.

We in the NDP are happy to see that the centre has taken steps to provide this kind of access and, that it is willing to be a vehicle through which we can sensitize managers to the country's tremendous racial and cultural diversity, as well as to the sorts of unconscious prejudices we all have. Unless the people at the top understand the needs of those who have been kept at the bottom, we can never have a society in which anyone with talent and skill can make her or his mark in the world.

Mr. Mac Harb (Ottawa Centre): Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to join in the debate today on third reading of Bill C-34, an act to establish the Canadian Centre for Management Development.

I would like to congratulate the hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier who first raised this idea in 1974. I am sure he will share our pleasure that the government has reintroduced this bill. It is a tribute to my colleague and members on this side of the House that the government has adopted this Liberal initiative. I would like to congratulate the government on introducing this bill.

This bill is before us again because there is a very real need for a centre for management development in the country. The world today is an increasingly competitive place. Success, in a lot of ways, depends upon the ability of a nation to manage its internal and external activities and resources with efficiency and creativity.

The centre, of course, will provide that ideal forum for fostering awareness and advocating excellence within the Public Service. It can also set an example for its counterpart in the private sector to follow.

Canada's Public Service is currently facing many challenges with difficulties in areas such as downsizing. We have close to about 13,000 employees and their families who have been affected since 1985. Any hiring done today is for term positions with less security and fewer benefits for the employee.

• (1240)

Another problem is the issue of aging. The average age of public servants is increasing, with the majority in the 30 to 54 years age bracket.

Yet another problem is plateauing. There are fewer opportunities for career advancement due to cut-backs and the large number of public servants with seniority.

But more than anything else, there is a major problem within the Public Service with respect to equal opportunity. My colleague from Ottawa West has put forward some resolutions to the House on the question of equal opportunity. I was informed that these recommendations were not adopted. It is quite unfortunate they were not.

Women are still mainly at a disadvantage, especially when we talk about administrative support positions. Women make up 83 per cent of the employees at this level, but they also hold 60 per cent of the term positions within the Public Service. Women are under-represented in every other occupation within the Public Service.

Perhaps most seriously, while women represent more than 42 per cent of the Public Service workforce, they represent only 12.3 per cent at the management level.

While visible minority groups also make up almost 5 per cent of the Canadian labour force, they represent only 1.7 per cent of the Public Service.

Workers who are disabled make up 6 per cent of the national labour force, but represent only 1.9 of the Public Service.

I was informed that, to date, attempts to achieve employment equity have not been very successful. Aboriginal peoples, disabled persons, members of visible minority groups, and women are still under-represented in the Public Service.

It is little wonder that morale is a serious problem in the Public Service sector. Employees must cope with the real possibility that their jobs may not exist tomorrow, and that, even if they hang on to their job, there is very little opportunity for advancement.

These concerns can and, indeed, must be addressed by the new Canadian Centre for Management Development. The centre will provide the ideal forum for fostering awareness and advocating change within the Public Service.

When serious issues such as employment equity and efficiency need to be addressed, there is no better place to start than at the top. Obviously, a management development centre will provide a forum in which values and priorities such as equity and excellence can be promoted.

When Max Yalden, the Chairman of the Canadian Human Rights Commission, addressed the legislative committee studying this bill, he said, and I quote:

> If the Canadian Centre for Management Development is to be effective in promoting excellence in the Public Service—human rights principles must be an integral part of a manager's approach to problem solving, not an add-on to be trotted out for inspection on appropriate occasions.

I could not agree more.

This centre must help put into action the values and priorities which the Employment Equity Act and the Canadian Multiculturalism Act are built on, but which to date have failed to be put into practice.

There is another serious issue that the Centre for Management Development must address. In this time of fiscal restraint and increasing competition, the Public Service, like those in the private sector, must focus on maximum productivity and effective use of resources, both human and financial.

Government initiatives such as downsizing, combined with very real changes in the national and international arena, have resulted in a greater need than ever before for organizational and operational excellence within our Public Service.

Managers must address the serious dilemmas facing their employees. Better communication and understanding between all levels within the Public Service will enable the various departments to function more smoothly and, obviously, more effectively.

The days are long gone when this country could afford to waste human resources. Canada is well known for its natural resources, but let me suggest that it is our people which are the most valuable of all our assets.

Yet, lack of motivation and low morale can affect the efficiency and quality of work of those employed in the Public Service. The problems of restraint, and the bleak prospects for advancement could be steering good people away from the Public Service.

The Centre for Management Development is the place to start if we are going to address this very real and serious problem. The public policy demands of the future will require intelligent and creative solutions. It is up to us today to ensure that we have prepared our public service for the challenges ahead.

It is my hope that the problems currently facing the Public Service and the increasingly urgent need for efficient and productive management skills will be addressed by the creation of this Canadian Centre for Management Development.

I am certain we will all agree that Canada has an excellent Public Service, perhaps one of the finest in the world, made up of employees committed to maintaining a high level of competency and excellence in the service area. However, we cannot take our public servants for granted.

The steps we take today will determine the quality and nature of our Public Service of tomorrow. The establishment of the centre will ensure that Canada heads into the 21st century with a highly skilled and adaptable Public Service at the helm.

Madam Speaker, I would like to thank you for this opportunity to speak on this bill, and once again I would like to thank my colleagues from Ottawa—Vanier and Ottawa West for helping to make this discussion a productive one.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Before putting the question to the House I would like to make the following comment. There was a typographical error in the ruling I made earlier today on Bill C–54. The remarks made about Motion No. 4 should have been made in connection with Motion No. 2. Motion No. 2, if the House agrees, will be deemed to have been debated and negatived on division, and not Motion No. 4.

From the debate it was obvious that the hon. member for Ottawa West was addressing Motion No. 2 and not Motion No. 4. It was simply a typographical error. If the House agrees we will make the changes accordingly.

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mrs. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West) moved:

Motion No. 2

That Bill C–34 be amended in Clause 4 by adding immediately after line 5 at page 3 the following:

"(h) To foster, through its staffing, programs and research, access to its programs and through the composition of the Board, the achievement of equality in the federal workplace and in the management of the public service so that no person shall be denied employment opportunities or benefits for reasons unrelated to ability and, in fulfilment of that goal, to correct the conditions of disadvantage in employment experienced by women, aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities and persons who are, because of their race or colour, in a visible minority in Canada by giving effect to the principle that employment equity means more than treating persons in the same way but also requires special measures and the accommodation of differences."

Motion negatived on division.

Hon. Robert de Cotret (for the President of the Privy Council) moved that the bill be concurred in.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. de Cotret (for the President of the Privy Council) moved that the bill be read the third time and passed.

Motion agreed to, bill read the third time and passed.

* * *

[*Translation*]

INTEGRATED CIRCUIT TOPOGRAPHY ACT

MEASURE TO ENACT

Hon. Gerry Weiner (for the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs) moved that Bill C–57, an Act to provide for the protection of integrated circuit topographies and to amend certain Acts in consequence thereof, as reported (with amendments) from a Legislative Committee, be concurred in.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Gerry Weiner (for the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs) moved that the bill be read the third time and passed.

• (1250)

[*English*]

Mr. Blaine A. Thacker (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Madam Speaker, I am honoured to speak at third reading of Bill C–57.

As hon. members know, this bill gives a unique type of intellectual property protection for designers of microchip topographies. It is a reflection of the new and modern society that we live in where these microchips play an ever–increasing role in all the manufacturing equipment and tools that we use daily.

Madam Speaker, you will know that the bill was introduced on December 18, 1989. It was debated at second reading and referred to a legislative committee on March 9. The legislative committee was struck on March 14, witnesses were heard and the committee reported back to this House, with amendments, on April 11, 1990. Those amendments reflect the evidence that the committee heard, and the good work performed by the members of that committee.

There was broad public support from the Patent and Trademark Institute of Canada, the Information Technology Association of Canada as well as the Canadian Bar Association. In this country, we have some 25 Canadian firms that design these types of microchips.

I would like to extend thanks on behalf of the committee to the officials; Mr. David Watters as Director General, Johanne Daniel, the Policy Analyst and Allan Troicuk, the Senior Legal Analyst. These officials were vital to us, because most of the members do not appreciate yet the significance of this new technology. Indeed, we hardly know the vocabulary. They were most helpful to us.

I would also like to extend thanks to the legislative chairman, the distinguished member for Welland—St. Catharines—Thorold, and members of the committee, such as the hon. member for Carleton—Gloucester who

had some valuable input. He caused an analysis of the bill to be made.

In short, this is good public policy for the country for the future. Parliament has acted well in a matter of four or five months. I think it speaks well for the future and how this Parliament should act on bills that are good public policy.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Eugène Bellemare (Carleton—Gloucester): Madam Speaker, first of all, I would like to point out that people in my municipality have done some research on how to pronounce the word "Gloucester"—I am not commenting on the way you said it, but it is often mispronounced, even by English-speaking people. It is not "Glou-ces-ter" nor "Glovester" but "Gloss-ter". We should perhaps practice with the words "Worcestershire Sauce". It would give us an idea of the right way to pronounce the English word "Gloucester" in both in English and French.

Madam Deputy Speaker: If I may, I fully appreciate the hon. member's comment. I will indeed indulge in some practice, but then perhaps we might try to convince our English-speaking colleagues to find a new way of pronouncing "Saint-Hyacinthe". That is not an easy one either, I can assure you!

Mr. Eugène Bellemare (Carleton—Gloucester): Your kindness is unsurpassed, Madam Speaker!

[*English*]

The Liberal party is pleased to support Bill C-57. The hon. member for Lethbridge made a wonderful presentation today and did an excellent job at the legislative committee level. I commend him. I found him to be very attentive and co-operative most of the time.

I have to admit that he is a good listener. Whether he reacts positively to everyone's request is another subject.

[*Translation*]

As far as integrated circuits go, for some time now we have been noticing that if we examine the innards of our refrigerators, our washing machines, our dishwashers, our cars and every electronic device we find, that they all have integrated circuits. We are now into the 90s and we are bound to see ever more industrial and electronic circuitry development. Most of these products come from the United States. In Canada we have about 25 firms which specialize in this field. I believe that close to $1 billion is spent on such circuits. Canadian and foreign companies involved in the design and production of integrated circuits need some kind of protection. It would be a shame if our country failed to protect designers and inventors in these various fields.

This is such a new field of endeavour that it may have been neglected over the past five years. I was told that the government has spent at least that much time getting ready to introduce this legislation. Well, now we have it, and the Liberals agree that we need this kind of measure. I sat on the legislative committee and I am aware that it raises a few problems, in the sense that we need a statute which will command respect on the part of the Americans if only because they happen to be our major trade partners. I know that five or six years ago the United States did legislate to protect the designers and owners of integrated circuits.

We all know that Europe 92 will soon be reality and that Europeans are involved in integrated circuitry development. This is true as well of such Far East countries as Japan, Taiwan, and Korea. All nations should get together on some kind of international agreement. As I understand it, the legislative committee studied a proposition for an international agreement according to which, countries would respect each others legislation concerning integrated circuits. That is necessary. Unfortunately, there is a disagreement between the Americans and the proponents of an international legislation or agreement.

Our measure seems based on the American law. I can live with that since the Americans are our main trading partners. But, while listening to the speeches in legislative committee, I could not help but ask myself questions about the American law since we often confuse the American and Canadian ways of doing things because we watch so much American television.

[*English*]

This is not Canadian law. Many times Canadians watching TV take for granted that this is the way law in North America is established. We know well that our laws are different in Canada. Originally they came from Great Britain.

[*Translation*]

And we also have the Napoleonic Code.

[*English*]

There are laws that are pertinent to the country; they are federal laws. There are laws that are pertinent to the provinces, and each province has a set of laws. We see this in property legislation, for example. If you want to purchase some land or a house, the laws that are applicable are those of the provinces.

• (1300)

That interests me a great deal. I did appreciate the discussions and dialogue that we had. Five or six members from the integrated circuit community explained to us what a topography of a circuit was. They gave a very interesting explanation of integrated circuit topography. They drew a cross-section of a cityscape where you could see many buildings of different sizes and different heights. If you slice it in two, as a jolly giant would, you get an idea what it would look like from the other extremity, the viewpoint of a small bug. You could see what a chip looks like from a side view.

That was really interesting and we all learned a great deal. We even all learned to pronounce the words correctly. It was quite an enjoyable and educational activity.

As a former high school teacher and school administrator, and being on this legislative committee for the very first time as a new member of Parliament, I became more and more curious about science and technology. I asked that certain witnesses appear before us. I appreciated the committee accepting a witness from the National Research Council of Canada.

We did have a presentation from the in-house lawyer-scientist from the National Research Council. At the very least, he was most provocative. He certainly made the member for Lethbridge listen very attentively on quite a few occasions, as he did all of us.

He was obviously challenged because he was not flowing in the same vein as the government side. He did not have the chance to prepare at length. The NRC did not have a chance to verify thoroughly his presentation, so his presentation was really one of an in-house lawyer-scientist house who made a personal presentation with the authority of the NRC authorities. However, they did not have time, or did not want to take the time, to verify his presentation.

I find it deplorable that the president of the NRC wrote a letter to the committee chairman stating that this gentleman was not representing the NRC's official position. He was a witness called by Parliament to give his impressions. He was not someone we picked off the street. He was someone accorded permission to come and speak to us.

On the final day of the hearings I presented a request to have another witness come in. I had my assistant call every faculty of law in Canada to find out who would be willing to give an opinion on this presentation by the person from the NRC. We found two such persons. One was David Vaver, Professor of Law from the most reputable institution, Osgoode Law School. This is his particular domain.

He wrote to me at great length. I did present the letter to the committee chairman and I gave copies to all the members of the committee. I was astounded that my request to hear this gentleman, who is a national expert in constitutional law and in this field that we are discussing today, was turned down.

This is no reflection on the member for Lethbridge who was present at all times and made terrific contributions. The staff from the Consumer and Corporate Affairs ministry made a beautiful presentation. They were very erudite and explained at length everything that they were doing. I commend them for their work. I commend them for their presentation. I commend them for the proposed law. However, I was dismayed that when I proposed that this final witness come in, all of a sudden a whole group of Conservative members came in and sat down, some of whom could not even pronounce half of the words in the text, and decided that no more witnesses would appear. I was quite displeased with this.

Therefore, knowing that I have all the time I need to make a response to the member for Lethbridge, I would like to have inserted in the record that there was a report presented to the legislative committee on this bill by Mr. Alan T. Blackwell, the intellectual property advisor of the National Research Council of Canada. He is both a lawyer and a scientist.

I would like to submit to the House the letter in response—and I believe it would be called an opinion—from Professor David Vaver of the University of York, Osgoode Hall Law School.

The ministry did deal with the opinion from Professor David Vaver and made a response that was sent through the mail to different members. Of course, in my mind, it was oriented to the government's view. My experience in municipal politics is that whenever you bring in experts, whether engineers or contractors, or experts in public accounts, accounting or law, if you bring in two of them to make a presentation, you will have contradicting views. If you bring in five of them, you could possibly have five contradicting views. The trick is to choose the one that is going to be closest to your philosophy or to the response you would like to hear.

Perhaps that is the reason why the courts are overly busy. That is perhaps the reason we see so many wealthy lawyers today and law firms with as many as 400 or 500 members. That is in Canada. I understand that in the United States there are firms with thousands of members.

I can well understand and I can appreciate the work of judges, especially since I spent the whole evening and all night, with just a couple of hours of sleep, comparing the text of the NRC lawyer with the text of the opinion of the professor from Osgoode Law School and the response from the Ministry of Justice to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

I will attempt to give an of overview of what they said because I really think this should be on the books.

• (1310)

The creators should be protected. They need to be protected, and this party is going to support this law. These people are going to be protected for 10 years. Also, this law is going to be on the books for at least five years. At the end of five years the minister will be able to call for a review, which could take another year. That is six years. It could well be another 10 years before we see any revision of this law. I find that extremely unfortunate. I find it unfortunate that after dragging its feet for five years now, all of a sudden the government wants to pass this law within hours.

I am also aware that the American government has been supporting the Canadian creators, inventors and owners of these integrated circuits for six-month periods. It has been repeating that for two or three years. Our six-month period is coming up, possibly at the end of the year, and that could have been renewed again. So the urgency of it makes me wonder why we are so much in a hurry.

I would like to quote from the reports I have read and the material I have gathered together. I would like to quote Alan T. Blackwell, the gentleman from the NRC. He begins by raising a constitutional question. He says:

> Bill C-57 attempts to deal partly with the problem of ownership in s.7, but it exceeds Parliament's constitutional power. s.7(1) says:
>
> "A topography, whether registered or unregistered, is transferable, either as to the whole interest therein or to any undivided portion thereof."
>
> The first problem is logical: s.7 says that the topography is transferable, but what is important is that certain rights concerning a topography be transferable. The topography is just a design, and is obviously transferable.
>
> The second problem is conceptual: s.7 assumes the very doubtful underlying idea that some kind of ownership of the design exists in the first place. Saying something is transferable does not say what it is, and does not necessarily prove that it exists.
>
> The third problem is constitutional: even if there is some kind of ownership of a design, it is probably not within the power of the federal government to legislate with respect to that ownership. The federal government cannot create common law, nor new species of property. The federal government does not have power over property and civil rights in the provinces. It has power in the area of patents and copyright, but that is because those areas are enumerated in s.91 of the Constitution Act, 1867.
>
> Topographies are not part of the law of patents. They could be part of the law of copyright, but that is explicitly excluded by this Bill.
>
> s.7 might be constitutionally acceptable if it said that the rights granted by the Act are transferable. That is different from saying that topographies, including unregistered ones, are transferable.
>
> s.7 might also be constitutionally justified if the topographies affected were involved in interprovincial commerce. However, as written, s.7 would apply with equal force to commerce entirely within a province. It also applies to topographies not seeking the benefit of the Bill, and to topographies not in in any way involving the federal Crown. One could argue that in the normal course of events topographies move interprovincially, but basing legislation on such a shaky argument is unwise, especially when workable alternatives exist.

Professor Vaver from Osgoode Hall states:

Mr. Blackwell raises the fundamental question of Parliament's competence to enact Bill C–57. In his view, Bill C–57 cannot rest on Parliament's power over "patents of invention and discovery", and reliance on Parliament's power to regulate trade and commerce would be unduly constrictive.

He is referring there to pages 8 and 9 of Mr. Blackwell's brief. Professor Vaver goes on to state:

I agree with Mr. Blackwell that Parliament cannot say who owns the actual chip that includes a topography, any more than it can say that I don't own the book I buy from a bookstore. This is a question of provincial law. But, if Parliament can create a copyright in a topography, it can create in respect of topography rights that can exist with or without registration. It has done precisely that in the *Copyright Act*, including in 1988 for computer programs.

Although Mr. Blackwell draws some inapposite conclusions from cl. 33(1), I agree with him that the drafting of the subsection can be improved. I think the major difficulty stems from the fact that the definitions of "design" differ under the *Copyright Act* and under Bill C–57.

I do not like Mr. Blackwell's suggestion (Brief, p.9) to change clause 33(1) to read: "Copyright shall not subsist in any topography." That indeed would undermine the copyright foundation for Bill C–57! I prefer his wording at the bottom of the page, with the underlined addition:

"This Act does not apply to topographies capable of being registered under the Integrated Circuit Topography Act, and shall be deemed never to have applied to topographies that, had the Integrated Circuit Topography Act been in force when the topography was created, would have then been capable of being so registered."

This is a little wordy, I admit. It has the advantage of using language already in the *Copyright Act* (as Mr. Blackwell points out). Moreover, that language has already been definitively interpreted: *Bayliner Marine Corp. v. Doral Boats Ltd.* (1986) 9 C.I.P.R. 311 (Fed. C.A.), followed in *Interlego A.G. v. Tyco Industries Inc.* (1988)—My underlined addition resolves, as Mr. Blackwell's language does not, the status of pre–Bill C–57 topographies: they never gained protection under the *Copyright Act*.

Mr. Vaver continues:

Mr. Blackwell says a design is "nothing more than information" (Brief, p 3). This is strictly true. It flows from the definition of topography in cl. 2(1): "design, however expressed". This suggests that a design need not be expressed in some fixed form but can be conveyed orally, although I don't think the Bill would be interpreted to mean that "expressed" includes merely "expressed in the creator's mind". A court would probably interpret "however expressed" as meaning "however expressed in some material form". Perhaps the definition could be usefully amended by including these clarifying words.

• (1320)

Mr. Vaver's fourth point is:

Mr. Blackwell finds the issue of ownership of a topography confusing—So do I (although his reading is largely coloured by his, I believe wrong, views on the constitutional issue, which lead to his view that Bill C–57 does not create a "copyright" in topography but instead depends on the civil law relating to ownership of ideas). For example, rights are granted only in respect of a *registered topography* and yet the Bill grants "the creator" the right to register; but nowhere is the "creator" made the "owner" of the design. (Brief, p.7)

The important point is that whoever authors the design should be able to convey the right to register it, by assignment, licence or contract. This requires careful drafting because, under comparable provisions in the *Industrial Design Act*, only the author of a design or someone (such as an employer) for whom the author has made the design for good consideration can register an industrial design. A design right, or a right to register a design, cannot be assigned. Only the design, *once registered*, can be assigned or licensed: *Melnor Mfg. Ltd. Limited v Lido Industrial Products Ltd.* (1970)—This situation must be avoided in Bill C–57, and clarifying the concept of ownership will help.

My diagnosis of the problem and its solution, however, differs from Mr. Blackwell's. In my view, the difficulty arises because the Bill defines "creator" in a quite inapposite manner. It confuses the person who actually makes the design with the person who owns (or should own) it. The two concepts are fundamentally separate and it is their intermingling that is the source of the whole later confusion.

I notice that the drafters of the detailed comments to Bill C–57, "Summary and Highlights" dated February 8, 1990, seem to be similarly confused on p. 18 of that document when they claim to have borrowed "the legal fiction of deemed creatorship—from the Copyright Act". *The Copyright Act* has no such deemed fiction at all. By s. 14(1) of that Act, the "author" is the "first owner of copyright", and by s. 14(3), a person with whom an "author" is employed is "the first *owner* of the copyright". In all Canadian intellectual property legislation hitherto, a clear distinction is made between the individual who does the intellectual work and the person, which may be his/her corporate employer or (in the *Industrial Design Act*) a commissioning entity who *owns* the right in the copyright, patent or industrial design. The *Patent Act* does not deem the employer of an inventor itself to be an inventor; nor does the *Industrial Design Act* deem the employer of the designer to be an author.

I think the other intellectual property statutes manifest a correct policy on this point and that Bill C–57 does not. They give the "flesh–and–blood" maker of an intellectual product at least the psychological satisfaction of being recognized as an inventor or author. In this, they also accord with customary usage and social convention. Legal ownership in the patent, design, or copyright may be in the employer; but as for recognition as the intellectual maker, to mangle an old song, "they can't take that away from me". I think it is an abuse of language to say that, if the National Research Council contracts with someone to make a topography (as Mr. Blackwell envisages on pp. 1–2 of his brief)

the Council should be called the topography "creator", even though it just specified the end product in terms of result but left it to the contractor how to create that result.

The *Copyright Act* provides an appropriate model. The drafters of Bill C-57 claim to have, but have not, followed it. Had they followed the model, then:

—the author of a topography would be the person who created it;

—he or she would be the "creator" and first owner;

—if the author was employed or commissioned, the commissioner or employer would be first owner;

—the owner of the topography would be entitled to assign his, her or its rights in the design and a simple assignment could, by the Bill, be deemed to entitle the assignee to register the topography.

The difficulty Mr. Blackwell sees about the entitlement of a Canadian importer to register a newly created Korean topography—would then be cured by adding "or owner" to cl. 4(1)(c) after the opening words "the creator".

Something like the foregoing seems to be the U.S. model, and I cannot see why Canada would want to depart from it, in a way that is moreover contrary to Canada's own intellectual property traditions. Semiconductor companies may object to their not being called "creators", but I think that, in the context of intellectual property statutes, this is a usurpation of status. The onus should be on them to show why the fundamental basis of intellectual property law should be perverted in this way, and why the model provided by the U.S.—the "creator" of this sort of protection and the country whose nationals are likely to resort most to Bill C-57—should not be followed here. I see no difficulty that would be caused in the application to register, and I note that the Registrar is not entitled to question the information contained in an application anyway. (Bill, cl. 18(2)).

I therefore agree with the spirit of Mr. Blackwell's proposals on pages 11-13 of his brief, but not with their wordings insofar as they merely change the concept of a "creator" into a "registered creator". This is replacing one confusion with a new one.

Obviously the topic is a difficult one, and the legal aspects or the legal approach is difficult at best. It is extremely difficult to go through papers worded in legalese and to sit as a lay judge and decide who is right, who is wrong, and what exactly legislators should be doing for the Canadian companies.

[*Translation*]

We must protect Canadians. And as I was saying earlier, we have provincial laws and Canadian laws. Should our Canadian law be a mirror of what others countries do? Perhaps, if that does not contravene our laws and if that does not disturb us in our interpretations.

In conclusion, Madam Speaker, the Liberal Party supports the principle of this legislation. And today, with our vote, we will support the legislation as proposed. However, Madam Speaker, I wanted to insist on the rapidity with which the government seemed to push this legislation through the legislative committee without really listening to the Canadian experts on this matter.

I hope it is a good legislation. I hope that tomorrow, or five years down the road, we will not regret it. I hope that Canadian companies and creators, as well as owners of integrated circuits, will not have horror stories to tell and will not spend hundreds of thousands of dollars in court to defend their position on the interpretation of this legislation.

[*English*]

Mr. Cid Samson (Timmins—Chapleau): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to rise today to speak on Bill C-57.

First, I would like to commend the committee for its work, as it was properly described by my friend from Carleton—Gloucester. It is difficult when we are challenging witnesses and trying to arrive at a perfect answer. It is not always easy but I think in this case Bill C-57 has come out of the committee with unanimous support. Protection is long overdue for Canadian manufacturers and Canadian technology and Bill C-57 endeavours to do that. Rather than prolong the passing of this bill with a lengthy debate I would terminate at this point by simply saying that the NDP unanimously supports this bill for passage at this time.

• (1330)

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Debate? Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to, bill read the third time and passed.

INCOME TAX ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

The House resumed from Thursday, May 17, consideration of the motion of Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre) that Bill C-51, an Act to amend the Income Tax Act, be read the third time and passed.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: On division.

Motion agreed to, bill read the third time and passed.

Mr. Hawkes: Madam Speaker, the House is aware that there is no Private Members' Hour slated for today. It being 1.30 in the afternoon I think we might collectively call it three o'clock and members could get on with their weekend.

An hon. member: It is three o'clock in Newfoundland.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is there unanimous consent to call it three o'clock?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Madam Deputy Speaker: It being three o'clock p.m. the House stands adjourned until Tuesday, next, at 11 a.m., according to Standing Order 24(1).

The House adjourned at 1.37 p.m.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, May 22, 1990

The House met at 11 a.m.

Prayers

[*English*]

PRIVILEGE

CHANGE OF AFFILIATION—MEMBER FOR VERDUN—ST. PAUL

Mr. Gilbert Chartrand (Verdun—St. Paul): Mr. Speaker, this morning is a very momentous and trying occasion for me, worse than a divorce.

For the past several days, Quebeckers have been awaiting a response from the member for Verdun—St. Paul and I feel I must deal in an open, honest and forthright manner with my colleagues from the Conservative Party, with my colleagues in Opposition and, above all, with the House of Commons.

Therefore, I have asked to rise on a question of privilege to read a brief statement which will reveal to all my reasons for embarking on a new course.

For more than five years, I have had the honour of representing the riding of Verdun—St. Paul as a member of this government. It has been a pleasure and a true honour for me to serve my fellow citizens. It was also a great pleasure for me to work with the Prime Minister of Canada, the Right Hon. Brian Mulroney. However, my personal principles and convictions compel me to take a stronger stand and to differ with some of the major issues of the day, notably the Meech Lake Accord.

Henceforth, I intend to participate fully in the debate surrounding this Accord since Quebec's future is involved. I cannot remain silent on this important issue since I would be unable to face my children if they approached me in several years' time and said: "Father, you were there; you said nothing, you did nothing". It is not by muzzling the members of the governing party that we will find an adequate solution to the problem.

The recently tabled Charest report proposes, in my opinion, other amendments to the Meech Lake Accord. As a Quebecker, I find these amendments unacceptable and I continue to believe and to maintain that the original Accord must be observed and upheld.

Mr. Speaker, it is clear that Quebec constitutes a distinct society and this has been the case since the early days of confederation. Moreover, I still do not understand why this committee was set up. I contend that we must uphold the agreement as it was originally drafted by the First Ministers at Meech Lake.

• (1110)

Therefore, out of respect for the party that I represent here in the House, and because I disagree with its policy prohibiting members from commenting on the current situation, I consider it my moral obligation to resign from this government, and to continue fulfillment the mandate the voters of Verdun—Saint-Paul have given me. Therefore, as of today, I will sit as an independent member.

I would also like to point out, Mr. Speaker, that I still consider the Prime Minister to be a trustworthy, honest person since he has made every possible effort to ensure that the integral nature of the Meech Lake Accord is upheld.

I want to assure my constituents from Verdun—Saint-Paul that I will continue to represent them and to serve them to the best of my knowledge and ability. The 1,200 members of our local association know that I have always favoured the Quebec option.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak the words that have been playing at the back of my mind for months now: Mr. Lévesque, you were right after all. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to mention to the hon. members that we have heard a question of privilege which is entirely personal. Another statement would not be appropriate at this time. According to the Standing

Orders, there is perhaps another place and another time for such discussions. However, now is surely not the time.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*Translation*]

1990–91 SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES (A)

REFERRAL TO STANDING COMMITTEES

L'hon. Robert de Cotret (President of the Treasury Board): A message from His Excellency the Governor General transmitting Supplementary Estimates (A) of the sums required for the service of Canada for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1991, and in accordance with the provisions of section 54 of the Constitution Act, 1867, was presented by Hon. Robert de Cotret (President of the Treasury Board) and read by Mr. Speaker to the House.

Mr. de Cotret: Mr. Speaker, pursuant to the provisions of Standing Orders 81(5) and 81(6), I move:

That the Supplementary Estimates (A) for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1991, laid upon the Table earlier this day, be referred to the Several Standing Committees of the House as follows:

To the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs

Indian and Northern Affairs, Item 6a.

To the Standing Committee on Agriculture

Agriculture, Items 5a and 15a

To the Standing Committee on Labour, Employment and Immigration

Employment and Immigration, Items 10a and 16a

And that a message be sent to the Senate advising the hon. senators of these motions.

Mr. Speaker: The House has heard the motion of the Hon. President of the Treasury Board. Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: Does it please the House to adopt the said motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Motion is agreed to.

[*English*]

PETITIONS

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to 66 petitions.

[*Editor's Note: See today's Votes and Proceedings.*]

* * *

ANTI-SEMITISM

VANDALISM IN CEMETERIES

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, there have been discussions among the parties. Although I know it is irregular for a member of the Opposition to rise on motions and propose a motion, I think you would find unanimous consent for me to put this motion to the House. It deals with these rather sad events that have happened in Canada recently, in Montreal and Ottawa, dealing with Jewish cemeteries. I would like to put this motion, with the support of the government. I think the hon. House leader will support this. The House leader for the NDP, the hon. member for Kamloops, would like to second this motion, Mr. Speaker. I would like to put the motion once the consent has been given.

Mr. Speaker: The House has heard the proposition of the hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier. The hon. member for Kamloops.

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, I want to confirm that there have been consultations. This is a very important initiative and I would be honoured, on behalf of my party, to second the motion.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Marcel Danis (Verchères): Speaking on behalf of the government, Mr. Speaker, I would say that there has indeed been consultation and that we fully agree with the proposal made by the hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier.

[*English*]

Mr. Gauthier: Mr. Speaker, I move:

That this House condemn and deplore acts of racism and intolerance in Canadian society that have been manifested by vandalism in cemeteries and call on all Canadians to reject such destructive and violent incidents.

Mr. Speaker: The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is there agreement?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to.

* * *

PETITIONS

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, it is my honour to present a petition pursuant to Standing Order 36 which has been certified correct by the Clerk of Petitions from citizens of Kamloops, British Columbia. This now brings the total to nearly 20,000 people from that constituency who have signed petitions in opposition to the goods and services tax. They are asking the government to reconsider proceeding with this tax, to go back to the drawing board and to come back to the House of Commons with serious, meaningful and fair tax reform.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Douglas Young (Gloucester): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour of submitting a series of petitions signed by people from across the country—Quebec, Manitoba, Nova Scotia—requesting that the government, and especially Parliament, defeat the goods and services tax. More particularly, Mr. Speaker, these people are asking the government to recognize that the economic survival of the country demands that the GST be cancelled, and they ask the Senate to take all possible steps to obstruct this pernicious bill.

[*English*]

Ms. Dawn Black (New Westminster—Burnaby): Mr. Speaker, I also rise under Standing Order 36 to present petitions from small business operators in my constituency of New Westminster—Burnaby in British Columbia.

These small business people say that the goods and services tax forces small business operators to carry a disproportionate share of the tax burden in Canada. They call upon this government to reject the goods and services tax and, in future, to consult with business, labour and consumer groups in order to reach a broad consensus on how taxation should be handled in a fair and equitable manner for all its citizens.

• (1120)

[*Translation*]

TAX BENEFITS FOR NORTHERN AND ISOLATED AREAS

Mr. Guy Saint-Julien (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, I wish to submit, in accordance with Standing Order 36, two petitions from Chibougamau, in the electoral riding of Roberval, concerning the recommendations made by the Task Force on Tax Benefits for Northern and Isolated Areas. Those who signed the petitions reject the conclusions of the Task Force on Tax Benefits for Northern and Isolated Areas and request that Chibougamau be recognized as an isolated community under the existing tax benefit scheme.

[*English*]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Mr. David Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast): Mr. Speaker, under the same standing order, I have a petition signed by approximately 100 people from Edmonton with respect to Mr. Yi-Shih Leo, a Canadian citizen who is imprisoned in Taiwan. They have asked that the government make every effort to have this Canadian citizen released as quickly as possible.

* * *

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, I ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

Mr. Speaker: Shall all questions stand?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

MOTION TO ADJOURN UNDER S. O. 52

ANTI-SEMITISM

Mr. David Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast): Mr. Speaker, I rise under Standing Order 52 with respect to an emergency debate on the subject that was a few moments ago made the subject of a unanimous all-party agreement. I am referring to the recent desecration of Jewish cemeteries and to other acts that are completely

unknown, unacceptable and improper in Canadian society.

My motion was to ask for the House to have a debate, although this is a busy day, perhaps at eight or nine o'clock tonight. I am told that other members would be interested in engaging in such a debate tonight.

Under the terms of reference on such motions, Sir, the Government of Canada can do a number of things. It can use all federal resources, for example CSIS, the RCMP and External Affairs, to try to find out what seems to be at the root of this. We could set up a commission, for example, to find out whether the schools have curricula that are encouraging mutual respect.

I appreciate, Sir, that we have just passed a motion with all-party support, but I would like to put this motion on the record for your consideration.

SPEAKER'S RULING

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Edmonton Southeast has applied under the appropriate order for an emergency debate on a matter which I think creates a great deal of anguish for all members of the House and the vast majority of Canadians.

However, I think the hon. member has anticipated my ruling in this case. The hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier proposed a motion, with unanimous consent, which was seconded by the hon. member for Kamloops and supported by the government condemning these acts of desecration.

Under the circumstances, I do not think it would be appropriate to adjourn the other business of the House for a debate today. I thank the hon. member for his courtesy.

* * *

POINT OF ORDER

COMMENTS OF MEMBER FOR BEAVER RIVER

Miss Deborah Grey (Beaver River): Mr. Speaker, I am rising in response to a point of privilege raised by the member for Calgary West on Friday, May 18.

I would like to make several short points in order to respond to the hon. member for Calgary West. I do appreciate that the hon. member followed proper procedure on Friday by informing my office shortly after 9 a.m. before raising the question after 12 noon. Of course, last Thursday he raised a similar question and, although he did not give the Speaker the required one-hour notice and he had to be reminded by the Speaker to put the appropriate motion, I was willing to respond immediately to the experienced member's concern.

Although my state of mind, my *mens rea*, I believe is the legal term, did not intend to cast aspersions on the hon. member, I saw, on reflection, how my remarks could be incorrectly interpreted so I immediately rectified the situation.

Now, some seven weeks after that original comment in the House, the hon. member says there is a question of privilege.

On page 8430 of *Hansard* the hon. Transport minister, then Justice Minister and government House leader, said about me:

> I guess I have to say that a lot of hours go into this job from everybody. Being a member of Parliament means that you are on top of what is going on in this House while the House is open and sitting. If you cannot be there yourself then you have party people who keep you advised of what is happening and what your responsibilities are. If you do not want to go through your party official you can always ask the Table.

Mr. Speaker, that statement was made with regard to me and I think the hon. House leader's sage remarks are read and certainly understood.

I am the only member of my party in the House and my staff and I try to keep track of everything that goes on in the House. If the hon. member cannot rely on his party officials' competence or ability to keep him informed, then it is up to him, certainly, to read *Hansard* himself or have his staff review it for him. If the hon. member feels overworked perhaps he ought to lighten his workload so that he is able to keep up with what is going on in the House as well.

This brings me to citation 82 in Beauchesne's Fifth Edition at page 25 which reads:

> A question of privilege must be brought to the attention of the House at the first possible opportunity. Even a gap of a few days may invalidate the claim for precedence in the House.

I am sure, Mr. Speaker, that the awareness of a single member, many weeks after the original statement, does not meet the time requirement for a question of privilege in this House.

Also, I do note that there were several other members of the member's own party in the House at the time of my statement on April 5. Had they believed there to be a

question of privilege it would have surely been brought up immediately at the time.

The *Merriam Webster Dictionary* says of the words bribe, bribed or bribery: "to corrupt or influence (one in a position of trust) by favours or gifts, something offered or given in bribe". As a teacher by profession, Mr. Speaker, I tend to rely on dictionary definitions, unlike lawyers who use the Criminal Code.

As no member rose to raise a question of privilege before now, I believe the majority of members took my words and meaning at the dictionary value and did not take it that I meant any legal definition to my words. I was using my statement to reflect an aspect of Parliament perceived by Canadians and which, I believe, is in need of reform.

As this House knows, I was elected as a member of the Reform Party of Canada. The Reform Party believes in, stands for and speaks about constitutional reform and parliamentary reform. We believe in the message of reform and in fundamental reform to Parliament, this institution, to make the elected representatives more responsive to the wishes of their constituents, and we do not believe this institution functions perfectly.

I do not believe this is contempt of Parliament but rather a necessary expression of the views of many Canadians in a democracy and a fundamental, absolute privilege granted all members of Parliament to function effectively in a democratic society. I will not be stifled or intimidated into criticizing practices which I, and many other Canadians, view as morally reprehensible.

I must stand on the meaning which I intended to deliver which was that there are presently in the parliamentary system rules, practices, customs and laws which are designed to serve the political parties for which MPs are elected and the Monarch's Governor General's Privy Council rather than serving the constituents who elected them, unfortunately.

I meant to say that if promises of rewards are used to garner support from wavering MPs, such as favours or patronage appointments and positions, while not constitutionally or statutorily illegal, certainly looked upon badly by the public. I meant to draw attention that day to the need for parliamentary reform and the need to make this House a place where constituents' views are expressed, not just party views.

I am not in contempt of Parliament, Mr. Speaker, I am only a messenger of public contempt of practices of patronage that undermine trust in our democratic institutions. It is not time to condemn me as a messenger. It is time to set up a royal commission empowered to examine all parliamentary practices.

Mr. Speaker: I hesitate to interrupt the hon. member, but I have made reference to the proceedings on Friday. The complaint raised by the hon. member for Calgary West was that the hon. member had said in this Chamber: "We know that other members are being bribed to vote for the GST or risk losing precious lifetime pensions".

• (1130)

Those are the words complained of. The hon. member has very strong views concisely expressed about other aspects of this place and politics in the country. Those are the words complained of, and it is those words I have to look at ultimately to determine this question.

I would ask the hon. member to deal with that particular statement and confine her closing remarks to it because that is the statement which, as I understand it, is complained of.

Miss Grey: Mr. Speaker, when this was originally raised on Thursday afternoon, you will recall that you made a ruling on it immediately after seeing the particular editorial. You ruled that because I had stood up and retracted my comment you considered the case closed. I immediately put out a press release retracting that, and I assumed in all good faith that the whole thing was closed.

When I was out in my riding on Friday I discovered that it had apparently come up again. I just wanted to make sure that I was on the record here to say that I believed you when you said the issue was closed. For my part it is closed, and certainly I trust for the hon. member for Calgary West the issue is closed as well.

Mr. Jim Hawkes (Calgary West): Mr. Speaker, when I rose last Thursday it was on the basis of an editorial. I agree with the member that the issue at that point in terms of that editorial was closed. I subsequently discovered that the comments had been made in the House. The motivation that I had last Thursday was to rise

because of what the editorial said about my personal behaviour.

On reading *Hansard* of April 5 and the phrase "we know that other members are being bribed to vote for the GST or risk losing precious lifetime pensions" it is obvious, I think to anyone who is a student of the Criminal Code of Canada, Section 119, that an accusation of bribery is a very serious offence.

In terms of Section 41 of the Parliament of Canada Act, a member is prohibited from receiving any compensation whether "directly or indirectly, for services rendered or to be rendered" in relation to any "matter before the Senate or the House of Commons or a committee of either House". A member who contravenes this section is liable to a fine of $500 to $2,000 and for five years after conviction of that offence is "disqualified from being a member of the House of Commons and from holding any office in the Public Service of Canada".

I rise on the question of privilege on behalf of all members because there is an opportunity in this Chamber. All a member who feels that any member of this place has behaved inappropriately, has indeed been bribed and has succumbed to that bribe has to do is rise in his or her place and name the member and ask for the matter to be referred to the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections.

Otherwise, we are all tarred with the brush of unspecified members. If the member believes that any member of this Chamber has been bribed, he or she should simply rise and make the charge. I did that in relation to the behaviour of two of my colleagues voting twice in the Chamber some weeks ago.

An hon. member puts his own reputation on the line by naming members, but one cannot leave all members of this Chamber accused of being bribed and succumbing to the bribe. It is simply inappropriate. Mr. Speaker, if you find that there is a question of privilege, I would be happy to move the usual motion.

Mr. John Nunziata (York South—Weston): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Beaver River made it absolutely clear that when she spoke the words she was not suggesting that any member of Parliament was in breach of the Criminal Code of Canada.

As she indicated, whenever words are spoken, quite often lawyers in this place tend to rush immediately to the law library and pull out the Criminal Code of Canada. She indicated that she was using the word "bribe " or "bribery" in the dictionary sense, not in the Criminal Code sense, and she did retract.

For the member to keep persisting in suggesting that the member was referring to the Criminal Code of Canada is irresponsible in my view. Mr. Speaker, I think you have made it absolutely clear that there is not a point of privilege. For the hon. member to press the point simply indicates to Canadians that perhaps there is a lot more to what the hon. member for Beaver River had to say.

Canadians generally agree that a lot of arm twisting goes on in this place in order for government members to fall into line. Canadians from coast to coast read about the pressure tactics that were being used in order to ensure that government members were supporting the goods and services tax.

Mr. Speaker: I thank the hon. member for York South—Weston for his intervention. I am going to look carefully at the reference that has been referred to, and I will look carefully at what the hon. member for Beaver River said not only today but several days ago.

I note in passing that the comment complained about by the hon. member for Calgary West was made on April 5, which is quite a long time ago. As hon. members know, if a point is to be made it should be raised at the earliest opportunity. I have mentioned that in passing.

I also want to make it clear that in the words complained of "we know that other members are being bribed to vote for the GST or risk losing precious lifetime pensions", I think the House should know that the Speaker is fully aware that pensions are something that go with the amount of time spent in the House and are not related in any way, shape or form to the particular party of the member, unless the allegation was suggestive of a cabinet position.

However I will look carefully at what has been said and return to the House as soon as I can.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

CRIMINAL CODE

MEASURE TO AMEND

The House resumed from Friday, April 27, consideration of Bill C–43, an act respecting abortion, as reported (without amendment) from a legislative committee.

SPEAKER'S RULING

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Pursuant to Order made Thursday, May 10, 1990, the House will now consider seriatim the select report stage motions as listed on today's *Order Paper and Notice Paper* with each member in whose name it stands speaking for up to 10 minutes immediately after his or her motion is moved.

Following those proceedings, any member may speak once for up to 10 minutes and may refer to any of the motions that have been moved.

MEASURE TO AMEND

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The first motion is Motion No. 3. Ms. Black, seconded by Mr. Riis, moves:

That Bill C–43 be amended in Clause 1 by striking out line 8 at page 1 and substituting the following therefor:

"an abortion on a female person without her consent is guilty".

Ms. Dawn Black (New Westminster—Burnaby): Mr. Speaker, I do not want to move Motion No. 3. I originally submitted it along with Motion No. 9 and, without Motion No. 9, it really does not make any sense, so I would ask that it be stricken from the record. I will not be moving it.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I declare the motion withdrawn.

Motion No. 3 withdrawn

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell) moved:

Motion No. 4

That Bill C–43 be amended in Clause 1 by striking out line 10 at page 1 and substituting the following therefor:

"imprisonment for a term not exceeding twenty".

He said: Mr. Speaker, this is the beginning of a debate that will last for two days. It is not a partisan debate perhaps, but a debate involving members of Parliament of various stripes who are dealing with a very profound issue, an issue involving life itself.

That being said, I move this motion to change the sentencing provisions from two years to 20 years to reflect on the severity of the crime involved. What we are talking about here in this amendment is to amend the bill which right now has a term not exceeding two years—and I read from the bill—as the sentencing for contravening the new proposed Section 287 of the Criminal Code.

• (1140)

This bill is a bill to outlaw abortion. It has a number of exceptions included in it, but the stated purpose of the bill is the following, and I read from the first lines of Section 287: "Every person who induces an abortion on a female person is guilty of an indictable offence".

That being said, if we are talking about an individual is guilty of an indictable offence and then serves two years imprisonment for contravening that indictable offence, the message we are sending out is that this is a Criminal Code provision, but a Criminal Code provision which is not necessarily very serious.

Mr. Speaker, if you wonder why I make that charge, why I say that a two-year sentence is inappropriate for contravening the abortion law, I want to compare the sentence to other sentences applied in various situations. I will read from the Criminal Code of Canada and I will provide examples to the Chair of various other sentences and the punishment imposed in various cases.

Section 233(1) of the Criminal Code is entitled "Dangerous Operation of Motor Vehicles, Vessels, and Aircraft". That has a penalty of imprisonment for a term not exceeding five years. "Dangerous Operation Causing Bodily Harm", this has a penalty of a term not exceeding 10 years.

Often in the Criminal Code we see the expression used "punishable upon summary conviction". That means, according to my colleagues who are learned in the law, that the sentences could be as much as two years less a day; in other words, virtually the same thing as the government's proposed abortion bill.

I give an example of bills that have as a punishment a summary conviction. Section 234(1) of the Criminal Code: "Failure To Keep Watch On Person Towed". If someone is being towed behind a boat, the penalty for failing to watch that person is summary conviction; in other words, potentially two years less a day. The "Towing of Person After Dark" section reads:

> (2) Every one who operates a vessel while towing a person on any water skis, surf board, water sled or other object during the period from one hour after sunset to sunrise is guilty of an offence punishable on summary conviction.

Towing someone on water skis after dark has virtually the same penalty attached to it as contravening the abortion law, the taking of a human life.

The Law Reform Commission of Canada prepared a report entitled *Crimes Against the Foetus* some time ago. While I do not agree with everything in the report, I do support to a degree the comments made by Mr. Joseph Maingot, Q.C., former Law Clerk of Parliament, who said about laws generally the following:

> The law does not exist for the sole or primary purpose of punishing illicit acts. It exists, as an expression, in a broad sense, of the kind of people we are. It does not merely regulate our behaviour, it articulates and symbolizes our values and beliefs.

If that law symbolizes our values and beliefs, would it not also be true that the penalty attached to it would reflect the value we place on human life? When the penalty for committing an offence related to that law is two years, the same as towing someone on water skis by boat in the dark, then I submit we are not serious in adopting a law if we do not increase the penalty provisions that go along with it. For this law to have teeth, not only in terms of its enforcement but in terms of what it symbolizes, surely the sentencing should be 20 years, not two years. The penalty would then fit the crime of the destruction of a human life.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell) moves:

Motion No. 22

That Bill C-43 be amended in Clause 1 by striking out line 16 at page 2 and substituting the following:

"twenty years".

Mr. Speaker, I shall be very brief with regard to this amendment. As a matter of fact, this amendment is similar to the first one inasmuch as the penalty in the first motion is the same as in the second: obviously if contravening section 287 of the Criminal Code makes one liable to imprisonment for 20 years, it seems to me that the penalty for an infraction of the proposed section 288 of the Criminal Code should be the same.

Perhaps I should point out for your benefit, Mr. Speaker, and for that of all Canadians, that section 288 would punish everyone, and I quote the bill:

> — who unlawfully supplies or procures a drug or other noxious thing or an instrument or thing, knowing that it is intended to be used or employed to induce an abortion on a female person.

Section 288, Mr. Speaker, refers to what our ancestors called a pessary. Therefore, if it is wrong to induce an abortion in a mechanical manner, if you will, using a medical means in the case of section 287, and if such action is to make a person liable to a maximum sentence of 20 years, it seems to me that the same penalty should apply for providing a pessary or a drug to a woman in order to induce an abortion and therefore, obviously, to end the life of the unborn child.

This having been said, Mr. Speaker, I would ask you and all my colleagues in this House to support the two amendments I have just moved.

[*English*]

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell) moves:

Motion No. 5:

That Bill C-43 be amended in Clause 1 by striking out lines 11 and 12 at page 1 and substituting the following therefor:

"years, unless the abortion is induced by a medical practitioner".

He said: Mr. Speaker, I wish that the procedure were somewhat different this morning because I end up making my speeches one after the other and do not have the opportunity to hear comments from my colleagues. I invite those comments. I know we will have a full debate later but, nevertheless, debates in the House are always far more productive when a large number of members participate. That being said, I do not fault the process because it is better than what could have happened in a situation whereby we could have started for instance debating the first amendment and virtually spoken of

nothing else for two days. We could have eventually voted on amendments that had not been discussed in this House.

• (1150)

The process may not be perfect but it is better than the alternative could have been so I do not want to be critical of those who have proposed the form that we have before us.

Dealing with the amendment in question, regardless of what side of the abortion issue one is on, surely one would recognize that this is a serious issue. It is so serious that in those rare cases where I believe that an abortion should be available surely then it should not be performed by anyone else but a medical doctor.

This motion was seconded by my colleague the hon. member for Winnipeg North who we all know is a medical doctor and a professor of medicine. I think it is particularly symbolic that this professor of medicine, my colleague from Winnnipeg North, agrees with this particular motion.

I think other members should note as well that whether one agrees with me that human life begins at conception, or at some other time prior to birth, the taking of that life involves just that, the taking of human life. If there is a situation that warrants the taking of that life, which I submit is the very rare occassion when the life of the mother is at risk, and I submit that it should be very rare, then surely only a medical practitioner should perform the abortion and not, as the bill proposes, a medical practitioner or someone under the direction of a medical practitioner.

[*Translation*]

Abortion, Mr. Speaker, is such a serious matter that we would certainly not want anyone but a physician to carry out such a procedure.

I maintain that abortions should be nearly non-existent but, in those rare instances where an abortion is required, surely it should not be performed merely by someone under the direction of a physician but actually by the doctor himself, or herself, as the case may be.

Therefore, I trust that my colleagues, whatever their views on the issue of abortion, whether they agree with me generally or not, will in all conscience agree that abortion is such a serious matter that it should definitely not be performed by anyone but a physician.

[*English*]

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell) moved:

Motion No. 10

That Bill C-43 be amended in Clause 1 by striking out line 14 at page 1 and substituting the following therefor:

"were not induced, the life of the".

He said: Mr. Speaker, I suppose this is the amendment of all amendments. It is the one that transforms this bill into a pro-life bill. We are two members who proposed similar amendments and I would want to state that publicly because it does not show on the record. My colleague across the way, the hon. member for Bruce—Grey, moved exactly the same amendment. I understand mine was on the Order Paper first and it was selected.

I want to indicate to the House that in fact two members representing two political parties have proposed exactly the same amendment. By far, this is the most serious amendment. If all other amendments fail, this is the one on which we should concentrate. At the conclusion of this debate, if this amendment does not pass, I do not intend to vote for the bill at third reading.

However if the amendment does pass, then I would like to wholeheartedly support the legislation.

The issue of abortion is not a new one, certainly. It is not something that we have to wrestle with as a modern society because it has never been dealt with before. It is a debate that has gone on for several millenniums. It is every bit as serious today as it ever was. I know those who disagree with me will invoke so-called "choice", as they have the right. However, I want all colleagues to remember that the choice of one should not be done at the expense of the life of another.

I was reminiscing this weekend. I was reading up on issues involving choice, freedom and liberty, and I was reminded of the United States civil war wherein the Confederates of the south were fighting the north. Young men were giving their lives for liberty, or so they claim. The liberty that they were seeking to preserve was that liberty which enabled them to subjugate someone else's liberty.

Similarly, when we invoke choice, we should remember that what we are saying is that the choice that we are allowed to make, according to those who advocate that point of view, is the choice not to bear a child even if it

means the destruction of the unborn child. I cannot agree with that proposition.

As I indicated before in another speech in this House, I do not know where life begins. I think it begins at conception, but I am not sure. I do know that when a child is born there was a child at some point before birth; otherwise, a child would not have been born. It would have been something else. If a child is born, then a child was in the womb. When a pregnant woman loses her life in an automobile accident, we never hear the comment that a woman and her foetus died. It is always: "the woman and her unborn child." The point I am making is that this woman obviously wanted that child. When her life and that of her unborn child are lost, we consider it two lives lost. When someone does not want to bear a child the destruction of it is not seen as the destruction of human life.

The degree to which we want that life seems to make us, as a society, able to make a decision whether life exists or not. Life does not exist because we want it or do not want it to be a life. Life exists because it is there. If that life is there, it is there whether it is wanted or unwanted, or whether parents are wanting or unwanting. It is there regardless of that consideration.

I would submit, Mr. Speaker, that this is probably the most important amendment with which we will be dealing in this debate. Granted, it changes the bill radically, but more important, it gives an opportunity to speak positively on the value and dignity of human life.

• (1200)

Mr. Ross Belsher (Fraser Valley East) moved:

Motion No. 12

That Bill C-43 be amended in Clause 1 by striking out line 16 at page 1 and substituting the following therefor:

"seriously threatened."

He said: Mr. Speaker, as we come down to the final hours of debate on Bill C-43, and we will be debating various amendments today and tomorrow, I do not think it comes as any surprise to members on either side of the House as to where the member for Fraser Valley East stands on this issue. It is an issue that crosses all party lines. It is an issue that is a family matter, an issue that each of us in the House must take very, very seriously.

On December 17, 1986, I rose in the House to make a statement. At that time I said:

> —British Columbia still has the highest abortion rate in the country, 26 abortions for every 100 live births.

In other words, over 20 per cent of the children conceived in British Columbia are killed by abortion. That is a tragedy.

We are dealing with putting a law back on the books because the law that was on the books has been struck down. This morning I was looking through a book published by the Canadian Automobile Association in conjunction with *Reader's Digest*. It is entitled: *You and the Law*. It states in part:

> The law under which we live was molded by men who wanted a wide range of individual freedom. But they knew that there must be rules indicating where the freedom of the individual ends and the freedom of others begins. For everybody to be free to use the highway, there must be rules of the road that everybody obeys; without them, the highway becomes a graveyard. The same considerations apply with equal force in many other avenues of life. Seen in this light, law is an instrument of liberation. It is not a series of booby traps cunningly concealed. It is, in large measure, a guide through the maze of human relationships that surround us, many of them strange until we have explored them.
>
> You would not think of taking a journey through a strange country without a map and a guidebook. No one should expect to get through life without trouble unless he has some awareness of what the law permits and requires, and of the ways to conduct himself in the presence of the law.

What the House is endeavouring to do is to set the guidelines as to what we should have on the books with regard to abortion.

I have written to many of my constituents in terms of Bill C-43. In explaining it to them I have said that the bill attempts to address the void in the law that exists as a result of the 1988 Morgentaler decision of the Supreme Court of Canada which found the then law to be in conflict with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Since 1988, Canada has not had a law pertaining to abortion. This situation, I find, is intolerable. As a consequence, we have before us today Bill C-43.

In this bill the government is sending a message to our culture. It is saying to Canadian society, clearly and in no uncertain terms, that the taking of the life of an unborn is unacceptable.

This is an objective standard stipulated in the bill. It puts into place a benchmark, an established and acceptable norm. It lets Canadians, specifically the scientific and the the medical communities within Canada, know that this is the standard to which they must adhere.

To ensure that this bill addresses the issue in a realistic and workable manner the bill amends the Criminal Code. This ensures federal jurisdiction throughout all of Canada. The bill incorporates criminal sanctions in the case of violations of Criminal Code provisions.

Finally, the bill protects the life of the unborn from the moment of conception on.

What is often viewed as a major flaw in this bill is the health provision for exceptions to the Criminal Code provision. It is to this end that I am proposing the amendment that stands in my name, to achieve a stricter wording for the health provision.

Bill C-43 places the making of this medical decision in the hands of a woman and her physician. Without the doctor's recommendation an abortion cannot, by law, take place. Medical doctors are the only ones who can actually make the decision. They are the only ones capable of determining whether an exception to this law is valid and necessary.

A few weeks ago a publication was sent to all members of the House by the Citizens for Public Justice. The title of that publication was *A Plea for Life and Justice for All*. It was dated April 5.

On page 13, it asks the question: "What do doctors really think the abortion law should say?" The answer is taken from an August, 1989 survey done by the Canadian Physicians for Life which sponsored a survey of over 50,000 physicians in Canada. The survey group included all the 43,000 members of the CMA. The response rate of over 20 per cent, or 10,000, is quite large for a single mail-out survey to doctors, especially in the middle of the summer. The number of responses is over six times larger than that from the most recent 1982 CMA survey.

Some of the key responses were:

> 2/3 of physicians support some form of legal restraint on abortion.
>
> 2/3 of physicians find the broad definition of health as an indication for abortion unacceptable.
>
> 2/3 of physicians see the CMA policy as representing abortion on request, yet only a minority share this position on abortion.

We know that with the tremendous number of abortions—and I have cited what they are in British Columbia—we certainly do need something on our books with regard to abortion. It is not my proposal to deal with this in isolation from other members of the House.

When I was growing up, we heard medical reports concerning people who were in hospital. The major hospitals were not near my home. I lived in a very small community where there was no hospital. The reports would always state that "so and so was on the critical list", "so and so was deemed serious", or "so and so was doing well" and so on. You could get a sense of what was happening.

That is what I am trying to do here. I am trying to send a signal to the medical community for when it deals with the life or the health of a person being threatened and whether the word "seriously" is used in its terminology.

I also want to say that the next motion that will be before us is presented by the member for Kitchener. It states in part:

> —the medical practitioner has concluded that there is no other medically acceptable treatment to alleviate the health risk.

When it comes to the definition of health and the use of the words "physical, mental, and psychological", I am pleased that the amendment of the member for Markham—Whitchurch—Stouffille would delete the word "psychological". It states that the definition of "health" includes, for greater certainty, "physical and mental health".

I suggest to all members of the House when looking at these amendments these three be taken as a package. There are other amendments which each of us will have to consider seriously as to whether or not we should support them and whether the House can support them as a whole.

I would like to quote from another paragraph that was in the report of the Citizens for Public Justice. On page 14, it states:

> We live in a broken world. All of us suffer, in one way or another, from distortions and injustices due to our failure to do justice, show mercy and walk humbly with God. But all of us still have both the

opportunity and the responsibility to be of healing service in our wounded world.

CPJ seeks to do justice to the Supreme Court's conclusion that the right to life of the human foetus may be protected by Parliament. We want also to ensure that alternatives to abortion are available. Women have a right to full information about the alternatives available to them in dealing with pregnancy.

I cannot put it more succinctly than that.

• (1210)

Mr. John Reimer (Kitchener) moved:

Motion No. 13

That Bill C-43 be amended in Clause 1 by striking out line 16 at page 1 and substituting the following therefor:

"threatened and the medical practitioner has concluded that there is no other medically acceptable treatment to alleviate the health risk."

He said: Mr. Speaker, before beginning my comments with regard to this motion, I would like to commend the member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell on his comments in regard to the amendment that he put forward, Motion No. 10. I would like to say to him I strongly endorse and agree with his amendment. I will be supporting it when we come to it.

I would like to begin my remarks on my amendment by saying that my amendment should not be taken in isolation from two other amendments put forward by my colleagues the members for Fraser Valley East and Markham—Whitchurch—Stouffville.

The three amendments taken together would, first, add the word "seriously" before the word "threatened" on line 16 at page 1.

Second, my amendment would add the words: "and the medical practitioner has concluded that there is no other medically acceptable treatment to alleviate the health risk".

The third amendment would specifically exclude the word "psychological" and, thereby, socioeconomic considerations, from the definition of health on page 1.

Taken together, all three amendments would greatly strengthen Bill C-43. Their total impact would be to make this bill, which is now pro-life in form but pro-choice in substance, into a bill which would be pro-life in both form and substance. The bill, so amended, would then truly balance the right of the mother to the security of the person in Section 7 of the Charter and society's interest in the protection of all human life from conception.

The Supreme Court, in its Morgentaler decision of January, 1988, spoke specifically only to the rights of the mother and not to her unborn child. However, the court clearly invited Parliament to consider the rights of the unborn, as Chief Justice Dickson stated:

Like Beetz and Wilson, I agree that the protection of the foetal interests by Parliament is also a valid government objective. It follows that balancing these interests with the lives and health of women is a major factor and clearly an important government objective.

These three amendments taken together would achieve that objective. The word "seriously" states the obvious. No abortion should be done frivolously or for non-medical considerations. But we all know that many are.

Dr. Morgentaler simply requires the signing of a consent form. This form was filed with the legislative committee on Bill C-43. All it requires is that the patient understand the risks of the operation and that she clearly wants the abortion. Dr. Morgentaler does not ascertain whether that abortion is therapeutically required to save the life or because of severe physical or mental risk to the mother. One just asks, signs a form to show one wants it and understands it, and then gets the abortion.

Second, by specifically excluding the word "psychological" from the definition of health, we are eliminating between 82 per cent and 96 per cent of all abortions. The Canadian Medical Association, when it appeared before the legislative committee, said the following:

It is recognized that 85 per cent to 95 per cent of induced abortions are done for psychiatric reasons, but there are very few absolute psychiatric reasons that are a threat to life, such as severe depression with suicidal risk. Most of these psychiatric reasons are for psychological and social reasons, or humanitarian reasons.

Another group which appeared before the committee was the Canadian Physicians for Life. According to the Canadian Physicians for Life, 96 per cent of abortions are performed for non-medical reasons.

The Badgley report of 1977 indicated that 82 per cent of Canadian physicians surveyed for conditions under

which they would support a request for an abortion, could be accounted for by social and economic factors.

U.S. Planned Parenthood states that in 1988, in its experience, 96 per cent of abortions were performed for non-medical reasons.

The National Action Committee on the Status of Women, when it appeared before the legislative committee on Bill C-43 stated:

> Women have abortions for many reasons. Most of them are social and economic in origin.

Third, specifically to my amendment, I would like to say the following. The CMA, Physicians for Life and several other witnesses who appeared before the legislative committee told us that abortion is a medical act. In fact, according to Dr. Lamont of the CMA, abortion is a serious medical act which could even, although rarely, result in death.

From my experience as a hospital board member and the first chairman of the Kitchener-Waterloo Hospital's Risk Management and Quality Assurance Committee, I know that every operation in every hospital involves a tissue analysis or pathological review and is subject to audit procedures to ensure that the medical act performed achieved the minimal risk concerning infections and was truly medically necessary. Yet there is no tissue analysis committee for the aborted child. There is no pathological review. There is no audit as to whether the medical act of abortion was truly necessary. Abortion is a privileged operation done, in the vast majority of cases, for non-therapeutic, non-medical reasons.

Therefore, although my amendment, if proper medical evaluations and procedures were followed would not be necessary, is unfortunately absolutely essential to ensure that they are.

The amendment would require doctors, in forming their opinion as to the necessity for the abortion, to do what they do for every other medical act, that is, determine whether there is any other medically acceptable treatment to alleviate the health risk.

This bill, weak though it is, does not provide for the medical act of abortion for cosmetic surgical reasons. In my opinion it is fundamentally wrong and surely unacceptable medically to use medical intervention to solve or deal with what are essentially, although sometimes difficult, social problems. Nor should a doctor take out one's tonsils or appendix, or whatever, if there are other means to treat that health risk. Abortion should always and only be performed when there are no other medically acceptable means to treat or alleviate the health risk.

This is the practice in Salvation Army Hospitals, and no one could ever accuse the Salvation Army of a lack of compassion for those carrying an unwanted child. Their position statement given to the abortion committee contains in practice the essence of my amendment. It reads as follows:

> The Salvation Army supports efforts to protect and promote the welfare of the weak and defenceless, including the unborn. It takes seriously the rights and needs of both the foetus and the mother. Termination of a pregnancy may be justified in those rare instances where, in the judgment of competent medical and allied staff, the pregnancy poses a serious threat to the life of the mother or could result in serious physical injury to the mother.

Witnesses who supported and recommended the amendment I have put forward are Citizens for Public Justice, the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, to name just three.

The Canadian Council of Catholic Bishops in speaking to such an amendment stated:

> We are convinced that this amendment is critical to ensure that all therapeutic alternatives are explored and that abortion is not used to remedy other problems or the stress and anxiety that may ordinarily accompany unexpected or undesired pregnancy.

• (1220)

In seeking legal constitutional advice on the constitutionality of the three amendments taken together, I have found that although no one can foretell future decisions of the court with certainty, these three amendments should be constitutionally acceptable. In fact they might even enhance the constitutionality of Bill C-43 by providing greater clarity and certainty as to its definitions and intent.

Therefore, in conclusion, I urge members of this House to support each of these three amendments as well as Motion No. 10 put forward by the member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell) moved:

Motion No 14

That Bill C-43 be amended in clause 1 by striking out lines 18 to 20 at page 1.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, Motion Number 10, which was moved earlier, was intended to withdraw the element of health from criteria which would mean, in fact, that abortion would only be allowed when the life of the mother would likely be endangered.

Thus, since health would no longer be a criterion according to Motion no. 10, it goes without saying that Motion no. 14 would simply eliminate the definition of the word "health" included in the bill.

As we all know, the definition of "health" can be misused. My colleague, the member for Kitchener, was making precisely this type of comments earlier. According to him, the definition of "health" should be restricted. As far as I am concerned, it should simply be taken out, as long, of course, as there is agreement on the order relating to Motion no. 10.

To give you an idea of the definition, Mr. Speaker, according to the dictionary, the word "health" has various meanings, but in the bill it includes certain elements.

Let me read to you the definition of "health" given in the bill:

"santé" S'entend notamment de la santé physique, mentale et psychologique.

At least that is what the French version says. It is a bit equivocal. If you refer to the English text, it says:

[*English*]

"health" includes, for greater certainty, physical, mental and psychological health;

[*Translation*]

Therefore, the French text gives a very specific definition of health; but in the English text and, as we all know, both versions have force of law, of course and the word "health" includes the bill and lists everything and does not exclude anything.

[*English*]

"Health" can mean physical, mental and psychological, but does not exclude any other definition of health as well. It leads me to believe that health means absolutely anything you want it to mean.

[*Translation*]

According to the dictionary's definition—and I refer you to the one given by *Le petit Robert—Mr. Speaker, «santé» is defined as "a good psychological state, a good physiological state, the regular and harmonious functioning of the human body during a long period—"*

Presumably, anything that is not exactly similar to the "regular and harmonious functioning of the human body during a long period" could therefore justify putting an end to the pregnancy.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, if we can use just about any definition of the word "health", in other words, any reason to terminate a pregnancy, I do not think it is quite honest to introduce a bill such as this one. If, on the one hand, the bill's aim is to prohibit abortion but, on the other hand it contains loopholes large enough to allow abortions in just about any situation, then that is saying one thing and doing the opposite. The bill is therefore less than honest if we, collectively, adopt the bill as it is currently worded, especially if we do not amend the definition of the word "health", we would in fact be maintaining the status quo and it would be the same as having no law at all. Indeed, it is perhaps worse; if we have a law that pretends to do something concrete when in fact it does absolutely nothing of the sort, some might assume that we have a real law to protect the life of the unborn child. Of course, we would end up with the opposite, that is, we would have a law that does not protect the child's life at all. Therefore, if we want a real law, let's make one. If we do not want a law and, of course, this House may so decide, then surely we should not pretend that we do.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I most sincerely ask my colleagues to amend the section in the bill which deals with health. More specifically, I think we should do away totally with the definition of "health" as I said earlier and, in fact, we should strike the word "health" from the preceding section, so that abortions would only be allowed in situations where this procedure is necessary to save the pregnant woman's life.

[*English*]

Mr. Rey Pagtakhan (Winnipeg North) moved:

Motion No. 16

That Bill C-43 be amended in Clause 1 by striking out line 19 at page 1 and substituting the following therefor:

"considerations of physical and mental factors as they cause a serious threat to life and".

He said: Mr. Speaker, before I speak to my proposed amendment I would like to indicate to the hon. members for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Fraser Valley East and Kitchener that, in essence, the substance of my motion complements theirs. I will be supporting their proposed amendments.

One of the most serious problems evident in Bill C-43 is the vagueness with which "health" is defined. The Supreme Court of Canada in deciding the Morgentaler case indicated that health must be defined clearly.

If you do not define and require at least that the gravity of health must be considered, then it is really vague. Even before that, to include the word "psychological" would in fact allow for such vagueness to be legalized.

The former Minister of Justice stated that "psychological health" included behaviour, emotions and problems of adjustment to the environment. He further stated that the word "psychological" is broad enough to utilize the word "socioeconomic".

• (1230)

Under his interpretation of this bill, and as he stated when he was asked at committee, poverty itself may be a basis for abortion. That will not be acceptable.

Because the word psychological is broad and nebulous, it will give occasion for abuse and would permit abortion for any form of distress.

Moreover, without the amendment that I have proposed, physicians would not have the clear guidance that they ought to have from this piece of legislation. Some physicians may interpret it as allowing abortions if the woman is merely unhappy with or inconvenienced by an unwanted pregnancy.

The bill itself even advances the erroneous idea that abortion can aid a woman's psychological health, for which there is no evidence, medically speaking. As a consequence, there could be a serious adverse effect on the relationship between physician and patient. A woman who desires an abortion, for no medical reasons, could be led not to tell the whole truth about her ailment, about the conditions that truly affect her medically. When that happens, the relationship between patient and physician becomes threatened. How can a doctor issue a proper diagnosis when the medical history is not full and thorough? How can a physician make a diagnosis when the information that the physician is receiving is clouded?

With such a loose definition of health, the foetus, the unborn is not protected at all. In fact, we may ask the question, why Bill C-43? The reason we are proposing a bill against abortion is precisely because we would like to protect another life, or there is no basis for this medical procedure to be in the Criminal Code. To me, the only indication why this medical procedure ought to be in the Criminal Code, in contrast to other medical and surgical procedures, is because this is the only procedure for which, when done unnecessarily, the life of the unborn is truly compromised.

Therefore, if we allow this bill without the amendment that I have proposed, it will result in abortion on demand and the protection of the unborn would be an illusory situation.

Before 1940, almost all indications for abortion were truly medically therapeutic. By 1950, many so-called psychiatric reasons accounted for more than 50 per cent of all abortions. Currently, 90 per cent of all abortions are performed on the basis of so-called psychiatric disorders. But the degree with which these disorders are assessed, whether they truly threaten the life or the health of the mother, is certainly subject to question.

In summary, I have proposed the amendment that we consider physical and mental factors, and in a sense deleting the word "psychological", because that will be included in "mental", but with the understanding on the part of the medical profession that the degree of mental disturbance ought to be severe and that this severity of disturbance would seriously threaten the life and health of the patient.

That is the essence of my proposed amendment.

I wish to quote the first two principles from the 1990 edition of the Code of Ethics of the Canadian Medical Association. First, consider the well-being of the patient. As I have indicated, when a physician approaches a pregnant woman as a patient, that physician automatically has two patients, the woman herself and the unborn she is carrying. The second principle is, honour your profession and its traditions. It has been the tradition of medicine that the physician protects all his patients in

this instance, both the pregnant woman and the unborn child in her womb.

Mr. Francis G. LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso) moved:

Motion No. 17A

That Bill C-43 be amended in Clause 1 by striking out line 19 at page 1 and substituting the following therefor:

"physical and mental".

He said: Mr. Speaker, before addressing my own amendment to Bill C-43, I would like to compliment my friend and colleague, the member for Winnipeg North, for his diligent work on the legislative committee studying Bill C-43. As a medical doctor, he has added an important element to the committee's deliberations. I also want to compliment him on the eloquent and persuasive manner in which he spoke in support of his amendment, Motion No. 16. I want to say at the outset that I fully support his amendment even though its passage will make a vote on my own unnecessary.

I would also like to associate myself with the amendments proposed by my colleagues, the hon. member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, as well as the member for Kitchener, and the member for Fraser Valley East who spoke earlier.

Motion No. 17A, a motion which I have proposed, seeks to limit and strengthen the definition of "health" in Clause 2 of Bill C-43 by removing "psychological" as a relevant category of health that would make abortion legal under this legislation. I have proposed this restriction for three main reasons.

First, in my view, the inclusion of psychological health as a relevant consideration for procuring an abortion, in particular as the term has been used in the explanatory notes to the legislation, and in the words of the former Minister of Justice, virtually sanctions abortion on demand.

In fact, I submit that it would be worse than abortion on demand. If no reasonable medical grounds can be found to justify the procedure—which, if we are honest with ourselves, is the case in all but the rarest of circumstances—women would then have to describe the psychological trauma, real or imagined, that carrying the baby to term might produce.

In the naturally stressful situation of an unwanted pregnancy, for whatever reason, the law would provide no support for passing through the early anxieties to what may be a far different frame of mind, if the option to carry the pregnancy to term was chosen.

The law would allow the psychological consideration to justify an easy way out.

This is not to deny that real socioeconomic or health factors may be at the root of these concerns. The woman may be facing the prospect of single parenthood on a low income. She may be a teenager. The new arrival may provoke a confronting and bewildering adjustment to her lifestyle and to that of her family. These are real situations. They deserve the support and compassion of society. They call for programs and policies that get at the root of these situations, not for the panacea of abortion, of snuffing out the life of an unborn child.

A second reason for proposing this amendment relates to cases where foetuses are found to be physically deformed, underdeveloped, or mentally handicapped. Modern methods of ultrasound technology now make it possible to identify these cases at early stages of pregnancy. Naturally, a woman who faces the prospect of giving birth to a handicapped or deformed child would be anxious to have this cup pass her by.

Physically and mentally disadvantaged children, whether arising from birth or accident, impose new costs on society. Yet, in a deeper sense, they add an important richness to our society, to the humanity which we all share, as those who have worked with or been privileged to be associated with celebrated cases of persons suffering from these handicaps will only too readily testify. This richness is in peril if we permit, as the psychological reference in Bill C-43 would permit, abortions for so-called eugenic considerations.

• (1240)

A childhood friend, Mary MacLennan, who was born with no arms, with the support of her family and community has gone on to become a successful lawyer, said this before the committee on Bill C-43: "If this is the way that those who are making the laws are thinking and this is what is being used to influence people, then I think those with a disability, whether you are born with one or whether you acquire one when you walk out that

door and try to cross the street, I think you have to be very concerned about creating a mentality like that".

Finally, I reject the claim made in defence of the psychological provision that the Supreme Court decision in the Morgentaler case makes this a necessary part of any abortion legislation. The government's background notes to Bill C–43 state on page 6 that "based on the majority reasons for judgment in the Morgentaler case, permitting an abortion if the psychological health of the woman is threatened, is constitutionally required".

I believe that this statement is a serious misreading of the words of the Supreme Court decision.

The Chief Justice in the Morgentaler decision blames the delays caused by abortion committees and the lack of a definition of health for the psychological threat to a woman's security of person. He states: "The psychological injury caused by delay in obtaining abortions, much of which must be attributed to the procedures set out in Section 251, constitutes an additional infringement of the right of the security of the person".

Further, he adds: "There is increased psychological stress imposed upon women who are forced to wait for abortions, and that this stress is compounded by the uncertainty of whether or not a therapeutic abortion committee will actually grant approval".

Nowhere does the decision state that the absence of a psychological health consideration is a breach of security of person.

Bill C–43, amended by Motion No. 17A, sufficiently eliminates these delays. There are no procedural delays and there is a more precise definition of health. In fact, by providing a more precise definition of health, by saying up front what will and will not be accepted as grounds for abortions, and by grounding these conditions in an honest and rigorous application of medical science, abortion legislation is enhancing the security of the person, of the unborn child and of the expectant mother. It will foster a responsible attitude in both women and men toward their sexual behaviour.

The wishy-washy inclusion of psychological health in this loose clause of Bill C–43 plays to the weakness in us all. It invites us to invent reasons to use to extricate ourselves from difficulties which, had the easy options not been so readily available, we may have chosen to avoid.

For these reasons, the health definition is one of the most glaring weaknesses of this legislation which would need to be strengthened before Bill C–43 could enjoy my support. My motion is an attempt to do that.

Mr. Bill Attewell (Markham—Whitchurch—Stouffville) moved:

Motion No 17B

That Bill C–43 be amended in Clause 1 by striking out line 19 at page 1 and substituting the following therefor:

"physical and mental health, and does not include psychological".

He said: Mr. Speaker, as a pro–life person, I am disappointed in Bill C–43 as it now stands. It is not restrictive enough. Therefore, I wish to put forth an amendment which would delete the word "psychological" from the definition of health.

In its brief to the committee the Canadian Medical Association stated: "It is recognized that 85 per cent to 95 per cent of induced abortions are done for psychiatric reasons, but there are very few absolute psychiatric reasons that are a threat to life such as severe depression with suicidal risk. Most of these psychiatric reasons are for psychological and social reasons or humanitarian reasons".

I want to make the point that my amendment is part of a group of three pro–life amendments put forth by my colleagues from Fraser Valley East, British Columbia and Kitchener, Ontario. I would also like to associate myself with Motion No. 10 standing in the name of the hon. member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell.

The Right Hon. Prime Minister of Canada, when speaking in opposition to the capital punishment debate on June 22, 1987, made the following statement:

> All of us share in the tragedy and sorrow of the taking of a human life, whether criminally inspired or from anger or passion—It is wrong to take life, and I can think of no circumstance excepting self–defence to justify it.

The act of abortion is clearly the taking of a life. The abortion issue is the most important issue this thirty–fourth Parliament will deal with. While many people contend that Bill C–43 accommodates all views, it certainly does not satisfy my pro–life position. Virtually all pro–life people I have spoken with believe that the bill is weak and flawed. That is why this package of amendments is needed in order to protect the unborn

human foetus. Canada has been without abortion legislation now for over two years. I believe legislation is urgently required in order to protect the unborn.

In their brief the Citizens for Public Justice make this statement in the introduction: "The abortion issue probes the values of our nation. It is messy, complicated, and explosive. Most people wish it would just go away. But this issue cannot go away. What we decide to do with it will tell us something fundamental about who we are and what we value. Therefore, evading the abortion issue is as much a decision as any action we may take".

Then they go on to state: "Our national response to this challenge will show what kind of people we are, what kind of future we seek both for our children and our grandchildren, and for Canadian women who must make agonizing decisions".

My wife Sandy and I have shared two personal experiences in our lives which profoundly affect our views on abortion: that abortion only be performed when the mother's life is at risk or in certain circumstances involving rape or incest.

I believe the choice of adoption should be considered by any woman who is considering an abortion. Many couples would love the opportunity to raise a little boy or girl. Sandy and I decided to adopt a baby boy in 1968. We had a family of one son, Howard, and two daughters, Pamela and Leslie, at the time. We believed we could provide a new young son with a warm family life.

So in the summer of 1968 we adopted John Fraser Attewell who was 11 months old at the time. His natural mother had one other baby and was unable financially to raise another child. Fraser will be 22 years old this August. He is married and he and his wife Robin have a young son, William Cody Attewell.

Sandy and I have often thought that if an abortion had been easy to obtain 20 years ago, we may not have had Fraser as a son.

There are thousands of parents in Canada who hope and pray for the loving opportunity to adopt a son or daughter.

As members of Parliament, it is up to us to provide legislation which will protect the unborn. It is up to us to fight for their lives. Thank God we had doctors and nurses who fought for the life of our granddaughter, Heather Attewell.

A little over two years ago, our son Howard and his wife Linda were excitedly awaiting the birth of their first child. Unfortunately complications developed. Heather was born two months premature and weighed only two and one-half pounds. It was then discovered that Heather could not swallow because her oesophagus was not connected to her stomach. Heather spent the first six months of her life in Sick Children's Hospital under the loving care of many professionals. Heather is now two years old. Most of her food is still fed to her through a tube in her stomach, but she is learning to swallow. She is beginning to talk now and she has a baby brother, Derek Attewell.

Hundreds of people were praying for Heather's survival when she was first born. Our prayers were answered. Heather had many people praying and fighting for her life. The doctors and nurses and other assistants were splendid in their professional and caring treatment. We were fighting for Heather's life.

• (1250)

I do not know how many members here have held a two and one-half pound baby. I have, and you see how vulnerable and dependent they are. But let us think of an unborn child, how totally vulnerable and totally dependent they are on us. We as parliamentarians have a grave responsibility to fight for the lives of all unborn children. We can help do this by passing appropriate legislation.

In their brief Citizens for Public Justice recognizes the fact that abortion is the tragic result of a society which does not sufficiently support women, children and families. Therefore, while life protecting legislation is needed, such legislation is not enough. I quote from the brief: "Social policy needs to address many of the factors which lead women to seek abortions".

The brief continues: "CPJ calls upon the federal government to extend its co-operation with the provincial governments to implement an even more comprehensive social policy that addresses factors which lead women to seek abortions, such as prevention of unintended pregnancies, better access to counselling, provi-

sion of a full range of adoption options, housing initiatives, and so on. The above list is intended only to introduce areas of concern".

In closing, I sincerely hope and pray that the proposed pro-life amendments will be passed in order to strengthen more adequately Bill C-43 in order to protect the lives of the unborn.

Mr. Rey Pagtakhan (Winnipeg North) moved:

Motion No. 19

That Bill C-43 be amended in Clause 1 by striking out line 3 at page 2 and substituting the following therefor:

"medical profession, developed from a solid body of scientific knowledge."

He said: Mr. Speaker, again before I proceed to speak to this proposed amendment, I would like to add my voice of support for the amendments advanced by the member for Cape Breton Highlands—Canso who spoke so eloquently on his proposed amendment and the member for Markham—Whitchurch—Stouffville.

My proposed amendment in essence emphasizes the need to ensure that the medical opinion shall be based only on a solid body of scientific knowledge and not on a popular opinion obtained by survey polls. The medical standards ought not to be variable, not varying from province to province, not based on fad and fashion, but in fact based on scientific knowledge.

It is necessary to emphasize this point because when diagnosing a woman who is seeking an abortion, a physician may be more preoccupied with the transient, immediate distress of the woman and less with the long-term health of that particular woman. When a physician is guided by popular opinion and not by true scientific knowledge, a physician may do more harm than good to his or her patient.

When physicians allow themselves to be swayed by popular fashion in making critical medical judgments instead of adhering to scientific standards they may not provide the proper medical care. The bottom line is that the physician's decision must be guided by the science of good medicine. Otherwise he or she becomes less of a doctor, only providing a service for a fee, and that is not in the highest standard and tradition of the medical profession.

What some of those who advocate abortion on demand overlook, I submit, is that if pregnancy is to be cosidered as a disease, which it is not, then abortion certainly is not the therapy either, because we know that after the duration of nine months of pregnancy the whole condition will solve itself.

There are no controlled studies which indicate that abortion is a treatment for normal pregnancy, although the pregnancy may be associated with some emotional and psychological distress.

It is in the tradition of medicine that when a patient sees a physician, first the physician obtains a medical history from the patient, a thorough history of all information relevant to the chief complaint. In this given case, what we would like to be clear is that the physician will continue to adopt the strict science of medicine and ascertain why a woman is asking for an abortion. We know that there can be many reasons including: "I do not like this pregnancy because I cannot afford to support this child after birth", "I do not like this pregnancy because I will not be able to pursue my own professional career", "I do not like this pregnancy because I just do not like it".

The answer to these questions and concerns is not abortion. The answer is counselling, giving the woman true options on how we can help that pregnant woman truly asking for our help go about solving the reasons why she has asked for an abortion.

Next, following the receipt of all the medical information, the physician makes a diagnosis and thereafter considers whether a given treatment approach is indicated or not. It is never the case in medicine that the patient decides "give me this treatment" and the physician follows hook, line and sinker without first getting the medical history, without forming his diagnosis or diagnoses, and without in fact discussing with the patient the alternatives to treatment and management.

When a physician reaches the point of making the treatment plan for his or her patient, then he or she considers whether the treatment approach ought to be medical or surgical. In considering those treatment modalities, the physician also considers the options of treatment—the first, second and third option—and considers the side effects that may emanate from any treatment. This is what I feel this law must enshrine. When a physician forms his or her medical opinion, the physician must be guided and guided only by the science of medicine, by a body of scientific knowledge, and not by popularity, not by fashion, not by fad, and not by a vote during a convention.

In this instance I am really saddened that the Canadian Medical Association, of which I am a member, took a vote in one medical convention and then asked how many were in favour of this particular position, without basis whatsoever of scientific knowledge sustaining that. Yet the President of the Canadian Medical Association, before the legislative committee that examined this bill, admitted that medical opinion must be based on scientific knowledge.

Therefore, it is only proper that this House supports my proposed amendments so that we can clarify and enshrine good medical practice. In so doing we will truly ensure the value of this bill and protect the unborn for which this bill has been created.

Mr. Boudria: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Prior to moving to the next item and prior to the adjournment for lunch, I want to indicate to the House that I will not be moving Motion No. 20 standing in my name.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Motion No. 20 will be dropped.

Motion No. 20 withdrawn

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): It being one o'clock, I do now leave the chair until two o'clock this day.

The House took recess at 1 p.m.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S. O. 31

[*Translation*]

POSTHUMOUS TRIBUTE TO DR. ROMUALD PAQUET

Mr. Guy Saint-Julien (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of all who knew him, I wish to pay special tribute today to an outstanding man from Val-d'Or, Dr. Romuald Paquet, who died on May 11, 1990.

The messages of sympathy from his colleagues attest to Dr. Paquet's brilliant career, his contribution and his remarkable devotion to medicine. The staff of the operating room do not hesitate to say that Dr. Paquet's career will go down in the history of Val-d'Or's Saint-Sauveur Hospital and they add:

"It is part of the life of most of us. As a doctor, obstetrician, anesthetist and labour relations man, he knew all the affection we had for him. He was a kind man. His patients esteemed him because he cared about their security and well-being. Because of all the years we worked with him, because of all the happy or difficult times we shared, because of everything that makes a team, he will always be with us in a way. To him, we say thanks and farewell".

Mr. Speaker, I would like to offer his family my sincere condolences and my deepest sympathy.

* * *

[*English*]

ANTI-SEMITISM

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport): Mr. Speaker, the desecration of Jewish cemeteries in Canada and France is a horrible act reopening a chapter in the history of humanity which we thought, and hoped, had been closed once and for all. President Mitterand spoke for us all when he said last week "Respect for the living depends on respect for the dead".

The all-party motion passed by the House this morning expresses very well the sentiments of all Canadian parliamentarians. Having registered our collective indignation, our task now is to take this message to our respective communities and urge other elected officials to reinforce the climate of mutual tolerance, the respect and human bonds which make up this great country of ours, Canada.

* * *

SASKATCHEWAN ECONOMY

Mr. Ron Fisher (Saskatoon—Dundurn): Mr. Speaker, a recent article in the *Wall Street Journal* depicting Saskatchewan as a depressed province which votes socialist is a fine example of journalistic bias. It is true that Saskatchewan is a depressed area. The implication that this is because of a socialist government is totally unfounded.

For the last eight years the province has been governed by a Conservative government. When Grant Devine's government came to power the Treasury had a balance of $139 million and a per capita debt of $1,300. In

1990, after eight years of Tory mismanagement, the per capita debt is $13,000.

A have province under the NDP Allan Blakeney's government, Saskatchewan has become a have-not province with the fastest growing poverty rate in the country. Three hundred communities have had notable population loss since 1986. In 1989 Saskatchewan recorded the highest level of bankruptcies in its history. Since 1985 more than 60,000 people have left Saskatchewan.

Whatever *The Wall Street Journal* implies, the fact remains that Saskatchewan is a victim of continuing Conservative mismanagement.

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ANTI-SEMITISM

Mrs. Sheila Finestone (Mount Royal): Mr. Speaker, when I rose in this House on May 11 condemning the desecration of a Jewish cemetery in France, little did I expect that isolated incident to become a terrible pattern of racism and anti-Semitism through ghoulish acts recently in Ottawa and Quebec City. Further stories about the desecration of Catholic and other cemeteries across Canada have also come to light.

Something is changing in Canada when sick minds feel they must express their political or religious views by defacing tombstones, disturbing graves, violating consecrated ground. Imagine the heartache, horror, and fear being rekindled by these acts, especially among Holocaust survivors whose aim was preventing future generations from inheriting the past as their future.

People of all religions, at all levels of government, do not accept these sick, depraved acts of bigotry just as they reject similar acts of violence reflecting deep-seated, unfounded and unprovoked expressions of racism, anti-Semitism, or anti-feminism. Speaking out is essential.

While we must find the perpetrators of these crimes, the proper solutions must also be found to reinforce civility, acceptable community behaviour and our belief in tolerance, decency and mutual respect for basic human rights as the Canadian hallmark.

S. O. 31

CN BRIDGE TO CAPE BRETON

Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester): Mr. Speaker, in 1940 Canadian National made an agreement with the communities of Colchester County and Truro, Nova Scotia, to provide a highway bridge over the main rail line to Cape Breton in return for the communities giving up and closing off two streets.

For the last several years the residents of the area have seen the bridge disintegrate so much that the weight capacity has been reduced first from 10 tons to seven tons and now from seven tons to five tons. The fact is, the bridge should be condemned.

After years of stalling and delays CN finally agreed in writing on January 18, 1990, to build a new bridge with construction starting in the middle of May. It has not started. The residents of the area need this bridge replaced, with no more excuses, and they are demanding that CN keep with its original obligation made in 1940 and its written commitment made on January 18, 1990, to replace this bridge now.

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ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, Canada's environment is at risk due to uncertain political leadership. Today our environment slips on the cabinet agenda into a vacuum.

It has been my experience while Lucien Bouchard has been Minister of the Environment that an honest, decent, caring person was in office. His largest obstacle was the majority in cabinet who believe that Earth is flat.

On global warming, despite the consensus of the 1988 Toronto conference that a 20 per cent reduction in CO2 emissions is needed and is achievable, this received no cabinet support. Despite the DPA report that Canada could save $150 billion in energy over the next decade while reducing CO2 emissions by two-thirds, it was attacked by the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources.

The minister's own federal policy as of last week that Canada's emissions of CO2 will be no higher in the year 2000 than they are now even came under attack from his own parliamentary secretary.

What now will become of the Environmental Assessment and Review legislation? How watered down will it be? What of completing the national parks system this decade? What will be done? What of toughened legislation on marine pollution from pulp mills? Will they be weakened? What about eliminating CFCs or the review of James Bay, or the Oldman or the Rafferty–Alameda dams, or The Green Plan consultations?

Mr. Speaker, the creative loss of Minister Bouchard is substantial. He was adapting to the rigours and necessity of swimming against the tide of uninformed opinion. Environment lost an ally today.

[*Translation*]

TRIBUTE TO PIERRE ASSELIN AND NATHALIE VÉZINA

Mr. Marcel R. Tremblay (Québec–Est): Mr. Speaker, on May 14, two young students from my riding who were studying for a bachelor's degree in history and political science at York University in Toronto, left Canada to pursue a course of studies at the University of Hanoi.

This rather unusual destination was chosen following an intensive course in Vietnamese at the South east Asian Studies Summer Institute of the University of Hawaii, during the summer of 1989.

The person who taught the course at the time was so impressed by these young Canadians that he offered to be their tutor in Hanoi.

Pierre Asselin and Nathalie Vézina are the first Quebecers and, in fact, the first Canadians to study in Vietnam.

Mr. Speaker, I invite hon. members to join me in wishing them every success in this adventurous and also quite difficult undertaking.

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[*English*]

BILL C–21

Mr. Ken James (Sarnia—Lambton): Mr. Speaker, a Decima research study recently released by the Minister of Employment and Immigration reveals that 66 per cent of Canadians support this government's plan to shift resources from UI benefits to effective job training.

• (1410)

The labour force development strategy is an important and valuable initiative of our government to develop a well trained and diversified workforce that can readily adapt to the challenges of tomorrow. Canadians are aware that without such training programs, Canada will fall behind other competitors in terms of a skilled workforce. This is a realization based on both common sense and economic reality.

Given the evident public support for Bill C–21 and Canada's urgent need to up–grade and enhance training opportunities, it is imperative that the Liberal members of the Senate listen to the Canadian public and pass this bill. It is only at that time that this government can proceed with the implementation of the labour force development strategy which will benefit all Canadians.

* * *

ANTI–SEMITISM

Mr. Eugène Bellemare (Carleton—Gloucester): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are shocked and disturbed at the news of the desecration of Jewish cemeteries in Quebec and Ontario, the last being in the city of Gloucester. The knocking over of tombstones is cowardly. The painting of Nazi symbols and anti–Semitic slogans is a disgraceful and dastardly act.

[*Translation*]

Canadians from both official language communities in this country, of different cultures and religions, wish to declare their solidarity with their brothers and sisters in the Jewish community and express their indignation in respect to these racist acts.

[*English*]

I ask the Prime Minister to assure Canadians that he will take positive action to promote unity and create an environment of harmony, tolerance and peace throughout the country.

Canadians should reflect on these events and ensure that never again such racist actions will never again occur. Never again.

* * *

MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Hon. John Bosley (Don Valley West): Mr. Speaker, Canadians do not hear, each morning just before the

doors are opened, your prayer and that felicitous phrase "*pour fructifier nos deliberations*" and for Canada herself.

Never has that prayer been more apropos. My country has never been so threatened, and I do not know what to do. Where I can, I make speeches. I am shocked to find how many of our citizens either are not worried about what will happen if Meech fails or hope Quebec will leave.

My Canada is so special and so unique precisely because of its regional diversity. We cannot seriously want some Canadians to face an impossible choice.

Of course Quebec is a distinct society. Let us celebrate that and get on with the other constitutional changes we need to make government relevant in this country.

We are much more than the words on a document or the sum of our parts. Mr. Speaker, for what it is worth, I pray with you each day, whether I am here or somewhere else, *pour fructifier les deliberations de nos leaders* and for Canada. I hope we all will.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

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ANTI-SEMITISM

Mr. John Manley (Ottawa South): Mr. Speaker, I wish to express my feelings of outrage and deep dismay at the desecration of the Ottawa Jewish Community Cemetery in my constituency of Ottawa South last week.

The vandals who perpetrated this crime must be brought to justice under the law. They have brought violence to our community, causing many innocent families both grief and fear, and in the end every one of us has been victimized.

What is equally worrisome is the increase in incidents of hatred and intolerance against Jewish people worldwide. In this century, the world learned a terrible lesson about what can happen when hatred is permitted to overflow into the streets. We cannot indulge in passive acquiescence when this kind of directed racism occurs in our communities or elsewhere.

While we cannot make laws to change what is in people's minds and hearts, we can, as leaders and citizens, denounce in the strongest possible language such acts as those that occurred last week.

To the families that have been terrorized through the violation of the resting place of their loved ones, I wish to extend my deepest sympathy. I also affirm that I share their sense of having been violated and their determination to put an end to these senseless and hateful acts.

* * *

ICELANDIC STUDIES PROGRAM

Mr. David Bjornson (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, last Friday I had the honour and privilege of announcing a $300,000 grant in support of the chair of Icelandic language and literature at the University of Manitoba.

Financial support for the only Icelandic studies program in North America was approved by the hon. Minister of State for Multiculturalism and Citizenship.

This grant will go toward establishing a Canadian Icelandic studies program in conjunction with the university's existing chair in Icelandic language and literature.

The expansion of this chair demonstrates our commitment to make our cultural and linguistic diversity part of the academic life of this country.

I applaud the University of Manitoba for its efforts, and I congratulate my fellow Canadians of Icelandic heritage for their unselfish work in preserving our Icelandic language and culture.

* * *

THE MIDDLE EAST

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona): Mr. Speaker, recent events in the occupied territories, and in Israel itself, must make it obvious to all but a shrinking core of hard-liners that an Israeli government must soon come into existence that is prepared to talk peace now with the PLO to bring an end to a situation which breeds unending violence and death and which can only lead to the spiritual destruction of Israel and all the good things it has been, and can continue to be if the Palestinian question could be dealt with.

The policy established to deal with the intifada has failed. Closed universities and plastic bullets are not the answer.

Israel has to be willing to negotiate with the PLO, but other Arab countries have to do their share. Israel cannot be expected to negotiate with confidence in an atmosphere of hatred and an expanding arms race in the Middle East.

The Arab countries that got the Palestinians into the camps in the first place have a role to play. Unfortunately, they are not playing it. But like it or not, it is now Israeli troops in the West Bank and Gaza that are the oppressors, and oppression is antithetical to the genesis of Israel. The sooner we have an Israeli government which sees this and acts on it, the better off the whole world will be.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[*English*]

MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister.

In light of what is said in the letter of resignation of the Minister of the Environment, I want to ask the Prime Minister if he continues to agree that the report of the special committee on the companion resolution provides a basis for a fair and reasonable solution to the current constitutional impasse?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I think it provides the basis for what the members of the committee sought to give it, the basis for a reasonable discussion that might have the possibility of bringing the provinces to the constitutional table to see if the Meech Lake Accord might not then be fully accepted by all.

Senator Murray met with nine provincial premiers over the weekend. He will be meeting with Premier Bourassa this evening, after which he will make recommendations to me and to the government, which I will, no doubt, share at the earliest moment with all members of the House.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, as the Prime Minister just said, the Minister of State (Federal– Provincial Relations) has now met most of our provincial premiers to find out whether it is feasible to call a First ministers' conference. I want to ask the Prime Minister whether he could now inform the House of the results of the conversations Senator Murray has had so far and tell us whether all the conditions are there for calling this conference very shortly?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I believe the senator said publicly that he would make his recommendations following the meeting he will have with the Quebec premier this evening.

Considering the important reference the Leader of the Opposition made, I may point out that as Prime Minister of Canada, I negotiated the Meech Lake Accord because I absolutely wanted to bring Quebec back into the Canadian family. The Accord does that. I will never agree—I have said so on many occasions, and it has been said by other members on both sides of the House, especially by members from Quebec—I will never agree to let the terms of the Accord be diluted or its objective questioned. We want to ratify the Accord so that Quebec and Quebecers will truly feel they belong to Canada. We have never reneged on our support for the Accord, and we have no intention of repudiating our signature to the Accord. We have always found the Accord acceptable in its present, unamended form, and that position has not changed.

The Charest report proposes a basis for resumption of discussions by the governments to ensure that the Meech Lake Accord is ratified. The report provides the basis. It does not guarantee the results. I have always thought that all members of this House, by unanimously supporting the Charest committee, were telling the parties: We have now found a basis for negotiations. Go ahead and see if you can conclude an agreement, but not at the cost of weakening the Meech Lake Accord. Everyone has said Meech Lake must pass unchanged. That was my position, and I think it is the position of all members of this House.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

• (1420)

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, the constitutional situation is obviously very serious.

[*English*]

Would the Prime Minister not agree, therefore, that the time has come for him to be in direct contact with the provincial premiers to develop a basis for an early First Ministers' Conference which would bring about a satisfactory resolution of the current constitutional impasse?

In other words, certainly the work of Senator Murray is intended to be useful. But does the situation today not require the direct intervention of the Prime Minister on behalf of the House and the people of Canada in contact with the provincial premiers if we want to bring about an early resolution of the current constitutional impasse?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I have been in touch with all provincial premiers; some of them twice, some of them three and four times over the last number of days and throughout the weekend.

These various communications have been actively complemented by a personal visit from Senator Murray who has sought to ascertain the extent to which, pursuant to the committee recommendations, it might be possible for the partners to sit down and to reach an agreement which would resolve the constitutional impasse.

My hon. friend will remember that three years ago, when we signed the Meech Lake Accord, it was not a complicated proposition. All parties in the House agreed and twice voted in favour of a document that was a simple, dignified and straightforward welcome to Quebec back into the Canadian family. That is what we passed, that is what I signed, and that is what I want to have respected.

That having been said, in a three-year time frame, governments changed and the situations changed. What was a simple, straightforward invitation to Quebec to rejoin the family, found itself burdened down with add-ons and some such matters which we were ready to discuss, provided they did not vitiate, in any way, the fundamental provisions of the Meech Lake Accord. I think that was the general view of all members of the committee.

I continue to believe, notwithstanding the difficulties in which we find ourselves, that it is possible for reasonable Canadians to understand quickly and urgently, the magnificence of the country that we have come to enjoy and love and to make sure that constructive compromises come forward to make sure we keep this nation strong and prosperous forever.

[*Translation*]

Hon. André Ouellet (Papineau—Saint-Michel): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister, who I assume is aware that Mr. Bourassa's cabinet is to meet later today to discuss a common position.

Has the Prime Minister of Canada been in touch with Premier Bourassa to give him the assurance that all three federal political parties in this House are unanimous in their desire to find a solution to the constitutional impasse? And more specifically, will he recall that the members of the Charest committee unanimously reaffirmed their acceptance of Quebec's five demands?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the answer to my hon. friend is yes. I have been in touch fairly regularly with the Quebec premier, the last time being, I believe, yesterday evening. I have always stressed the point that was made and quite properly raised by my hon. friend from Papineau—Saint-Michel. I have told him that the purpose of Meech Lake is to make Quebec a full-fledged partner of our federation, an active partner who would participate fully in the evolution of Canadian federalism. And that is because the Accord will make it possible for Quebecers to feel they are truly part of Canada and want to build their future on that basis.

Yesterday, I noticed one particular comment by Premier Bourassa, which is important in the context mentioned by the hon. member. On the weekend he said, in referring to Canada: "We are one of the most privileged countries in the world. That is why the majority of Quebecers would like to stay and prosper in this country and work together with the country's other groups and other communities".

This statement by the Quebec premier reflects his respect, admiration and deep affection for a united Canada. That is why we negotiated Meech Lake, and that is why we will have to make the following message unanimous: Quebec said yes to Canada, and now it is time for Canada to say yes to Quebec.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Hon. André Ouellet (Papineau—Saint-Michel): Mr. Speaker, I wish to ask the Prime Minister a supplementary question. Does the Prime Minister realize that it is important for him at this time to play a considerable leadership role in explaining, and not just leave it to the chairman of the parliamentary committee, Mr. Charest, to explain the avenues which this committee explored? Is the Prime Minister himself ready to explain clearly that this report, which was accepted in good faith by opposition members, with the agreement of government members, only explores ways to solve the constitutional impasse and at no time did any of the members of this parliamentary committee want to require 23 concessions from Quebec, that the recommendations and suggestions contained in it are not to be taken as a whole but as a series of recommendations and suggestions to get Canada out of its constitutional impasse and that it is completely wrong to claim that they are 23 amendments, several of which change the essential conditions of the Meech Lake Accord? Is the Prime Minister prepared to defend the thesis that it is part of a compromise and that these suggestions would in no way lead Quebec to amend its five initial demands?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, my friend raises an important question. The answer, I think, is that the Charest report proposes a basis for resuming discussions among the governments to see if it is possible to ratify the Meech Lake Accord. I think that the New Democrats, Liberals and Conservatives all said that it was a sort of menu to get the first ministers to sit down at the table in order to see whether, among all these recommendations, a suitable way could be found to solve a most serious problem. I accept it as a noble and interesting statement of a common position taken by all the members of this House who participated actively in this very important parliamentary undertaking.

I can tell my friend that it is true that only the first ministers negotiated the Meech Lake Accord, and I represented the interests of the Canadian government there. I negotiated the provisions of the Meech Lake Accord on behalf of the Government of Canada. I had no "nationalist" adviser to help me in that. I did it because I sincerely believed that it was in the interest of national unity and would allow Quebec to find an honourable place in the Canadian Constitution. That is why all parties here in the House subsequently endorsed§ it on two occasions. Obviously, since I negotiated the Meech Lake Accord myself, there is no question of you or me participating, for any consideration whatever, in a scheme to dilute the scope of its provisions. There was never any question of doing that and it will never be done, because Quebec was isolated once and that is once too often!

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

• (1430)

[*English*]

Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the right hon. Prime Minister. I certainly agree with the Prime Minister's comments. I think he is saying that all of us in this House have a responsibility for the future of Canada and we take that responsibility seriously.

There is a serious situation in this country and I know that some people are despairing of the situation. But our role is to bring the country together. While we are all concerned about the events of the last few days, we cannot lose sight of the objective, which is to break the constitutional impasse.

I know that the Prime Minister has had Senator Murray speaking to the premiers of the provinces. Can the Prime Minister share with this House what the progress is to date and what specific plans this government has to ensure that we really can break the constitutional impasse?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I must tell you that I am advised that the progress has not been substantial. Unfortunately there are some people—and I say this uncritically—who fail to understand the objective of the Meech Lake Accord.

The Meech Lake Accord was brought about by an agreement in 1986 of the premiers gathered in Edmonton who said that we cannot go on with Quebec not being a willing part of the Constitution and therefore we call upon the federal government to begin negotiations to seek a formula which will allow Quebec to become part of the constitutional deal, willingly, after which we will move to a second round.

There began a process which resulted in Meech Lake. The objective of Meech Lake at the time was not that anyone was seeking to exclude anyone's considerations. The specifically stated objective was that Quebec be

brought back into the Canadian family first and that any other matters be dealt with in a second round.

That was a very clear-cut and I think a very noble purpose. We achieved that. That Meech Lake Accord was honourable and, as Jack Pickersgill said, on terms so reasonable they will never come again in our lifetime. That Meech Lake Accord was endorsed twice by the House of Commons.

There were subsequently some add-ons which, in the minds of many Quebecers, have diminished the value of the Accord, and have changed it from its fundamental, noble objective. That is why there is growing frustration in the province of Quebec. They were willing to come on side and to say that by signing the Meech Lake Accord we willingly bind ourselves to Canada, to make Canada whole again, one Canada; we are proud to be Canadians; we sign with enthusiasm the Meech Lake Accord because it binds the nation together.

That is what the Meech Lake Accord is all about. It is now being diverted from that original, very noble purpose. We have to get it back on track so that Canadians understand what it is about. It is about the future of Canada.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Prime Minister. Certainly no one denies what the purpose of the Meech Lake Accord was, and we certainly agree with that purpose. However, I would suggest that, owing to the lack of public consultation and public input, it has gone far beyond that, and this is why the Prime Minister called together a special committee to study a companion resolution.

[*Translation*]

The unanimous report tabled last week stressed again the importance of upholding Quebec's five principles.

In a few hours Senator Murray will have met with Canada's 10 provincial premiers.

Can the Prime Minister commit himself as early as tomorrow to share with the House and the whole country the contents of the propositions his minister made to all provincial Premiers?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, Senator Murray has been seeking common grounds following the recommendations of the Charest report. He wants to know whether it is possible to clear the air so that the provinces and the first ministers might begin negotiations likely to lead to an honourable solution for Canada while maintaining the integrity of the Meech Lake Accord, without any changes.

That is his mission as he is crisscrossing the country.

[*English*]

My hon. friend prefaced her question by referring to a lack of consultation. May I submit to her that perhaps that was not the reason. I do not think that anybody fully understood the implications of the new constitutional provisions in 1982 that provide a three-year period for constitutional amendments to be reviewed.

People knew, of course, that governments will change in a three-year period, but nobody in that room anticipated that subsequent governments would repudiate the signatures of their predecessors. Nobody anticipated that premiers would refuse to honour the signatures. I am not quarrelling with the process, I am just saying this was one of the new elements of the 1982 Constitution.

As I say, it was a very clear-cut undertaking by all Canadians which promoted joy across the country. I and many people thought that within a matter of months after the signing on June 3, 1987, all of the provinces would have ratified it and it would have passed the House of Commons.

The statement that French Canadians were making was that we want to be part of Canada. You have been asking us for 25 years what Quebec wants, we have just told you. We have acknowledged it, we have a document that is honourable for Canada. It is decent for our citizenship. It is a source of pride for us all. Let us sign it, let us pass it and let us get on with the job of building a better Canada.

That is what we thought would happen. Nobody anticipated that governments would change, signatures would be repudiated, and all of a sudden a very simple, straightforward document of unity would become a catch-all for everybody else's wish list as governments changed across the country.

That was not the intention of Meech Lake. That should not be the intention today. We should proceed with the objective of bringing Quebec solidly back into

Canada so we will have one powerful country and then go on with these other questions.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, there is certainly no one in this party, and I am sure no one in this House, who does not share the objective and the importance of having Quebec in the Constitution. However, whatever happened over the last three years, whatever misunderstandings or miscalculations there were, we have to deal with what is happening now.

• (1440)

We know that Senator Murray has been consulting with the premiers, that he will do so with Mr. Bourassa tonight and that he has shared some kind of text with them. Every day that that is left unclear, the anxiety over the future of this country increases.

Following Senator Murray's meeting with Premier Bourassa this evening, will the Prime Minister make a commitment to share with this House and with Canadians the exact state of the negotiations, including the contents of the wording? Can he make a commitment to share that with this House and Canadians tomorrow after the negotiations have concluded?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I will be happy to share with my hon. friend and the members of the House any information that is given to me by Senator Murray which I feel could be constructively imparted.

As well, I do have an obligation to consult with very strong and, if I may say, very loyal and courageous supporters of Meech Lake, from the Premier of Nova Scotia to the Premier of Ontario and the Premier of Alberta, people of all political persuasions who have done so much. I plan to keep all people informed including, of course, members of the House of Commons.

I would just observe, in terms of the realities, that what happened really was that a separatist government arrived in 1981 with a shopping list of requests for the federal government which were clearly unacceptable. Most people know that. A federalist government was elected in the province of Quebec in 1985 with a list of five requests, not one of which broke new ground, not one of which had not been heard of before or debated for years in Canada. I can remember these debates taking place at Laval University 30 years ago on each and every one of those topics. There is nothing new under the sun.

Mr. Bourassa, a Canadian federalist, came forward with a list of five specific requests. They were debated for almost a year and a half. They were negotiated and we had an arrangement. As I say, it had the advantage of responding directly to a challenge of Canadian unity. It was clear cut and it did not close the door to the other matters that were raised legitimately for a second round. It was clearly stated in the Meech Lake Accord that there will be a second round and that the first item on the second round will be Senate reform. It was devised with this in mind.

That was the statement by Quebecers and this should never be forgotten. I began hanging around the National Assembly in 1960 and I have watched every Premier of Quebec very, very carefully. On June 3, 1987 Premier Bourassa went to the Conference Centre and I want to tell you that it had been a long time since I had heard a premier of the province of Quebec say: "This is a statement of love in Canada. I am proud to be a Canadian. This is a great day for Canada".

That was three years ago and we still have not concluded the deal today. It is time for Canada to say yes to these reasonable conditions of the province of Quebec.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

* * *

[*Translation*]

TRANSPORT

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport. This morning, Quebec truckers are blocking roads around Montreal to react to the disastrous impact of deregulation and free trade deals arranged by this government.

Already half a dozen Ontario trucking firms have moved to the United States. A Manitoba survey indicates that only 12 of the 84 provincial trucking companies will still be in business in four or five years. Being responsible for this major crisis, what measures does the Minister of

Transport intend to take to protect this essential Canadian industry?

[*English*]

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I would not be so quick to blame this on free trade. My hon. friend might, but I would not.

I think he will find that the dispute is between the various provinces and states along the border. That is where the dispute is. In fact, I had already taken the initiative to ask for a meeting with the Canadian Trucking Association some two or three weeks ago. The meeting will be this week. I intend to explore avenues wherein we can try to assist the trucking business in its efforts.

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, the minister says this has nothing to do with free trade but, as the president of the Ontario Trucking Association has said, the level playing field is tilted 20 per cent toward the United States on taxes, on wage costs, on capital investment and on a whole series of measures that give them a substantial advantage, and this government is doing nothing to respond.

What will this government do to respond to the thousands of jobs that are being lost in the trucking industry and the movement of hundreds of trucking firms to the United States in order to protect a fundamental building-block in this country, our transportation system? This government has a responsibility. These are the government's policies. It must do something about it. When are we going to get the government's policy reaction?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, broad as the free trade agreement was, it did not contain anything about taxes and labour costs, and I think my hon. friend knows that.

We have a very solid transportation system in this country. From time to time there are adjustments that have to be made. I dismiss out of hand my hon. friend's suggestion that there are thousands and thousands of jobs being lost. That is simply not the case and he knows it.

Oral Questions

ANTI-SEMITISM

Mr. Derek Lee (Scarborough—Rouge River): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Solicitor General. Over the past several days there have been three distinct acts of desecration and vandalism to cemeteries of Canadians of the Jewish faith. Over the same period other similar acts of desecration have occurred in Europe. These acts are an affront to all Canadians and manifest an intolerance and a hate that is unacceptable in our society.

Will the Solicitor General tell the House what steps he will take to assist local law enforcement to respond to these shameful acts?

Hon. Gerry Weiner (Secretary of State of Canada and Minister of State (Multiculturalism and Citizenship)): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister and all members of this House have condemned this abhorrent and cowardly act. It regretfully reminds all of us that racism and intolerance are just beneath the surface of our society. It is an outrage that offends and wounds all of us and I call on all Canadians to combat racism and bigotry wherever it is found.

We have very actively been moving our program into the race relations and cross-cultural understanding area. We have been bringing forward hundreds of initiatives to build partnerships so that every aspect of Canadian society can fully respond to our diversity and, once and for all, provide all our citizens with the equal opportunity, access and understanding that our citizenship demands.

Mr. Derek Lee (Scarborough—Rouge River): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are seeking to know more about the ignorance that lies behind these acts. The RCMP and the Solicitor General have access to police intelligence data which may be of assistance, both in apprehending those who committed the acts of desecration and in exposing any common links that may exist between these crimes.

Will the Solicitor General undertake to ensure the co-ordination and delivery of relevant federal police intelligence information to the local police forces involved?

Hon. Pierre H. Cadieux (Solicitor General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, obviously the RCMP has communicated with the appropriate police authorities where these

events occurred. Of course, we will continue to monitor and give whatever help and assistance we can.

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PRESENCE IN GALLERY

Mr. Speaker: I wish to draw to members' attention the presence in the gallery of Sir David Wilson, Governor and Commander-in-Chief of Hong Kong.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: I also wish to draw to members' attention the presence in the gallery of His Excellency Mr. Ali Ahmed Al-Khader, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Yemen Arab Republic.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

• (1450)

Mr. Speaker: I also wish to draw to the attention of hon. members the presence in the gallery of the Hon. David Gilbert, Minister of Works, Transportation and Services of the province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

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TRADE

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister for International Trade. In January, Canadian officials were asked about free trade with Mexico and said: "Mexico's level of development is so different from that of their northern neighbours that it is not realistic".

Now the minister is quoted as telling reporters that he is considering joining the U.S.-Mexico trade talks. Is the minister in fact considering such a step? If that is the case, could he tell us just one single benefit that there would be to Canada from such a stupid, ridiculous act?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, the two countries involved, United States and Mexico, have not yet decided whether they are going to discuss this subject and the hon. gentleman has gone crazy that they even deign to discuss with one another whether they want to see if there should be a free trade arrangement.

Nor, Mr. Speaker, have we made any decision to join the non-existent talks, because you cannot join something that is non-existent.

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Mr. Speaker, with his usual skill the minister has avoided answering the question. The fact is that these talks are being very actively taken forward by the United States and Mexico. The question is not whether we support those talks, it is whether we become part of that three-way process.

In the face of the 45,000 manufacturing jobs that we lost just last month, is the minister prepared to put more jobs at risk in Canada by putting us into low wage competition with the people of Mexico without discussion in this country?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, if the United States and Mexico choose to have discussions on a freer trade arrangement between Mexico and the United States, Canada will have a direct interest in such discussions.

Since over 70 per cent of all Canadian exports go to the United States market and something in the order of 65 per cent of all Mexican exports go to the United States market, we will have to make a decision, if there are such discussions, as to whether we want to be involved with the discussions so that we will know exactly what is being discussed and what the possibilities are because obviously the results will be important to Canada. That is a decision that the government has not yet made.

I can tell the House, as our Prime Minister did when he heard of the possibility of these discussions, that we very much admire the way the Mexican government is tackling the problems of Mexico. It is opening up Mexico to competition and imports, improving its exports and has joined the GATT. It has taken these steps in recent years to assist the 85 million Mexicans.

Why anybody in this House should be so against Mexicans trying to improve their lot by joining the world trading system and by improving their trade and prospects with Canada and the United States is beyond us. We want free trade everywhere in the world. We believe that Mexico should be encouraged on the course it is now on.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Mr. Jesse Flis (Parkdale—High Park): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Secretary of State for External Affairs. We are now in the second year of Canada's two-year term on the Security Council, yet this government has failed to introduce any specific initiatives to further the peace process in the Middle East.

With the current two-day session of the Security Council, what direction has the minister given to the ambassador to the United Nations to help break the impasse in the peace negotiations and encourage movement toward an international peace conference to resolve this serious conflict?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I have encouraged our ambassador and representative to the United Nations in this case, as in others, to use every means available to us to explore whether there is a useful role the Security Council might play in dealing with circumstances that become every day more dangerous.

Those discussions are going on. If there is a useful initiative which the Security Council can take, the Government of Canada will encourage that it be taken.

Mr. Jesse Flis (Parkdale—High Park): Mr. Speaker, we all heard the reports of a dramatic increase in violence in the Middle East, particularly the occupied territories. What representations has the minister made on behalf of the Government of Canada to the Government of Israel on these recent events? Second, is the current situation in the Middle East on the agenda for the respective visits of the President of the Soviet Union and the Secretary General of the United Nations?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, at my instruction the Canadian Ambassador to Israel spoke today to Israeli government authorities to express Canada's shock and great concern at the increasing violence in the Middle East and to urge the Government of Israel to take appropriate steps to try to restrain the sources and incidents of that violence.

Mr. Prud'homme: Incidents?

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): Mr. Speaker, I am not sure who speaks for the Liberal Party on questions relating to the Middle East. I am answering a question that has been put to me by the spokesman. If there is to be some freelancing done by the hon. member, let him stand up in his place and do it. Let him not pose questions from his seat.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Perhaps the right hon. minister could conclude his answer.

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): Mr. Speaker, with regard to the second part of the question, yes, those matters will be discussed with Mr. Gorbachev and with the Secretary General of the United Nations during their respective visits to Canada.

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FISHERIES

Mr. Francis G. LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister for International Trade. East coast lobster fishermen are facing a disastrous season this year, in part because of the uncertainty caused by U.S. legislation restricting the importation of Canadian lobsters.

Last fall the minister promised an early resolution of this uncertainty through the free trade panel, yet this panel report, which was due on May 15, was delayed until today, and now we learn it has been delayed once again.

Can the minister tell this House why the report of the panel has been delayed for a second time?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, the purpose, of course, of these procedures under the free trade agreement is to try to reach a settlement of any disputes that might arise. The panel report has been delayed until Friday at the request of Mrs. Hills and myself because we want to give the industry in both countries a chance to consider some arrangement that they might both find acceptable and that might deal with the problem. That is why the panel report is delayed until this coming Friday.

The process itself has, however, been remarkably quick. Under the GATT it probably would have been another year before we had a result such as the panel report will give us at the end of the week.

Point of Order

Mr. Francis G. LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the same minister. On December 14, he told this House that he considered the U.S. lobster legislation to be a trade distorting measure and promised to pursue this vigorously through the free trade panel. He said he thought we had a very strong case. Yet earlier this month we learned that the preliminary report seemed to be accepting the premises of the U.S. law.

In light of his meeting with the U.S. trade representative, Carla Hills, can the minister assure this House that the report of the panel will confirm this view and lead to the withdrawal of this trade distorting legislation, or are the lobster fishermen on the east coast now about to be abandoned just like the fish plant workers on the west coast were abandoned last fall?

• (1500)

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, the rhetoric of the hon. gentleman's question is vastly exaggerated. Nobody has been abandoned.

Obviously this is something which could involve several different answers to the question, or the matter would not have gone to a panel for dispute resolution.

Were I the sole panellist there is no doubt what the decision would have been. However there were five panellists. The majority of them has reached a certain conclusion, as we will see next Friday and as the interim report indicated.

I can only say that no matter what conclusion the majority reached, we are hoping that the industries in both countries will agree on a settlement that they can both live with and which will be in the interests of both our countries as well as the lobster fishermen in both our countries. That is what we are trying to achieve.

Mr. Speaker: That concludes Question Period.

I will recognize the hon. member for Saint-Denis on a question of privilege and then the hon. member for Lac-Saint-Jean.

PRIVILEGE

THE MIDDLE EAST

Mr. Marcel Prud'homme (Saint-Denis): Mr. Speaker, the Right Hon. Secretary of State for External Affairs from time to time seems to forget that he is an ex-Prime Minister and my Secretary of State for External Affairs. He likes to play politics.

All I can say to him in response to his provocation is that I would be more than delighted to debate the question of the Middle East with him any time, at any hour, anywhere he wants.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Before I call on the hon. member for Lac-Saint-Jean, the hon. member for Skeena has a very quick point of order to correct the record.

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POINT OF ORDER

CORRECTION OF COMMENTS MADE IN QUESTION PERIOD

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

I erred in referring to the hon. member for Brandon—Souris earlier during Question Period. In fact I meant to refer to the hon. member for Calgary Southeast as can be confirmed by looking at page 11604 of *Hansard*.

* * *

[*Translation*]

PRIVILEGE

CHANGE OF PARTY AFFILIATION BY MEMBER FOR LAC-SAINT-JEAN

Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Lac-Saint-Jean): Mr. Speaker, I entered politics late in life, under trying circumstances, but with the best of intentions. Two reasons prompted me to go into the lion's den. The first is the attraction of the *beau risque*, the worthy risk of co-operating with Mr. Mulroney. The second, Mr. Mulroney himself. In Sept-Îles, on a warm day in August 1984, he made the solemn commitment to bring this country together. I knew as well that he had met this commitment by having all provincial premiers sign the 1987 Accord which would enable Quebec to endorse formally the 1982 patriation.

The objective was clear: join the government team to help the Prime Minister obtain the ratification on which the implementation of the Accord was dependent.

It was with some hesitancy that I finally accepted the accord. Indeed, as early as 1982, I thought that some day English Canada would pay dearly to repair the breach of faith of 1982 and the historical harm done to its own reputation. When I first read the accord I had the impression that Quebec had made light of the fact that it had been humiliated and that it was justifiably indignant. Still, convinced that nothing better could be achieved, I finally concluded that we had to pull ourselves out of the ghetto and prostration where Pierre Trudeau's arrogant deception had confined us. I said to myself that we had to take that opportunity to turn the page on the bitterness of the recent past and, with Brian Mulroney, begin to write a glorious chapter highlighted by acts of faith, tolerant gestures and open dialogues.

Mr. Speaker, there are those who would say that these were mere words and that words do not mean much in politics. But it so happens that I come from a family, a background and a region where words are heart-felt. It is not mere chance if, for instance, the Prime Minister so often uses the word generosity. It is because, basically, he is a generous man.

I also thought that, if anything, the signature of the provincial premiers was sacred. Therefore, I had no reason to suspect that the Meech Lake Accord, bearing the signatures of the Premiers of New Brunswick, Manitoba and Newfoundland, would be dishonoured. There is something deeply shocking in the idea that the very people who chose not to honour the signatures of their predecessors are now trying to make Quebec bear the onus of their own guilt. The sharpest of the three, Mr. McKenna, even reminds me of the wolf that calls out for help to protect the sheepfold it has just ransacked.

Mr. Robichaud: Now, now, he is not here to defend himself.

Mr. Bouchard (Lac-Saint-Jean): All these gentlemen know full well that the negotiations did take place, that the compromises have been made and that Quebec came out of it bloodless after setting the extreme limit of its concessions precisely where proudness loses its meaning.

This is why any request for more concessions is an insult to its sense of honour. The report of the parliamentary committee advocates belittling the distinctiveness of Quebec's society by enshrining, in the same provision, the equality of New Brunswick's English- and French-speaking communities. I also have in mind the still greater dilution of the Accord as a result of the suggestion that the Charter of Rights and Freedoms be jointly applied. And I am concerned about the recommendation aimed at eliminating the unanimity rule to implement Senate reform, and about all the dangers which the ambiguous formula of a "regional approval" mechanism entails for Quebec's veto.

Above all, I consider as altogether unacceptable the recommendation to give Parliament and the federal government the role of promoting and not just preserving the linguistic duality, as stated in the Meech Lake Accord.

That is why I must speak out about the government's strategy to make this report the basis for discussions to call a First Ministers' Conference. I do not doubt Mr. Mulroney's intentions but by conferring this status on the report, the government is, in fact, forming an alliance with the very parties that would impose humiliating terms on Quebec. This report accredits practically every attempt by enemies of Meech Lake to dilute the Accord and deal a fatal blow to Quebec. The report should never have existed. I disapprove of it utterly, and I see no alternative but to leave this government—be it with feelings of pain and anguish—as well as the Conservative caucus, to sit as an independent member.

I implore the Premier of Quebec to avoid falling into the trap that has now been set. I ask him here and now to spare Quebecers one more insult, one more blow to their pride, one more ostracism. I can honestly say that for two years I have constantly supported Mr. Bourassa in his efforts to protect the integrity of the Accord. Today, I say to him that if he refuses to attend a conference where this committee's report will be on the agenda, he will have not only my support but that of all Quebecers, from Montmagny to Rouyn, from Quebec City to Montreal, from Roberval to Baie-Comeau.

I urge Mr. Bourassa to accept as a framework for discussion only the resolution that was passed by the National Assembly in a great move towards unity, a prelude to the new surge of energy that will put Quebec in charge of its own destiny. Let clever politicians, those arsonists disguised as firemen, those sorcerer's appren-

tices, come and tell us here in Ottawa, before the people, before past, present and future generations, whether or not they repudiate signatures that were freely given, at that time of grace in the national life of this country, at sunrise on June 3, 1987.

Mr. Speaker, enough of this hypocrisy! Let the real culprits take off their masks, or if they cannot stand the light of day or fear the judgment that history will pass on them, let them be inspired by Macdonald and Cartier and look to the future, our children's future, and then reach out to the fraternal hand Quebec still offers, perhaps for the last time.

• (1510)

Mr. Speaker, with your leave, in concluding I would like to say to all my colleagues, to the Conservative ministers and members, that it was an honour to serve with them. Ties of solidarity and friendship were forged. I told the Prime Minister in my letter and at our meeting yesterday how much I appreciated him. I wish them all good luck and assure them of my support for the policies I had the privilege of developing with them.

Mr. Speaker: Of course, I well understand that some hon. members would like to speak on the statement made by our hon. colleague, but the Standing Orders do not provide for it. Therefore, we shall resume debate on the order of the day.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

CRIMINAL CODE

MEASURE TO AMEND

The House resumed consideration of Bill C-43, an act respecting abortion, as reported (without amendment) from a legislative committee.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): We will now move to Motion No. 24.

Ms. Dawn Black (New Westminster—Burnaby): moved:

Motion No. 24

That Bill C-43 be amended in Clause 1 by striking out lines 5 to 24 at page 1 and lines 1 to 16 at page 2 and substituting the following therefor:

"code are repealed."

She said: Mr. Speaker, my amendment would turn Bill C-43 into a simple housekeeping bill rather than an act to recriminalize abortion.

Criminalization of abortion is wrong. It does not prevent unwanted pregnancies, which is why women and girls seek abortion. It does not ensure access to abortion services.

This bill is somewhat like making food illegal and then saying that the government will ensure that everyone has access to a grocery store. It makes no sense.

It does not stop legal cases or strike down provincial abortion laws. It seems to create another legal tool to base legal cases on. Provincial laws will not just disappear as a result of this bill, as some would have us believe. As both the Minister of Justice and the Minister of National Health and Welfare are so fond of saying, health is under provincial jurisdiction. The provinces can enact laws regulating medical services at any time they want. These constitutional powers are in no way affected by the presence or absence of a federal criminal law, as constitutional lawyers across this country have told us.

Criminalization does not fill a regulatory vacuum. The Canadian Medical Association and provincial colleges of physicians and surgeons already have guidelines concerning abortion. It is illegal to practise medicine in Canada without a licence.

We have been without a law now since 1988. For more than two years there has been no criminal law on abortion. Criminalization will not make this issue go away. We know that. We have listened to the people on both sides of this issue. It is not an issue in society that is simply going to disappear quietly because there is new criminal law passed.

There will be court challenges. There will be court challenges within a year if this measure passes. All it takes is someone like Barbara Dodd who changed her mind. She could lay an information saying that she knew, and that her doctor knew, that she was not coming in and asking for an abortion because of health reasons.

Some pro-choice Tories in this House have turned a blind eye to the ramifications of this bill. They think that hardly anyone is going to be charged, or they have said that it is unlikely that people will be charged, doctors or women.

We do not have criminal laws so that no one will be charged. A criminal law is a serious matter in this country. Henry Morgentaler spent time in jail for breaking the last abortion law. We have heard already from doctors who say that they will openly disobey this law because it is an insulting and a hypocritical law. They say that they will perform abortions because the woman wants one for her own reasons, not for reasons acceptable only to the state.

It is surprising to me to see pro-choice Tories turn a blind eye and to support state control of women's bodies and women's private decisions. The Tories are the ones that go on *ad nauseam* in this House about privacy, about deregulation, and about as little government control as possible. Yet this is the very same government that wants to dictate to women on their reproductive health.

This bill is wrong. Why do members on the other side feel that they must compromise their values and their principles on this bill?

This is supposed to be, we are told, a free vote. Members did not seem to compromise when it came to the issue of capital punishment.

There is no reason for this bill. The country has operated fine for the last two years without a criminal law on abortion.

The amendment I propose will wipe out the bill leaving only one sentence stating: "Section 287 and 288 of the Criminal Code are repealed". This will have the effect of getting rid of the sections of the Criminal Code that were invalidated by the 1988 criminal court decision in Morgentaler, formerly sections 251 and 252.

If my amendment passes, that will be the whole bill. There will be no recriminalization of abortion.

Anyone in this House who calls themself pro-choice must vote for this amendment. This is the only pro-choice amendment proposed to this House. It does not escape notice that all the amendments proposed this morning were proposed by men, and that all of those amendments would make the legislation even more regressive, even more restrictive to women, than the present bill.

The Liberals and the Tories have proposed only amendments that would make this bill far more restrictive. I know these amendments have come from a minority of Liberals and a minority of Tories.

Thus I appeal to the pro-choice Conservatives and to the pro-choice Liberals in this House to vote for this amendment. Do not let those severe anti-choice amendments stand as your parties' position on reproductive choice.

The amendment I propose is for all pro-choice members in the House of Commons. It is for people in this House who value the integrity of Canadian women and who respect the decisions of Canadian women.

I appeal to all members to put aside whatever party pressures there may be, and vote for this amendment, Motion No. 24. There is a chance for pro-choice members to speak out and show all Canadians that they do have integrity, that they do care about women, that they will vote for their conscience.

I would like to see the Minister of Justice, the Minister responsible for the Status of Women and the Minister of Employment and Immigration vote for this amendment. It is the only pro-choice position. Just because they are being coerced by the Prime Minister and by their paramount commitment to their own political careers to vote against their consciences on the bill, does not mean that they should vote against the amendment.

This is a way out. If this amendment passes, the House will have spoken. The House will have voted against the ineffective approach to the abortion issue for an effective and a compassionate approach.

In this situation criminal legislation is not the answer. Social policy is the answer. Family planning education, research into safe and effective contraception, support for pregnant women and their families are the truly effective approaches to this question.

It is too late now to change peoples' minds about their own philosophical position. It is going to be impossible for me to convince the member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell to vote for my amendment.

I appeal to all of you who share my philosophical point of view, who do care about women, who do believe in reproductive freedom, to vote, for the only pro-choice amendment before the House of Commons and cast your ballot for choice. Cast your ballot for the integrity of Canadian women.

• (1520)

Hon. Kim Campbell (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I will address some of the points that have been made by the last speaker in the third reading debate.

I rise today in response to the motions put forward for debate at the report stage of Bill C-43, an act respecting abortion.

[*Translation*]

You already know, Mr. Speaker, that the provisions contained in Bill C-43 are the result of a very long process, of a careful examination of the question, of many consultations and months of study and deliberation to answer this difficult question in the most just and moderate way.

[*English*]

This bill has been carefully drafted to achieve a delicate balance between the conflicting views on the abortion issue.

It complies with the ruling of the Supreme Court of Canada in the Morgentaler case with respect to a woman's constitutional right to security of the person guaranteed in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and to reflect the societal interest in the protection of the foetus.

Clearly, abortion is one of the most divisive issues facing Canadians today.

I am strongly of the opinion that Bill C-43 reflects a balance of the views of the Canadian people in a way that will be acceptable to the majority of Canadians.

It is our role as parliamentarians to bring forward legislation that reasonably reflects the various views and interests of Canadian society in a manner acceptable to that majority of Canadians, and that respects constitutional guarantees.

It is not our role as parliamentarians simply to continue to articulate a particular side of the debate. We must act in the interests of all Canadians.

[*Translation*]

The highest court in the land recognized this responsibility by stating in the Morgentaler affair that its role was to examine the laws to determine whether the legislative balance of particular interests complies with constitutional guarantees but that it is first and foremost Parliament's task to achieve this balance.

Mr. Speaker, we have taken time and effort to reach an acceptable solution on abortion, in the best interest of Canadians, while respecting and reflecting the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

For many people, it was necessary to seek an accommodation and to recognize that in order to find a basis of agreement on this difficult question, and I emphasize, a basis of agreement that respects differing opinions and constitutional guarantees, we must set aside our personal opinions and act in the interest of Canadians whom we represent.

[*English*]

The legislative committee which examined Bill C-43 and has now presented its report to this House clearly accepted this challenge.

Following months of hearings, including testimony from many individuals and groups expressing strong views at either end of the spectrum of opinion on abortion, the committee recognized its duty to attempt to strike a fair balance between the rights and interests of women and society's concern that the foetus be protected.

The legislative committee has approved Bill C-43 without amendment, and I commend its members for the thoughtful considerations they have given to their examination of the proposed legislation.

As parliamentarians we must assume our responsibilities to bridge the gap created by the divergent views which we and our fellow Canadians hold with respect to the matter of abortion.

Bill C-43 is our best effort at bringing forward a law that will withstand a constitutional challenge. It is a balance that addresses the protection of a woman's security of the person, as identified in the Morgentaler judgment, while providing recognition to society's interest in the protection of the foetus.

[*Translation*]

If we change the bill by accepting any of the proposed amendments in the motions presented, I am quite afraid that the fragile balance we reached in the bill will be broken and that we will pass an unconstitutional law or even go against the objective sought.

[*English*]

The motions to amend Bill C–43 which are before the House reflect the strong divergent views held by the partisans on either side of the abortion debate. Obviously, this law will not satisfy these members. Only absolute positions would do that.

It would be my hope that these members not condemn this bill for not reflecting their own personal positions, but recognize its ability to respond to the concerns of their fellow Canadians in a manner that is understandable, workable and fair.

[*Translation*]

Without going into the details of each motion before you, I wish to make the following general remarks on the effect of the various proposals to be debated.

[*English*]

You have several motions before you, Mr. Speaker, which, if adopted, would serve to remove or restrict the definition of health or the standard of health required by the proposed legislation, or require exceptional medical circumstances in order for an abortion to be induced.

The imposition of a "serious threat to health" or that a requirement that a woman be in a life-threatening situation in order for an abortion to be performed at any stage in a woman's pregnancy, would be contrary to the reasoning of the Supreme Court of Canada in *Morgentaler*, and thereby jeopardize the constitutional validity of Bill C–43.

In addition, the definition of "health" in this bill explicitly refers to psychological health in order to comply with the ruling in *Morgentaler*.

Removal of this ground would, therefore, increase the risk that there would be a successful challenge under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Increasing the severity of punishment for inducing an abortion outside the exemptions permitted by law from two to 20 years would have an adverse effect on the constitutionality of the bill, as would attempting to regulate the pre-implantation stage by abortion legislation.

[*Translation*]

In Bill C–43, we are trying to respect both the judgment of the Supreme Court of Canada in the Morgentaler case and society's interest in protecting the foetus.

Any amendment to the bill that could be perceived as unfairly favouring the state's interest in protecting the foetus to the detriment of the woman's constitutional right to security of the person could endanger the legislation's constitutional validity.

[*English*]

I have policy concerns as well with the motions that would remove the legal protection afforded nurses or other medical staff who assist a doctor in the performance of an abortion or would suggest that a doctor's opinion based on the generally accepted standards of the medical profession would not normally be based on scientific knowledge.

Two of the motions proposed would serve to defeat completely the purpose of Bill C–43—first, by allowing abortions to be induced by any person provided the woman consents; and, second, by repealing the current abortion provisions in the Criminal Code without enacting any replacement.

To suggest that the bill be withdrawn in its entirety does not recognize our responsibility as members of Parliament to bring forward a law that is constitutionally valid and addresses the protection of a woman's security of the person, while providing recognition to society's interest in the protection of the foetus.

I have stated repeatedly that it is our duty to attempt to strike a balance of interests that reflects the various views and interests of our constitutents and respects constitutional guarantees.

[*Translation*]

I have tremendous respect for the process by which Bill C–43 was drawn up.

Because of the fragile balance achieved in the bill, people of opposing opinions support it.

I believe that it is extremely important to continue to respect the balance that Bill C–43 reflects.

That is why I am afraid that if any of the motions before the House pass, Bill C–43 may not be adopted on third reading.

[*English*]

Any of the proposed amendments, if adopted, would likely upset the political balance sufficiently to alienate support for Bill C–43 from those holding opposing views.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, I believe that the abortion issue must be settled by Parliament and not just by the courts.

It is up to us to deal with this issue.

That is why Bill C–43 was presented and why hon. members must support it.

[*English*]

I therefore strongly recommend that we support Bill C–43 by voting against all of the amendments proposed in the motions before this House. In this manner, we will ensure the successful passing of this bill into law.

We will thereby fulfil our responsibilities as parliamentarians in having introduced an abortion law which provides safeguards for Canadian women and reflects society's interest in the protection of the foetus, while at the same time respecting the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): Mr. Speaker, I apologize for not being in the House. Actually I should have spoken before the minister, but I am glad I had a chance to listen to her speech. I would like to say first of all that the Official Opposition has recognized the right of its members to a free vote on this difficult and fundamental issue.

• (1530)

Some very strong views are held on this side as well, and I would also like to take a few minutes, at the report stage of this bill, to explain my own.

Despite the respect just shown by the minister for the process used before the committee that considered this bill, I think we should point out that the committee ignored, and the government ignored and refused to consider, the tenor of the testimony brought before this committee.

I believe the government decided from the outset that it would refuse to accept any amendments and would reject all testimony to the effect that this is a bill that contains many problems. There are problems with the principle and with the moral perspective. This is not a bill that takes an honest approach to the position it reflects. That is basically what should be said.

I said I have my own position, and it is that the Supreme Court of Canada was right to suggest that first of all, we should respect the right of women to chose freely to have or want to have an abortion.

In this respect, the government's bill does not work because in the framework of this bill, there is no provision for having access to the services of a doctor to have an abortion in the first stages of pregnancy. Before the woman has access to medical services, she must first have the permission of those services. To me, this goes against the judgment of the Supreme Court of Canada.

I have asked the government to make a referral to the Supreme Court of Canada to find out whether the legislation is constitutional. I have my doubts, and practically all the witnesses we heard said the same.

Mr. Speaker, the problem I have with the situation in which we are in now is that pretty soon we will have a ruling by the Supreme Court of Canada on whether or not the bill is legal. Unfortunately, this will happen when we have a pregnant woman who has problems, as in the case of Chantal Daigle and in so many other cases in this country. That is how we are going to determine whether or not this bill is constitutional.

I am very sorry that the government, possibly because of male chauvinist leanings, decided to ignore legal advice and go ahead with some very questionable legislation. In my opinion, in line with the views of the Supreme Court of Canada, in the later stages of pregnancy there are interests respecting the foetus that must be recognized and which we were asked to recognize. Some of the judges of the Supreme Court of Canada expected our committee would hear witnesses that would expound their ideas on the development of a human being that, during pregnancy, becomes a being worthy of legal recognition. And then, in the context of the testimony received, the committee would be able to establish a system that would strike a balance between

the very important and legitimate interests of the woman and the emerging interests of the foetus.

This the government refused to do, and the Speaker felt that my amendment to establish this system was out of order. I accept that decision.

As I said, I accept that it was out of order but I regret very much that on the principle, the government did not decide to listen to the witnesses and to create a system recognizing the rights of women, even though some of those witnesses did not want to admit that at a certain point in the pregnancy, other interests come into play but for me—I insist—and for the Supreme Court of Canada, the interests of the foetus deserve to be recognized and protected as much as those of the mother.

Mr. Speaker, we know, as the minister just suggested, that all the amendments before us must be rejected. I deplore it. I will vote against this legislation which neither respects the right to life nor recognizes the rights of women.

Consequently, I personnally think that it is an hypocritical piece of legislation that does not deserve to be adopted by the Parliament of Canada.

Mr. Marcel R. Tremblay (Québec–Est): Mr. Speaker, this is for me both a duty and a pleasure to debate today in this House this abortion bill. This is a very emotional issue for all hon. members and it forms an integral part of the legal and moral approach of all Canadian men and women in general and my Quebec–Est constituents in particular.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, a great many things were said, a great many opinions were expressed both individually and collectively, and sometimes emotion wins over reason; that is why I felt further thought needed to be given to the matter. Finally, I have come to the realization that, fortunately or not the greater the information gathered from all sources, the harder it became for me to make up my mind.

Yet, Mr. Speaker, I feel I must share with you all the result of this reflection which, in my humble opinion, can only serve to enhance the various sentiments expressed to date. Here are some ideas:

According to Ronald D. Elving, "abortion is now and will remain for many years a politician's nightmare". There is nobody in the House, I believe, who disagrees with this opinion, and it could be said also that this is a societal concern.

Unanimity exists only on two points, namely, that first the abortion issue is highly charged with emotion and second that opinions are highly polarized.

Mr. Speaker, can we reasonably hope to achieve soon a consensus which could make the legislation acceptable to the majority?

I would rather hope so. As Paul Valéry wrote: "There always comes a day when a clever man can define in three words the essential of a doctrine which all until then had deemed absolutely incomprehensible".

Of course, I do not think I am such a man, but anybody can seek to hasten the coming of this liberator. The three key elements are perhaps the distinctions on which we should insist.

The first is the basic distinction between the legal and the moral aspects of the matter.

Mr. Speaker, it is always difficult for a layman to view an issue the way the legislator does. Why?

Because when considering an issue, the legislator must keep in mind the good of society, the need to preserve law and order in a society while seeking the common good which dissensions can only jeopardize.

A legislator who is against abortion could vote in favour of a legislation which makes it possible, while not authorizing it, if he felt that it were necessary for the good of society.

A second basic distinction is that between objective and subjective morality.

Objective morality considers things in the abstract dealing with their principles and not their application. It looks at abortion from a general viewpoint without considering the individual case which a real human being confronted with the realities of life has to deal with.

The way a person deals with the abortion issue as such depends on how he or she sees the foetus. There is not much of a consensus on this.

• (1540)

For some people the foetus is a part of the mother's body, for others it is just a group of cells, for some it acquires value over time, for others still it is a human being from the moment of conception.

The moral judgment on abortion varies. For some it is as simple as having a tooth pulled, for others it is murder.

Under the strictest moral, meaning Catholic moral, the foetus is a human being from the moment of conception, it has the strict right to live and the state must uphold that right. Therefore it may never be killed directly even to save the mother's life. Under this moral the end never justifies the means. Abortion therefore can never be a means to the best of ends.

We seem to be in an impasse, Mr. Speaker, but when certain Catholic theologians want to apply the official thought to real life, complex as it is in most instances, they do make exceptions by introducing very significant nuances, for these people make a distinction between "doctrinal" and "pastoral" speech. It is not unlike the well-known distinction made by legal experts between principles and their application.

Some of these theologians accept even direct abortion in certain cases, say to save the mother's life, in cases of rape, and others. Others find situations where abortion is the least of two evils. Still others make distinctions: do not allow, but do not penalize; do not allow, but make it possible, and so on.

Even more than moralists, legislators will have to take these compromises into consideration. Above all they will have to take into account the personal conscience that each individual looks upon as the rule which guides one's conduct. Keep in mind that the moral which says one is never allowed to kill a foetus also says one is never allowed to act against one's own conscience. Pro-lifers have no use whatsoever for the subjective moral and the key role which conscience must play in human life.

When legislators are on the verge of passing legislation on abortion they ought not to forget subjective morality. The more numerous the various opinions on this issue, the greater the role of personal conscience. They ought not to forget that there are Canadians who are not at all convinced that the foetus is a human being or even a living being from the moment of conception, and that destroying it is always a murder.

Mr. Speaker, a major question which my fellow citizens of Québec-Est often put to me is this: Should the government legislate in this matter? If it did not, the abortion issue would be like so many others which are not covered by law. These problems relate to morals and personal conscience.

Would abortion be more frequent if there were no law? That is a moot point. Apparently the number of murders did not go up after the death penalty was abolished. An abortion is not the kind of operation which a woman is happy to undergo. As the doctors have pointed out in their brief, the procedure is hard on everyone involved. The best protection for the foetus' right to life is built in the human heart by moral values and not by a law, however wise and strict it may be.

So, if Bill C-43 does not pass, it should not be seen as a tragedy.

On what criteria then should the drafting of a law be based in order to be wise will you ask me, Mr. Speaker? I will answer that the wise legislator must remember that he is not a moralist, in spite of his moral convictions. He must not try to impose his personal convictions on everybody through a law. It is hard, however, not to forbid others what one forbids oneself.

The wise legislator must take into account the society for whom he is legislating and the era we live in. In a hundred years from now, things might be different. Our ways may have changed and some of our existing laws may then seem quite inhuman.

The wise legislator must also take into account subjective moral values as well as individual conscience, especially considering we are dealing with a field in which there is no unanimity within a given set of values.

We all know, Mr. Speaker, that not so long ago, the Supreme Court required two conditions to be met for fear of being brought back before the courts and having to go through the whole process all over again.

The first constraint was that it considered section 251 of the Criminal Code to be unconstitutional because women had to go through the too time-consuming

process of the therapeutic abortion committee comprised of three doctors who had to give their "consent".

And as for the second constraint, the Chief Justice said that it was unacceptable to force a woman under threat of criminal penalty to carry a foetus to term.

I have heard some people tell me that abortion is nothing more nor less than a medical procedure. But, Mr. Speaker, considering abortion as a medical procedure does not mean that it is not at the same time and more fundamentally a moral act, as is every action taken deliberately or voluntarily and freely. If abortion is a medical procedure, Bill C-43 makes it a crime for anyone but a physician to perform an abortion. That is as it should be.

However, when the Canadian Medical Association maintains that abortion must be considered in the same way as other medical procedures, some nuances should be added.

From the strictly medical point of view, it is a medical procedure like others. But from a moral point of view, it is a very different kind of medical procedure. Indeed, as the Hon. Jake Epp said, "it is the only medical procedure that involves taking the life of an unborn child as a way to improve the quality of life for someone else, namely, the pregnant woman."

Mr. Speaker, Bill C-43 takes account of the Supreme Court judgement that, in ruling section 251 invalid, wanted the procedure to be less cumbersome.

Instead of three physicians, there will be only one. This reduction would be acceptable if the decision were made "after objective analysis of all other possible solutions", as the CMA's brief to the legislative committee says. But we must ensure that this analysis has been done properly. At one in his trials, Dr. Morgentaler admitted that he did nothing of the kind. In short, he performed abortion on demand, which is unacceptable; no surgical operation is performed on demand.

If Parliament decided to have a sort of committee do this analysis, this committee would have to be very flexible. First of all, the ultimate goal of such a committee should be to have as many women as possible who want to interrupt their pregnancy carry it to term by helping them to make an enlightened and responsible decision. Otherwise, the number of abortions will not go down and the fine statements in favour of respect for life will come to naught.

However, this committee would not have to grant approval: it would simply confirm that the analysis the CMA mentioned had been done.

The woman involved would then make her decision by herself, thus respecting the moral aspect of this medical procedure since the conscience regulates morality: "Those who act according to their conscience, even when misguided, as long as they show goodwill, also obey the laws of God since they follow the first and only true principle of listening to their conscience". This is Saint Thomas Aquinas's moral philosophy. An act in keeping with the person's conscience is subjectively good even if it is a crime in itself.

In a sphere where there is no unanimity, even among supporters of the Catholic moral code, we must compensate for the often denounced vagueness of reasons for abortion by putting more faith into the sense of morality of the people involved. While the Catholic religion does not allow abortions under any circumstances, it makes them possible by invoking the first precept of the Catholic ethic: "Obey your conscience".

As for the second constraint imposed by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, no sanctions should be taken against the people involved, such as doctors and nurses, as long as they follow the procedure outlined in the legislation.

Bernard Haring wrote: "Almost everywhere abortions performed by a physician for vital or simply therapeutic purposes are left unpunished". In terms of morality, not allowing is one thing but not punishing is another.

Finally, the bill extends the notion of health to mental and psychological health.

A legislator tormented by his conscience could include the "particularly painful cases" Haring was talking about.

Julien Harvey seemed to reassure them when he wrote: "The mother's distress and not only her physical health can justify, in conscience and in law, an abortion as a lesser evil in the first quarter of pregnancy, a restriction that a long religious tradition in the West

allows us to contemplate". This can be found in the September issue of *Relations*, at page 196.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, an abortion law would not come into conflict with the principles of Catholic morality, the most rigid of moral doctrines, as long as it contained the four following provisions: making abortion a crime when it is performed by a person other than a physician and providing for appropriate penalties; outlining a way of doing the "objective analysis of all the alternatives" the CMA was referring to; making the pregnant woman responsible for her own decision; not imposing penalties when this procedure has been followed.

This, Mr. Speaker, is only a very small part of my reflections. We could talk about it for hours but I would like to close by saying I will give the government my total support when we vote on this bill which of course is not perfect but, under the circumstances, tries to conciliate the various positions.

[*English*]

Mr. George Proud (Hillsborough): Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on Motion No. 10 to Bill C–43, as proposed by my hon. colleague from Glengarry—Prescott—Russell. This amendment, if adopted, would allow abortions to be performed only if the mother's life was threatened by the continuation of the pregnancy.

• (1550)

Since Bill C–43 first came before this House, various groups have presented their views to the legislative committee on an act respecting abortions. Thousands of Canadians have written to their members of Parliament, and several members of this House have proposed amendments to the bill.

The conviction of the people in the riding of Hillsborough, who I represent, has not wavered. The majority of my constituents and I believe that human life begins at conception, and it must be protected by law at all stages. With such a conviction, I cannot support Bill C–43 unless it is amended. The life of the unborn child must be protected by law and I could only support a bill which provides such protection.

I did vote for Bill C–43 at second reading, but I supported it so that the bill would go to a legislative committee where amendments could be proposed that would fully protect the life of the unborn child.

Even as I voted for it at second reading, I knew that the only exception to the full protection of the foetus which I could ultimately support, would provide that an abortion could be performed to save the mother's life. That is what the motion I am discussing proposes to do. If it is not adopted, then I cannot possibly support the bill.

If Bill C–43 were to pass as is, an abortion would be legal when performed for health reasons, whether for mental, physical or psychological factors. This is a flimsy disguise for abortion on demand, and Canadians will not condone such hypocrisy. Pro–abortion advocates would have us believe that if we deny women access to abortion on demand, we are denying them basic health care. I have several problems with that argument, but the most fundamental one is that we are dealing with two human lives here, not one.

I am horrified that anyone could say that a procedure which kills one human being for the convenience of another is a medical procedure. Abortion is the killing of a human being, and a helpless one at that. If we do not ensure that abortions are performed only to save the mother's life, then our society will be condoning abortion on demand.

We hear a great deal about freedom of choice. The rallying cry of the pro–abortion forces is that every woman must have the freedom to choose whether or not to bear children. I wholeheartedly agree that everyone must have the freedom to choose, but I say that the time for this choice is before conception takes place.

The choice to be made is whether to take the risk of conception occurring at all. Once a choice has been made and a human being has been created, the woman and her family have different choices to make. It is not true that after a pregnancy has begun there are no other options. The pro–abortion groups would have us believe it is a black and white situation, but that is not true.

Thousands of Canadian couples are infertile and long for a child of their own. Waiting lists at adoption agencies are years long. The so–called black market in babies exists, and the emergence of surrogate motherhood is evidence of the desperate longing of infertile couples to have children.

There are loving, stable homes for babies born to women whose families cannot support them. In view of

this, abortion on demand is an act of pure selfishness. I am not pretending that unwanted pregnancies are trivial or that they are easy experiences for people to live through. No one would deny that women with unwanted pregnancies, and their families, deserve all the support that we can give them during a very difficult time.

Support is the key, not denial. A healthy, humane, caring society must address the situation of unwanted pregnancies and not pretend that they do not happen. Abortion is a denial of the problem of unwanted pregnancy, and it is a denial of responsibility. Above all, it is a fundamental denial of the value of human life.

Bill C–43 completely fails to address the painful issue that is troubling this country's conscience. It fails to provide leadership on this fundamental, social and moral issue, which are the factors that drive women to seek abortions.

Abortion is not an answer to poverty, rape, sexual abuse, family violence or teenage pregnancy. It must not be allowed to become an escape from responsibility, either for the individual or for our society as a whole. I stated that I believe in the sanctity of human life, and that life begins at conception. Like all humans, unborn children deserve the full protection of the law. How can any civilized society which professes to care for the rights of the individual, which professes to be a world leader in human rights, deny these rights to one group simply because they are at a different stage of life. It is not a less valuable stage, not a less human stage, just a different stage, a totally vulnerable stage.

Our society has many problems to solve, such as the problem which led us to this dreadful situation in which thousands of abortions were performed every year. However, Bill C–43 as it stands is not an answer because abortion is not an answer. Bill C–43 must be amended to fully protect human life from conception onward. Only when the mother's life is threatened can abortion be considered an option, and with the advances in medical technology being made every day, I believe that this scenario has become an extremely rare one.

Mr. Speaker, if the motion of my colleague from Glengarry—Prescott—Russell is not adopted and if we do not change this bill so that the rights of the unborn child are fully protected by law, then I must vote against this bill.

Hon. Alan Redway (Minister of State (Housing)): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate most sincerely the opportunity to say a few words at report stage of Bill C–43, which as you are well aware, deals with the sensitive and very controversial issue of abortion.

My own views with respect to this matter of abortion are well known. I have spoken out in my own riding over the years, I have spoken out in other parts of Canada and I have spoken out in this House on numerous occasions, the last time being on November 23 of last year in the debate on second reading. In each case I made it quite clear where I stood, that I stand clearly and firmly on the pro–life side of the scale.

The bill before us at report stage has certain elements. As I pointed out in my remarks in this House on November 23 of last year, these elements support the pro–life position, in particular, the bill provides that abortion is an offence under the Criminal Code. It also rejects, and rejects quite clearly, the gestational approach to abortion and therefore it recognizes implicitly, if not explicitly, that life does begin at conception.

Having said that in my remarks at second reading, the bill as it now stands at report stage, is an extremely disappointing one for me. It is a bill which has many exemptions and a bill that is far wider than the sort of legislation that I would like to see before this House.

I had hoped that we would see some substantial amendments to this bill after it passed second reading and went to a legislative committee where the committee had an opportunity to examine it clause by clause to hear witnesses and to make amendments. I have been a member of numerous legislative committees in the past where very substantial amendments were made to legislation. Certainly I had hoped most fervently that we would see those kinds of amendments come from the legislative committee and that the bill at report stage would be an entirely different one from the one we see before us today.

Clearly, that did not happen and it has left me with a deep, extreme and profound sense of disappointment about what has happened to this bill. At the same time that presents me with a supreme dilemma, a dilemma of whether I am now in a position to support Bill C–43 in an unamended stage or not.

• (1600)

I do not like this bill. The Prime Minister has indicated that it is a free vote for other members of this House, but it is not a free vote for members of cabinet. That is a position that has left me deeply troubled. It has left me struggling with my conscience. It has left me with many sleepless nights. It has left me doing a great deal of praying as I am, quite frankly, right at this very moment.

I have come to the conclusion that this particular bill, no matter whether it passes this House or whether it does not pass this House, will not be the end of the great struggle for the pro-life side of the argument, for the pro-life movement on this issue. If this particular bill is defeated in this House, the pro-life struggle is going to continue. If this particular bill passes this House, the pro-life struggle is still going to continue.

Bearing in mind that no matter what happens to this particular legislation the struggle is going to go on, I have to face in my heart whether it is going to further the pro-life cause and further my own pro-life convictions to have one less voice in cabinet in support of the pro-life position and, in all likelihood, to have one more pro-choice voice in cabinet contrary to the pro-life position.

As I say, I have struggled long and I have struggled hard and I still continue to struggle with this. I suspect that after the votes are cast, I will continue to search my soul and my heart on this particular issue.

However, I have come to the conclusion that, because this is not the end of the struggle and because the pro-life position is going to go on whether this bill passes or is defeated, rightly or wrongly, I am going to support this bill.

If I am wrong in that decision, then without a doubt it is the absolute duty of those who believe I am wrong to work their hardest and do their utmost to ensure my defeat at the next election.

Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on the amendments to Bill C-43, and in particular to support Motion No. 24.

I do this because I believe that a compassionate society and a Parliament elected to represent society's needs and society's wishes does not need to return to a time when women were criminals for exercising the most fundamental of human rights, that right being the personal care and control of one's body. Reproductive choice is a basic and fundamental right.

I rise also to argue that the role of Parliament is not to imprison women forced to make difficult decisions, but rather to provide the leadership, the process and the money for better prevention of unplanned pregnancies, and to ensure that every child born in this nation and every woman who chooses to be a mother has the opportunity to live a full and rich life, a life free of poverty, ignorance, violence and abuse.

We are not the first, nor will we be the last society to debate abortion. This has been an issue of conflict throughout history. If there is one thing that we have learned from history, it is that no matter what the law, or how tough the sanctions, abortion will happen. Abortions, if they are not performed legally in medical facilities under the direction of a physician, will happen in much less favourable circumstances. As ugly as it may seem, women must not be forced to return to those ugly circumstances of using coat hangers, vacuum cleaners, or putting themselves in the hands of quacks. It is an ugly reality, but it is a reality. Women die as a result of these kinds of processes. Young women are sterilized as a result of these kinds of procedures. The reality is that any amendment that puts abortion back in the Criminal Code will sentence some women somewhere in Canada to sterility or to death. That is not supporting life.

The bill before us and the amendments being debated today in many ways define the fundamental value and inherent dignity of each human being and the worth of each human life.

[*Translation*]

This debate cannot be used to convince people. That is impossible, and if we, as legislators, keep trying to do so, we would be losing our time and we would not be serving our constituents. What we ought to do is define the common goals we should strive to attain, which are to glorify life, to respect life and to reduce the number of abortions.

On one side, there are those who believe that to legislate criminal sanctions is the only way to reach our goals. On the other, there are those, like myself, who believe that the only way to reach our end is to develop social and economic policies which would ensure that every child, every woman, and even every family is respected and even glorified.

[*English*]

We have made this realization in other areas. It was not that long ago that attempting suicide was a criminal offence which appeared in the Criminal Code. Statistically, suicide attempts are most prevalent among young men and teenage boys. So do we threaten today to fill the prisons with young men attempting suicide? Do we believe that criminal sanctions will actually reduce the number of attempts? Of course not. We know that it is an emotional issue. It is an issue that needs to be dealt with in other ways.

We responded by removing attempted suicide from the Criminal Code and putting the emphasis where it belongs, on prevention and support. That was the right thing to do, just as ensuring that abortion remains decriminalized is the right thing to do.

There has been much said during this debate about respect for human life, about how our society and our nation is based on this respect. I say to the members of this Chamber and to Canadians everywhere, words are not enough. It is much easier for us to stand here and to legislate than to bend down and offer a helping hand to a child who has been abused, a woman who is tormented, or an unemployed father who is wondering how he is going to feed his family. The answer is clearly that this must be, and regardless of the law we pass here will continue to be, the choice of women.

I would like to draw this House's attention to what I think is a very good statement. This statement was made on July 27, 1988, in this House by the present Minister of Employment and Immigration who stated:

> And make no mistake, women make the right choice, a far better choice than you or I or all the pageantry of institutions that have been invented by human beings from the beginning of time.

I agree with that statement made by the Minister of Employment and Immigration. I believe she was reflecting that women are adults, that women can make the right choices, and whatever any institution decides to do, we will not be able to control the decisions of women. It must be the choice of all women. We know that women of wealth and power have options, and part of what we are debating today is whether or not that freedom will be extended to all women.

• (1610)

All women, not just the wealthy, must be free to decide the number and the spacing of their children. All children have the right to be raised in a family capable of providing housing and food and proper nurturing. All children have the right to be raised in a family free of violence and abuse.

If anyone believes that they can lay claim to a respect for life because they legislated against abortion, while voting for cuts to child care, cuts to shelters for abused women, cuts to job creation, cuts to prenatal health and prevention, then they are fooling themselves. They are not fooling the electorate, they are fooling themselves.

I am not going to debate which side of the question has a monopoly on the respect for life. I am pro-choice and I will put my commitment and my record of action up against anyone's when it comes to a respect for human life.

[*Translation*]

If we go beyond the legal, medical, and philosophical questions raised by this debate, we see that the real issue is, in fact, very simple. Who is to decide whether a pregnancy shoud be interrupted? Judges and lawyers? The Church? Or maybe politicians and legislators? Or should not the women, given their unique capability to conceive, look deep into their hearts and souls and make that decision?

I think those decisions should be the responsibilities of the women. They have heard every argument. They know that some families are eager to adopt children. And they know that every child has the right to live a good life. So what gives us the impression that we are in a better position to make that decision? Ten years of legal or medical training do not give anyone the right to impose his or her views.

[*English*]

There are things a woman considers in deciding whether or not to terminate a pregnancy, and no matter what her decision, there are no moral or ethical grounds for putting her in prison.

Bill C-43 must be amended to read simply: "Sections 287 and 288 of the Criminal Code are repealed". To do anything else is a disservice to Canadian women and families.

I will vote for this amendment and I will vote against Bill C–43 because Bill C–43 limits the right to a woman's choice and to a woman's control over her own life.

Mr. Gus Mitges (Bruce—Grey): Mr. Speaker, I am indeed pleased once again to have this opportunity to express my strong opposition to Bill C–43, the so–called abortion bill.

There is no question in my mind that the fundamental purpose of Bill C–43 is to provide ready access to abortion. Therefore, the defeat of this bill is absolutely essential because it does not offer any protection to unborn children. The government made it emphatically clear that it will not entertain any amendments. It wants the bill passed as it is. So what we have is a bill that provides abortion on demand, protected by the law of the land.

Bill C–43 will not only increase the number of abortions, which number some 1.5 million since 1969 in Canada, but it is being treated as a compromise bill by some who should know better. Any compromise on abortion means legalizing the death of some unborn children.

The only law that is fair and just is a law that protects unborn children from the moment of conception.

Bill C–43 must be defeated so that the fight on behalf of all our unborn children, now and in the future, will not diminish but will continue in a very active way so that some day we will have instituted the protection of unborn children as a law of Canada.

When we think about abortion, we think about the aborted child who cannot speak for himself, who cannot defend himself from his executioners, and who is deprived of all his or her rights that we know are here today and are being taken for granted by those of us who are living.

Our fellow human beings who have already been aborted were never given a trial, there were no judges ever present, there was no jury and no appeal, and there has never been a stay of execution. In fact, as I mentioned, since 1969 some 1.5 million unborn Canadians were heartlessly and brutally murdered, with no chance of defending themselves or anyone interceding on their behalf in a legal way to stop the carnage and wholesale murder of our unborn babies.

If unborn babies could talk, I am sure what would be on their minds before being executed would be this thought: "If so soon I would be done for, why on earth was I begun for?" I would ask: Has the civilized nation of our society degenerated to such a low ebb that we have resorted to destroying the most defenceless of human beings, our unborn children?

Compassion indicates that we protect children in the womb, as well as providing real and substantial help to their mothers when needed. There are distressed pregnant women out there who need and deserve assistance to help them give birth and support to their children.

The unborn child is a human being and is entitled to the full protection of the law, as are all human beings. As I mentioned a moment ago, any compromise on abortion means legalizing the death of some unborn children.

No one would ever think of legalizing the rape of some women or legalizing the abuse of some children already born. The theft of money is not legal, nor is it legal to commit murder on humans already born. It is wrong, wrong, wrong to take the life of an unborn child.

From its beginning in the womb life is a continuation, not measured in weeks, inches or pounds; a human being exists and is alive from the moment of conception. Abortion at any time after conception kills an innocent, defenceless human being.

For abortion to be legalized in the Criminal Code indicates implicit acknowledgement that abortion is wrong. There is no logical way in which it can be acknowledged that both it is wrong and that it should be legal. Anyone who believes that abortion is wrong must discard the position that abortion should be legal. In fact a person who believes that abortion is wrong but also sanctions Bill C–43 must be prepared to say that it is civilized and appropriate for society to permit the killing of innocent and defenceless human beings, so long as the killing is done by a medical practitioner or someone authorized by him, with the consent of the victim's mother.

Bill C–43 is deceptively presented as balancing the constitutional rights of the woman and the right to life of another human being, namely her unborn child. The avoidance of any reference to the child who is awaiting

birth raises questions about the sincerity of the claimed intent to protect.

One is also compelled to question the protection extended to the women in Bill C–43 as it legalizes abortions right up to the time of birth, even though a woman's life would be genuinely at risk when an abortion is performed during the later stages of pregnancy.

Moreover, the proposed legislation in Bill C–43 would not require the abortion to be performed by a physician, nor is it required that the abortion be performed in a credible hospital. To legitimize abortion should the woman's health or life likely be threatened is virtually to eliminate any restrictions on abortion. Even those who advocate a woman's right to abortion recognize that the language of this bill is such that it would permit abortion simply if the woman was unhappy about being pregnant. Being unhappy about being pregnant is often a temporary state of mind even for women who have planned their pregnancies.

Not only is there an attempt being made to fool Canadians into thinking that this law has the interest of the unborn at heart, Bill C–43 is an affront to our intelligence and an affront to our sense of justice in Canada.

Furthermore, it is irresponsible for Canadians to leave the decision of whether a baby is allowed to live or die in the hands of the medical profession whose track record on the interpretation of "health" for the purpose of abortion has been so questionable in the past.

• (1620)

To give substance to this claim, one only need note the fact that close to 80,000 women in hospitals and clinics submit to abortions annually for reasons of so–called health, when even abortionists themselves admit that 20th century medicine has virtually eliminated risks for even the very sick pregnant women.

In 1969 Canadian people were assured that the proposed legislation at that time would not result in an increased rate of abortions. Obviously the government of the day underestimated the teaching value of the law. It now appears that the present government is about to make the same mistake.

No one, except those who choose not to accept the truth, will deny that abortion kills a living human being. It is acknowledged that the commitment of an abortion is not new. What is new to Canadians is the state's sanctioning of this form of killing with flagrant disregard for the value of human life from its very beginnings. It behooves us at this time to recall what history has recorded when society sanctions the killing of the weak and defenceless.

I would just like to say a few words about the pro–abortion and pro–choice movement. It seems that the pro–choice movement puts up a lot of smoke–screens to support its position on abortion. One of its more confusing statements is the basic right to control our bodies.

In this day and age a woman who allows herself to get pregnant when she does not want a child certainly does not appear to be in control of her body. Women today are educated at an early stage about sexuality and birth control. There are free clinics all over the country that give out information or even help with birth control. With the resources available, why would a woman who gets an abortion feel more in control of her body when she was not in enough control before becoming pregnant to seek out the information needed?

It seems to me that a lot of the pro–choice movement is centered around that basic age old theme of having your cake and eating it too.

Another common argument of the pro–choice movement is that so many unwanted babies is a huge, financial burden to society. What about the cost of not letting these human beings grow up into productive adults? Think about all the potential doctors, teachers, nurses, priests, ministers, construction workers, lawyers, diplomats, presidents, et cetera, who will never contribute their talents to this desperate, floundering world because of the evil of abortion.

Because of allocation of time I will conclude my remarks by saying that Parliament not only has the right but the urgent duty to protect human life from the moment of conception and pass legislation to this effect.

To accept Bill C–43 would mean accepting wholesale abortion on demand. We would be accepting a law that is unacceptable and evil. That is why I will be voting against Bill C–43.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Eugène Bellemare (Carleton—Gloucester): Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to speak to Bill C–43, an Act respecting abortion, and to do so at the report stage, when amendments are presented.

I intend to vote against the bill in its present form, unless there are reasonable amendments. The most reasonable amendment I could find was Motion No. 10 submitted by one of my colleagues, in which he asks that Bill C–43 be amended in clause 1 by deleting the word "health". To me, Mr. Speaker, this is very important. To me, abortion is a matter of ethics and morality. Human life is very important. The unborn child, the viable foetus must be protected, and I see that this bill contains no protection for the viable foetus. I find that hard to understand.

I would find it very difficult to vote for a bill that does not respect life. As a legislator, I believe we should always consider legislation in the light of protecting life and the family.

The family is the most precious thing we have in our community. And what is more precious in a family than its members, starting with our babies? Another thing I do not like in this bill is that it introduces the criminal aspect, in other words, it criminalizes both the physician and the mother.

I do not think we should criminalize a mother who is desperately trying to get an abortion. I think society has a responsibility to give a young mother the support she needs. I imagine that, in most cases, when we are talking about abortion we are talking about young pregnant mothers, young pregnant women, future mothers.

What we need above all is social, medical and family support. This is very important in a person's life. People should not consider abortion as a solution, as a way to get rid of an incidental problem—the problem of being pregnant.

[*English*]

It is absolutely essential that we protect life and the family and the viable foetus. In my mind it is absolutely important that we develop a law that protects life, protects the family, and comes to the support of a young pregnant person who needs help and is desperate all of a sudden. Society, the communities, the social services in communities, and the immediate family—all of these groups—need to assist the pregnant woman.

On occasion we hear about the rights of persons, the rights of people, the rights of mothers, the rights of women to control their bodies. I am sure we all have rights to protect our bodies. We do not have the right to pour a can of gasoline on ourselves and just light up and say as an excuse that it is my right to control my body. This is obviously an extreme example of control of your body, but you cannot destroy your body. If you are pregnant and you want to destroy the foetus that is something similar in my mind. It is just as extraordinary. I think the idea is to try to save the baby.

In the history of art, architecture and sculpture, one would know that Leonardo Da Vinci was an unwanted child. What if Leonardo Da Vinci's mother had decided to have an abortion? I think the answer is very obvious. There are in my mind all sorts of people in the world who may not become a Leonardo Da Vinci but have a great deal to contribute to society. Some of them may even grow up to become doctors who would save the life of the same mother who had that thought earlier in life.

The idea of criminalization *vis–à–vis* the doctor is absolutely abhorrent and should not be thought of. If there is going to be any criminalization, I would suggest that it should be those people who operate clandestine operations, the coat hanger operations, or whatever abhorrent examples we hear of, not the doctors who make the decisions, not the young mother who is struck all of a sudden by having to make such a hard decision.

• (1630)

It has always been my contention that abortion is an option that should only be entertained when the life of the mother is in jeopardy, or in the very rare case of rape or incest, and that within the shortest possible period. I believe that in far too many cases, if this bill is passed as is, the use of the word "health" will be misused.

No one believes that any woman who makes the decision to have an abortion is happy to have made the decision. However, there are other options open to these women. Rather than debating abortion, our society should be looking at ways in which we can better support women and children.

Continuing to allow the word "health" in the bill will only continue to allow abortion on demand. Too often the word "health" has been used in a very vague way, thereby allowing a decision to be made for termination of the pregnancy for frivolous reasons.

Under the previous legislation we saw that unwanted pregnancies were aborted because the mother convinced a panel that carrying the baby to term would affect her health psychologically. This opens up the whole issue of abuse. I have been and continue to be in favour of abortion when the life of the mother is at risk. I believe firmly in the ability of medical practitioners to make these decisions. By deleting the word "health" the emphasis will thereby be placed on the word "life", and all life-threatening situations will be covered by this bill.

I believe in the preservation of the family. Let us help mothers who find themselves in the difficult position of unfortunate pregnancy but, also, let us save them from making the decision to abort a foetus by voting down this amendment which ultimately will lead to abortion on demand. We must protect the life of the unborn child. We must protect the family.

Mr. Geoff Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek—Assiniboia): Mr. Speaker, in January, 1988, the Supreme Court of Canada struck down the section of the Criminal Code dealing with this matter on the ground that the procedures therein deprive the pregnant woman of the right to security of her person under Section 7 of the charter. Since that time the unborn child has been without legal protection in Canada.

I spoke on this matter in July, 1988, and again last fall. I say again that there must be some law in this area. We hear, in this place of concern for wildlife, whales, seals and trees. We halt much needed projects over concern for waterfowl. Surely, it is not too much to ask for some legal guide posts in regard to human life, a statement as to how Canadians view life itself, when life begins, the value of the human being, and whether the exercise of a woman's individual freedom overrides the life of the unborn child within her.

We must have a law that reflects the beliefs of our society, hopefully a law that affirms that life has value regardless of its state of development, that recognizes that a human being is involved. It should be a federal law, one that is national in scope and one that applies to all Canadians. The division of legislative powers under our Constitution is such that the only way in which the federal government can enact such a law in this field is through the criminal law. The federal government cannot directly regulate abortion or the conduct of individuals in any other way.

It is for this reason that Bill C-43, an amendment to the Criminal Code, was introduced last fall in an attempt to find some middle ground between conflicting points of view that are by their very nature irreconcilable.

Bill C-43 attempts to provide some legal protection to the unborn child by making it a criminal offence to induce an abortion unless the procedure is done by, or under the direction of, a medical practitioner who is of the opinion that, if the abortion were not induced, the life or health of the female person would likely be threatened. Health includes physical, mental or psychological health.

A number of amendments have been made and we are now, at report stage, able to speak to these amendments which will be voted on tomorrow evening. I intend to support the amendments which will strengthen the bill and better protect the unborn human.

Those amendments are as follows: Motion 10 would delete health as a criterion thereby leaving threat to life of the female person as the only grounds for abortion. While the recent comments of the Supreme Court of Canada would seem to indicate that this position is very likely unconstitutional, I am nevertheless prepared in principle to support it.

Motion No. 12 adds the word "seriously", to read, "the health or life of the female person would likely be seriously threatened". If Motion No. 10 fails I will support this motion.

Motion No. 13 adds the further requirement that the medical practitioner conclude there is no other medically acceptable treatment to alleviate the health risk. If Motion No. 12 fails I will support Motion No. 13.

Motion No. 16 would alter the definition of health under Section 287(2) of the Criminal Code to say "considerations of physical and mental factors as they cause a serious threat to life and health". This would eliminate the psychological or socio-economic factor. I would support this motion.

Motion No. 17A would delete the word "psychological" from the health definition. If Motion No. 16 fails, I will support Motion No. 17A.

Motion No. 17B again involves the definition of health and reads "physical and mental health and does not include psychological health". If Motions Nos. 16 and 17A should both fail I will vote yes to Motion No. 17B.

Motion No. 19 would expand the definition of the word "opinion" under Section 287(2) of the Criminal Code to say, "standards of the medical profession, developed from a solid body of scientific knowledge". I would support that motion.

Having reviewed these various amendments one must consider the possibility, indeed the probability, that none of them will be approved. While I hope and pray that some additional protection for the unborn might come out of these amendments, I think it likely that at third and final reading this House will be considering Bill C–43 as it is, unamended.

Since I may not be able to speak again on the matter I would like to take the opportunity to examine the options available to me as a member who supports a pro–life position, who has consistently voted pro–life and must face the hard choice of either voting for Bill C–43 with all of its imperfections or of standing with the NDP and others who want no law at all, who advocate no legal protection for the unborn.

The suggestion has been made by pro–life organizations, and quite correctly, that Parliament could legislate on abortion in a manner much more favourable to the unborn than C–43. The operative word, of course, is "could", if a majority of members of Parliament so agreed it could. But that is simply not the case. The majority in this place does not want to make abortion any more restrictive than is stated in this bill. I do, others do, but the majority does not.

Perhaps a future Parliament will take a more restrictive view. That remains to be seen. But neither the previous Parliament in the 1988 debate nor this Parliament today contain sufficient members to pass genuinely restrictive legislation.

Let no one think for a moment that the defeat of this bill will lead to a better bill next week, next month, or next year. This thirty–fourth Parliament will have spoken on the issue and the matter will not be dealt with until after the next general election. The choice before us today is, I believe, Bill C–43 or nothing. Bill C–43 with its wide definition of health, including psychological health, falls far short of protecting the unborn.

On the other hand the bill does have positive aspects. It does recriminalize abortion. The inclusion under the Criminal Code sends the message that foetal life is worthy of respect, promotion and protection. The bill does reject the gestational approach. It does recognize that life springs from the moment of conception. It says that we as a society do not measure arbitrarily the value of life by its stages. The requirement that there be grounds is important because it affirms that abortion is more than a mere matter of choice. It does restore some protection by requiring the opinion of a medical practitioner who in turn is governed by a series of ethical and professional considerations.

Clearly Bill C–43 is a compromise. In regard to this matter of compromise I would like to make a couple of references. The first is to Tom Schuck, President of the Saskatchewan Pro–Life Association and its pro–life publication of April, 1990, which states in part:

> What if the reality is that we do not have enough pro–life parliamentarians to pass the ideal law to end all abortion? Do we support legislation that limits abortion to save as many lives as possible? Are those that support imperfect alternatives compromising the unborn? Or are those who compromise the unborn really those who oppose limiting legislation regardless of the consequences?"

• (1640)

The Permanent Council of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, in their presentation to the legislative committee on this bill, said at page 14:

> When it is the only available or feasible political option, support may be given to legislation which attempts, if only imperfectly, to restore protection.

Mr. Speaker, of course this bill is a compromise. Every bill put in this House is a compromise of some sort; a reconciliation of competing and diverse interests. While I am far from being satisfied, I am nevertheless going to vote for the bill because the alternative is not a better law. The alternative is no law at all, a continuing total lack of protection, and the longer we go without a law, the less likely we are ever to have one.

In my mind, Bill C–43 represents a foundation for the future. If C–43 passes, we will at least have some recognition of life from conception and some, albeit limited, protection for the unborn. Those who want more protection for the unborn will have the opportunity in future general elections to seek more representatives who are prepared to support their viewpoint.

Mr. Speaker, it is obvious that more effort has to be directed to education, to counselling and to greater individual responsibility. Adoptive processes must be improved and assisted and ways must be found to assist the churches and other organizations which support women in difficult circumstances.

In closing, let me endorse a further quotation from the presentation made by the Catholic bishops at page 15:

> We shall renew our efforts to educate about positive life-giving solutions to unwanted pregnancies, and increase our support for those individuals and agencies who are providing much needed services.

Finally, I would like to thank the thousands of constituents who took time to respond to my various questionnaires, who wrote to me and phoned me and with whom I have met in person over this difficult issue, including members of the medical fraternity within my community and with many clergymen of various denominations. Their thoughtfulness, advice and input has been most helpful.

Mr. John Nunziata (York South—Weston): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to speak to Bill C–43 at this stage.

As you know, I supported this bill at second reading not because I supported or agreed with the substance of the bill but because I felt it necessary that the bill proceed to committee to provide the opportunity for amendments to be put and carried in order to strengthen this particular piece of legislation. As you know, Mr. Speaker, this bill was not amended at committee and the committee, in effect, endorsed the bill as it is. I find that extremely regrettable.

This bill is a bad piece of legislation. It is a bad bill, a fraudulent piece of legislation in that it purports to be all things to all people. On the one hand it re-introduces the subject of abortion into the Criminal Code of Canada, in effect saying that abortion is illegal, a criminal act. On the other hand, it defines abortion in such a broad fashion as to be tantamount to abortion on demand. The operative clause in this bill, Bill C–43, reads as follows:

> Every person who induces an abortion on a female person is guilty of an indictable offence and liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years, unless the abortion is induced by or under the direction of a medical practitioner who is of the opinion that, if the abortion were not induced, the health or life of the female person would be likely to be threatened.

"Health" is defined, as including:

> for greater certainty, physical, mental and psychological health.

In effect, this allows for abortion on demand or abortion on request.

I think it is important to ask the question why we are dealing with Bill C–43 in this Parliament. The Supreme Court of Canada, in its wisdom, decided that the previous Criminal Code provisions with respect to abortion were unconstitutional and declared the provisions null and void. That was over two years ago. For two years the government has dithered. The government has not had the backbone or the courage to bring forward legislation and to allow a true free vote here in the House of Commons.

On November 3, 1989, Bill C–43 was introduced for first reading. There is a recognition by the mere fact the government introduced the bill, that unborn children must be protected. That is the fundamental *raison d'être* or purpose for introducing into the Criminal Code of Canada the subject of abortion.

Human life begins at the moment of conception and, therefore, must be protected from the moment of conception until natural death. At present there is no recognition whatsoever of human life before the moment of birth. The moment a child is born, that child is afforded each and every protection of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. There is no distinction between human life before and after birth.

A number of years ago in the House of Commons, we abolished capital punishment. Under no circumstances, in Canada, can human life be taken after birth, regardless of how miserable or how criminal that life may be, or what criminal act that person may have committed.

At the moment before birth, there is absolutely no protection whatsoever for that human life. For anyone to suggest or argue that human life begins at birth, I believe, is a ludicrous and nonsensical. That is what those who argue no law at all are suggesting, that there is no need to protect life before birth, that life ought to be protected only from the moment of birth onward. Surely,

any reasonable Canadian knows that there is life before birth. A minute before, an hour before, a day before, a month before, there is a child. There is human life in the womb of the mother.

If we respect life at all, if we attach any respect for human life, we must as Parliamentarians address the question of whether or not there ought to be protection for life before birth. If we are to be classed as a civilized, civil, and moral society, there must be recognition of life before birth.

Where the issue becomes difficult is where that life begins and at what point should that life be protected. There is only one logical place for life to begin—and I have struggled with this particular question. That is at the moment of conception. To argue that life begins at some other point from conception until birth would suggest that at some precise moment there is life after that precise moment and that before that precise moment there is not life. No medical or logical argument has been advanced to my satisfaction that would allow me to conclude that life begins at some point other than at conception.

Some suggest that viability ought to be the deciding factor and that we ought to use the trimester system to determine when life should be protected. I cannot accept that. I believe that life in whatever form must be protected. Surely, the moment life begins is the moment of conception.

• (1650)

I would like to state unequivocally that I intend to vote against Bill C-43, unless it is amended substantially. Regardless of what happens to the bill, the issues of abortion and the recognition and protection of human life before birth will always be issues to be faced by Parliament.

Regardless of where one stands on the issue and one's belief of when life begins, there is common ground that must be met and searched for in order to reduce the numbers of unwanted pregnancies in Canada. Today, we know that approximately 75,000 to 80,000 abortions take place annually. Surely, those on both sides of the issue can agree that more effort should be put into trying to reduce the numbers of unwanted pregnancies.

We are dealing with women who, for a number of different reasons, do not want to proceed with a pregnancy and want to terminate it. I believe sincerely that greater effort must be expended in order to turn some of those unwanted pregnancies into wanted pregnancies and reduce the numbers of abortions that take place. The national government, in co-operation with the provincial and municipal levels of government, must provide a significant increase in resources in order to provide the necessary education, counselling, and resources to try to convince couples and women who find themselves in situations of unwanted pregnancies to try to turn those pregnancies into wanted ones.

Statistics of recent years indicate a very steady increase in the number of abortions, as well as in the number of women having multiple abortions. In 1970, just after the abortion laws were changed, there were just over 11,000 legal abortions in Canada. In 1986, 16 years later, 63,508 legal abortions were performed, which is an increase of approximately 550 per cent. Examined from a different perspective, in 1970 there were three abortions per 100 live births. By 1986, that number had increased to 17 abortions per 100 live births.

If we look at the numbers regarding repeat abortions, the percentage of women with at least one previous induced abortion increased from 8.6 per cent in 1975 to 24.2 per cent in 1986. In 1974, the first year for which there are records, 2,850 women had a second abortion. By 1986, 12 years later, 12,300 had had two abortions, an increase of 400 per cent. These are alarming statistics.

I note my time is up. I look forward to speaking to the bill at third reading stage. Unless Motion No. 10, which would allow abortions only when the life of the mother is in danger, as proposed by the hon. member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell is approved by the House, I would like to indicate to the House that I have no intention of supporting Bill C-43.

Mr. Bill Domm (Peterborough): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to speak on a subject that is not new to the House.

In retrospect, I cannot help but think back to the years 1978 and 1979 at which time the albatross was around the necks of the Liberals. It was then that we went into the

1979 election. There were a lot of comments made and debate entered into over the abortion issue.

In 1979, I campaigned against the Liberal legislation because, even with the review committees set up in the hospitals as a second board of review, there was still the likelihood of availability of abortion on demand in most cases. I also campaigned against the legislation in 1980, 1984, and 1988. Here I am standing in the House today with the same conviction that I had in 1978. No legislation is of any interest to me whatsoever, unless it protects the life of the unborn child from the moment of conception until the moment of birth, when that child becomes a person under our Constitution.

I have supported amendments to our present constitutional laws advanced by the hon. member for Bruce—Grey that we need to deal with an amendment to the Constitution. We need to change the Charter of Rights. Sooner or later, we have to realize that, if we are going to protect the unborn children as persons, they must be listed as persons in the Charter of Rights.

The exercise of debate, argument and court challenges will go on for generations in the United States, in Canada and in other countries, until we clearly define the rights of unborn children. I do not very often agree with criminal lawyers in debates I have had with them over the years, but I agree with what the Criminal Lawyer Association states in a letter sent to me. It reads:

> We disagree with the Justice Minister. In our view doctors should be afraid, based not on fear of conviction, but on fear of being brought improperly into the criminal process. From our observations of prior use of the courts by those opposed to abortion, we believe that there will be frequent attempts at private prosecutions under this legislation. Under the old legislation, the existence of the Therapeutic Abortion Committee had the effect of insulating doctors from prosecution in abortion situations.

I agree with this 100 per cent. Even with therapeutic abortion committees there in 1979, when I first ran for a seat in Parliament, I would not support the bill. Why would I stand up in the House of Commons today, 11 years later, and suddenly support a bill advanced by my government that is far more liberal in the allowance of abortion than anything that I fought against in 1979?

We no longer have that opinion being offered by a second party. We no longer have the kinds of abortions on request that we had then. Now, all that is needed to have an abortion in Canada under our legislation is a pregnant woman, a Dr. Morgentaler and a free-standing clinic. One cannot think for one minute that I will ever be convinced that Dr. Morgentaler has the interests of the unborn children at heart through his clinics across Ontario and in other parts of the country, nor can one think free-standing clinics in Quebec have any interest in the protection of life. They are running a business.

What we are faced with now we will be faced with in the future, without even a second opinion. When the Government of Canada makes it perfectly clear that it does not intend to give serious consideration to any of the amendments, how can it expect a true pro-lifer to stand up in this House of Commons and say that he or she will support this bill because it is better than nothing?

• (1700)

The Catholic Bishops say that they do not like the bill, that it would not be their choice of legislation, but members of Parliament should support it because it is better than nothing. I call the Catholic Bishops the Pontius Pilates of today. They wash their hands of the issue. Yet who will be the first to go down in the next election? I maintain it will be those who support this bill, thanks to the Catholic Bishops and the like.

To substantiate that statement, I want to read to you from an editorial in *The Catholic Register* dated May 26, 1990.

> "If the bill remains as is, it cannot have our approval." So wrote the President of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops—

> So, what we have in the bill is abortion on demand, protected by the law of the land.

Where have you heard that before? I heard that in the 1979 election campaign on the Liberal bill. I heard it in the 1980 election campaign and the others I have already mentioned.

This same *The Catholic Register* states:

> Bill C-43 is not pro-life. It is pro-death.

> What is the alternative? If the bill is defeated in the Commons, no other will be introduced by this government. But after the next general election, the MPs will know that they must deal with the issue, for there will be no law on the books.

Some Members of Parliament will be new then, elected by people of all Faiths who are determined to give pre-born babies the same opportunity to live and contribute to the community as they themselves were once given.

It is hardly fair that 10 minutes is all the time we have at report stage, dealing with this volume of amendments, and then only one 10-minute last recourse at third reading.

The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada do not support the bill, as evidenced in their letter of November 17, 1989. The Carleton Roman Catholic School Board does not support it. Neither does The Calgary Pro-Life Association nor does the Lutheran Church-Canada, which has quite a large membership. The Canadian Catholic School Trustees Association, the Catholic Lay Association, the Ontario Separate School Trustees' Association and the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops do not support the bill, and yet they are telling us to vote for it, it is better than nothing.

I am warning all my colleagues for whom I have great esteem and who I wish will return to this House of Commons after the next election. Will the people support a member who supports a bill that is far more liberal than the bill we inherited from the Liberals when we took office in 1979?

If there is one amendment that I think has even the slightest chance of passing, I would vote for it and it alone and I would urge those who are really and truly pro-life to consider the same move. I would vote for Motion No. 10. Motion No. 10 would not satisfy Mother Teresa or Pope John Paul, but it would satisfy the majority of Canadian people if we were to support Motion No. 10.

However, the government has said today that it is not recommending any amendments, even the most minute amendment affecting very little of the functional ability of people to have abortions. The government is not interested in taking a serious look at any amendments.

So at report stage I would support one motion, Motion No. 10. At third reading I suspect we will not have Motion No. 10, or any other motion. For that reason at third reading I will vote the same way as I have voted for 12 years on this issue. I will take a pro-life stance. I will stand and defend it regardless of how many of my constituents tell me they will never vote for me again because I am pro-life. They told me that on capital punishment, on metric and on extradition. If everybody who said they would not vote for me again ever got together in my riding I would not get any votes, I would be in a negative position.

The truth of the matter is that constitutents today look for members of Parliament who will come to Ottawa and try to do what they say they want to see done. In Canada today we have a strange collection of members of Parliament who are faced with conscience issues, party positions, government positions and constituency positions. Remember, members of Parliament will never go down in flames if they are consistent.

I am proud to say that I am voting against this bill and any other bill like it as long as I am fortunate enough to be here in this House of Commons.

Ms. Dawn Black (New Westminster—Burnaby): Mr. Speaker, I had planned what I was going to say about the motions before I came into the House today, but when I listened to the motions that were presented, many things went through my mind. I felt some very strange emotions.

I had not felt these things when I had looked at the written words of the motions. One of the things that went through my mind was that each and every one of these anti-choice, more restrictive motions was being proposed by men in this House of Commons and that the only pro-choice motion was being proposed by a woman, and that was me.

I am the only mover of an amendment who has actually been pregnant, who knows what women go through when they are pregnant, who knows what they go through when they give birth to children, who knows what women go through when they contemplate the choices that are ahead of them when they find out they are pregnant.

I have three grown children. The complete ignorance and lack of real feeling of what women go through when they are pregnant, when they contemplate an abortion, when they contemplate adoption, or when they contemplate the future and keeping that child, was so evident by the statements made by the other movers of motions in this House today.

I was shocked to hear phrases such as "abortions are performed for cosmetic reasons, for frivolous reasons", and "abortion is an easy option for women". Someone said that women say to themselves that they just do not

like this pregnancy so they terminate it. That is nonsense and is insulting to the women of Canada.

One mover made a bizarre analogy between the criminal penalties for abortion and the penalties for negligence when you are towing a water skier behind you on a boat. Pregnancy is a unique experience; it is not like water skiing, it is not like driving a boat, it is not like arson, it is not like anything else. It is a joyous and wondrous experience for those who have chosen to become mothers, but it can be a very painful and disastrous experience for those whose pregnancy is unwanted.

One mover of an anti-choice motion spoke of how his personal experience of raising a disabled child had shaped his opinion on the whole issue of abortion. My first child was born with a genetic mutation. It is a very serious and life-threatening mutation. He is handicapped and he is disfigured from the medical treatment that he had to undergo. This experience did not make me want to suppress women's choices. It did not make me want to decide for other women what their choices should be. It did not make me want to take away another woman's right to decide the number or the spacing of her children. I made personal decisions to carry out my pregnancies. My personal experiences do not entitle me to decide for other women what their choices should be.

• (1710)

The member spoke of how glad he was that his adopted child had been available for adoption. Well, I wonder about the women and the young girls who are pressured and sometimes even forced to give up their newborn infants for adoption. They might keep those children if they had the financial means. The answer to this situation is to support pregnant women and families, not to expect poor women to give away their children to better-off or well-off people.

Neither abortion, adoption nor keeping a child is an easy decision. The only people who can say that these are easy decisions are those who will never, ever have to face that kind of a decision. Women around the world have risked their lives, their health, their fertility, to obtain abortions in countries where they are illegal, where there is no access to abortions. Women die because they will always make that choice for themselves. They will not allow the state to dictate to them their own personal choices on this issue.

Making abortion illegal does not stop abortion. It simply makes it dangerous, unsafe and a potential killer of women.

Some of these motions, if passed, would amount to a death sentence for some Canadian women. One of these motions would have us throw our medical practitioners in jail for up to 20 years. Under the aiding and abetting section of the Criminal Code, women who have abortions would also be liable to a severe term of imprisonment.

This is the solution that some members of this House say is the answer to this very, very complex social issue; an answer that would put teenage girls into jail; one that would have the effect of jailing mothers who already may have young children, simply because they could not bring themselves to bear another child.

The mover of Motion No. 5 said in his statement, "when I think an abortion should be available". Well, Mr. Speaker, how arrogant, how patronizing to the women of Canada. How dare any member of this House set him or herself up as the sole judge of how many children other people should have, when they should have them and why they should have them. This is an abuse of our role as legislators. Our job is not to intrude into the private affairs of individuals and to make personal, very intimate and very painful decisions for them. The decision to have children or not is one of the most private, intimate and individual decisions there can be.

I am glad to see that the Liberal member who submitted a motion that would have made some forms of birth control illegal has withdrawn it. It would be fitting if some other movers of motions contemplated what their motions would really do to women's lives and health and withdraw theirs as well. It is so obvious that these movers of motions have never experienced an unwanted pregnancy and cannot even contemplate with any degree of realism what it means to be faced with these decisions.

Another thing that I noticed was that the movers all supported one another. There was great camaraderie among them. They congratulated each other for their motions. Well it is time that the women in this House of Commons supported one another.

I have received support from my caucus but I look forward to receiving what all the women in Canada need, the support of all members of this House who value the fundamental right of every person to control their own bodies and their own lives, the right to decide whether or not they will have children and when.

Most Canadians believe in family planning education and in support for pregnant women and families. This is the real solution. A November Environics poll found that 62 per cent of Canadians are opposed to this government's plan to recriminalize abortion.

This bill is no compromise, Mr. Speaker, it is a sell-out. These amendments before us seek to make a bad bill, a criminal bill, even worse.

I heard one of the Tories who moved an amendment talk about social policy in addition to a criminal law. Well, the most effective approach is social policy instead of a criminal law. It is ironic that while he spoke of social policy, the government which he supports is busy dismantling Canada's social support network, making it economically more difficult for people to raise their children. He is part of a government that scrapped the national child care program, deindexed family allowances and put a cap on the Canada Assistance Plan, which is the federal-provincial funding mechanism that currently provides child care spaces and shelters for battered and abused women.

I listened to the member for Peterborough who spoke before me. He indicates that he would even change the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in this country. He would change it to stop women having their full rights. It is shocking. I am horrified to hear some of the comments that have been made here.

I would like to address some of the comments that the Minister of Justice made when she spoke to the amendments. The minister said three times that society has an interest in protecting the foetus. Why is this government criminalizing abortion which provides no protection for the foetus? Many groups and individuals have told us that. That was the overwhelming input from Canadians who came to the legislative committee hearings.

If the government really wants to protect the foetus, why is it not concerned about reproductive health hazards in the workplace, the higher incidence of women and men becoming infertile in our community? Why is it not working toward those issues and toward the underlying issue that always exists when women choose abortion, that is, poverty?

I urge all members to vote against the amendments and to vote for Motion No. 24 which is the pro-choice amendment.

Mr. Doug Fee (Red Deer): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to address the proposed amendments at report stage of Bill C-43. This is an issue that has touched every Canadian. It is an issue that I do not think anyone could have been elected to this House without addressing time and again in the various forums that led up to our election.

It is very obvious from the tone and tenor of the debate this afternoon on the amendments that everyone in the House recognizes how important this is. The debate is also being conducted in a manner in which I would like to see more of them conducted, with each member free to express his or her own point of view and to vote according to his or her own conscience or according to the wishes of his or her constituents.

Having said that, I do not know if very many of us are ready to handle the emotional weight that would be involved if we had to face many issues like this one.

The legislative committee that reviewed the bill deserves to be recognized and applauded for its work. It invested a tremendous amount of study and many hours in listening to witnesses and examining the same. It spent a lot of time in debate and in research. The members of the committee gave the issue much thought and did much soul-searching.

We all know that the bill was reported unamended. That does not mean that there was agreement, as we know. Far from it. This illustrates the problem that exists in trying to legislate a moral issue upon which there are greatly diverging views.

In my speech at second reading I said:

> To achieve political solutions to the complex and controversial problems that come before us it is often necessary to accept compromise. On this issue, however, views are held so strongly and opinions are so galvanized that many of the people we represent are, because of personal convictions, unwilling or unable to compromise their position or their beliefs.

I went on to say:

> Bill C–43 is by necessity a political answer to a moral question, and as a political answer represents a compromise and moral values are not subject to compromise.

My personal position is that life is sacred from the moment of conception until natural death. Many people who share that conviction with me have said that that they felt I compromised my views by supporting Bill C–43 at second reading. They asked how it was possible for me to accept a bill that was a compromise.

Politicians must face a reality that advocates outside of the legislative process do not have to face. We must sometimes accept a bill that is less than perfect when it is better than the alternative. At second reading the alternative was this bill or nothing. I supported it because it was better than the vacuum which existed, and which still exists. I supported it because it is still possible to strengthen it and provide more protection for the life of the unborn.

• (1720)

You cannot compromise moral values as an individual. It is not possible to compromise in your personal life and still retain those values. You are either right or you are wrong.

In the political process our values should be equally strong, but the reality is that to achieve political approval you need the support of half of the members of this House, and at this stage of the debate it is already becoming very apparent that it is going to be difficult to get that many members to support either extreme of the debate. We might well face the same question: not what is right or wrong; not what is the ideal; not what we would like; but what is best given the alternatives available.

The difficulty that the committee experienced illustrates just how difficult it is to achieve compromise in this moral issue, where strongly held opinions do not allow for it.

We are now engaged in debates on amendments at report stage, amendments that have the potential to either strengthen or weaken the bill and the protection it provides for the unborn.

In a brief presented to the legislative committee by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops they said:

> You have the responsibility of drafting legislation which will profoundly affect future generations. Your recommendations will be a statement about the value Canadians place on human life. Yours is not an easy task, but we are confident that you have the ability, humanity and integrity to make a difference.

Time does not allow us to present detailed responses to each of the many amendments and motions before us today. These amendments could make a tremendous difference to the bill. It is my intention to support those amendments which offer more protection for the life of the unborn.

Bill C–43, as presented and reported, still makes an important statement about the importance of life. It recognizes that importance from the moment of conception. It states that it is a criminal act to abort that life unless the health or life of the mother, who carries that life, is threatened.

The weakness, from my perspective, is that the definition of "health" is too broad and not restrictive enough. No one at committee, or in debate, ever argued that abortion should be a form of birth control and we do not want it to be. I will be supporting those amendments that restrict abortion to those circumstances where, in the opinion of a medical practitioner, the life of the mother is threatened.

The committee, in preparing its report, heard numerous witnesses and much testimony. As did many other members of the House, I accepted the opportunity to sit in and participate in the committee when the opportunity allowed. It was an emotional and draining experience. Those who sat throughout all of the hearings have my admiration.

During one of my visits to the committee, a presentation was made by a group called Women for Social Justice. This group will not agree with my position in its entirety, but I would like to quote two statements from their brief to the legislative committee. They said, first: "It is a strength of Bill C–43 that it acknowledges that all society has an interest in unborn persons".

It is not enough in this issue just to talk of women's rights. We cannot perpetuate the myth that men have no responsibility. Indeed we have legislated rights, but all too often we have ignored the requirement that we have to accept responsibility for our actions. If this country is going to continue to reflect the values it was built on, we

must understand and accept the fact that responsibility must precede rights.

One of the values our society has always respected is the value of life and I pray that we will strengthen our law to the extent of respecting the value of the life of the unborn as well.

In their presentation to the legislative committee, Women for Social Justice also said: "It is the function of the criminal law to symbolize our social ideals. Abortion is an issue about the most basic social value and therefore belongs in the central document of our law, codifying community commitment".

Another group representing Catholic Bishops stated, referring to the committee, but it would apply equally well to the House today as we consider these amendments, that our recommendations will be a statement about the values that Canadians place on human life.

Reflecting on this, I would suggest that no stronger statement could be made about the value that Canadians place on life and on the importance of the rights of the individual than guaranteeing the rights of those who are most vulnerable and protecting their right to life. Even with the proposed amendments we do not guarantee the right to life for the unborn, but we can make a strong statement about the value Canadians place on life and establish legal recognition of unborn persons. I would encourage all hon. members of this House to respect life and support those amendments that provide more protection for the unborn.

Hon. Ralph Ferguson (Lambton—Middlesex): Mr. Speaker, I want to remind members, first, of what I said in this House when I spoke against Bill C–43 last November. I said that to those of us who are older, life itself takes on a new meaning. I, as a farmer, go out in the spring of the year to the fields and pastures and see life all about us. We see the birds, the animals, the new growth, the trees, the grass and the flowers, and there is a sense of nearness to one's Creator, the Creator of human life, of life itself.

This debate is about human life, the lives of unborn children. I ask the members of this House to consider the lives of these unborn children above all else.

You will note that the Scriptures never talk about the foetus, they always talk about the child in the mother's womb. An example is Isaiah 49.15: "Can a woman forget the infant at her breast, or a mother the child of her womb?"

I want to draw to the attention of this House that in the preamble to our Constitution it is stated that Canada was founded on principles recognizing the supremacy of God and the rule of the law. I accept those principles, but I further believe in the sanctity of human life and I will work and fight to protect the rights of the unborn. Bill C–43 does not offer any protection to those rights.

I commend my colleague from Glengarry—Prescott—Russell who brought in Motion No. 10. Motion No. 10 would delete the word "health" as a reason for abortion. This would mark a substantial change in the nature of Bill C–43. If amended by Motion No. 10, the passage of Bill C–43 would be a clear indication that Parliament does not want the lives of unborn children placed at risk or to have those lives snuffed out.

The passage of Motion No. 10 would be a step in the right direction. Without the passage of Motion No. 10, Bill C–43 would simply remain a formula for abortion on demand. We would regard a vote for Bill C–43 in these circumstances, regardless of any other amendments passed, as unacceptable.

I certainly commend my colleague from Glengarry—Prescott—Russell on his amendment to this bill and for his endeavours to give some protection to the lives of unborn children.

It is interesting to note that Nurses for Life recognize abortion as the taking of an innocent human life and advocate legislation to protect the youngest members of the human family. It is interesting that this group of nurses and many doctors feel very strongly about this issue.

I want to quote from a letter from a family practitioner in my riding. He says:

> I feel very strongly that this Bill C–43 is merely a method of fully legalising abortion on demand. In saying "—a medical practitioner who is of the opinion that—the health—of a female person would be likely to be threatened" and then that "—health includes—psychological health—" the act opens the way to any physician to perform any abortion on the pretext that continuing the pregnancy would endanger her psychologically.
>
> In Britain, about 20 years ago, a very similar bill was introduced with the additional factors of requiring two doctors and a gestational limit. This law immediately resulted in abortion on demand with no practical redress.

This approach totally ignores the right of the unborn human being to life. This is a God-given right which the state cannot morally take away.

As a physician of 25 years' qualification I should like to mention that I have never seen or heard of a case in which the mother's life was lost by continuing her pregnancy when in the natural place of within the uterus. Occasionally we do see ectopic or tubal pregnancies which are not in the natural site but usually these are only diagnosed after the baby has already been lost.

• (1730)

As I mentioned earlier, as we look at the events unfolding around us in the world today at this time of year, a season when we have the creation of life all around us, it is very ironic that we as the Parliament of Canada are debating a bill that would end life, particularly human life.

I want to quote from another letter. It says:

Before Bill C-43 has its third reading, I would like to express my concerns regarding this bill. Bill C-43 has been characterized as a compromise between the pro-abortion position and the pro-life position. In actual fact, however, it virtually opens a door to abortion on demand. For it is a known fact, that abortions can easily be obtained when they are allowed for so-called health reasons. Even the restrictions "physical, mental and psychological" will not prevent this, for they are too general and too vague.

It goes on to say:

I urge you to withdraw this bill and to give our country an abortion law that protects all of Canada's children from the moment of conception. Only when you do that can we expect God to look down upon our country in favour and grant us His blessing.

It is signed by Reverend Dick Moes of Strathroy, Ontario.

I have another letter that I want to read. It is from an RNA from Kitchener, Ontario. She says:

I am writing to you as an adoptee. When I was 3 months old, I was officially adopted, and have had 19 wonderful years with my adoptive parents. One thing really bothers me: when I was still in the womb, my biological mother could have aborted me, and although it was 1969, abortions were still available.

I think of how my life could have been ended in a few short minutes, before I'd seen my first sight. How then can we actually stand back and allow leniency in the laws for abortion, when millions of unborn children will never see the light of day.

I implore you to see how fragile and precious life is, and how innocent the foetus is, no matter what circumstances their conception comes from. Please—life is so important—say no to abortion. Sincerely,

How can we ignore this, particularly at this time of year when we have a bill like this one before us. Certainly my colleague from Glengarry—Prescott—Russell realized the implications or he would never have brought forward an amendment such as Motion No. 10. I believe it has to be included or we have to turn down this bill as practically no law at all or it would allow abortion on demand.

We have to look at the conscience of this nation and look to the preamble of our Constitution, when it was pointed out so very clearly that Canada was proud of those principles recognizing the supremacy of God and the rule of the land. My plea here today is to ask members of Parliament to make sure that those two principles are not in conflict: one is God's teaching which reflected the supremacy of God and the other is the rule of the land and the decision of this Parliament with regard to this bill that hits so close to the hearts of all of us here today.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to speak on this motion and to say again that I am opposed to this bill unless it is amended with Motion No. 10 which my colleague has put forward in this House.

Mr. Bill Attewell (Markham—Whitchurch—Stouffville): Mr. Speaker, I rise again to speak further on this subject.

I put forth Motion No. 17B which dealt with the definition of health and read:

"physical and mental health, and does not include psychological".

My amendment was part of two others put forth by the member for Kitchener and the hon. member for Fraser Valley East. They were both as well pro-life amendments. I also support, as I said earlier in the day, Motion No. 10 put forth by the hon. member from Glengarry—Prescott—Russell.

In speaking on the amendments I want to make the point and share some thoughts on why I believe Bill C-43, even if it is not amended, is better than no legislation at all. If Bill C-43 is defeated, it will be years or decades before any government will have the political will to take the initiative and present proposed legislation to the House.

With the expected rapid developments in reproductive technologies, we may never again debate an abortion bill in this House. Amendments may be proposed and passed

to existing legislation, but we cannot make amendments if no bill exists. If some of us like myself are not happy with Bill C–43, we could look forward in the future to some amendments.

Several pro–life supporters have told me that I would be breaking my word if I voted for Bill C–43. I want to say that those comments have disturbed and distressed me, but I have given the issue a great deal of thought. I have had many discussions and written correspondence with constituents. I have discussed the issue extensively in Ottawa with my pro–life colleagues and I have prayed about the issue. I believe for a number of reasons that it is better to have Bill C–43 than nothing at all.

I would like to quote from a book prepared by the Law Reform Commission entitled *Rights of the Foetus* in which it answers the question: Why the criminal law? It reads: "Through our criminal law we express the kind of society we believe in and the values we uphold. In our working paper 58 Commissioner Maingot, in his dissent, summarizes what criminal law means to us. 'The criminal law is our nation's fundamental statement of public policy— Ultimately, the criminal law is a mirror of what we are; it reflects our commitment, or lack of commitment, to human dignity and equality".

The book continues: "By using the criminal law power as the basis for a new law on abortion, we are enshrining a certain set of values, which in part describes the kind of society we are".

A second quote I would like to read into the record concerns another paragraph by the Law Reform Commission. It deals with the role of the Criminal Code in our society. It reads: "In truth, the criminal law is fundamentally a moral system. It may be crude, it may have faults, it may be rough and ready, but basically it is a system of applied morality and justice. It serves to underline those values necessary or else important to society. When acts occur that seriously transgress essential values like the sanctity of life, society must speak out and reaffirm those values. This is the true role of criminal law".

It should also be remembered that if we leave a legislative void some provinces will feel obliged to pass an abortion bill. In theory, we could have a patchwork quilt of provincial abortion laws. I find this possibility unacceptable. Whatever abortion legislation we have should be uniform across the country.

In conclusion, as a pro–lifer we have at least three prime conditions. First, we must have a law on this area and it must be in the Criminal Code. Second, there must be provision for criminal sanction against an unlawful abortion, and that is in Bill C–43. Third, we must have protection of new life from conception or implantation. While not totally acceptable, these three conditions are in Bill C–43, but it should be noted that no gestation period is mentioned. I urge all hon. members to support Motions Nos. 10, 12, 13, and 17B.

• (1740)

Mr. John Harvard (Winnipeg St. James): Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to have the opportunity to place some of my thoughts on the record with respect to Bill C–43.

At the outset I want to say that I find the issue of abortion troublesome, complex, and intensely personal. I am very thankful to be in a position to cast a vote against Bill C–43 according to my conscience. I cannot afford the women of Canada anything less than to allow them to decide the issue according to their consciences.

I note that there are members opposite who normally support this government who have chosen to follow their consciences and vote against this government bill. They are doing so because they feel it is the right thing to do according to their consciences. For some reason they will not extend that same privilege or right to the women of Canada. I find that very difficult to understand.

What is this debate all about? I think it is really about who should decide the issue of abortion. It has nothing to do with one side having more respect for life than the other side. One side of this issue calls itself pro–life, while the other side calls itself pro–choice. In my long years of professional life I worked with hundreds of pro–choice women. I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, that they have just as much respect for life as those who call themselves pro–life.

It certainly has nothing to do with abortion on demand, a term that I find insulting, to tell the truth. I think it is an affront to women. I know of no woman who would equate the seeking or the contemplation of abortion with just another item on a shopping list. Yet, when people use that term, in effect they are saying that women

would look upon seeking an abortion just like buying something at the store.

Who should decide the issue of abortion? When all the rhetoric and arguments are cut away, who is going to decide? Is it the woman or the state? I can say truthfully and with all candour that I come down on the side of the woman.

Abortion is intensely intimate, intensely personal, and intensely complex. I cannot think of anyone in a better position to decide the delicate, troublesome issue than the woman. She is in the best position.

How can we come down on the side of an intrusive state? Where is the state in this matter? If we give the state the right to decide on the issue of abortion, it would have to do it from the position of one act or one law. It would have to make the profound decision at a distance, remotely. I cannot believe for a moment that even if we consider the odds the state could anywhere match the judgment of a woman who has to live with this matter from the moment of conception. I will choose the woman in this matter.

A woman is not perfect. She is a human being like the rest of us. She is not perfect. If you cannot trust a woman, who can you trust? Women are our mothers. If we cannot trust women about something as sacred as life, when it comes to unborn babies, when it comes to foetuses, who can we trust? I cannot believe that there are those who would trust the state before trusting the women of this world.

It is normal for women to have babies. It is normal for women to want to carry their pregnancies to full term. When a woman contemplates abortion she is sending out a very disturbing signal. She is saying that despite the fact God has given her the capacity to bring life into the world, she feels she cannot cope. There is something there that prevents her from bringing life into the world. I have to respect that judgement. I have to honour women.

Let us not forget that this issue really is a part of history, part of a continuum. There was a time when we did not trust women with the vote. We did not trust women to work outside the home. We did not trust women to enter professional classes. We thought they were best at home looking after the children or playing the part of housewife and housekeeper. We did not want them in managerial positions. In fact, there are still not many women in managerial positions today. We certainly did not want women to control the purse strings in the home.

Women have been partly emancipated over the past number of years and what have been the results? Is the world poorer? Is our society poorer because women have gone out to enter professional ranks, managerial ranks and achieve equality with men in some areas? I do not think so.

I am opposed to this bill because it does not contribute in any way to the emancipation of women. Women have come a long way but they still have a great distance to go.

I had a mother who belonged to a generation of women who were very repressed. My mother was good enough to bring 14 children into the world. She helped raise 12. I suspect she pretty well raised them on her own. I was number 11. She was good enough to work around the clock, day and night, to raise these children. She was good and noble enough to serve as a wife. She was good and noble enough to serve as an unpaid servant of the family. She was perhaps the finest woman I ever knew and probably will ever know. What did she get in return? She got love from all of us. But, she could not participate in the major decisions of the family.

We were raised on a farm. Despite all the noble deeds, did she have a right to participate in the major decisions of running the farm? Not on your life. Did she have the right to participate in major spending decisions? Not on your life. While she would never have contemplated it, if she had ever thought for a moment about abortion or divorce or anything like that, her thoughts would not have been considered for a moment, because when it came to issues like that she was a second class citizen. I remember in those days how powerless my mother was and it was mainly because she was a woman. She was not entitled to participate in those major decisions.

• (1750)

I have heard a number of members today talk about the need to protect the foetus. I do not think anyone would disagree with that, whether they call themselves pro-choice, pro-life, or anything in between. We all want to protect the foetus, we all want to protect the unborn, we all want to protect life, we all want to respect life. I suggest that the best way to protect the unborn is to protect their mothers. One does not protect the foetus

through the Criminal Code, through some coercive law. We protect them by protecting their mothers.

That is another reason why I am against C-43. It does nothing in the way of providing community support. There is nothing in it dealing with child care. There is nothing to indicate that society will help women; that the community will help a woman to have her baby by providing the assistance she needs.

If we as a society want to protect the unborn, as we should, then let us protect the women and let us protect the mothers of the unborn.

I simply want to say in conclusion that a decision about abortion is complex and personal and intimate. We must leave it to the women. We have to learn to respect women and to trust their judgment. If we do that we will do more to protect life and the unborn than the state ever could.

Mr. Walter Van De Walle (St. Albert): Mr. Speaker, as Parliamentarians we have a responsibility to shape and enact a law that will respect human life from conception to natural death. I oppose abortion, the killing of the unborn. The so-called progressive-minded people who promote the concept of free abortion on demand are contravening the laws of nature and God.

I rise to support Motion No. 10 submitted by the hon. member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell. With the removal of the word "health" the clause would read: "If the abortion were not induced the life of the female person would be likely to be threatened."

The inclusion of the word "health" in Bill C-43 opens the door to many abuses, as happened with the former abortion bill in 1969. Its interpretation is open to many flimsy excuses as a justification for termination. When the word "health" is present, there is a need to define what it means. The plain fact is that it is extremely rare for a pregnant woman's health to be seriously in jeopardy as a result of pregnancy.

There may be other factors causing a health problem. In those instances the medical profession is already aware that they have a responsibility to treat that health problem without making a direct intervention on the life of the child. In the 1969 legislation all kinds of interpretations of health came into play, resulting in abortions being performed for reasons that were not always valid.

In the last 20 years, the large majority of abortions performed in Canada have been for reasons of convenience only, having nothing to do with the real meaning of health. I refer to the Badgley report on the operation of the abortion bill. It states: "In the majority of cases, stating that pregnancy is a danger to the patient's physical health is nonsense as there is no real threat to the patient's health if the pregnancy goes on."

Let us stop playing games with words by hiding the true reason for the slaughter. It is not for reasons of health, but rather for convenience. We must speak out for the sanctity of life.

Mr. Jim Karpoff (Surrey North): Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak to the amendments put forward on this bill.

Before I address specific amendments, I would like to outline again for the House my own philosophical position on the issue. I think it is very clear that the decision a woman makes about an abortion is very personal and intense. It is a difficult issue. It is not done frivolously as some people in this House have suggested, and it is not done without due consideration. It is an agonizing decision.

The decision to have an abortion is a private issue that should not be subject to public or legal scrutiny and certainly should not be subject to legal sanction of the woman or her doctor. I have some understanding for those who oppose abortion under any circumstances because of moral conviction, but I cannot agree with them. They are at least consistent in their belief that under no circumstances should there be an abortion.

This bill is based on a fundamental concept that we, in this House, are able to make a decision on when a woman should have an abortion and that we are in a better position to make a more rational, moral and correct decision than that woman. I cannot agree with that. The women of Canada are totally competent to make the decision as to when they should have an abortion.

We do not know all the circumstances that they are going to be facing. We do not know the circumstances of their health or economics, and we do not know the circumstances or the dynamics of their families. A woman must take all these things into consideration

when she makes that decision. We think we can sit here and prejudge the circumstances under which a woman will be allowed or denied access to a medical abortion, perhaps forcing her to seek an abortion elsewhere.

Perhaps we should consider how we arrived at the position in which we now find ourselves. In 1988, the Supreme Court struck down the previous legislation. In doing so, Justice Wilson stated that the right to reproduce or not to reproduce, which is the issue in this case, is one such right, and is properly perceived as an integral part of a modern woman's struggle to assert her dignity and worth as a human being.

This legislation is not about allowing a woman to assert her worth and dignity as a human being. Chief Justice Dickson stated that by interfering with bodily integrity, forcing a woman by threat of criminal sanction to carry a foetus to term unless she meets criteria unrelated to her own priorities and aspirations is a profound interference with a woman's body and thus, is an infringement on the security of persons.

• (1800)

My philosophy is that it is a woman's right, and that she is the person best able to make that decision. Canadian women have the strength, intelligence, integrity, and, most of all, the right to decide when and under what circumstances they will bear children.

One of the reasons I think people oppose the position of pro-choice is that they think by putting in criminal sanctions it will deny women the right to have an abortion. That is not the history of Canada. It is not the history of any country that has had criminal legislation prohibiting abortion.

Prior to being elected, I worked in the social services field. I worked with poor women and street women. I worked with women who, because of various circumstances, found that they were not in a position either to wish or to be able to go through with a pregnancy. They were forced to seek abortions outside the law.

I have known women who have died from having abortions performed by unqualified practitioners. I can assure the House that, no matter what law is in place, women in urban centres, women with money, will always get abortions. They will get them from medical practitioners. They always have.

It is the poor women who must to seek non-medical abortions. It is women in isolated and rural areas. It is women who do not understand the law, social agencies, and organizations who will be forced to seek illegal abortions. The sophisticated woman, the woman with money, the woman in the urban centre, is not going to be deterred by any piece of legislation that the House passes.

If the government really wanted to have an impact on abortions, then instead of trying to criminalize abortions again it should look to trying to provide support for women. First, it should provide more support so that a woman has a choice as to whether or not she should become pregnant. She should have better information and better access to birth control.

Then, we must make it possible for the woman to make a choice in the true sense about whether she wishes to proceed with a pregnancy. We must provide her with child support, day care, and adequate wages. In this country, women are still paid only 66 per cent of the wages of men. We have to provide adequate housing so that she is able to say: "I am going to be in a position to raise this child in a secure environment".

But what has the government done? It has done everything it can to undermine the ability of women to make that choice. It has done away with the concept that it is going to bring in a universal child care program.

The government has made an absolute shambles of the housing program so that we now have an increasing number of Canadian families being forced into poverty because of inadequate housing. Housing is one of the main indicators of poverty in the country and we still have 1.2 million people living in poverty.

The government has put a cap on the Canada Assistance Plan, the social services network that can provide not only income support services to women but counselling services and such things as alternate home care for teenagers facing pregnancy. It has simply said that it is going to turn its back on the disadvantaged, the poor, and the person who is not socially and economically powerful. Then, at the same time, it wants to say: "We are also going to restrict your access to abortion".

I will close by saying that I will be opposing all of the amendments, except the amendment proposed by my

colleague from New Westminster. Hers is the only amendment that will protect the dignity and worth of women in the country.

Mr. Maurice A. Dionne (Miramichi): Mr. Speaker, I want to intervene just briefly in this debate since I have already spoken my piece at second reading. I will not belabour the issue for long.

I do want to make it clear that I will be voting against this legislation. I will be voting against it because I believe in the sanctity of human life, and I mean all human life, from the moment of conception until natural death.

It strikes me as rather odd that we go through such extensive routines in the case of criminal activity to make sure that there is no miscarriage of justice. Yet we have before us a bill that says a life can be snuffed out by the decision of one person. I believe that is wrong. I believe that that is virtually abortion on demand. I believe that life is more sacred than that and that it deserves more protection.

Once we open the door to abortion, we are opening a Pandora's box that will be very difficult to close. We insist that every perpetrator of a crime—and I am repeating this because I think it is very important— every perpetrator of a crime has every access to the law. Yet, the government is bringing in a law that gives absolutely no protection to the human foetus, which is a fully human being except that it is not yet able to sustain itself. It has all the characteristics and all the attributes of a human being from the moment of conception. Therefore, in my opinion, it deserves full protection of the law from that very moment of conception until its natural death.

We have heard a lot of argument here about how onerous pregnancy is for the woman and, indeed, in some cases it is. But, in this day and age, there are the methods and access to methods of limiting the size of families. It would seem to me that we should be putting the emphasis and the education on that aspect of limiting family size, rather than expending all our time and efforts trying to find a way to kill the unborn child legally. I do not believe there is a way. I will not vote for this bill.

Mr. Len Gustafson (Parliamentary Secretary to Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate this opportunity to address our government's proposed abortion legislation. It is a bill of some significance because the principle on which it is based reaches down and touches the very conscience of our nation. It makes a statement about the definition of life and lays out sanctions that symbolize our value of life.

During my years here, I have gone on record as one who believes that life begins at conception and at that miraculous point it acquires intrinsic worth and value. I am convinced therefore that from this point life should be protected and abortion allowed only when the life of the mother is threatened.

• (1810)

My position today remains unchanged. It is an extension of my desire to develop an anti-abortion consensus in our society.

I have no reason to believe that this consensus does not exist in the riding of Souris—Moose Mountain which I have the privilege to serve. Over the last months I have received 541 letters in favour of this position and two against.

This position is based on sound medical evidence. Those things which indicate life and determine who we are as individuals are present from conception. Clearly, we in this Chamber cannot ignore these facts. They are evidence which require a verdict in favour of truth and in favour of life.

Bill C-43 makes a statement about the truth of life. I am glad that it implicitly recognizes that life begins at conception by placing a criminal sanction against the taking of foetal life. In doing this, the law symbolizes our value and belief in the worth of life.

I might say at this point that I was pleased to see that the gestational approach is not in the bill, but that it does recognize the worth of life. The worth of life is not determined by its validity, its potential, whether it is wanted or not, or whether it will be productive to society or not. If these factors are allowed to determine the value of life before birth, how will we decide what protection life will be guaranteed after birth? We must acknowledge life as intimately valuable.

So, in giving the right to life to the unborn, we preserve life for all, honourable in what we give and what we preserve.

Having said that the bill is sound in principle, I am disappointed in its provision which lays out the conditions under which abortions would be permitted. The bill permits abortion not only for the legitimate reason of the

life of the mother, but for health reasons broadly defined as physical, mental and psychological.

I am deeply concerned that this definition of health is wide open to abuse. I am unhappy that it might allow abortions for reasons of convenience.

However, Bill C–43 does indicate that the mother and the doctor must make a moral choice. For this reason I have searched my heart long and hard. I have come to the conclusion that, because it is sound in principle, I will support this bill with reservations and with the vital hope and desire that it can be improved upon if not now, then at some time in the future.

As a Canadian parliamentarian I have two goals. It is my strongest desire as a parliamentarian to protect the value of life in law. But as a Canadian I have a strong desire to see a reorientation of our society to a view where abortions would be unthinkable. In fact, the two goals go hand in hand. Restricting abortions is easy when it is based on the wider consensus about the value of life.

I would go further to suggest to our pro–life friends that, while we in Parliament do our jobs, their efforts must be more directed to the building of a consensus. This can only be done through compassion and law. Our churches, organizations and we as individuals need to show a new direction that upholds concern over confrontation and that is marked by compelling compassion. We need to be part of the solution by building social, spiritual and physical support networks to serve the needs of the family and the single parent.

We cannot let it be said that our love ends after we succeed in entrenching pro–life legislation. If, while we fight for pro–life law, we lose sight of the greater compassionate purpose, then the law would be worthless.

Therefore I am pleased to say that I do support the protection of the foetus. While I am not completely supportive of the legislation, I believe that at this time it is the best that can be achieved under the circumstances that exist. I believe that a law is important.

I say to those who agree with me that one day we will achieve pro–life legislation. I do not believe for a minute that it is going to come with one stroke of a pen. As we are educated to the great miracle of life and the great responsibility of protecting it, I believe one day we will have this legislation. I believe that the pro–life movement has to look forward in a positive way to directing its emphasis on how best this can be accomplished. It may be one step at a time, but that is my goal. I believe it should be the goal of all Canadians.

Mr. Francis G. LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to participate in this very important debate on an issue of fundamental importance, not only to the people of my riding but to all Canadians.

I want to begin by saying that I will be voting for the pro–life motions that were introduced earlier today. In particular, I will be supporting the motion which would restrict abortion to situations in which the life of the mother is threatened.

Second, I will be supporting the body of motions which would strengthen the health definition contained in the bill in order that that particular definition may limit, as far as possible, the circumstances in which abortion would be permitted.

I will be voting for those motions and expecting a number of them to carry in order to consider voting for the bill at third reading. In my view it is the only philosophically consistent approach I can take. It is the only approach which is consistent with a rigorous examination of what it is to be human, what it is to be Christian, what it is to believe in the sanctity of life and to support life in our laws, in our social customs and in our institutions.

However, I want to say at the outset that I would not like to have this be a blind pro–life versus a pro–choice distinction which is governing my decision in this matter. I believe that the dichotomy between these two points of view is far too simplistic an approach to understanding what is a very complex issue.

• (1820)

In fairness, I do not believe that those who proclaim themselves to be pro–choice are actually in favour of abortion. Likewise, I do not believe that those who proclaim themselves to be pro–life are against any form of choice, against the responsibility of women, against women, or against their particular freedom because they advocate restrictive legislative bounds on abortion.

I believe that the way to understand the principle of legislation to restrict abortion is in terms of social responsibility. We can regard laws as a curtailment or a restriction on human freedom, just like we could regard this particular law as a restriction on the choice or on the freedom of women, but I would rather see the law be regarded as a support for responsible social behaviour.

Seen in that light, it is no different than seeing, for example, seat-belt laws as legislation which restricts our freedom but, at the same time, encourages people to responsible social behaviour, just like other laws which, for instance, have imposed severe sanctions on consumption of alcohol while driving a motor vehicle. Those laws which have been introduced over the past few years, including social proscriptions, have also been an inducement to responsible social behaviour. And I think there is a way of understanding a restriction on abortion in that respect.

We must see, as a society, legislation which will encourage not only women, but men as well, to view the consequences of their actions, and particularly, in this case, into the sexual sphere, before they get into situation. The law has to support responsible conduct in this regard, realizing, of course, that situations in life will always make it difficult and will pose challenges for us as human beings when confronted with standards which would be established by, for example, a restrictive abortion law.

That having been said, I would like now to comment on some of the proposed motions of other hon. members, particularly those about which I feel most strongly.

Motion No. 16, which has been grouped for debate with my own, adds that a health risk must be a serious one. I agree. Requiring that the health risk be a serious one eliminates as a reason for abortion many of the quite normal physical and mental discomforts which often accompany a pregnancy.

I must stress again that any abortion law must be accompanied by a range of programs which address difficulties like the ones that have been mentioned by other speakers. Counselling services and medical advice must be available and accessible to all Canadian women. We must adopt a broad policy to effectively reduce abortions in Canada. A law by itself is insufficient and I will speaking to that question at a later time, Mr. Speaker.

The last resort amendment, which is that abortions are only a last resort, must be accompanied by my own which narrows the health definition. What medically acceptable alternative treatment is there for psychological, socioeconomic factors such as being poor or being afraid to tell one's parents? Would treatment by a financial adviser or by a school counsellor constitute medically acceptable treatment to alleviate the health risk? This amendment is meaningless to me unless accompanied by a more restrictive definition of health.

Motion No. 13 interests me as well. It states that abortion be the treatment of last resort to alleviate the health risk to the mother.

The Canadian Medical Association has stated that abortion reflects a distasteful failure of the education and medical system. Abortion is a regrettable last resort treatment.

This last resort amendment must be accompanied by my own which limits the health definition to mental and physical. This amendment is meaningless to me unless a medically acceptable alternative treatment is found for psychological factors, such as being poor or afraid to tell one's parents.

Motion No. 19 expands the definition of opinion. The Canadian Medical Association has called Bill C-43's definition of "opinion" rather useless. Bill C-43 indicates that the medical communities practice acceptable standards deemed appropriate for formulating an opinion regarding abortion.

So why has the government bothered to insert it into the legislation? In my view, unless opinion is given additional and more defined meaning, insertion of its definition into Bill C-43 is useless.

In closing, Bill C-43 is in dire need of amendment. Motion No. 17A, which I have proposed, is only a minor change, but serves to clarify and strengthen the section of the bill which I feel is in need of repair. I cannot emphasize enough the urgent need of a broader policy on abortion in Canada, one which does not simply put a line into the Criminal Code but adds a program which will effectively reduce and hopefully eliminate the number of abortions in Canada.

Ms. Lynn Hunter (Saanich—Gulf Islands): Mr. Speaker, I am not pleased to be rising this evening to participate in this debate on the amendments to Bill C–43, an act regarding abortion.

I have listened with a growing sense of outrage to the statements by the men who are proposing, in total, 13 amendments. All of their amendments would make an already punitive bill even more so.

I try to insulate myself from that anger. I struggle to keep my temper in the face of these horrendous insults to women. I hope this evening to keep my temper sufficiently in order to speak clearly on this issue.

Earlier in today's debate the Minister of Justice told this House that the bill is a compromise, a fragile balance between a woman's right to control her own body and foetal rights. This is an outrageous statement coming from the woman given the honour of being the chief lawmaker in Canada.

Does the Minister of Justice not know that foetal rights have not been defined? The Supreme Court in the Daigle decision acknowledged that fact. The minister's statements this afternoon only served to exacerbate the confusion over this bill.

I will agree with the minister that Bill C–43 is a compromise, but the word compromise infers a solution. In this instance the so–called compromise is anything but a solution. It serves to mark a compromise of principle while moving us further from a solution.

If members of this Chamber were sincere in their wish for a real solution, they would be devoting much greater energy to the issues of equality for women, child poverty, reproductive health and education. They would be urging that greater resources be allocated for research into safe and effective means of birth control.

As a woman, I have had first–hand knowledge with that. When I was pregnant with my son, who is now 17 years old, I participated in a family planning clinic and took birthing classes. Of the 10 white, middle–class couples in that class, all well–educated people, six were there because of failed birth control. If this country really cared about stopping abortion, it would be putting more money into research into effective means of birth control.

I am ashamed of the ignorance that has been displayed in this Chamber on this issue. When I speak of ignorance I am giving those who speak the benefit of the doubt. If it is not ignorance, then it comes down to a conscious exercise of power, men utilizing their power over women. That is a very frightening and sinister prospect. Pregnancy is a wondrous process. It is wondrous for both women and men, but women are the only ones who can actually experience it. Some have argued that men are in awe, in fact resentful of that fact, that they have used their power to attempt to control the reproductive power of women. These men depict women as wanton creatures, morally deficient creatures, requiring threat of criminal sanction to keep them in line. It is this insulting assumption which is the basis of this law.

• (1830)

Some of the sanctimonious statements I have heard from men in the House today are trotted out as truisms, as items not considered by women facing an unwanted pregnancy. That is utter hogwash.

Ms. Black: Absolutely.

Ms. Hunter: Women facing an unwanted pregnancy do not need the advice of men in this House. I urge the members of this House, if they really truly respect women, to support the only amendment worthy of consideration, that is Motion No. 24 put forward by my honourable colleague—and I say that in the most sincere way—the hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby.

Mr. Howard Crosby (Halifax West): Mr. Speaker, I want to begin my brief remarks on Bill C–43 relating to abortion by saying that for all members of the House of Commons, it is a difficult decision. I hope all members will make the decision bearing in mind the interests expressed across Canada against abortion and in favour of women's choice.

It is not a decision one can make lightly. I do not accept the political ideology that we have just heard in the House of Commons from that member of the NDP and other members who put it on a basis of no decision–making, the decision is made. That is not true. The decision has to be made by members of the House based upon their own view of life in Canada and the social values of Canadians in their own constituencies, across the regions and throughout the country. It is not a decision to be made lightly. I want you to know, Mr.

Speaker, I have put a great deal of thought into the process.

First, I want to make clear that the decision I made for myself is that there must be a law in Canada with respect to abortion. The existing situation where we have a void as a result of the decision of the Supreme Court of Canada is not acceptable to the great majority of Canadians. I say that with respect to the views of those who believe that Canada, and life in Canada, can continue without a law on abortion. I think that is a view people hold with real emotion but, at the same time, it is not a view that I personally can accept. I want to make it clear to all my colleagues in the House of Commons that I believe there must be a law on abortion.

The difficulty is in what should be the content of that law. I think members must realize the legal parameters set down by the Supreme Court of Canada with respect to a law on abortion. It is not possible, in my opinion, for the House of Commons to enact a law that precludes abortion in all circumstances. There must be circumstances in which abortion can be performed. Any law that says otherwise would not meet the tests and the dictates of the Supreme Court of Canada, which is the lawful determining authority under the Canadian Constitution and under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Those who believe that there ought to be a law which totally voids abortion in all circumstances will have to seek an amendment to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. That can only be done under very special circumstances. What is at stake in relation to the Charter of Rights and Freedoms is the protection of the foetus not now recognized under the Constitution. In order to fully protect life as it exists in the foetus, there must be a constitutional amendment to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. We are dealing with a specific bill relating to abortion law in Canada which must meet the test imposed by the Supreme Court of Canada. It is in that context that we must examine Bill C–43. It is difficult to consider the nature of an abortion law without reviewing one's own feeling in addition to the feelings of the Canadian society as represented in constituencies such as Halifax West and provinces like Nova Scotia and across the country.

In order to respond to what one perceives to be the prevalent view, I think it is difficult to accept the law imposed by Bill C–43. As has been said by so many members, it virtually includes abortion in those circumstances. The only condition would be that a medical practitioner must direct the performance of the abortion and it must be based on health grounds of the broadest kind.

I am going to look very carefully at amendments proposed by colleagues in the House of Commons that would restrict the definition of health and would add restrictions to the law proposed by Bill C–43. If those amendments do not pass then I, as all members, will be faced with the decision of whether or not to support Bill C–43 or vote to defeat that legislative measure.

Again I repeat that I believe very strongly that we must have an abortion law in Canada. In the few moments available to me today I want to indicate why I would question the provisions of Bill C–43. May I say that I proposed an amendment to Bill C–43 in the House of Commons that would have defined medical facility as an approved hospital or medical clinic and would have required that the kind of abortion permitted under Bill C–43 be performed there.

I am very disappointed that the Chair did not see fit to permit that amendment to be included in the list of amendments relating to the abortion law because I think it is very important to Canadians, particularly in Nova Scotia and my area of Halifax. If abortions are to be performed, they must be performed under very careful circumstances. We have the requirement that a medical practitioner must be involved, but if abortion can be performed anywhere determined by the medical practitioner, that is going to create difficulties.

As is well known, Dr. Henry Morgentaler and perhaps others believed that they should be permitted to perform abortions in a clinic they have established. I am sure if that precedent is established as part of our law, many clinics will spring up across the country for the performance of abortion.

Those who believe in free choice will welcome that change. But for those who want to be extremely careful in determining the circumstances in which an abortion might be allowed, this will pose very grave difficulties. It will be unacceptable to those who oppose abortion, as well as to those who would only permit abortion under limited circumstances.

I find it very difficult to support the bill in the absence of a provision restricting the place in which abortions can be performed. In the province of Nova Scotia a law has been enacted to restrict the place in which abortions are performed. That law is now before the courts and there is great danger that if Parliament does not act to restrict the place in which abortions may be performed, provincial laws may be declared invalid once legislation such as Bill C–43 is passed.

This is a very technical legal point but it is one that is going to cause serious difficulty, not only in Halifax and Nova Scotia, but across Canada. I think if there is one thing I glean from conversations with my constituents and Canadians in other places, it is that there should be a law pertaining to abortion. That law must be carefully administered. It cannot be carefully administered unless the places at which abortions are performed are restricted.

• (1840)

In closing, I have the greatest sympathy for those who believe that it is a woman's right, in certain circumstances, to have an abortion. I cannot as an individual and as a member of Parliament accept that view. I do not want to increase the possibility of danger to women in the matter of child bearing. I realize that there should be other measures to avoid situations that result in unwanted pregnancies and I would support any of those measures. For the moment, my position is clear: There must be a law on abortion in Canada and that law has to be carefully crafted in order to ensure that abortions are restricted and that those restrictions are carefully monitored.

Mr. Dan Heap (Trinity—Spadina): Mr. Speaker, I rise to oppose Bill C–43 and all amendments proposed thereto, with the exception of amendment No. 24, standing in the name of the hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby.

I am not going to dwell on the legalities of the matter. It is not that they are unimportant but because I have only a few minutes. I am not going to argue about the rights of a woman versus the possible rights of the foetus, although undoubtedly that is a question that must be dealt with. I do not think the matter rests at the level of legalities. I want to deal with the underlying moral debate, the reason why some people say and sincerely believe that we must have a law in the Criminal Code prohibiting and punishing abortion.

The argument, as it is most usually presented, is that abortion is the killing of a person; a person yet unborn but a person. As we have laws to prevent the killing of a person who has been born, so we should have law to prevent the killing of a person who has not been born. It is also said on the basis of some very particular traditions that this is contrary to the teaching that we know as God's law. I take God and his law seriously, Mr. Speaker, although I think that there is far more to God than what we call His law, such as laws that have been written down in the Bible and in other books. There is God's creation, God's forgiveness and God's love. The law is really a smaller part than those, and I will come back to that later.

The reason I do not accept the very simple argument as it is put forward is that I do not think it works. Even if I were to accept the view that the unborn is a person and that abortion is there for the killing of a person, I oppose this bill. I oppose it because it will not work. It will not stop abortions no matter how it is amended. Therefore, it causes trouble to no good end. It causes useless trouble to women and doctors.

The reason why I say it will not work is that abortions have been done since the earliest time of our history even though people in those days, as in our days, had reverence for life. It is not reasonable to get hysterical about saying our civilization must not decide to kill the unborn. The shoe is on the other foot. The question is: Have we arrived at the point in our civilization where it is possible that no one will kill the unborn? That is the challenge but it is a very different one.

Abortions have not only been performed in the past, they are performed in our own time, in Christian countries such as Ireland that have ferocious laws penalizing abortionists. There is a high rate of abortion in Ireland as there is in some other countries that are not Christian. In other words, they appeal to what people say is God's law on the matter, but the backing up of that appeal by the threat of prison does not stop abortion. That is a matter of experience and a matter of fact.

When we had punitive laws in Canada they did not stop abortion. They drove it underground. Abortions were done secretly or abroad. When they were done secretly they were often badly done. They succeeded as

abortions in killing the unborn but they also at times did great harm, even to the point of killing the mother.

I think a previous speaker summed it up very well when he said that the best way to protect the unborn was to protect the mother. This is assuming that the unborn is a person to which some hold and some disagree. Taken at the point of the strongest argument against abortion, namely the argument that it is a person there in the womb, the best way to protect what is in the womb, person or not, is to protect the woman carrying it.

As a practice to be legislated by us, it is simply not practically possible to protect the unborn against the will of the mother. The only way to do that would be to threaten violence on the mother, and that is bound to have a dangerous effect on the child. We can all imagine the ways in which that may happen. The threat of violence against the pregnant woman might affect the child in her womb, nevertheless the experience of threatened violence against her has not prevented the practice of abortion.

There are other things that can be done. I regret that so much attention is given by some parts of our society in Canada to the negative means, to the threat, to the use of violence either directly or as a threat. It has been pointed out many times in previous debates and again today that there are many women who choose abortion who would not choose it, who would choose to bear the child if they were given the support that would be fitting to the position of people who say we must reverence life.

I have had experience on the Toronto City Council where certain people, who spoke about reverence for life, condemned abortion and Planned Parenthood because they might sometimes give someone advice about how to procure an abortion. There was a five-hour debate about whether to give $500 to Planned Parenthood. Some members said they would not vote for it because they reverenced life.

Those same members of council despised life once it was born because they also voted against a by-law that would stop landlords from excluding tenants on the ground that they had children. So the unborn have rights but the born have no rights; that is ridiculous. If this House, including the government side, seriously wishes to protect the unborn, it can do far more than this law could ever do. It could provide for the economic and health maintenance of the pregnant woman be she married, unmarried, rich or poor. It could provide for decent medical treatment, which to some extent our country provides better than the United States does for its poor people. That is one reason why some of us want to keep our economy safe from the American takeover.

• (1850)

It could provide decent housing accommodation for the parent or parents and child. It could provide decent working conditions and could respect the work of women who still carry the huge majority of the work of raising children.

By the laws of our country there is a whole class of women expected to do the work of child raising and housekeeping who are paid rotten, low wages, who are kept in positions of semi-servitude, and who are forbidden even to try to organize a union on their behalf. We call them the immigrant domestic workers. We bring them to Canada because the pay for the work they do is so rotten and the conditions of abuse, sometimes physical or even sexual abuse, are so rotten where they work that Canadian women will not do that work. That shows how this government and this House despise the work of women, particularly the work of raising children.

Until we change that and give decent recognition to the work of raising children, we have no right to threaten violence against a pregnant woman who decides not to bear a child. Therefore, as I say, I would oppose all the amendments that are proposed today, except for Motion No. 24, standing in the name of the hon member for New Westminster—Burnaby. It would simply strike out all the sections that provide for violent penalties against the woman or doctor who take part in an abortion. It will do no good. It will do a great deal of harm. If we are serious as a House, we can do much better.

Mr. Rey Pagtakhan (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, earlier I spoke in support of my two amendments which in essence would safeguard the pregnant woman having the abortion based on genuine medical indications.

The member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell whose motion I seconded indicated that a medical procedure had only to be induced by a medical practitioner. It stands to reason that when the procedure to be done will effect the destruction of the unborn, it should be carried out wholly and solely by the physician so that he or she can assume the ultimate medical responsibility.

Were we to allow people other than physicians to perform the procedure for genuine, medical indications, first, the indications may not exist. Second, we may franchise abortion clinics across the country. Third, there can be an assembly line for doing abortions. When that happens truly the practice of medicine will be corrupted.

The amendment proposed by my colleague is an attempt to ensure that the physician truly does the procedure and does it according to medical standards.

For the last minute, I cannot help but comment on the information of the previous speaker. He indicated that we do not need this law because it will not work. That is not an argument against introducing a law. There is a law against murder, there is a law against death, and we have not eliminated those offences from this earth. Inability to eliminate offences completely is no excuse not to enact a good law.

The last speaker indicated that many women would not choose abortion if support was given to the pregnant woman so that she would be encouraged to proceed with that pregnancy to term. If that were the true answer to the problem, why then propose an answer that is no answer at all?

The Supreme Court of Canada, in saying that the state has a legitimate interest to protect the life of the unborn, is telling Canadians that it is part of our rule of law enshrined in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

I object to this bill being unamended because although it is difficult to compromise the two opposing views it does not really reconcile the two at all. We cannot equate the right to choose on the part of the women versus the right to live on the part of the unborn. Only two lives may be equated, and that is why there is a need to ensure that medical indications are safeguarded and that the one who will do the procedure is a medical practitioner.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): It being nine o'clock, pursuant to Order made Thursday, May 10, 1990, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at two o'clock p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

The House adjourned at 6.57 p.m.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, May 23, 1990

The House met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S. O. 31

[*Translation*]

TRANSPORT

Mr. Guy Saint-Julien (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, the truckers' association has now set up four roadblocks in Abitibi—Témiscamingue.

These independent truckers are struggling to survive. They are protesting against the fact that truckers from neighbouring provinces and the United States have invaded Quebec and the Abitibi—Témiscamingue area and are competing unfairly against them.

They demand new rates and want better highway controls to be put in place immediately to ensure that truckers from neighbouring provinces and the United States who work in Quebec meet the standards and regulations of the Régie de l'assurance-automobile du Québec and the Quebec Department of Revenue.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of Quebec must consider the demands of truckers in Abitibi—Témiscamingue and throughout the province.

* * *

[*English*]

CULTURAL INDUSTRIES DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

Mr. John Harvard (Winnipeg St. James): Mr. Speaker, the federal government has pulled the rug from under Manitoba's culture industry. The budget of the Canada-Manitoba Cultural Industries Development Office, CIDO, has been slashed for 1990, but worse still come March 1991, the Conservative government will withdraw completely its support of CIDO. There will be nothing left.

The federal government has reneged on the commitment it made when the Canada-Manitoba CIDO was created. This is a major blow to Manitoba's cultural industry and economy. It will kill, for example, a young but successful film industry. Producers and technicians will leave the province in order to do their work elsewhere, resulting in the loss of nearly 200 direct jobs. Manitoba's economy will lose more than $7 million in related broad-based economic spin-offs.

CIDO was a success. Why tamper with success? Once again this government is showing its lack of interest in Manitoba and western Canada.

* * *

MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Miss Deborah Grey (Beaver River): Mr. Speaker, the government has been trying to pass Meech, not by convincing Canadians, but by threatening them. These threats have not worked. Instead, they have only proven that Meech cannot be sold on its merits.

The threat is Quebec's separation. This is a real issue and may be dealt with eventually, but passing Meech will not make eventual separation any less likely. Defeating Meech will not make it any more likely.

I urge the province of Quebec to recognize that the rejection of Meech Lake is not a rejection of the people of Quebec, but a rejection of the flawed Prime Minister-Bourassa approach to constitution making.

I call upon the Prime Minister of Canada to accept responsibility for the constitutional chaos into which his Meech Lake initiative has led this country and to resign.

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[*Translation*]

CATHOLIC CLERGY

Mr. Marcel R. Tremblay (Québec-Est): Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to offer my sincere congratulations to Father Claude Jobin and Father Jean-Pierre

Boivin, respectively, pastor of Sainte-Monique les Saules parish and assistant in the same parish, in my riding.

On June 10, they will both celebrate their twenty-fifth anniversary in the priesthood. That evening, Father Jobin and Father Boivin, whose compassion and generosity towards those who seek their help are well-known, will receive a token of appreciation for their constant involvement in the community.

Thank you both and keep up your wonderful work in the community!

* * *

[*English*]

LOW-LEVEL FLIGHTS

Mr. Robert E. Skelly (Comox—Alberni): Mr. Speaker, I wish to extend my congratulations to the Innu people of Labrador for successfully making their case against the proposed NATO base at Goose Gay.

Perhaps NATO recognized that 40,000 over-flights a year would be destructive to the Innu way of life. Perhaps NATO recognizes that changes in Europe and a reduction in international tensions made the test facility obsolete.

However, it is an unfortunate comment on leadership in Canada that under the Conservative government and in the face of east-west tensions, the Prime Minister himself could ignore the Innu and their land, and insist on proceeding with Canada's bid for the base.

The cancellation of the base does not mean an end to the 7,000 over-flights a year already conducted out of Goose Bay. Under agreement they will continue for another six years.

If Canada wants to create employment in the Happy Valley-Goose Bay area, it should embark on negotiations to settle aboriginal claims in the region. Those settlements result in economic independence for native communities, a repatriation of capital to the region, and more jobs for natives and non-natives alike.

If Canada could show sufficient respect for the Innu, it would abandon all low-level test flights in Labrador now.

THE MIDDLE EAST

Mr. Mark Assad (Gatineau—La Lièvre): Mr. Speaker, I had the honour and privilege of listening to Dr. Israel Shahak, who immigrated to Israel after surviving the siege of the Warsaw ghetto and a Nazi concentration camp. He is now a retired chemistry teacher from the University in Jerusalem.

He gave us his impressions of events in the occupied territories on the West Bank and in Gaza, and spoke with a great deal of concern.

Maybe Canada cannot force the Israeli government into peace negotiations with the Palestinians, but at least, as Canadians, we should realize that there are children and women who have suffered greatly in those occupied territories and who do not have the proper kind of health care.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of such gifted gentlemen who come and tell us what is actually happening, pleading on behalf of the Palestinian women and children, I would ask that the Canadian government at least call upon the Israeli authorities to make sure there is proper medical treatment available in those occupied territories.

* * *

MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Mr. Peter L. McCreath (South Shore): Mr. Speaker, during the fall of 1986, 11 first ministers met in Edmonton and determined that the next logical step in the constitutional process was to conclude arrangements that would honourably permit Quebec to return to the Canadian family.

Such provisions were achieved several months later at Meech Lake under the inspired and persuasive leadership of our Prime Minister. For the only time in Canadian history 11 first ministers came together in historic agreement.

Prior to ratification of that agreement, elections brought new first ministers to three provinces. They were not a part of the process and concluded that their agendas were more important. But without the prior ratification of the Meech Lake Accord, with or without a companion resolution, there may be no future agendas.

Atlantic Canada can ill-afford the political and economic uncertainty that the loss of the Meech Lake Accord will bring. I urge Premiers Wells and McKenna to serve Atlantic Canada's interest, to ensure Canada remains strong by passing and putting Meech behind us in order that we can all look forward with optimism to future constitutional and economic agendas.

* * *

• (1410)

[*Translation*]

RACISM

Mr. David Berger (Saint-Henri—Westmount): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the House passed a resolution condemning and deploring racism and intolerance in Canadian society, as reflected in acts of vandalism in cemeteries.

The House has spoken, Mr. Speaker, but I wonder whether this gesture should not go further. A recent study by B'nai Brith points to a 57 per cent increase in racist incidents against Canada's racial minorities last year.

Yesterday, an article in *The Gazette* reported a series of racist and violent incidents in Quebec and Ontario which occured between May 12 and May 20. In one incident, five "skinheads" assaulted a black youth on Saint-Laurent Boulevard in Montreal. Are these incidents symptomatic of a deeper, underlying malaise? Why now? Why cemeteries? Who are these unknowns who perpetrate such terrible acts? Were these incidents orchestrated?

Mr. Speaker, our responsibility to the victims bids us to ask serious questions.

* * *

[*English*]

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, will the GST be harmful to the Canadian economy?

Some hon. members: Yes.

Mr. Riis: Yes, it will. Do 80 per cent of Canadians oppose the GST?

Some hon. members: Yes.

Mr. Riis: Should the GST be stopped?

Some hon. members: Yes.

Mr. Riis: Can the GST be defeated?

Some hon. members: Yes.

Mr. Riis: The Liberals in the Senate know how Canadians feel about the GST. Canadians oppose it. The Liberals in the Senate have the constitutional authority to defeat the GST.

On behalf of the New Democratic caucus, I call on the Liberal Senators to do the right thing, the honourable thing, hear the cries of 80 per cent of Canadians and stop the GST. Vote in the Senate today and defeat the GST. You have the right. You have the responsibility. Do it, Liberal Senators.

* * *

MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Mr. Arnold Malone (Crowfoot): Mr. Speaker, I was privileged to serve on the committee that studied the companion resolution to the Meech Lake Accord. It was an experience of politics at its best; three political parties working together for the good of Canada.

I would like to share a personal experience with the House of Commons. While in Vancouver, Mr. Glen Cowan gave testimony before the committee. He and I met later for a private discussion.

This fine, well-read and deeply committed Canadian told me that four decades ago, he and four of his friends voluntarily left for a theatre of war a wide ocean and a continent away.

They risked their lives in the name of Canada. Three of those five men never returned. They are, in the name of freedom and Canada, buried in foreign soil.

Mr. Cowan himself was twice seriously wounded. Every day that he did battle, he knew the great risk involved.

He then, with a burden that comes with painful knowledge, said to me: "If we young people were willing to lay down our lives for Canada, then surely these hold-out provinces can make a political sacrifice in the name of nation-building."

Sir, I concur. The torch is ours to hold high. The most magnificent nation on earth must not fail.

FISHERIES

Mr. Francis G. LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso): Mr. Speaker, yesterday 38 trawlermen travelled by bus from Canso to Ottawa to speak out on the crisis facing their community. They had three messages for this government, and in particular for the Minister of Fisheries.

First, the central problem of the Atlantic fisheries is not too many fishermen chasing too few fish. It is too many powerful fishing boats destroying too many fish at sea. This scandalous practice is occurring at the same time that fish plants in our coastal communities are closing for want of fish to process. This practice has got to stop.

Second, the people of Canso are not responsible for the crisis in which they now find themselves. Canso is a victim of the murky scheme to use declining quotas in the northern cod stock as a pretext for rationalizing this community out of existence.

Third, the solution to the Canso problem is simple. Give back to its fishermen their rightful share of the quota taken from them by National Sea's departure and ensure that the trawlers continue to fish from the Canso port.

This is within the power of the Minister of Fisheries to achieve. It is what the people of Canso have asked for from the beginning. They and I will accept nothing less.

* * *

NATIONAL UNITY

Mrs. Edna Anderson (Simcoe Centre): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my heartfelt sadness at the anger, fear and intolerance I am seeing and hearing in my country, Canada.

Goodness knows our history is not without blemish. I believe we have tried to learn from our past, and we have tried to build a better Canada for our future generations. I wonder if we have suddenly stopped caring and trusting each other. Why are we responding to perceived fears and threats to our national unity rather than reaching out and embracing the one vehicle that will unite us, the Meech Lake Accord?

By accepting Meech Lake, we do not lose any of the provisions that exist in the Constitution Act, 1982. Instead, we gain by including Quebec in the Canadian family where she belongs.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[*English*]

MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister. Canadians are concerned about our constitutional situation. They are concerned about the future of our country. They want assurance that action is being taken to confirm that future.

I understand that Senator Murray has completed his consultations with the provinces and has reported today to the Prime Minister. I ask the Prime Minister exactly what proposals Senator Murray took to the provincial premiers. What recommendations has he made to the Prime Minister today? Is the Prime Minister now ready to announce an early First Ministers' Conference to develop a fair and reasonable solution to our current constitutional impasse?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I have just finished meeting with Senator Murray who provided me with a very extensive debriefing on the 10 very complete meetings he held with provincial premiers across the country over the last three or four days.

It is his judgment that at this time it would be premature to call a meeting of First Ministers. It is his judgment that some of the individuals involved in the process clearly have not seized the magnitude of the problem that is upon us, and that a First Ministers' Conference at this time would be premature. He did, however, a few moments ago leave with me some suggestions that I will reflect upon very carefully because they deal with some interesting ways whereby we may be able to narrow some of the differences and begin the process of bringing some of the parties more closely together.

Obviously, Mr. Speaker, my objective is the same as all members of the House. It deals exclusively and principally with maintaining the unity of Canada and finding therein a proper and an honourable place for all of its important component parts and, at this particular junc-

ture, principally the province of Quebec. We are searching for an honourable and thoughtful way to do precisely that. As all members of the House would want, I will continue the search right up to the very end to see if we can find a formula that will allow us to make sure that the unity of Canada is firm and irrevocable.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my second question is for the Prime Minister. Canadians will certainly be surprised and disappointed by the Prime Minister's answer to the question on calling a meeting of first ministers.

Mr. Speaker, the provincial premiers, in particular those of Quebec and Newfoundland, said that they are ready to take part in a conference. For example, the Premier of Quebec, Robert Bourassa, even said yesterday that dialogue is always a good policy. He added, "I do not see how I would serve Quebec's interests by saying that I refuse dialogue with my partners."

So, Mr. Speaker, I ask the Prime Minister why he refuses to call a conference when the provincial premiers agree to participate in one. Certainly, Mr. Speaker, the time has come to call such a conference, in light of the public statements of the provincial premiers themselves.

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I think that my friend misinterprets Premier Bourassa's statement.

Mr. Bourassa did say that he was not refusing to talk with his partners; it is also true that Mr. Bourassa said that he would not necessarily refuse to participate in a first ministers' conference. But I think he is of the opinion that it would be premature to call such a conference immediately.

Some other premiers have said that of course they would like to have a first ministers' conference, but they think that, under the present circumstances, it might be premature in the next few days.

So I will analyse Senator Murray's proposals to find a formula that could bring the parties together, so that we can have everything in our favour as much as possible. If there is a conference, I want it to succeed. I want the conference to succeed as much as possible and not to fail.

We had a failure in 1981 when Quebec was excluded; we do not want that to happen again. We are for the unity of Canada!

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

• (1420)

[*English*]

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Prime Minister said that Quebec at the time put forward 23 proposals that were unacceptable to the rest of Canada. He offered that as an explanation for Quebec not yet being a signatory to the Constitution. I hope he will remember the words he used yesterday.

I would like to ask the Prime Minister a specific question. If he is not going to call an early First Ministers' Conference, exactly what is he going to do between now and June 23? Is he telling Canadians he is going to sit and do nothing? If that is the case, certainly Canadians expect more from the Prime Minister to ensure the unity and future of this country.

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, as a politician myself, I am not offended by the remarks of my hon. friend, but I find it strange that in these circumstances he has failed to resist the temptation to politicize what is a very important national issue.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Mulroney: I just mentioned to my hon. friend that contrary to the implications of his prefatory remarks, it is my intention to meet with Senator Murray later this afternoon to review some quite interesting suggestions that he made that might facilitate the bringing together of the parties in order to narrow the terrain. That process might indeed lead to a fruitful First Ministers' Conference. I think this is clearly what all members of the House are suggesting, not a conference simply for the pleasure of getting everybody together but one that hopefully, not necessarily, but hopefully will wind up with some success.

My friend asks me to remember that I mentioned yesterday the 23 or 24 proposals by a separatist premier of Quebec. Indeed, I remember it well. I ask my friend to remember that I immediately followed that up with a reference to five proposals brought forward by a federalist premier of Quebec, Premier Bourassa, resulting in

the Meech Lake Accord, which was a statement of affection and respect and unity for Canada. That is why we signed the Meech Lake Accord and that is why, in the interests of a united Canada, I hope that that will be ratified by all provinces.

* * *

[*Translation*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport): Mr. Speaker, my question is also directed to the Prime Minister. Since the Environment Minister has resigned, and since public meetings will begin tomorrow in Winnipeg on the Green Plan for the protection of the environment and the implementation of sustainable development, could the Prime Minister inform the House today who will be Minister of the Environment tomorrow, in Winnipeg?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Yes, of course, Mr. Speaker. Right after Oral Question Period, I intend to make a public statement to announce who will be responsible for the Department of the Environment. The Canadian government will be well represented at the opening of these meetings.

[*English*]

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport): Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the Prime Minister on his decision. I ask him to confirm to this House and to the public that the decision made in Bergen by the former Minister of the Environment of stabilizing CO2 pollution by the end of the century will be the policy of his government as well as the successor to the Minister of the Environment.

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I think my hon. friend would understand why I would want to examine with great care all communications from Europe by the previous Minister of the Environment—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Mulroney:—including anything in the absence of a final report. My information is that Mr. Lucien Bouchard, as Minister of the Environment, along with his officials, did an exemplary job, as usual, at that conference in Norway. The government of Canada and the Prime Minister were very pleased with his efforts and we look forward to building on those. Obviously I would want to examine the specific wording of any documents that emanated from that conference with care.

* * *

[*Translation*]

MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister. This government is caught in a crisis mentality. Crises often have a negative impact. People tend to panic. We must not lose sight of our objective which is to resolve the constitutional impasse. This must not be done in secret, if we want to end this panic situation.

My question for the Prime Minister is as follows: Could the Prime Minister inform the House of the contents of the text proposed by Senator Murray?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to inform my hon. friend that there is no panic situation in Canada. We have experienced some human problems. The New Democrats think that is funny. We have had a number of problems, a number of challenges of that nature. This happens in a government, but of course the New Democrats have had no experience of the responsibility of running a government. From time to time, prime ministers or governments must— Mr. Speaker, I vigourously deny any suggestion that there is a problem, a panic situation in this country. We have human problems and we have political problems. We are faced with a major challenge at the constitutional level. There has been a long debate on the question.

I said it yesterday and I repeat it today: Three years ago, the Government of Quebec signed a document, with all the other provinces and the federal government, to make it part of Canada, and of the Canadian Constitution, a participation to which all parties freely consented, which would make our country united, something we have all wanted since 1981. Finally, we had a document on the basis of which we could all say that we had a strong, united Canada. All Canadians could believe that since the premiers of all the provinces and the Prime Minister of Canada signed that document, Quebecers

and Canadians could expect to see this document ratified.

That has not been the case. Since then, three provinces have repudiated the signatures of their premiers who had previously given their consent, which creates a serious problem for Canada. We, the government and the opposition parties, are trying to find a formula that will make it possible for Quebec to again become part of the Canadian family, on terms and conditions that are honourable. I have received no recommendations in writing from Senator Murray. I have received suggestions that will help us maintain the dialogue, continue the dialogue, in order to try to break this constitutional impasse, because I think that all Canadians want to see Quebec become part of our Canadian family again, once and for all.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

• (1430)

[*English*]

Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the Prime Minister.

I suggest to the Prime Minister that the country does not need a history lesson from him but some leadership.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Ms. McLaughlin: If he wants to refer to history, then I say to him that surely we have learned something from the process which has taken place.

We are now at the point, as some people have said, of being at five minutes to midnight. We do not want to see what happened the last time when something came out at the last minute and when everyone was asked to agree or disagree with it without there being adequate time.

Surely Senator Murray has taken something to the provinces. There are at least 10 premiers who know something of what Senator Murray has taken to them.

Could the Prime Minister share with this House, at least in general terms if not specifically, what Senator Murray has taken to each of the provinces?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. friend for her question in regard to the specific nature of the problem. I thought that I had answered it before. If I have not, I apologize. I tried to indicate to members of the House that in a meeting a few minutes ago with Senator Murray he gave me a full debriefing on the meetings that he held with all provincial premiers.

He indicated that as a result of these series of meetings he did not feel that a First Ministers' Conference at this time could be called in circumstances that would be beneficial and would advance the cause of Canadian unity.

He did however leave with me at the end of our meeting some views as to how I might, in communication with the premiers later on this afternoon, begin the process of seeking anew to limit the areas of disagreement in some of the regions of Canada, for example. I propose to do that after Question Period, to continue our work.

As soon as I have something more specific, and I hope more helpful, to report to my friend, the leader of the NDP, I will be happy to do precisely that.

I also hope she would agree that these remain delicate and difficult negotiations and that they must take place among first ministers. I propose to do that and to try to keep her and all members of the House fully informed.

Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, despite the fact that the Premier of Manitoba has said "a conference is the only way to save the accord", that the Premier of Newfoundland has said "the first ministers must meet immediately", and that the Premier of Quebec has said "let's work together", I say to the Prime Minister, who seems to be indicating that first ministers meeting together will not advance Canadian unity, what will advance Canadian unity? Surely there has to be a basis of discussion.

Is Senator Murray not basing his recommendations on the Charest report? What is the Prime Minister's next plan? Why will he not call a First Ministers' Conference now?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I tried to answer that question. I am in no way opposed to calling a First Ministers' Conference. I would just like to call a First Ministers' Conference in circumstances that would advance the cause of unity.

I think most people would agree that we should try to put as many chances on the side of success before a First

Ministers' Conference is called. What Senator Murray has been doing is looking for a basis of accommodation.

The hon. member mentioned a few premiers. Some of the views of those specific premiers in regard to specific important items are antithetical one to the other, province to province, not the federal government. It is very, very important in regard to this list that the work that Senator Murray has been doing be continued to eliminate, to the extent humanly possible, the differences that exist even between premiers—mostly between premiers—before they come together to see if we can eliminate those differences that would prevent a resolution of the matter in favour of Canada.

Surely my friend will understand that what we are trying to do is to get rid of as many differences as possible, trying to put as many chances on the side of success that will guarantee a conference that will ensure the unity of Canada.

* * *

TRANSPORT

Mr. Joe Comuzzi (Thunder Bay—Nipigon): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport.

What we saw yesterday in Montreal and Toronto and what we are seeing today in Windsor, Sarnia and other points in Canada is a complete and total frustration by Canadian truckers with not being able to compete with their friends, the American truckers, and they cannot compete right here in Canada.

Canadian truckers cannot compete because of high insurance costs, high diesel fuel costs, high interest rates, maintenance, and the very cost of the rigs themselves.

The minister can do something constructive about this unfair competition. What is he going to do with this unfair competition? When is he going to do it? When is he going to get Canadian truckers rolling again?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my hon. friend's question. I understand the frustrations of those in the Canadian trucking business. I had been aware of this for some time. I had arranged for a meeting with the Canadian Trucking Association. That is to take place in my office tomorrow.

I understand at the same time that the Minister of Transport for the Province of Ontario is meeting with the truckers this afternoon. He has a call into my office. I intend to confer with him afterwards to see if there is some action that can be taken at federal government level to alleviate this situation.

I think that my hon. friend will agree that most of the problems being met are state to state and province to state. Those are the difficulties they are under. We will take whatever action we can to assist them.

Mr. Joe Comuzzi (Thunder Bay—Nipigon): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that reply. It just so happens that the Minister of Transport for the Province of Ontario is from Windsor. I am told by the most recent report that the automobile industry in Windsor may come to a grinding halt unless we do something about this problem immediately.

What we are saying is that we have to stop this unfair competition. The minister can take constructive action in stopping this unfair competition. He has got to do something about the cabotage that is affecting Canadian truckers.

The simple question is: When will he be prepared to do it? He can do it.

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, we are now down to something we can deal with. I am sure my hon. friend agrees that high insurance rates and high fuel taxes are something that are not completely within our jurisdiction.

When it comes to the question of cabotage, I agree with my friend. He has a point. I will take that matter up with the executive of the Canadian Trucking Association tomorrow afternoon when I see him.

* * *

[*Translation*]

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Douglas Young (Gloucester): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. He is not unaware that the budget tabled on February 20 projected an average interest rate of 11.1 per cent for the year. We are now in May and I would like to ask him whether his government intends to table a new budget as soon as possible to reflect Canadian economic reality.

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): No, Mr. Speaker.

[*English*]

Mr. Douglas Young (Gloucester): Mr. Speaker, the difficulty facing the Canadian economy has been set out now by the Chamber of Commerce, the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, and the Canadian Labour Congress.

In view of the fact that an 11.1 per cent interest rate was an absolutely basic premise, and we are now at nearly 14 per cent, does the Prime Minister not understand that we have to make sure that the economy is seen as being strong and well managed, that many influential people who understand the problem are calling for a new budget, that it is urgent that it be introduced as soon as possible, and that it reflect what is really going on in the Canadian economy?

• (1440)

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I am sure my hon. friend, the finance critic for the opposition, was pleased, as were all members of the House, to see the inflationary pressures in Canada dropping quite impressively in the figures released last Friday. That is good news for Canada. That is what is required before interest rates begin the process of coming down.

My hon. friend is clearly seeking what we all seek, that is, economic growth in a non-inflationary climate.

The fact that we have had some serious signs of decreasing inflation is important good news for Canada, consistent, if I may say, with policies that we have been pursuing with the encouragement of the IMF and the OECD, both respected international organizations which have said that by and large the policies pursued by the Government of Canada are appropriate for the circumstances and will ensure ongoing prosperity and sustained economic growth in a non-inflationary climate.

* * *

TRANSPORT

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport.

As I speak, thousands of truckers are blocking major border crossings into southern Ontario. They are protesting, as they said to me on Sunday, the unfair competition which federal deregulation has thrown them into with United States firms, deregulation which is now costing them thousands of jobs.

Will the minister now agree, as I requested over a month ago in a letter to him, to sit down and negotiate with representatives of these truckers so as to save the trucking industry in this country?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my hon. friend's interest in this matter. Contrary to his opinion, rather than ignore his letter and the concerns of the trucking industry, I set about and asked for the meeting myself. That meeting has been arranged for tomorrow.

As I have said, we have received the brief of the Canadian Trucking Association. Certainly what I want to do is find a way if there is one at the federal level, and I specify federal level, to assist the trucking industry.

I would also tell my friend that I do not think the trucking industry wants a great deal of regulation. It wants the freedom to compete, something which is antipathic to the hon. member's party.

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Mr. Speaker, the freedom to compete, as the minister puts it, meant that last year 64 per cent of cross-border traffic was handled by Canadians while this year 42 per cent of cross-border traffic is Canadian run. That is not what truckers across this country want.

Is the minister prepared to expand that meeting which he has set up with the truckers' association to include the people who are blocking border crossings, those people who are in various trade unions, those independent owner-operators, those people who are actually facing the fight out on the highways to keep a job for themselves and for their families? Is he prepared to talk with them and start real negotiation on this critical issue?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, in approaching this issue we naturally looked for the organization which claims to represent the Canadian trucking industry. I make no comment about independent operators. I think they have a place in the scheme of things.

However we have to start with an organization. We have started with the Canadian Trucking Association. I would like to see what progress we make as a result of that meeting and go on from there.

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AGRICULTURE

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Agriculture.

Last fall the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool requested the federal government to provide some $500 million in special farm financial assistance because of low world prices for grain, high interest rates and so on.

Last week we understand that the federal government agreed to provide something less than half of this amount. I want to ask the minister if he will clarify the situation.

Is it to be paid, as has been reported in the press, on a $5 per seeded acre basis? Will it be paid directly by the federal government, as was done for the Special Canadian Grains Program, or is there going to be a continuation of long negotiations for several more weeks on this matter?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, obviously, the hon. member has not been listening to my answers in the House.

First, I have indicated that this is a multifaceted problem that has to be dealt with in such a way so as to ensure that the assistance is properly targeted in all the regions of the provinces that are affected.

We engaged in negotiations with the provinces to try to design the most effective program to ensure that those areas that are affected by drought will be given some assistance, and that those areas affected by excessive moisture will be given assistance while recognizing depressed prices.

It is to that end that the federal government put $500 million on the table to negotiate with the provinces. I am pleased to tell the hon. member that at the meeting of ministers of agriculture on Friday we reached an agreement as to the allocation of those funds to the respective provinces, along with some general understanding as to what programs would be eligible for matching contributions to be considered as part of this over-all plan.

Those negotiations are continuing. I can advise the hon. member that as soon as they are completed on a bilateral basis the money will flow to the provinces and the provinces will design the program as they see fit. We think that that is the most effective way of proceeding.

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Mr. Speaker, I want to point out to the minister that even though eight weeks have elapsed farmers still do not know what the criteria for this program will be. In other words, even though they are well into seeding in many areas of the country, they do not know if they are going to be eligible for this assistance or not.

How soon will the federal criteria be available to farmers so that they will know if they are eligible for assistance? How soon can they expect the actual cheques and payments to be made, especially in the province of Saskatchewan which has been affected worse than any other part of the country?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, to a great extent that will depend upon the provinces which will be trying to design the program that is most effective for their particular province.

In the case of Saskatchewan my understanding is that the province is considering an acreage payment that will be more or less across the board.

I understand that in Manitoba greater emphasis will be placed on the drought areas of that province.

In Alberta we have had excessive moisture in the northern part of the province and excessive drought in the southern part of the province.

Obviously, what we are trying to do here, with the co-operation of the provinces, is design the most effective program so that the farmers who are in the greatest need will get the most amount of money.

Mr. Bob Speller (Haldimand—Norfolk): Mr. Speaker, my question is also for the Minister of Agriculture. It concerns the tragic financial situation facing apple growers across Canada, particularly in Norfolk County.

These growers are forced to compete with subsidized apples from across the border, while at the same time they are facing a government that is unilaterally disarming itself of all subsidies.

How does the government plan to help our apple farmers compete against these unfair trading practices?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, first and foremost, if there is evidence of dumping of apples from our competitors, there are provisions and redress procedures in place. In the case of the United States there is the snap-back provision which was used recently in the case of asparagus.

I should say as well that as a part of the $500 million program some $50 million is being allocated for other crops. Obviously, the horticultural industry would be included in that sector.

Mr. Bob Speller (Haldimand—Norfolk): Mr. Speaker, the apple growers in Norfolk County would like to know that they will still be around by the time a marketing agency comes into force.

The last drought assistance program failed to address the real loss apple producers faced, a loss of quality, not quantity, and a subsequent loss of market price.

• (1450)

What assurances can the government give apple producers in Norfolk County and across Canada that programs will be made specifically to meet the needs of the apple producers to help them deal with this tragic situation?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, in response to the hon. member for Algoma I said precisely that the objective of the federal government was to try to design the programs with the co-operation of the provinces to ensure that assistance will be targeted to those producers and those sectors which are in the most need, and to ensure that they get the most amount of money as soon as possible.

INDUSTRY, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Mr. Howard McCurdy (Windsor—St. Clair): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to whomever speaks for the Department of Industry, Science and Technology.

Statistics Canada has released figures which show that foreign ownership of Canadian manufacturing is rapidly approaching 50 per cent. This week's sale of Polysar Rubber to Bayer of Germany worsens the trend, in spite of 1985 legislation that the government promised would preserve by a wide margin Canadian control of this major corporation.

Does that promise still hold, or will Investment Canada once more bear its toothless grin while one more Canadian R and D intensive firm falls into the hands of foreign ownership?

Hon. Tom Hockin (Minister of State (Small Businesses and Tourism)): Mr. Speaker, I say to my hon. friend that the Nova transaction is going to be examined by Investment Canada. Of course it has to be proved that it will be of net benefit to Canada before it is permitted.

On the larger question of R and D and of technology transfers, it is interesting to note that 11 of the largest investors in research and development in Canada are in fact foreign controlled companies. They have done a tremendous job.

We have found from 1984 to 1988 that $23 billion of reinvestment in the Canadian economy has come from foreign controlled companies. We have had a higher level of job creation from that sector than we have from the Canadian controlled sector.

What we have is a situation of a tremendously dynamic economy that is enticing foreign investment. It is good for Canada. Investment Canada has its role to review that all acquisitions are of net benefit to Canada.

Mr. Howard McCurdy (Windsor—St. Clair): Mr. Speaker, as a matter of fact the National Advisory Board on Science and Technology has cited foreign ownership of Canadian industries, which StatsCan has said is increasing, as largely responsible for Canada's poor research and development performance.

Will the government act according to its 1985 CDC legislation to stop this trend by enforcing the 10 per cent limit on foreign ownership of Polysar, or will this company, once cited as one of Canada's 10 greatest engineering achievements of the century and whose picture once appeared on the $10 bill, appear on the Deutschmark instead?

Hon. Tom Hockin (Minister of State (Small Businesses and Tourism)): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is really speaking generically of the manufacturing sector. Of course what this government is doing is removing the biggest impediment of all on the manufacturing sector in Canada which we have had for over 66 years—the manufacturers' sales tax. That is the first thing we are doing.

If we take a look at the evidence of foreign controlled companies in Canada, we see a slight pick-up of control of assets in Canada by foreign controlled companies in 1987. Guess why that is, Mr. Speaker. It is because we had a deregulation of a sector of our economy which the opposition has been calling for for 20 years. It wanted more competition against the banks. We brought in financial deregulation. That contributed to more competition in the Canadian economy.

* * *

TRANSPORT

Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport.

After years of delays and stalls to replace a deteriorated Salmon River bridge near Truro, Nova Scotia, the National Transportation Agency has instructed CN to replace the bridge and CN has agreed in writing to begin construction.

Will the minister confirm that CN will comply with its original obligation, the National Transportation Agency's order and its own commitment made in January and replace this dilapidated bridge right away?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, my understanding is that CN is prepared to design the structure and go ahead with the construction. The problem is that there is a 75-25 split on the cost of the structure and the upgrading that the province wants. The province, being on the 75 per cent end of the split, is concerned about that. At the present time we are trying to see if there is a way to meet its concerns and get the bridge constructed.

* * *

ITALIAN CANADIANS

Mr. Sergio Marchi (York West): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister.

Following the federal redress to Japanese Canadians for their internment during World War II, the government invited other Canadians to submit their concerns in the hopes of reaching a fair solution to this tragic time of our history.

Given that the government has had a brief from the National Congress of Italian Canadians since January on the internment of Canadians of Italian origin, without an answer, can the Prime Minister please update the House with a response to the request, what the government is prepared to do about it, and when?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. friend for the question. He reminds us all of what I think was quite a glorious moment in the history of the House of Commons when, pursuant to a resolution that I had the honour of bringing forward, after 45 years of neglect, the Japanese Canadians whose rights were trampled upon in the war saw that justice was finally done on behalf of the government of Canada and the people of Canada. I think that was a good moment in Parliament.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mulroney: I was also offended by the notion that Italian Canadians who had for decades made similar pleas to Ottawa had their pleas go unanswered.

In point of fact, contrary to what my hon. friend says, I responded publicly to the concerns of the Italian Canadian community in Toronto a few months ago when I indicated that the Government of Canada viewed what had taken place to Italian Canadians as most unacceptable, that it was something that should have been dealt with a long time ago and that the Government of Canada was seized of the matter and that we would deal with it, I hoped urgently and efficiently, so as to acknowledge what has been an unfair stain placed upon the Italian community which this House must expunge.

Mr. Sergio Marchi (York West): Mr. Speaker, I am sure the House joins the Prime Minister in clearly recognizing that that day in the last Parliament when we recognized those injustices in a very profound way was truly a parliamentary success story. The fact is that we should repeat success stories. Therefore I return to the basic premise of my question.

Mr. Prime Minister, one of the difficulties with the Japanese Canadian redress was the lack of clarity in terms of a process and structure. Given that the Prime Minister is favourably disposed to correcting and righting the wrongs with respect to Italian Canadians interned during World War II, can he ensure that there will be a very clear and well-defined process and structure for talks between the government and the community? Will he also provide us with a possible timetable by which these talks may in fact bear fruit that will do us proud as a country?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, my hon. friend is quite right. One of the problems that I had as a new Prime Minister in 1984 when I sought to deal with the problem of the Japanese Canadians and their plight was that it had been ignored for 40 years. It is true that it took us a little while longer than I would have liked to bring about a policy of communication with the Japanese community and to initiate a proper process of redress.

I am sure that the actions taken during the war by the Government of Canada against the Italian community of Canada which has worked so hard to bring so much honour to Canada is, as I say, something that we cannot let stand unchallenged. I am saddened and appalled, as are all members of the House, that Governments of Canada have not acted before. I take my honourable friend's excellent views as representations.

• (1500)

We are initiating conversations and meetings with the Italian community. Hopefully, we will be able to bring about a dimension to convey the appropriate apology and redress to the Italian-Canadian community so that we can put this shame behind us and do honour to the Parliament of Canada.

Routine Proceedings

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*Translation*]

PETITIONS

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Hon. Marcel Danis (Minister of State (Youth), Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to seven petitions.

[*Editor's Note: See today's Votes and Proceedings.*]

* * *

[*English*]

DUTY REMISSION ORDERS

PRESENTATION OF REPORT

Hon. John McDermid (Minister of State (Privatization and Regulatory Affairs)): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 32(2), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, copies of the report to Parliament on new remission orders approved in the six month period ending March 31, 1990.

* * *

[*Translation*]

EIGHTY-THIRD INTERPARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE

TABLING OF THIRTEENTH REPORT OF CANADIAN GROUP OF INTERPARLIAMENTARY UNION

Mr. Jean-Marc Robitaille (Terrebonne): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1), I have the honour to table in the House, in both official languages, the thirteenth report of the Canadian group of the Interparliamentary Union. This is the report of the official delegation that represented Canada at the eighty-third interparliamentary conference held in Nicosia, Cyprus, from April 2 to 7, 1990.

Mr. Speaker, the timely subjects dealt with at this conference included the fight against drug trafficking, employment, occupational training and new technologies and their relationship to sustainable development, developments in eastern European countries and promoting peace and security in the Mediterranean regions.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, the Canadian delegation had an opportunity to visit the Canadian contingent of the United Nations forces in Cyprus. On behalf of my colleagues in the delegation, I wish to point out the excellent work done by our military in Cyprus, under the command of Major-General Clive Milner and Lieutenant-Colonel Sutherland.

Mr. Prud'homme: Excellent!

[*Editor's Note: See today's Votes and Proceedings.*]

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

MOTION FOR AUTHORIZATION TO TRAVEL

Hon. Marcel Danis (Minister of State (Youth), Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House): Mr. Speaker, I think you will find there is unanimous consent to move the following motion:

> That the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs, and necessary staff, be authorized to travel to Western Canada, from May 30 to June 3, 1990, and to Eastern Canada, from June 12 to June 15, 1990, to conduct hearings on the literacy issue.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to.

* * *

[*English*]

PETITIONS

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to present a petition, pursuant to Standing Order 36, on behalf of a number of my constituents who are concerned about the government's intentions regarding the imposition of a cruel goods and services tax.

The petitioners point out that this is going to be a tax on reading. They believe ours will be the only country in the world that will tax reading material. They also have a whole other set of reasons why they oppose this tax.

They call upon the government to reconsider the imposition of this tax, to go back to the drawing-board and to introduce, instead, real tax reform.

Mr. Rod Laporte (Moose Jaw—Lake Centre): Mr. Speaker, it is my honour today to present a couple of petitions.

First, there are about 100 petitioners from the riding of Moose Jaw—Lake Centre who are opposed to the goods and services tax. They point out to the government that it has not addressed the unfair taxation system currently in place which permits wealthy individuals and corporations to pay little or no federal tax, while forcing lower and middle-income taxpayers to bear more of the national tax burden. They call upon the government to introduce immediate, fair tax reforms.

CANADIAN WHEAT BOARD

Mr. Rod Laporte (Moose Jaw—Lake Centre): Mr. Speaker, I also have another petition signed by a number of Saskatchewan farmers who call upon the government to reinstate oats under the Canadian Wheat Board.

The petitioners call upon the government to place both oats and barley under the Canadian Wheat Board and give them the same protection that wheat now has under the Canadian Wheat Board. Then, there could be no changes to oats and barley unless Parliament itself makes that decision.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mrs. Sheila Finestone (Mount Royal): Mr. Speaker, I have a very interesting petition coming in from the Tax Busters which is addressed to hon. House of Commons of Canada, in which the petitioners say the following:

> "We're fed up with government waste eating up our tax dollars. Why are we so severely taxed on every dollar we work so hard to earn, and again taxed on whatever we can afford to buy with what's left of our earnings? Federal tax—provincial tax—sales tax—manufacturers tax—property tax—land transfer tax—excise tax—and now the GST!!! Will it ever end?
>
> "If our tax dollars were spent wisely, instead of being foolishly wasted, we wouldn't have to be taxed to death. The Canadian government does not need more money from the taxpayers—it needs conscientious, responsible representatives to diligently manage the public purse.

"Whereas the undersigned, your Petitioners, humbly pray and call upon Parliament to stop wasting our tax dollars, and to reject the proposed goods and services tax."

[*Translation*]

RESPECT FOR LIFE

Mr. Jean-Luc Joncas (Matapédia—Matane): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I have the honour to present a petition signed by 4,700 citizens who urge the government to pass legislation respectful of life.

[*English*]

ENERGY

Mr. Jack Whittaker (Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure today, pursuant to Standing Order 36, to present two petitions.

The first petition asks that the current moratorium on offshore oil exploration continue on all hydrocarbon exploration and development activities in the coastal waters off British Columbia and that the Canadian government indicate to industry that this moratorium will not be lifted in the future.

The petitioners further ask that money currently being spent by the federal government subsidizing offshore oil drilling on the pacific coast be used instead to promote energy conservation and the development and use of alternative, sustainable, environmentally benign sources of energy.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Jack Whittaker(Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt): Mr. Speaker, I also have the honour and privilege to present a petition, pursuant to Standing Order 36, against the goods and services tax.

I have just travelled through my riding of Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt, in towns like Princeton, Oliver, Keremeos, Cawston, Osoyoos and Grand Forks. People in all these towns are asking me to tell the House of Commons and the government that they are unalterably opposed to this goods and services tax. This is reflected in this petition of some 213 additional names.

• (1510)

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): Mr. Speaker, I rise to submit a petition on behalf of dozens of Canadians who are concerned about the fate of Mr. Yi-Shih Leo, a Canadian citizen originally from Taiwan, who has been arrested and unlawfully sentenced to 10 months imprisonment in Taiwan.

They urge the Canadian government to issue a public statement expressing Canada's concern over the violation of his rights, instruct the Canadian Embassy in Japan or our High Commission in Hong Kong to send a representative to Taiwan, to appoint a lawyer to handle the case, and to request all allies of our country that have representatives in Taiwan to assist with the case.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Neil Young (Beaches—Woodbine): Mr. Speaker, I also have a petition signed by quite a number of Canadians who say that the goods and services tax proposed by the federal Minister of Finance is an unfair form of taxation because of its lack of regard for the taxpayers' ability to pay.

The government has not addressed the unfair taxation system currently in place which permits wealthy individuals and corporations to pay little or no federal tax, while forcing lower and middle-income taxpayers to pay more of the national tax burden. The government is now trying to tax reading, hair cuts, diapers, coffins, and home heating fuels.

The petitioners call on the government to withdraw this tax and bring in a fair taxation policy.

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I would like to table a petition signed by several dozen Canadians from the great constituency of Hamilton Mountain who are so well represented in the House by my colleague.

These petitioners call upon Parliament to reject the GST, the grief and suffering tax, proposed by the Conservative government across the way. They ask that Parliament urge the government to eliminate this tax immediately before further damage is done to our country.

VETERANS AFFAIRS

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise and present a petition signed by numerous residents of the riding of Kingston and the Islands and the neighbouring riding of Hastings—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington.

These people have signed a petition objecting to the cutbacks the government has announced in its budget to the veterans affairs portfolio, particularly long-term care for veterans and the reduction in housekeeping services to veterans. They call upon Parliament to reject these budget measures.

* * *

[*Translation*]

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Hon. Marcel Danis (Minister of State (Youth), Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House): Mr. Speaker, I ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

MOTIONS FOR PAPERS

Hon. Marcel Danis (Minister of State (Youth), Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House): Mr. Speaker, I ask that all Notices of Motions for the Production of Papers be allowed to stand.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is it agreed?

[*English*]

Mr. Milliken: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I have had a Notice of Motion on the Order Paper since October 25, 1989. I have made pleas on at least three occasions over a period of many weeks to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Government House Leader trying to get him to use his good offices to help me out.

Now I see the Deputy Government House Leader here in the House today. As a member of the cabinet and a new one—as they say a new broom sweeps clean—I know that he would be delighted to take this matter up with his colleague, whichever minister it is who is responsible. It appears to be the Minister of National Defence. I know he is a hard-working minister. I know that the Deputy House Leader is a hard-working minister. I am sure that if he took five minutes and placed a call to his colleague, this information could be made available immediately in the House.

October 25, last year, Mr. Speaker. This is an inexcusable delay. Every week these matters are stood because the government cannot make up its mind. It is dithering. It is time that the public had this information. The Deputy House Leader, who is new to his job, could move with gusto and take firm steps to get his colleagues to pay some attention to the reasonable requests for information made by members of the opposition in the House on behalf of the people of Canada.

Mr. Danis: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands is a very hard-working member. However, the record of this government in answering notices of motions or petitions is the best of any government in Canadian history and will continue in that way.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

CRIMINAL CODE

MEASURE TO AMEND

The House resumed from Monday, May 22, consideration of Bill C-43, an act respecting abortion, as reported (without amendment) from a legislative committee, and on Motions Nos. 4, 5, 10, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17A, 17B, 19, 22 and 24.

Mr. Al Johnson (Calgary North): Mr. Speaker, Bill C-43, an act respecting abortion is one which deals with a subject that divides members of this House and the people of Canada.

Some people want strong legislation, others have said that the government should not even legislate in this area. I do not agree with the contention that we should not make laws on abortion. To me, it is essential that we legislate on the very definition of life and being, as well as on the rights associated with our being. Nothing could be more fundamental.

As it is presented, Bill C-43 is not acceptable. Unless it is substantially amended, I cannot support it. When the bill was first introduced, I spoke at length on my concerns relating to this issue. These concerns involve my belief that we cannot discuss abortion until we define life as beginning at conception, my desire for better support systems for women with crisis pregnancies, the need for preventive counselling and support, and my belief that there should be a major reorganization of our

basic philosophies towards the supporting and nurturing of families.

I do not want to repeat these arguments today, but I do want to speak briefly on the proposed amendments. I think it is important that I set out the reasons for the decisions I will be making when these amendments are brought to a vote.

I would like to deal with the proposed amendments in the order that they will be presented for voting. First, let me say that I will reject Motion No. 3 out of hand. In my view, this amendment attempts to change one of the most fundamental aspects of Bill C-43. It would allow abortion on demand and limit the application of this law.

Ms. Black: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The member on the opposite side is speaking to an amendment that was never moved. It has been withdrawn. He is speaking to Motion No. 3 and I would suggest that is out of order.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The hon. member is on debate so he can speak on any motion. I am sure he is going to get to one of the other motions. If he wants to speak to Motion No. 3 he can. It is debate. The hon. member for Calgary North.

Mr. Johnson: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate very much my hon. colleague's comments. I was not aware of that, and I would be pleased to discuss other motions that have been proposed.

Motions Nos. 4 and 22 attempt to increase dramatically the punishments that would be incurred by those who would illegally commit abortions. I have grave concerns over this type of amendment. To approve it would be to signal that our interests are in punishment and revenge. This is not and should not be the case.

As I have said before, the key issue is the definition of the beginning of life and the careful, compassionate balancing of rights from that point onwards. Emphasis on extreme punishment is a vindictive approach that fails to consider the enormous emotional and psychological stresses that are involved. It is inconsistent with a caring society and also inconsistent with other parts of the Criminal Code. Therefore, I cannot support these amendments.

Motion No. 5 would limit the performance of abortions to medical practitioners. It would not allow the procedure to be performed by nurses or assistants under the supervision of a doctor. Although I believe that the amendment would have little actual effect on the number of abortions performed, I would like to support it. Doctors have a choice whether or not to participate in abortions. Their employees do not, nor do the employees of hospitals. Although this amendment tries to relieve nurses from having to actually perform abortions, they would still be forced to assist. The distinction is too fine and would not be upheld in the courts. I will not support this amendment, although I support its intent.

• (1520)

Motion No. 10 attempts to remove the health of the mother from consideration and leave the life of the mother as the only criterion for determining whether or not an abortion should proceed. I sympathize with the intent of this motion but I do not believe it is always possible for a doctor to determine exactly whether life or just health is at stake. I also do not believe that this amendment is constitutionally valid.

For these reasons, I will vote against Motion No. 10 in the hope that other motions, specifically Motions Nos. 12 and 13 will carry.

Motion No. 12 clarifies for me that there must be a serious threat to life and health for an abortion to be considered. Although I am not certain that Motion No. 12 would be of much use without Motion No. 13, I will support it.

It is important to point out that I consider Motion No. 13 to be the key to amending Bill C-43 successfully. This amendment limits the procedure of abortion to those cases in which no other medically acceptable treatment is available to alleviate the risk. It clarifies the issue that rights must be balanced. The test is the availability of medical procedures for the protection of the life and health of the mother. This amendment will receive my support.

Motion No. 14 would remove the definition of health from the bill. I do not consider this appropriate as I believe physicians may not always be able to distinguish between serious health and life risks. Although I believe the definition must be left in, I also believe it should be

strengthened. Therefore, I will vote against Motion No. 14 and for Motion No. 16, which I believe places clear and acceptable limitations on the definition of health. If Motion No. 16 fails, I will support Motion No. 17B rather than 17A, as I believe that Motion 17B leaves less room for interpretation of the word "health".

Motion No. 19 attempts to introduce the concept of a solid body of scientific knowledge into the definition of the medical practitioner's opinion. I have real concern for the ability of the courts to interpret such a clause. It would, in my opinion, invite numerous court challenges. I will therefore vote against this motion.

Motion No. 20 causes me a great deal of concern. The intent of the motion is to include in the definition of abortion, methods of birth control which work after initial conception but before implantation. I will not support this motion as I believe that deleting this clause will result in enormous confusion and uncertainty in matters relating to birth control. I strongly support birth control as the most effective method of reducing the perceived need for abortion.

The last amendment before us is Motion No. 24, which proposes to gut Bill C–43 so that there is, in fact, no law on abortion. Although I may disagree with the bill as amended, or not amended at this point, I will not support this motion.

I consider it essential that we define life in our laws. I believe that Bill C–43 does this by recognizing that abortion is fundamentally wrong. Although the definitions are not what I might like, I must reaffirm the duty of Parliament to legislate on matters of morality. I will therefore vote against this amendment.

Finally, I wish to say to my colleagues, to the Prime Minister, and to the Minister of Justice, how much I respect and appreciate the way in which the process of debate on this bill has been handled. I am well aware of the deep divisions that exist and of the enormous compromises already made on this issue in order to bring a bill, any bill, before this House.

In the final analysis, should I find that I have to vote against this bill, I will do so with great reluctance and not in any sense to criticize or condemn those who have come to a different conclusion. It is my sincere hope that amendments will be made that will enable me to support this bill.

Mr. Tom Wappel (Scarborough West): Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to the comments of the member on the opposite side because I think he hit the nail on the head when he stated that this bill and the amendments fail to discuss the true issue. We as Canadians and as parliamentarians have to face it. When does life begin and when do we, as a society, propose to protect it?

We are talking about amendments to Bill C–43. The amendment is designed to improve the bill in some way. I would like to talk about my views on the amendments, whether they achieve what they set out to achieve, and second, on the circumstances surrounding the amendment process of Bill C–43. In order to determine whether an amendment aids or improves a particular bill, we have to look at the bill. At the beginning, I want to say that in my analysis, Bill C–43 is fatally flawed and totally unconstitutional, regardless of which side of the issue you are on, or whether you even have a side.

I say this simply because the Supreme Court of Canada the past summer in the Chantal Daigle case set out quite clearly what is the responsibility of parliamentarians. It made a statement that the foetus has absolutely no protection under Canadian law at the present time. It went further and said that the people of Canada and those who represent them in the House of Commons can, if they so decide, protect the foetus. If they wish to do so, it is fundamental that the protection be explicitly spelled out in legislation, not implicitly.

Otherwise, the bill will be unconstitutional. We did not follow that advice in Bill C–43 because there is no statement as to why abortion is being re–criminalized. There is no indication in the bill why we are putting abortion back into the Criminal Code. The first thing I look for in an amendment is to see if this fundamental flaw in the legislation is dealt with. Unfortunately, as I see the 12 amendments, the flaw is not addressed.

There is no amendment dealing with a definition of life. There is no amendment stating why the procedure of abortion is contrary to the accepted norms of society in the views of the proposers of the bill. How then can those amendments improve the bill as it now stands in its unconstitutional form, as I see it?

That brings me to the second point about the amendment process, that is, the circumstances surrounding the amendment. We were told that we would have a free vote, that we would be able to exercise our consciences on this very emotional and divisive issue which has torn the country apart and has set families one against the other. That is what we were told by our Prime Minister. He indicated in the 1988 general election that he would allow a free vote.

Instead, he has committed a fraud on the Canadian people by insisting not on allowing a free vote but that his cabinet ministers abandon conscience in favour of loyalty; then further, to send the message quite clearly that absolutely no amendments whatsoever were to be considered with respect to this bill. Regardless of what the amendment might be, regardless of whether it improved or made constitutional or changed in any way the intent of the bill, there were no amendments to be considered. The message is clear and totally contrary to the promises made by the Prime Minister that members of this House would be able to view this legislation on the basis of conscience and vote in accordance with their conscience.

• (1530)

Cabinet ministers are struggling in this House and indicating their dilemma, indicating that they feel that they are in effect coerced into voting in favour of Bill C-43, in fact voting against all of the amendments. This is a free vote? How can we have amendments which benefit the legislation in the face of coercion? I say that we cannot do so. It is simply impossible.

The amendments have made efforts to improve the bill in the eyes of the mover. I do not propose to go through each and every amendment. I simply wish to state that in the absence of a grappling by this country and by this Parliament of the fundamental issue, which is "Does an abortion kill a human being?", and then depending on the answer, struggle with what we do to prevent that or to allow it, and in the absence of struggling with whether or not life begins at conception or some time subsequent, we cannot deal with this bill. Therefore, I see no amendments which can save this bill constitutionally or make it logically flow to answer that question.

Having said that, it seems to me that Motion No. 10 makes an attempt to indicate the revulsion that society has for the procedure of abortion, except when it is necessary to save a human life. It does not deal with, nor does the bill deal with, why we have this revulsion, why an abortion brings on different feelings than a tonsillectomy or an appendectomy, but at least it attempts to define and limit when we are going to have the procedure of abortion.

Unfortunately, in my view, even the amendment is broadly worded. If we look at the amendment as proposed it reads, and I will only read that portion which is being amended: "If the abortion were not induced, the life of the female person would be likely to be threatened."

It seems to me that the intent of the bill is that if the life of the female person is threatened, the procedure should be performed. For what purpose? To save the life. Not to destroy a life, but to save a life. However, to leave the phrase "likely to be threatened", I believe totally removes any proposed protection that Motion No. 10 would wish to bring to the bill.

Accordingly, I sympathize with the intent, as I see it, of Motion No. 10. Because I sympathize with the intent of Motion No. 10 and because I feel that Bill C-43, whether or not it is amended is, based on these amendments and based on its present structure, unconstitutional, I cannot support the bill or any of the amendments.

However, I want to make it clear that when I do vote for Motion No. 10, it will be to show that I am in favour of the spirit behind the motion which was the protection of life, the protection of the life in the womb and the protection of the life of the female person whose life would be threatened if the procedure were not performed.

All of the other amendments do not deal with the fundamental issue, which is the question of life. Therefore, I will not be supporting any of those amendments, with the exception of Motion No. 10.

Mr. Stan Wilbee (Delta): Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to speak again on this important subject. Although my position in the House has changed, my position on this particular item has not changed.

I would like to reiterate that I appreciate very much the method by which this bill was arrived at. The consultation among the caucus and the discussions with many people in the committee was a good way of formulating legislation. However, I have a problem with

the legislation in that I believe that it has failed in that it does not protect the unborn.

If we read the legislation, there is absolutely nothing that protects the unborn foetus which, of course, is helpless. I believe that as a Parliament we need to recognize the relative rights of the mother and those of the foetus.

There has been some question about whether any amendments to this bill will be constitutionally correct. I suggest that if our Constitution does not protect the helpless in our society, perhaps we should take a look at that Constitution.

It was clear from the Supreme Court decisions the two previous speakers mentioned, where the Supreme Court cast down the previous abortion law, that there should be some protection somewhere for the foetus.

I would like to quote from the *Legal Aspects of Abortion* from the research branch of the Library of Parliament which states: "Apart from the obvious fact that there is no longer an enforceable federal prohibition against abortions in Canada, the full import of the court's ruling in the Morgentaler case is as yet unknown." The majority of the court did not rule that women had an unconditional right to abortion under the Charter. On the contrary, it merely concluded that the existing provisions on abortions were set so as to impair irretrievably a pregnant woman's Section 7 rights.

All five justices comprising the majority acknowledged the interest of the foetus was deserving of constitutional recognition under Section 1. Three expressly stated that the law restricting abortions might yet be consistent with the Charter where at some point during the pregnancy the state's interests in protecting the foetus might be sufficiently compelling to override the rights that women otherwise might have under the Charter.

Although the justices did not indicate when this compelling state interest might crystallize, Madam Justice Wilson, who wrote the strongest judgment against the existing abortion law, made the following comments: 'The precise point in the development of the foetus at which the state's interest in its protection becomes compelling, I leave to the informed judgment of the legislature which is in a position to receive guidance on the subject from all relevant disciplines. It seems to me however that it might fall somewhere in the second trimester".

We could go on with that, but it does show that the Supreme Court indicated that there should be some type of protection for that foetus.

A lot of the debate and the discussions throughout the country centre around the idea of when does life actually begin. Does it begin at conception? Does it begin at the age of viability when the baby or the foetus can live outside the womb? As we read the literature, examine precedents in court, and even medical opinions, it is very difficult to come to a conclusion as to when this actually does occur.

A lot of it really depends on our own attitude toward the unborn. I remember in particular a case of mine in the past where a woman went into labour at 24 weeks, just at the borderline of so-called viability. In the case room there were three doctors, two nurses and an anaesthetist. The baby was born weighing under two pounds and was taken to the Vancouver General Hospital. The baby went through six months of intensive care. Today this baby is a very beautiful teenager. At the same time that the struggle was going on to maintain the life of this baby, an abortion was being performed in the operating room of this same hospital.

• (1540)

There was an instance last summer where a foetus of the same age was aborted that could have been saved. It could have been a life that carried on.

Our attitudes are very important in determining our judgment and the positions that we take.

I believe that our society must defend the defenceless. I cannot think of anything more defenceless than an unborn baby.

I was very impressed during deliberations of the legislative committee by a submission from the Families and Friends of the Handicapped on Bill C-43. I would like to quote from the submission that they made to the committee.

These people represented a number of types of handicapped children. There were also parents who had adopted handicapped children and adults with handicaps. In their brief they stated: "If society takes the position that a disability is a sufficient reason to deny treatment to a child or is grounds for ending that child's life before birth through abortion, society is making a

profound and dangerous statement about all human life. Society is saying that the lives of the unborn are second-class and not worth defending, that the life of a disabled person is not really worth living".

They further stated: "Are we expected to believe that a society which sanctions death before birth is a society which will recognize and respect the rights, the aspirations and the human dignities of persons with a disability? It is not just eugenic abortions which represent a threat to the disabled. Any abortion law which sanctions the killing of children poses an equal threat. Such a law establishes the principle that the value of a human life is to be determined by its value to other persons" and I think that that is a very significant statement. "A permissive abortion law embraces the principle that one group of human beings can be declared to be of secondary value and to be disposable. If the unborn can be so designated, so can the disabled".

Because this submission was from a group of disabled people, many of their comments are in that vein.

"Bill C-43 represents an attack upon the efforts of the disabled to obtain equality in society and win the dignity and respect to which they are entitled. The bill would allow abortion for the widest possible reasons. It would enshrine in law a principle that the lives of some may be destroyed for the convenience of others".

There are many points in their brief. I would like to make one last quotation: "We have also reached a crucial moment because of our frequently expressed belief in the equality of everyone is now put to the test. If we say that some people are more equal than others, that the lives of some can be destroyed for the sake of others, then we have abandoned our cherished principles of equality".

Although that is a particular point of view, we need to take note of it and see where this law could possibly lead in the future.

There are some other problems with the law as it stands. I would bring forth the brief from the Canadian Medical Association which opposes Bill C-43. It is particularly concerned about the first amendments we are dealing with, Motions Nos. 4 and 22.

The CMA brief points out that "the bill singles out abortion as the only specified medical act to attract Criminal Code sanctions", and I think we need to ask why that should be. The CMA believes that such treatment is inappropriate and abortion should be treated and controlled under the same statutes that apply to other medical acts.

The CMA further comments: "The inclusion of abortion in the Criminal Code threatens the nature of the physician—patient relationship. The ultimate effect of this bill would be to confer legal entitlement to abortion, but at the expense of access to the service. The bill creates a conceptual nightmare and the bill is vague in its intent".

There are various problems with the bill. It does not protect the innocent or the unborn. It puts the medical fraternity at a distinct disadvantage. They are the only people under this bill that in any way are at risk for carrying out their duties, and of course they are concerned about future access.

Mr. Joe Fontana (London East): Mr. Speaker, to say that this is a complex and difficult issue would be a fantastic understatement. Every individual Canadian has wrestled with it and has had to come to grips with this very personal and difficult moral issue. Some say you cannot legislate morality, but I believe that we must try.

This issue challenges the basic question of what we believe in as individuals and as a society. This issue speaks to rights, freedoms, choices, responsibilities, and obligations of the individual and of society.

Throughout the 1980s Canadians have watched a difference of opinion grow and fester into a raging debate that has deeply divided many Canadians. It has created countless front page headlines on dragged out court battles, demonstrations involving thousands of Canadians, and repeated arrests.

The debate on abortion is really a debate on values, rights, and obligations. It is a debate that has grown into a conflict where both sides have confronted each other frequently in the courtroom. The repeated legal battles saw the conflict mount and result in the Supreme Court of Canada striking down the law governing abortion.

Now this painful and divisive issue has been put by the Supreme Court into the hands of Parliament to be resolved. As members of Parliament we are elected by

Canadians to make political decisions, decisions that will benefit society as a whole while respecting the rights of the individual. Parliament must attempt to resolve this conflict in Canadian society.

As we have been debating Bill C–43 in the House of Commons, my hon. colleagues have risen to give their thoughtful opinions on the abortion issue. While I may not agree with all of them, I do respect their differing opinions.

This conflict in Canadian society is created by deeply divided views on abortion. Each side is demanding that the law governing abortion protect differing rights. One group demands that the rights of the unborn be recognized and protected under the law. Another group demands just as strongly that the rights of women be upheld and protected. The people of Canada wait for leadership from Parliament to resolve this conflict.

Bill C–43 has been characterized by the government as a compromise, but how can the government claim to have covered the middle ground when it has done nothing to address the fundamental problems at the root of the conflict? The government has done nothing to address the rights of the unborn, the key issue at the core of the debate.

It is the duty and responsibility of the government to draft a bill that is good for Canadian society by trying to bring an end to the conflict surrounding the debate. I believe this bill has failed the test and will fail again.

The committee that sought to hear the opinions of Canadians and groups met for a number of weeks and heard expert witnesses. I think it is fair to say that most of those groups representing a number of viewpoints have all said that this bill has failed the test and should be rejected. Nowhere in the bill does it speak about life. It speaks about protecting the life and health of a woman, and I am fully supportive of that. However the bill is frighteningly silent about life and the meaning of life, especially the life and the rights of the unborn.

• (1550)

Deep in our hearts we all know that life begins at conception, that a living cell is nurtured within the womb of a mother until such time as it can sustain itself outside the protective life sustaining system of the mother.

Advances in medical technology now make it possible for that living human being to be sustained outside the protective womb as early as 19 weeks, and who knows where we go from there. I am proud to have in my riding a world renowned hospital, St. Joseph's Hospital, dedicated to this end.

My point is that as a society and as individuals we all rejoice at the miracle of birth and life. As a society, once a person is born, we devote our total attention and resources to protecting that life. We expend millions of dollars and would expend anything it takes to protect and enhance life. As a society, we do that from birth to death. Therefore, it is implausible to me that if we believe in life after birth, that we would not do everything possible to ensure that the rights of yet to be born human beings should also be protected and enhanced.

If this bill with certain amendments were to be passed, especially those that seek to speak to life and the rights of the unborn, we will be saying that we believe in something. For, if we do not believe in life, what do we believe in?

Therefore I will be supportive of those amendments that seek to restrict abortions and take into consideration the life and the serious health implications of the mother.

Life should be the rule and abortion should be the exception, and not the other way around. Society should understand and know not only what a law says, but what it means. It must have a value system built in.

The exceptions where an abortion should be permissible should only be when the life of the woman is in danger and the medical risks are substantial and serious.

It must be clear to those seeking an abortion and to those medical practitioners called upon to perform an abortion that it should be the exception and not the rule.

Having said that, it is also imperative that as a society and as a government that supportive community resources be encouraged and supported and that other governmental policies and programs are in place to reinforce our commitment that we intend to encourage, support, and assist women, specifically, who have to make this heart–rending, excruciating and personal decision.

The community and government must play a very positive, substantial and supportive role up front, and not as an after the fact matter.

In addition, I have some grave reservations as to the criminal implications of this bill. I voted against Bill C–43 at second reading because I felt that this bill was seriously flawed from a number of standpoints and, if certain amendments were not passed to ensure a proper balance of competing rights, that I could not and would not support this bill at third reading.

I have listened to Canadians and my constituents for almost 16 months on this fundamental issue. I do not believe their views are respected and reflected in Bill C–43 as written. This bill has failed to achieve the delicate balance sought by this government and has failed to meet the challenge laid out by the Supreme Court to Parliament to recognize the rights of the unborn.

Ms. Barbara Greene (Don Valley North): Mr. Speaker, I volunteered to sit on the legislative committee on abortion, although I was quite aware it would be a very difficult and onerous committee, because I felt it was important that our caucus have female representation. Although I feel this issue is important to men, it directly affects women. As a woman representative in this Parliament, I felt I had a special interest in representing women on it.

Second, it is important that we in our particular caucus have representation from the centre, from the people who do not have extreme views of those who think that abortion should only be permitted in very rare instances affecting life and those who have the view that it should be entirely the decision of the woman. I feel that I am in the middle.

I come to this debate with a great deal of experience. I have been elected at large across 560,000 people five times and have sat on the Metropolitan Toronto Council for 11 years. In that forum we had to debate this issue on a number of occasions. The area which I debated it that was the most sensitive was as the metro appointee to the Catholic Children's Aid Society. Therefore I have a very personal experience with some of the most heart-rending situations involving abortion that anyone could possibly have experienced.

I have a deep concern that the rights of women are respected on this issue. Yet, we as a society should be doing everything possible to prevent abortions. The act of abortion represents a failure and a tragedy.

I therefore have no problem with legislation in this field. It is important for Parliament to state its position, particularly when the rights of individuals can be so terribly affected.

There has been a very definite need for legislation since 1988. Things have not been fine. We have had two very newsworthy court cases with third party interventions. We have had the B.C. government attempt to legislate in this area, and there are several provinces that have attempted to restrict access. The opposition member's contention that everything has been just great since 1988 is simply not so.

If one looks at the statistics on abortions since 1988, the number of abortions has not risen. This statistic has been used to say that women have been acting responsibly. I think it also means that when there was a law they were also acting responsibly and there was no difficulty for women who wanted an abortion to get one in Canada, except for the problems of access in remote areas with which we have to deal in any event, law or no law.

Legislation in this area is not something that is negative. I do not think we are recriminalizing abortion. Abortion was not criminal before. Abortions that were outside the law were criminalized. Similarly this legislation makes abortions that are not in accordance with the law again criminalized.

The old law was not much of a problem. It was in for 17 years. The Morgentaler decision was around the issue of the abortion committee, which doctors also complained about. It was simply something that did provide a delaying effect, that when it was operating properly, as it was in most urban centres and major hospitals, there was really no real problem.

I do not think what we are talking about today is law. What we are talking about is whether or not there will be more court actions. I do not think that the law we are passing will affect the number of abortions in Canada. I do not think women have abortions for frivolous reasons. The fact that there has been no law and that there has been no change in the statistics indicates that.

What I am hoping will be prevented are court cases and the humiliation particular individuals suffered, as we saw so clearly last year. With this new law, if the medical association meets the challenge implicit in it, because the law makes the doctors really responsible for enforcing the ethics of their profession, and if the CMA responds by establishing procedures for doctors to follow and a standard consent form such as the one that Dr. Morgentaler uses which ensures that women are aware of alternatives to abortions, it will operate in an efficient and reasonable fashion.

The question of access is also improved by this law, because it establishes the right of a women to have an abortion in consultation with a doctor.

• (1600)

In addition, the medical innovations that are now occurring mean that in the future abortions will not be performed in hospitals. There is the new pill that has been approved in France and doctors are now talking about medical procedures in the abortion field being performed in their offices. This will mean that access will not be an issue in the future.

Let us turn to the rights of the foetus. According to this legislation, the foetus is entitled to consideration in balance with the rights of the woman to security of person. I do not think that the foetus has been ignored because doctors have been given that responsibility in accordance with their profession.

The Canadian Medical Association, according to their ethics, does not believe that it is professionally reasonable for a doctor to perform an abortion on a viable foetus, a viable foetus being one that weighs over 500 grams or is past 20 weeks of gestation. The CMA says that abortion should not be used as an alternative to contraception. Similarly, counselling services, family planning services and information on contraception must be readily available to all Canadians. It says that the patient should be provided with the option of full and immediate counselling services in the event of unwanted pregnancy. It talks about options for women.

This law makes it clearly the responsibility of doctors in the medical profession, in conjunction with women, to provide that kind of counselling and that kind of assurance to society that women who receive abortions are fully counselled as to their options and that prevention is also considered.

Those who would deny a woman the right to an abortion except if it threatens the life of the woman, her physical health in some dramatic way, do not, I think, appreciate the rights of women in this society. The Minister of Justice has already stated that she believes it would be unconstitutional to support those amendments.

I think those people also underestimate the seriousness of the psychological reasons that women have for abortions. In a pluralistic and democratic society such as ours, such a law would simply not be obeyed. One cannot force a law on society which affects people so individually or personally.

At the committee I asked the question how people could possibly think that such a law could be enforced in Canada if Ceausescu in Romania could not enforce such a law in the most severe dictatorship in the world.

Our society respects and cares about the rights of individuals. We have to deal with people with compassion. I think this law will ensure that, with the help and co-operation of the medical profession, that will be done.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Phillip Edmonston (Chambly): Mr. Speaker, today I would like to talk about the amendments contained in Bill C-43, and especially in support of amendment no. 24 moved by one of my colleagues.

I feel somewhat uneasy reading this bill because I wonder if 85 per cent of the members of this House were women, would we vote for such a bill? I shall give you an example. As you know, Mr. Speaker, about 12 to 15 per cent of the members are now women. On examining this bill, I am struck by the lack of logic and plain common sense.

This bill came about as a result of the Morgentaler decision, as I am sure you recall, Mr. Speaker. After several Quebec courts had rendered decisions, a Quebec jury decided that Mr. Morgentaler had the right to perform therapeutic abortions. The people spoke. They said it was not a criminal matter. The decision to have an abortion is already hard enough; the public did not want to make it a crime. In the end, Dr. Morgentaler was found not guilty. It went to the Supreme Court, which confirmed and ratified the decisions of the other courts. Good! It is done.

But what happened is that two years ago, the federal government—that is us, Mr. Speaker, we are responsible—but especially the Conservative government said, "we will not leave that alone. No! We members of Parliament, we men know better. We will prepare a bill that will make everyone unhappy"—well, not everyone, but about 62 per cent of Canadians. And I understand that some Canadians are unhappy with the bill because they think it is against the unborn. There are others, especially in my party, who think this is not a step forward, a step toward a better understanding of the problem but a step backward. When the government says it wants to defend the interests of Quebec men and women—I trust the women of Quebec are included—I find it hard to understand how it can claim to protect those rights when we have before the House a bill that is so illogical in design and so unfair in its application, I would even go so far as to say, Mr. Speaker, a bill that is cruel and anti-women. How can I prove that? Easy. It means forcing a woman who has been raped to bear the child of the person who raped her! A young girl of 13 or 14 who was raped by her father would have to bear his child. Why? My colleagues will say, because they are convinced, which I do not doubt: because life is important. I ask you Mr. Speaker: whose life? The life—and one can debate whether life is there or not—of the foetus or the life of a young girl of 13 or 14? That is the problem.

I know we can talk about this for a long time. When does life start? At what point does the foetus become a human being?

The consequences of this legislation are disastrous. They are very negative for Canadian women. We have already seen it in Nova Scotia—in fact, that is why the Supreme Court dismissed the existing legislation—where women have lacked the same access as women in Ontario, British Columbia or elsewhere. In fact, this was pure discrimination.

The Canadian Medical Association has said, and these are experts, that if the bill is passed, doctors—the CMA speaks for the doctors—will limit access to abortion because they will be afraid of being put in jail.

• (1610)

I do not blame them. I realize that some hon. members here really want to do the right thing, and I understand that, but by supporting this bill, they are doing the exact opposite.

Before I finish, Mr. Speaker, I just want to say that I am uncomfortable with this bill. I am comfortable with the fact that I am opposed to this legislation, but I am uncomfortable about the fact that a government has the arrogance to believe it has a monopoly on truth and to promote this kind of legislation which I think is unnecessary and, in the final instance, does not protect the interests of Quebecers and especially not the interest of the women of Quebec. That is why I am ashamed when I see this government which claims to defend the rights of men and women by proposing this kind of legislation.

[*English*]

Mr. Rob Nicholson (Niagara Falls): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased once again to make a few comments on this very difficult and troubling subject for members of Parliament.

When this issue was before the House the last time I voted against the bill. Parliament at that time was being asked to give approval in principle to the bill and I said to Parliament at that time that I could not in good conscience give approval to something that I have always fought against in my life. I have fought for the protection of unborn children and I fought against the abortion law that was in place in Canada for many years.

Since I was being asked to give approval in principle, I said I could not do that. I decided at that time, having made the point, that I would consider the whole issue again. I listened very carefully to the arguments of individuals who said that this law was better than no law, that there were positive aspects to this law from both points of view, the pro-choice and the pro-life.

I looked at it not only for that reason but because of the profound respect that I have for other individuals in Parliament who are also struggling with this. One of the things that I have learned is that as difficult and important as these moral questions are, it is very difficult to come up with absolutes. Other members looking at the same set of circumstances can come to different conclusions as to what they should be doing and how they should be acting in this.

Having considered very carefully all the different sides of this issue, I have come to the conclusion that I will not be supporting the bill at report stage or third reading stage because it goes against a principle that I have fought for all my life, that is, my belief in the sacredness of human life. After having discussions with my colleagues, I realize there are good points in this, that it does recognize the value of human life, but I could not overcome my concerns with respect to the over-all implications of this bill.

I think there is a role for individuals who state their position very clearly and not move from that. Society itself, indeed the Supreme Court, recognizes, in cases of unborn children, the legitimate interest of society in the foetus. That is as it should be because it has always been my belief that the less articulate a particular interest is, the more likely it is that their interests will be compromised or not taken into consideration. I think there is a role for individuals such as myself, who believe as I do, to state very clearly their position.

I do not minimize the difficulties. I know the difficulties of the constitutional considerations in this area. As well, I do not know what words Parliament could come up with. I have no idea what could be put down on a piece of paper that would be acceptable to both sides of this issue. I do not know what those words would be. I give full credit to my colleagues and the leadership of my political party for putting together what I would not call a compromise but an accommodation of both sides. That is why in many ways it was very tempting for me to say that I could accept that, because I do not know what else could pass in Parliament.

However, I have other fears. I have fears about the removal of this issue from the public agenda. I have fears about how this bill will operate in practice. I could go on with those criticisms. I am sure that the criticisms of this bill have been very well articulated by members inside and outside of the House. It would be unfair for me to get into that when I know how difficult this has been.

For myself the way is clear, but that does not make it any less difficult for me. I will not be supporting the bill. I will also not be supporting, with the exception of one, the amendments. The so-called pro-life amendments do not turn this into a pro-life bill. It would be hypocritical for me to get up this evening and support any one of 10 or 15 of these amendments and then ultimately find that the bill is unacceptable to me. It would be hypocritical to do that. I will not do that this evening and, with the exception of one, I will be voting against those amendments presently before the House.

One of the things I have learned about this is that there are no absolutes, and there is no way of coming to a conclusion about absolutes. People on all sides of this issue are sincere. I heard some speeches yesterday that I was somewhat disappointed to hear. People on either side of this issue were ascribing insincerity to the other side. I do not believe that. I believe that people on both sides of this issue are just as sincere about wanting to do the right thing.

As well, I heard at least one comment suggesting that the Prime Minister may be forcing government members to do something. I can say that those members do not know the Prime Minister of Canada. They are absolutely wrong in that conclusion. That is not the case. Members of this party are free to vote according to their conscience, which is one among many reasons why I am so proud to be a part of this government and this political party.

Mr. Joe McGuire (Egmont): Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to participate in this debate and to express my views on a most sensitive human issue. It is a human issue. It affects all of us. To discuss the issue solely in the context of how it affects women is to ignore the fact that abortion affects men and children and, obviously, it affects the unborn.

I voted against the bill at second reading in the hope that it would be amended at committee stage. While a number of amendments were moved, the government has indicated that it is not willing to accept any of them. Therefore, I must make my position clear from the outset.

I believe that, since life begins at conception, life must be legally protected from the moment of conception. On that basis, I cannot support the bill in its present form because it does not effectively prohibit abortion and it does not protect the unborn. I am opposed to Bill C-43

in principle. I am opposed because this bill does nothing to solve the real dilemma of abortion.

I realize, however, that it is unproductive merely to criticize the government's proposals without making some alternative suggestions or general recommendations. That is why I would like also to address the need for a holistic approach to the abortion issue.

The main problem with this bill is that it fails to address fundamental issues. There is no mention of the rights of the foetus or the rights of women. Nowhere does it say that an unborn has a right to life and that this life should take precedence over a woman's expressed desire to "control her body". Nowhere in Bill C-43 is there an explicit recognition of the fact that a foetus is a human life. In fact, there is not even any mention of the foetus. How can a law on abortion make no mention of the existence of the foetus?

• (1620)

It seems clear to me that this bill is avoiding the fundamental issues. It dumps the problems onto the provinces, the doctors, and the courts.

What is the meaning of the term "health" in this bill? When Section 251 of the Criminal Code was struck down by the Supreme Court in the Morgentaler case of January, 1988, Chief Justice Dickson expressed concern that the term "health" was too vague. Bill C-43 does not rectify this problem. While there is attempt to respond to Chief Justice Dickson's concerns, I maintain that the qualifiers of "physical, mental and psychological" in Bill C-43 simply leave too many doors open. In fact, C-43 does not limit interpretation of "health" in any way. The definition could be extended to include anything and everything. One doctor can arrive at a conclusion that would make an abortion legal.

I support Motion No. 10 by which the word "health" would be eliminated. The bill in its present form will be susceptible to arbitrary limitations on application. It will be vulnerable to constitutional review on the basis of ambiguity. In fact, it seems clear that the issue may simply end up being passed on to the courts.

According to Professor Allan Hutchinson of Osgoode Hall Law School:

> Anyone who thought the introduction of new legislation would end the abortion debate will be disappointed. One chapter may be closing but another is just beginning. Once the dramatic action in Parliament ends, it will move down the hill to the more refined but no less heated setting of the Supreme Court.

The courts, however, will not be alone in facing the abortion issue. With Bill C-43 the federal government is passing on an additional burden to the provinces. The federal government is responsible for criminal law and for guaranteeing that all Canadians receive the same level of insured medical services. However, if Bill C-43 is passed, the government will be abdicating these responsibilities because it will be the provinces which will ultimately have to decide such issues as whether abortions will be performed in their hospitals, whether abortion clinics will be licensed, and whether provincial health plans will cover the cost of abortions.

Finally, I would like to add that doctors will also be burdened by a great deal of decision-making concerning abortion. The responsibilities and the problems associated with these responsibilities will now be in the hands of the courts, the provinces, and the doctors. What an abdication of responsibility.

Effective solutions assume a good understanding of the problems. However, I firmly believe that in the case of abortion the real underlying problems have not been sufficiently dealt with or, in fact, understood. How can we provide solutions when we have not even properly identified the fundamental problem?

This is the crux of the matter. The fundamental problem is not the pregnancies themselves. It is the fact that they are unwanted. From this we must infer that the solution is not abortion on demand. Rather, the solution is to deal with the various forces that underlie the decision to have an abortion. We must examine why women have abortions. We must identify the pressures that push women to opt for abortions, and then it is our duty to do everything humanly possible to remove these pressures.

I would like to mention at this point that, contrary to the beliefs of many pro-choice advocates, being pro-life does not imply being anti-women. In fact, it is quite the contrary. We must encourage the development of support and counselling programs for women. We must recognize that many women, faced with the problem of an unwanted pregnancy, are lonely, afraid, deserted, usually poor and, perhaps worst of all, stigmatized by society. We must help these women. We must have programs that deal with the enormous social, economic, and psychological forces that push women to believe that

the only way out of a difficult situation is to abort their own children.

Abortion is a violent act. It is a violent act against unborn children and against women. It is time to understand why this violence occurs. It is time to stop this violence.

Bill C-43 does nothing to address the reasons why women abort. There is a desperate need for counselling and support programs. We must make facilities equally accessible to all women across the country. We must facilitate the adoption alternative. We must provide more child care facilities. We must provide child care bursaries for women with children who want to complete their education. After all, people are our most precious resource and we should invest in that resource.

There is no quick fix to the abortion problem. There is no easy solution. Bill C-43 is an attempt to have it both ways. It pays lip service to the pro-life movement by putting Bill C-43 in the Criminal Code. However, the content and the intent of the bill basically amount to abortion on demand. It will be a criminal offence to perform abortions unless any one doctor is prepared to say that the life or health of the mother is threatened. In essence, abortion is left to the discretion of the woman and her doctor.

I reiterate that I will not support this bill. I simply cannot support a bill that discriminates against the weakest and most defenceless members of our society.

Ms. Margaret Mitchell (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, I have spoken many times on this issue. I am speaking now, of course, at report stage of Bill C-43 and against the motions nos. 4 to 19 which are very tough, restrictive and punitive amendments which would increase the criminal sanctions of Bill C-43. If the complete criminal prohibition of abortion fails, there are several amendments which would limit the definition of "health" as another tactic to try to restrict the choice of women.

It is significant that these extremely restrictive amendments are presented by anti-choice advocates. I am sorry to say this, but all members who presented these motions, and most of the members speaking to them, are men. The total impact of the abortion question concerns women primarily and should be a private choice and decision of each woman.

I regret that some women members, who I know in their hearts prefer women to have a choice on the question of abortion, also will vote for Bill C-43. I can respect some of their feelings about this, but I note that there are none today who are speaking for the extremely restrictive and paternalistic Motions Nos. 4 to 19.

I would particularly like to commend the member from Toronto who spoke a few minutes ago for stressing prevention and the points she raised about the lack of reality of these motions in even achieving the goals that their movers sought in presenting them.

I would like to take a moment to pay tribute to the many men, and particularly our male colleagues in this caucus, who have supported the policy that abortion is not a criminal matter to be controlled by the state with severe criminal sanctions and limitations in criminal law. They recognize, as do the majority of Canadians, that this is an extremely personal matter that involves a very difficult personal decision for a woman who is faced with an unwanted, unplanned pregnancy. As such, it must be treated as a health matter with the decision to be made by the woman and her doctor.

We do not feel that criminal laws have any place in the question of reproductive and family planning matters. Experience over the past two years, since the Supreme Court decision was made in the Morgentaler case which rescinded the previous criminal laws, has shown that we do not need a new federal law. Abortions have not increased as a result of having open choice on this matter. Women have been treated with the respect and dignity they deserve, recognizing their right to decide themselves whether or not they are ready to have a child.

• (1630)

The present situation, where we have no abortion law, is much more respectful of doctors and medical associations generally. Doctors and medical associations have established regulations and health standards that are the only kinds of controls needed.

If a woman decides not to continue a pregnancy, whether it is because she is alone without support, is in an abusive relationship, is a young girl with no means of support to raise a family, or wants to wait and plan a family later, whatever the reason—and there are many, many complex reasons—this is a safe medical procedure performed by a physician who does not feel intimidated

or subject to criminal sanctions. There is no criminal law imposed on the woman or the doctor. That is one of the reasons we object to the bill. The major problem for women today is the lack of access, particularly in the Atlantic region and rural and remote areas. That is where we should focus our action.

The series of amendments, numbered 4 to 19, being debated this afternoon are restrictive, cruel and undemocratic, based on outdated, patriarchal views of women, the fact that women must be controlled by the state—and the state is usually a patriarchal institution—they cannot be trusted and must be controlled and punished with tough criminal sanctions. That is what these particular amendments are saying to Canadian women and to Canadians generally.

It is sickening to know that there are people in Canada, and members in this House, who support these resolutions, who want to impose the kind of inhumane policies that we saw in Romania where women were forced to have babies and these babies were neglected and abused. A whole generation is almost destroyed and disturbed and society as a whole has suffered greatly.

Do we really want this kind of authoritative dictatorship in Canada? Most Canadians do not. I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, and members of the House, that that is what these amendments mean to many women. These amendments and their movers show that they have no empathy for the condition of women who face very difficult decisions and no respect for the rights of women to make their own choices as to whether or not now is the time to have a family.

I would like to refer to the main motions to which I object. First, Motions Nos. 4 and 22, if passed, would increase the criminal penalty from two to 20 years, a 20-year imprisonment for doctors who perform abortions. Doctors perform abortions now because they see it as a health measure and a necessity in individual cases. This is not only completely intolerable for doctors but would also increase criminal penalties for women.

Motion No. 5 states that abortions will be performed only by a medical practitioner. The medical associations have objected to this and have agreed that in certain situations there could be medical procedures under the direction of a medical practitioner. We know that this is directed to women who would have self-induced abortions. I wonder what some of the proponents of these amendments would do about morning-after pills which is a form of abortion. What are they going to do about monitoring that, I wonder. There are no beneficial effects to any of these amendments, only negative ones.

For example, Motion No. 10 proposes that the only abortions that would be legal would be those performed in order to save the life of a woman. Other abortions performed for the woman's health would be illegal. Surely, that does not make sense. It certainly does not make sense to me.

Another amendment would force a woman by threat of criminal sanction to carry a foetus to term unless she meets certain criteria. This is a profound interference with a woman's body and thus, an infringement on the security of the person. This is what Chief Justice Dickson said about the old law and would certainly say the same about this amendment.

Motion No. 13 makes a bad bill worse. Health is not the issue. Unwanted pregnancy is the issue. Motion No. 14 is another one that would strike out the definition of health.

Motions Nos. 16, 17A and 17B are ones I am very interested in because we have had at least two doctors in this House who have spoken about the question of health. They seem to disregard completely the UN definition of health, and also, what I understand to be psychosomatic medicine which relates to the psychological and physical aspects of health. It is very difficult, if you have a whole approach to medicine, to separate these.

Certainly, I wonder if a woman under extreme stress and anxiety is a healthy woman. I do not think so, and I do not think she would really be in a position to be a healthy mother. The rationale about health as a reason is particularly offensive.

Motion No. 19 refers to scientific knowledge. I would think that, surely, physicians have access to scientific knowledge now. This seems to be an insult to the medical profession.

In summary, there are many reasons why I and my party object to these resolutions and will vote against them. They criminalize abortion in the extreme and are not a deterrent, because women will still seek out back street abortions or self-induced abortions. They will be victims of quacks and butchers as the women in Romania

were. It was the experience in Italy when abortion was very restricted.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I regret that the hon. member's time has expired. The hon. member for Edmonton Northwest.

Mr. Jim Edwards (Edmonton Southwest): With the greatest respect, Mr. Speaker, Southwest. Come back for a visit some time and we will reorient you.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The Whip had you down for Edmonton Northwest. I knew it was Southwest, I thought maybe you had changed your constituency.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, far be it from me to quarrel with you or the Whip.

I am going to be very brief today, because my position on this issue was dealt with at some length in the 1988 debate on the motions that were before the House at that time. The philosophical approach that I had was outlined at that time but I would like to make a few comments on the process, the amendments and on the bill itself, to illustrate the tremendous dichotomy of views that one encounters in dealing with this issue.

First, with reference to process, I am pleased that I am afforded the opportunity as a member of Parliament on the government side to have a free vote in this instance. In many ways, parliamentary secretaries are members of the government and are regarded as such within our system. I appreciate having the opportunity to vote according to my conscience on what I think is a very fundamental issue.

I listened with great interest to the hon. member for Vancouver East and her comments about the amendments. I believe it is her position that her party is for choice, but her party does not seem to have a choice available to its individual members on this issue.

With reference to the amendments themselves, I believe that all those who were involved with the process of putting forward amendments and considering the possibility of amendments while the bill was in committee and those who have put them on the Order Paper for consideration here today have borne in mind a number of criteria. The first is to do that which is proper and right. The second is to do that which is politically achievable and the third is to do that which will meet the test of the Supreme Court of Canada.

• (1640)

It is my considered opinion that a number of the amendments before us—I refer to Motions Nos. 12, 13, and 17B, in particular, but not excluding the others—will stand a court test. I concede that there is opinion on both sides of the issue, but I have seen opinions I respect from three very substantial and distinguished sources that these amendments would stand a court test.

I want to relate what happened one Friday afternoon in February when I was seeing constituents, as we all do, in my riding office. I had had a rather testy exchange of correspondence with a constituent who represented a significant interest group, not only within the constituency but also nationally.

This constituent had written to me taking me to task for what she perceived to be, with some accuracy, my position on this issue. She suggested that "no one group", as she put it, "had the right to impose its view on others within a pluralistic society".

I met with this woman, had lunch with her and tried to come to grips with this and other issues which she had raised in her correspondence with me. I stressed to her my belief that if there is not an ethical and moral basis for our law, then we are steering by the bow, rather than by the tiller. In this issue we tend to fall into the whirlpool of losing respect for life itself.

I listened with care to the member for Vancouver East, and I know it will sound patronizing to her ears and to the ears of a number of my colleagues in this House, but I do not think the issue is controlling women when we address this bill. The issue is respect for life. That is why I see a series of amendments on the Order Paper.

On that same day, I returned to my constituency office and met with an obstetrician who I thought was of the Catholic faith, because of his well-known position on the abortion issue. He was, of course, opposed to abortion but I learned that he was a Muslim. I had not known that, prior to meeting with him. He gave me his view and, as he left my office, a young woman came in to see me. Neither the man who was leaving nor the young woman

who was coming in, knew that the other would be there. They were father and daughter.

The daughter had organized a pro-life group on the campus of the University of Alberta. She said it was uphill because it was not the most popular cause on a campus, but she had recruited 75 members for that group and was hoping to have a national meeting of like-minded groups from campuses across the country.

I asked her what message she conveyed to young women in particular, but also to young men who joined her group as well. I asked what she advocated they do in our society and what kind of code of behaviour she advocated. She said: "fun within the framework of chastity". Those words may seem absurd in today's society and in fact the woman with whom I had lunch said: "Let's face it. The fact of the matter is that the vast bulk of teenagers and young people today are having sex and so we have to face that reality."

The point I am making is that there is an issue of responsibility here, not just responsibility for women but also for men to endeavour to control their activity and, if they are not able to do so, to take reasonable precautions to minimize the consequences.

Now we come to the obvious, the amendments themselves. We face the possibility of none of the amendments succeeding tonight, and which way do we go on the bill itself when the vote comes up next Tuesday, May 29.

There are many people who know my position on the issue who are urging me to vote against the bill. They are saying that it is better to have no bill than to have a flawed bill. Frankly, I do not know how I am going to vote if the amendments do not succeed. I hope some of the amendments do succeed.

If the goal is as I have suggested, to respect life and to spare lives, which is the lesser evil: to have no bill, or to have the bill that is before us? When one deals with the issue of lesser evil—a much abused term, by the way, Mr. Speaker—one must clearly identify that there are no alternatives before one. Clearly in this case there are not if the amendments do not succeed. One must also analyze whether the options have components of evil or lack of good in them. Both clearly do.

If, on the other hand, the goal is to find a bridgehead on which the principle of respect for life can be nurtured and encouraged, to await the day when through education and a change of heart this country will come to a different attitude on the issue of abortion without in one slightest way demeaning the rights of women and in fact enhancing the rights of women, and can define a parallel right of the foetus or the unborn individual, then that is a goal to be pursued.

I will be listening with great care to the debate not only today but tomorrow. I have consulted with my constituents. I have written all those who have been in correspondence with me on the issue and I have said, among other things:

> —if the Bill emerges from Report Stage unamended, is it better to vote for it, imperfect as it is, or against it, which would leave us with no abortion law whatsoever for the foreseeable future?
>
> My judgement at this point is that the Bill would discourage some doctors who perform some abortions from continuing to do so. I am not at all sure that it would save substantial numbers of unborn lives. But it would make a statement that performing abortions is a breach of the Criminal Code (except in certain very broad circumstances).

That is the issue before us, an issue from my point of view of deciding between lesser evils. I will be praying for guidance, but I will also be listening to my colleagues for guidance because there is a good body of wisdom in this House.

Mr. Jack Iyerak Anawak (Nunatsiaq): Mr. Speaker, first of all, if men were able to become pregnant, would we be debating this bill? I rather think not. That is a question I would like to put because I, as a man, do not have a clue what it is like to be pregnant. I think we, as men, should admit that we are rather unqualified to judge the issue of what to do about pregnancy.

• (1650)

I do not condone abortion as birth control. I doubt that very many people do, regardless of whether they are pro-life, anti-abortion or pro-choice. I make the mistake of saying pro-life because I think that is the name given to people who call themselves pro-lifers. It is a misnomer, a mistaken label, because I do not think anyone has a monopoly on caring about life. I care about life just as much as anyone else. I do not think that is debatable. If you are pro-choice it does not mean that you do not care about life.

I would like to state something that should be understood by some people here in the House. I think there is some hypocrisy in attitudes of non-aboriginal people. In the Inuit culture there is no such thing as an unwanted child. We have a custom called custom adoption. I am adopted. I have five adopted children. That is not because these children were not wanted, but because I had talked to whoever had the children and we decided we could take care of the child better than the mother, or maybe because we did not have children of our own.

I would like to elaborate on this. When I say some of us are pro-choice, I talk about people in general. When I talk about Inuit, you will find that most Inuit are anti-abortion but unlike some people down here who are anti-abortion, Inuit do not just pay lip service to the issue of abortion or anti-abortion. They practise what they preach. If they are against abortion, it is because they are prepared to take care of the children whether they be of single mothers or relatives. They are prepared to adopt and again, there is no stigma in adoption. When I was adopted I knew exactly who my natural parents were as well as my adopted parents, and so do my five adopted children. They know exactly who their natural parents are or who their natural parent is, in some cases. When I say they practise what they preach, that is exactly what it is.

In the Eastern Arctic there are no receiving homes for unwanted children. That is because all children are adopted. I would like to ask—and again, I do not condone abortion as birth control—those people who want to either restrict or even tighten the bill, how many are taking care of unwanted children that they got because they cared enough, and did not condone abortion. I am sure there are some, as the hon. member across just raised his hand, but I think the question is how many of those people who demonstrate in the streets against abortion, whether it be here, in Toronto or Vancouver, have children that they took because they cared enough about homeless children. I think that many of them would be hard pressed to admit that they have any.

I think that when women are pro-choice, it does not mean that they take abortion lightly. I think when women decide to have an abortion, it is not just one day deciding: "Well, I am going to get pregnant and I am going to have an abortion." I do not think it is that simple. I think when women make the decision to have an abortion, it is an agonizing and very painful decision. I find it very difficult to believe that those decisions are made lightly. How can you inflict punishment on a person who, after very agonizing, painful thinking, has decided to have an abortion? How can you inflict criminal charges against that person?

If we were in an ideal world, we would not have abortion. However, the fact remains that there are women who are going to continue to have abortions and, frankly, that is probably the way life is at this point.

I would like to state that I am going to be voting against this bill because it criminalizes women when the decision to have an abortion is a very, very personal one.

• (1700)

Mr. Lyle Kristiansen (Kootenay West—Revelstoke): Mr. Speaker, in rising to speak at report stage of Bill C-43, I want to make it very clear at the outset that I will be voting against Bill C-43 on third reading. At report stage I will oppose all of the proposed amendments except for Motion No. 24, which stands in the name of the hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby.

In an issue which touches personal conscience such as this one does, I have the greatest of respect for the feelings and opinions of all members which they hold very deeply.

Abortion has been an issue that has been very difficult for some people more than others. I suspect particularly some of them on the government side feel themselves torn by conflicting loyalties. All of us have those at times, but I think it probably bears more so on some members of the cabinet. As an individual who shares accommodation with some of those members, I must say that I appreciate the agony I am sure that they are going through.

In the contemporary lexicon of the abortion debate, I am unequivocally pro-choice and make no apology for it. I hold this view not because it is the position of my party. In fact I have argued on numerous occasions that it is in my opinion not the sort of issue which should be enshrined as a party issue or policy, because like religion or creed it is more properly a matter of individual conscience, personal philosophy and individual choice.

This has caused some difficulty for some members of my party, not here in the House of Commons but in the constituency and elsewhere, who during election campaigns have been active members of Pentecostal assemblies and do not hold a pro-choice point of view. Regardless of that, because we agree on a multitude of issues we have actively campaigned for our party and for myself when I have unequivocally taken a pro-choice point of view. I feel the discomfort that I know that they have felt on occasion.

Intolerance is not something that is exclusive to any particular political philosophy or creed. We all have our problems at times. It is difficult in the heat of debate to accord to all others the rights and full respect that we demand for ourselves.

I am pro-choice because I believe firmly that only the individual most closely affected, the woman, the potential mother, has the right ultimately to determine whether or not a pregnancy should be brought to term. In the final analysis she and she alone has the right to determine whether she will bear a child and when: not me, not us, not the police, not the courts, and not the criminal law.

Nothing could be more abhorrent or inappropriate than for the state to impose values on people regarding such an intensively personal issue as whether or not someone shall bear children. That is a woman's right. Women have shown throughout history, often at great cost to themselves, that they will exercise the right to choose regardless of risk or law, whether the law is religious, civil or criminal.

Rights exist not because we grant them, not because the law grants rights or society grants rights. Rights exist not because we grant them, not because the law grants rights, or society grants rights. Rights exist because people claim them and exercise them, often at great cost to themselves. When a large number of individuals have consistently shown that in order to exercise what they believe to be their fundamental rights they have to place themselves at risk, it does not behove us to impose our values by using the state or the law to try to force them to do otherwise.

That is bad law. It is bad law in this case. It is bad law in labour relations. It is bad law in a whole host of other areas. All that kind of action means—and regardless of our point of view on this issue we all know it—is that women who claim this fundamental right to choose will continue to do so regardless of the penalties and regardless of the risk to themselves. If we pass such a law, it will simply bring the law and the institutions which pass and enforce those laws into contempt. We do not need any more of that than we already have in this day and age.

Do we really want to force women or large numbers of women to risk their lives as they have done before or be branded as criminals or sent to jail for exercising what they understandably regard as their right to choose whether or not to give birth? I do not want that, and I will not be a party to imposing my values on them.

With regard to values I said earlier that I have always resisted those people—whether they are on the right, on the left, or in the centre, no party is excluded—who from time to time want to use the law to impose their personal values or their moral judgments upon others or upon society. That is not my role, and I do not believe it should be our role.

I would like to make a few personal comments on the matter of language. A lot of very charged language has been used in this debate back and forth across the country. We have heard the phrase unborn children or unborn babies being used instead of the term fertilized eggs or foetuses or whatever.

I am not a religious person in the classical sense, but I value life every bit as much as someone who believes that all life has been created by a divine being. I believe that all life exists as a result of an infinitesimal number of accidents of fate over an infinitesimal number of years, trillions of years, beyond reckoning. I think that perhaps I regard it even more preciously because I do not believe that that combination of circumstances could ever likely occur again. I am not one who believes that there is a creator that is going to give us a second chance some day if we do not manage right now. I do not question the importance that others put on life, but I put just as much importance on it.

The whole debate of when life begins is a very moot point. I have no great certainty as to that point. I cannot accept the view of others who say: "Bang, this is when it starts." Life is an ongoing process. Life exists in a tree. It exists in an ant. It exists in the foetus. It exists in an individual human being who acts independently. I also

believe in social order, and I know we sometimes have to reach compromises on that.

In conclusion I want to say as a personal note that my wife and I have three children and have been married almost 30 years. I have a daughter. If as a teenager she were to have come to me and asked my counsel—this would have been a few years ago—because through an act of neglect or passion she found herself to be pregnant, probably in those circumstances I would have suggested that her life might be better and that she would have a better chance to have a happy life and a happy family in the future if she did have an abortion. There is no way that I would impose that on her. I would be one of the sources of counsel that she would seek, but it would be her decision. I would also tell her that regardless of what decision she took I would stand by her. As a society we need to provide nurturing, to provide the means for people to be capable of making that independent judgment, and not to impose our values or criminal sanctions on them for doing what comes naturally, that is to decide for themselves whether or not they shall bear children.

• (1710)

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to participate in the debate this afternoon. This is actually the last opportunity that I will have to speak prior to the very crucial votes that will take place later today.

Initially, after proposing the amendments that I had to offer, I had not intended on speaking again prior to the vote that will take place tonight. I listened attentively yesterday and today to the remarks of my colleagues on both sides of the House, members of parliament, some who agree with me and some who profoundly disagree. Of course I believe all of them feel very strongly about their particular point of view and most—and I say "most"—are respectful of the point of view of others.

It is with sadness that I use the word "most" rather than the word "all" for the following reasons: a few members have seen fit during this debate to state that I was unqualified to speak on this issue because I am a man. If I were to say that the members in question who made those remarks cannot speak of building bridges because they are women, I would be condemned and rightfully so. Of course I never have, nor do I intend to. All members representing constituents in this House are equal and worthy regardless of sex, age, gender, colour or otherwise. It is unfortunate that some people saw fit to utilize that argument. I suppose it only weakens the other strong arguments that they may have had.

However, that sadness having been stated, perhaps we should speak of the issue at hand rather than allow myself to stoop to the level that they have chosen to utilize to make their respective points in the House of Commons. Instead I would like to take this last opportunity to urge colleagues to vote for a number of the amendments offered to us.

The last colleague who spoke did raise a number of interesting points. I do not agree with his point of view, but I do think he expressed it quite well. He said, I believe, that he did not know whether life started at conception. I suppose I agree with his proposition there too. I do not know either. Unless someone proves otherwise, what else am I to conclude? If we know that human life is there at birth, it must have been achieved some time before birth. If no one indicates to me at which time before birth it occurs, then I am to assume that it was there from the beginning unless proven otherwise. That, I believe, is the only reasonable conclusion to arrive at. I am still awaiting anyone who challenges that proposition to indicate specifically at what time it is they feel my proposition is wrong. Mr. Speaker, whenever we are collectively and individually as a society afraid of an issue, I suppose we resort to words that tend to hide the facts that we are afraid of. A child born is obviously a child; a child unborn is a foetus—which means a young one in Latin—so my colleagues who are medical doctors tell me. Why do we use Latin, versus English or French, other than to specifically avoid using words that are uncomfortable to us? But we seem to use these words quite comfortably when they suit our individual purposes.

I have here a cover from a package of cigarettes which was given to me by another colleague, because I do not smoke. On this cover of the package of cigarettes, it says: "Smoking during pregnancy can harm the baby". It does not harm the "foetus"; it does not harm the "embryo"; it does not harm anything else. But it harms the "baby" during pregnancy.

Other colleagues have gone to great pains to tell us that it is not a baby, it is a foetus. I suppose those colleagues will want to make the cigarette manufacturers aware of the fact that they have this horrible mistake, according to them, on the jacket of this cigarette box.

I have an article here from the Canadian Press which refers to an incident which happened in Kingston, Ontario. A woman had been prescribed the wrong medicine which could result in her unborn child dying prior to birth. In other words, it could have resulted in an abortion. I quote from the article:

> "At night I have dreams about what might happen to my child," said Mrs. Debney, 23. "We still have another five months to go before we know what happens to the baby."

As I said in my speech yesterday, what we have is a situation where if we seem to want the child to be born, there is no hesitation in calling the child a baby. If we do not want the child, then it becomes the foetus. As I indicated yesterday, the child is not a child by virtue of the fact that we want it or not; the child is a child because that is what the child is, and that is the end of it.

To that extent I invite colleagues to reflect upon that when they are called upon later today to vote on the various amendments, particularly Motion No. 10, because it is that amendment which would change the bill in such a way as to give value to human life. I suppose other amendments will do so, but I believe to a lesser degree.

In conclusion, I just want to inform the House of how I intend to vote later today.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, I intend to support Motions Nos. 4, 5, 10, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17A and B,—although in the case of 17A, this Motion may have very little impact—Motion No. 19 and Motion No. 22. I intend to vote against Motion No. 24. Of course, I repeat what I said several days ago: If Motion No. 10 is not passed, I will have to vote against this bill on third reading.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, I urge all hon. members to examine their consciences thoroughly, whether they agree with me or not, and to vote according to their conscience. I know that will be the case with our hon. members across the way, because there is no discipline in their caucus, any more than there is in mine. Members are free to vote any way they want.

I hope all members will have that choice. And since we are talking about free choice, I think we should all have the free choice to vote for protecting human life.

• (1720)

[*English*]

Mr. Jim Karygiannis (Scarborough—Agincourt): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to speak today to Bill C–43, an act respecting abortion.

When the Prime Minister indicated that his government would bring forward a bill on abortion during this session of Parliament, there was a collective sigh of relief across the country. That relief, however, was quickly shattered with the introduction of this bill. Bill C–43 completely fails to address the painful issue that is troubling this country's conscience.

I realize this is not a decision to be made lightly. I intend to vote against the bill in its present form. I believe this bill is a bad piece of legislation. Many of my constituents from the riding of Scarborough—Agincourt believe as I do, that human life begins at conception and must be protected by law at all stages of development.

Once we come to the unavoidable conclusion that the foetus is a human being, we must then come to the conclusion that this person must be given full protection of the law as would be given to any child in Canada today.

It is absolutely deplorable that anyone can say that a procedure which kills one human being for the convenience of another is a medical procedure. In simple terms, abortion is the killing of a human being and cannot be accepted. If we do not believe in life, then what can we believe in? Where is the value system? If we do not ensure that abortions are performed only to save the mother's life, then our society will be condoning abortion on demand.

I did not vote for Bill C–43 on second reading. Though I was disappointed that the bill reached committee stage, I hoped we would see some substantial amendments after the legislative committee had an opportunity to thoroughly examine the bill clause by clause. This was obviously not the case. I had hoped for an entirely different bill from the one we see before us today.

The abortion issue has not been rectified. The bill still does not recognize the fundamental value and dignity of each human being and the worth of each human life. I ask members of the House to consider the lives of unborn children above all else.

The only amendment that I can in conscience support is the one put forward by my colleague from Glengarry—Prescott—Russell which removes the word "health" from the bill. This would end any dubious claims of mental, emotional, fiscal or other reasons of so-called health which could be encompassed by such a broad definition.

This bill was flawed from the outset, and I dare say would not stand up constitutionally in a court of law. Therefore, it should not be before us at this time. It is obvious that the government, in choosing to put forward this bill at this particular time, decided it does not wish to deal with the real matter at hand, which is that of foetal rights.

The passage of this bill will lay open the door to medical experimentation upon the pre-born and would also leave open the question of usage of foetal tissue for dubious medical purposes.

I would also like to express my disappointment in the government's decision not to allow the free vote on this bill as was promised and expected.

I read in the paper today that some of my colleagues on the other side, members of cabinet, who are pro-life supporters will vote in favour of the bill. That saddens me. The constraints placed upon cabinet ministers to support this abortion bill is unconscionable.

I call upon all my colleagues in the House to give thought to why we are not addressing the real issues here today and to defeat this bill so that a comprehensive bill that looks at all the issues of foetal rights could be brought forward, or failing that, the rights of the unborn be placed where they rightfully belong, in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms of Canada.

Ms. Joy Langan (Mission—Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, this is not a compromise bill. It is a bill to recriminalize abortion. These are not compromise amendments. In fact, most of them are extreme, punitive and repugnant to women.

The Minister of Justice claims that the federal government must occupy the field on abortion. The field has not been occupied for two years, yet the numbers of abortions in Canada have not increased and the field does not appear to need to be occupied.

The minister says that this bill provides a delicate balance between both sides of the issue. I think not. This bill has failed on both sides of the question and there is no real balance at all. The women of Canada do not believe that this bill is giving us balance on both sides of the question.

The minister says that this bill respects constitutional guarantees. The women of Canada do not believe this bill respects constitutional guarantees, and most of the amendments fly in the face of constitutional guarantees. This bill is not an accommodation of common ground, as the minister says, that respects individual rights and freedoms. The women of Canada do not believe that it is the accommodation of common ground.

As a woman, I have been offended by many of the speeches in this House on the amendments to this bill, and indeed, by many of the amendments that have been put forward. The amendments to this bill suggest that women cannot be trusted. If men could be trusted to take their share of responsibility for birth control, we would not be having the debate on these amendments in this House today.

Let me deal specifically with the amendments. Motions Nos. 4 and 22 are amendments that, if passed, would increase the criminal penalty for doctors who perform abortions from two to 20 years. These amendments also have the side effect of increasing criminal penalties for women who have abortions. Obviously, these are not amendments that most Canadians, men or women, can subscribe to.

Motion No. 5 proposes that a legal abortion can only be performed by a medical practitioner. Essentially, this amendment imposes the threat of a two-year jail term and criminal record for a woman who induces her own abortion. If a woman is desperate enough to self-induce an abortion, she needs medical help and access to safe, affordable medical services. She does not need to be thrown in jail. Women self-induce an abortion only when they cannot get safe medical abortions or if the procedure is too costly.

Having a criminal penalty hanging over women's heads is not a deterrent, as we can see from the numbers of self-induced abortions that occurred when abortion was completely illegal. It is still illegal in some countries.

Motion No. 10, the motion that the member who just spoke said that he would support particularly, if passed, would mean that the only legal abortions would be those performed in order to save the life of the woman. Even abortions performed for the woman's health would be illegal. This is the most severe and cruel of all of the amendments associated with high maternal mortality rates. It is also the most controlling of women's bodies. Essentially, it is the former Romanian abortion law. There are only a few countries in the world left that still have this type of law.

While I am on the subject of the speech by that hon. member, I would like to point that he took exception to the fact that somebody in the debate disqualified him because he was a man. He tried to use the analogy of building a bridge. The ability to bear children and the consequences of that ability are quite different from the ability to build a bridge. Unfortunately, it is that kind of analogy that I think would disqualify him from speaking with any kind of authority on the question of abortion.

• (1730)

Motion No. 12 adds that in order for an abortion to be legal, a woman's life or health must be seriously endangered. This is an unconstitutional amendment. It contradicts the opinion expressed by Chief Justice Brian Dickson of the Supreme Court of Canada. In the Morgentaler case that struck down the old abortion law, he said that forcing a women by threat of criminal sanction to carry a foetus to term unless she meets certain criteria unrelated to her own priorities and aspirations is a profound interference with a woman's body and thus an infringement of the security of the person.

Motion No. 13 would change the bill to state that an abortion should be legal only if there is no other medical treatment available to alleviate the health risk to the woman. This amendment plays upon the government's own wording that the only legal abortions are those performed for the woman's health. It takes the government's bad bill and makes it worse. Health is not the issue—unwanted pregnancy is.

Motion No. 14 would strike out the definition of health in the bill which states:

> "health" includes, for greater certainty, physical, mental and psychological health;

Medical professionals who appeared before the legislative committee complained that the health criteria in the bill were already too vaguely defined. This motion only exacerbates that.

Motions Nos. 16, 17A and 17B all change the definition of health in the bill to exclude psychological health considerations.

Motion No. 19 is a bizarre amendment. It would change the bill by clarifying medical opinions of whether or not to grant abortions should be developed, not only according to generally accepted medical standards as expressed in the bill, but also by considering the solid body of scientific knowledge.

Motion No. 20 would make the IUD and the morning-after pill illegal. I do not think that this amendment even requires further debate.

Motion No. 24, which would strike out the entire bill, would leave only one sentence which would state that Sections 287 and 288 of the Criminal Code are repealed. This motion in fact is the motion that addresses the inequities of the government's bill. This is the motion that most of my colleagues, and most people who want to reflect the needs of Canadian women, will support when we vote tonight.

In closing, I say that it is very sad that what the government has said about a woman's rights—her right to be a full participant in Canadian society—tells Canadian women where they stand with the government. It is this: "You are free and you can fully participate, as long as you understand that we do not trust your ability to make correct choices".

Mr. Jesse Flis (Parkdale—High Park): Mr. Speaker, I feel very privileged and honoured to be able to participate in debate a second time on Bill C-43, this time at report stage.

In my previous vocation as an educator I taught students, and I taught teachers to teach students, certain values in life. Some of those values were based on the three Rs. Those three Rs were not reading, 'ritin' and arithmetic. The three Rs were respect, respect, and

respect—respect for authority, respect for property, and respect for others.

If all Canadians today had a greater respect for the authority of the federal government, then maybe we would not be in the mess we are in. If all Canadians had a greater respect for property, then maybe our environment would not be in such jeopardy. If all Canadians had respect for others, then maybe we would not have this heated debate over whether we should allow a foetus to live or not.

I have carried these values into politics. Because I have this deep respect for others, which means respect for life, I cannot support Bill C-43 as it stands. To me, life begins at conception. Unless someone proves otherwise, I have to go on that belief.

I want to congratulate all those speakers who have debated this bill at second reading and report stage for the seriousness with which they have dealt with this problem. I want to congratulate those who promoted the pro-choice ideology, and the ones who promoted the pro-life ideology. I am convinced that both sides spoke very sincerely. They believe in what they told us. They are going to vote according to what they believe in. I am pleased that at least the two major parties are allowing us to vote according to our conscience.

I am a little disappointed in the New Democratic Party because I thought that it was the party which respects individual thoughts and ideas. I appeal to its members that on this issue they make an exception. Rather than vote as a party, let the members vote according to their conscience. In speaking to some members of the New Democratic Party, I know that their feelings are pro-life feelings also. That is an appeal to the New Democratic Party.

I also appeal to the people who believe in the pro-choice ideology. We have heard the statements: "It's my body. I will decide what I want to do with it", et cetera. That argument breaks down because, in that free choice, two lives are at stake. If the choice was made just for one life, okay, I could maybe accept it, but the decision made affects two human beings. As a result of that, I cannot accept it.

Judgments of jurisprudence have been made to recognize clearly that the foetus is a human being. If a woman who is pregnant gets killed in a car accident, courts have ruled that two people are killed. The case is treated with greater seriousness and gravity. Also, if a human being who was a foetus during the course of an accident survives, then he or she can sue the person causing the accident. Legislators and judges in the past must have recognized that the foetus is a human being.

The member for Vancouver East called the amendments that we brought in punitive and paternalistic. I would ask her to look at the amendments brought in by the members for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell and Winnipeg North, as well as the amendment of the member for Markham—Whitchurch—Stouffville. These amendments would strengthen Bill C-43 to protect the lives of the unborn. If these amendments were accepted, then I might be able to vote in favour of the bill.

I took a very extensive poll in my riding of Parkdale—High Park. People supporting both ideologies, the pro-life ideology and the pro-choice ideology, have urged me to vote against this bill. At this point I do not think we know the outcome of Bill C-43. In talking to members individually, they are also going to look at which amendments will be accepted and which ones will not.

• (1740)

But whichever way the vote goes, I would like to recommend through you, Mr. Speaker, that the government introduce a national education program on this issue. The government can call it the national education program on life, or whatever title it wants, but there should be a national program funded by the federal government, supervised by the Department of National Health and Welfare.

The curriculum for this program would have to be written with input from the provinces, since the provinces have jurisdiction over education; from people who are supporting the pro-life ideology; from the pro-choice people; from the medical profession; and from religious groups. By having a curriculum taught in all schools across the country, hopefully fewer young teenagers would get pregnant and have to make that very serious decision. In many cases, whichever decision is made, there are very deep-rooted emotional problems that follow.

In closing, I again appeal to the government to bring in a national education program on this issue, whichever way the vote goes.

Miss Deborah Grey (Beaver River): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to voice my concerns regarding Bill C-43 as the member of Parliament for Beaver River, but I also want to voice the concerns of my constituents. Certainly, I have a personal feeling about this issue, but I am responsible for my constituents.

I want to speak today obviously as a woman, but I believe firmly that this is not just a woman's issue. It certainly is a family issue and an issue that faces all of us as a society.

My party calls for a candidate to let constituents know how he or she feels about the abortion issue. Then, if there is a consensus in the riding, the member of Parliament must vote according to the collective wishes of the constituents as determined by a referendum, such as a questionnaire, or at public meetings that determine whether or not there is a clear consensus. If there is no clear consensus, then the member of Parliament must vote according to his or her conscience and, of course, they have let that be publicly known while campaigning.

This approach certainly is somewhat different than we have traditionally seen from many members of Parliament. History shows that MPs often have gone directly against the wishes of the majority of their constituent's wishes and said that they want to go for their conscience alone and vote on behalf of that. Unfortunately, we know that it is not just a member's conscience that got them elected. They had only one vote to cast on election day. They were voted in by many electors to whom they are responsible. A member of Parliament gets only one vote in the House of Commons and that is not a personal vote, necessarily, but one vote on behalf of their entire riding.

I want to make it publicly known, and I have told my constituents in Beaver River, that I am pro-life. I am not ashamed of those views. In fact, it makes me proud to be able to say that I believe in the sanctity of life from the moment of conception. Those who deny that life begins at conception, deny the fundamental issue of life itself. A life cannot begin just at birth. If there had not been union nine months before, obviously there would be no live birth.

If we try to determine at what point life occurred, or whether or not an embryo a foetus is a life, then we miss the point of life itself. A human life begins at the moment of conception, not before and not after. Whether we like it or not, science dictates, not semantics.

I conducted the closest thing that I could to a referendum in my riding. The results were very interesting. The totals were 60 per cent to 40 per cent pro-life, with people in those categories saying that they could make exceptions. Exceptions could be made in cases of rape, incest, and when the life of the woman is in danger.

I will be voting that way at third reading, unless Motion No. 10 specifically goes through tonight at report stage.

Regardless of the fact that everyone has different views, whether pro-life or pro-choice, it seemed to me that the people in my riding felt very serious frustration and misgivings about this particular bill.

In fact, Bill C-43 unfortunately satisfies neither end of the spectrum. Those at the pro-life end of the spectrum say that this bill does nothing more than give abortion on demand, and they are very, very concerned about the idea of psychological health as is stated in Bill C-43. Those at the pro-choice end of the spectrum are upset about Bill C-43 because, first, it goes back into the Criminal Code and they do not want that and, second, there is no access for healthy women to have abortions. No matter at what end of the spectrum people are, they are concerned about this bill.

I do believe that although I am pro-life and am not ashamed to admit that, as I said earlier, people say: "We are pro-choice and that is the way it is". I do believe that there is room for pro-choice. That choice rests with the individual about whether to become pregnant or not. That choice is for teenagers, whom I taught in high school, to become sexually active or not to be sexually active.

If a person does make the choice to be sexually active and they do become pregnant, then they have further choices open to them. Certainly, there is the adoption option, whether to keep the child or whether to have an abortion, but the choice is not just one choice, whether to have an abortion or not.

I will be voting for the amendments which strengthen this bill in favour of protection for the unborn and against the idea of psychological health, because it is so nebulous. I will be voting in favour of Motions Nos. 4, 22,

5, 10, 12, 13, 14, 16, and, if 16 is defeated, then 17A as well as 19.

I know that many people are wishing to speak on this debate. I certainly admire the calibre of debate that has taken place in this chamber. In my year and a half here as a member, this is the bill to which the most respect has been paid. I appreciate that.

I would like to close off with a verse of scripture because we in Canada call ourselves a Christian nation, one that was founded on Christian principles. I believe that this sums it up when we are worried about the semantics of where life really begins. I think it is fairly clear when the psalmist David wrote in Psalm 139, verses 13 through 16:

> Thou hast covered me in my mother's womb—I will praise thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. My substance was not hid from thee when I was made in secret—Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.

I think it is very clear from that that life does begin at conception. I am pro-choice. I choose life.

Mr. Neil Young (Beaches—Woodbine): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to say a few words on Bill C-43 today.

I want to say at the outset, and make my position absolutely clear, that I support a woman's right to make a decision on whether or not she should terminate a pregnancy, and that that decision should be made between her and a doctor.

It is not a question that should be subject to legislation. In fact, if it should be a subject of any legislation, then I would make the argument that it should fall under the Canada Health Act. Once a woman has made that conscious decision to terminate a pregnancy, and once it has been agreed upon by her personal doctor, between both of them, then she should have access to proper medical treatment.

I am proud to take that position. I did not arrive at that conclusion today. I arrived at it many years ago and made my position absolutely clear in numerous election campaigns in my constituency of Beaches—Woodbine. Any time I was asked at all-candidates meetings or elsewhere I made it absolutely clear that that was my position.

• (1750)

I do not want to deal with the legalities. I think there has been far too much debate about the legalities involved. It is a basic question of human rights and especially the rights of women.

If this government were serious about trying to minimize the number of abortions in this country, it would do things other than cut back on programs which actually encourage abortions to take place.

Starting with the previous government and since this government came to power, there have been reductions to family allowance programs and the clawback of benefits. There have been reductions in funding for women's programs. There have been drastic reductions in family planning and family counselling programs. All of those programs have been cut, as well as the child care program for which this government promised to increase funding but has never come through on.

I do not doubt the sincerity of people who hold a position opposite to mine. I respect such a point of view, even though I do not share it, because this is a deeply moral issue for many people. I accept that. I do not necessarily agree with them, but I at least accept it.

There is an argument which is continually being made, mainly by men, but I have heard it made by women, that if a woman chooses to become pregnant, she has to carry that child through conception to birth because she allowed herself to get pregnant. It has been a long time since a woman got herself pregnant. It seems to me that there are two people responsible for that pregnancy.

I could make an equally strong argument that the weight of responsibility lies with the man, not with the woman. When I hear members like the member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell suggest that the penalty for anyone contravening this legislation should be increased from two years in prison to 20 years in prison based on specious arguments that compare a pregnant woman to someone in a speedboat hauling someone along on a pair of water skis, it is simply not acceptable to me. There is no comparison. I am trying to keep the rhetoric low, but I think it is a stupid argument and it displays something about the approach that some people bring to this debate. I think it lowers the level of debate.

The question before this House and before the country in 1990 should be whether or not a woman is a piece of property. This bill continues the argument that women are property.

Mr. Fontana: Give me a break.

Mr. Young (Beaches—Woodbine): The hon. member asks me to give him a break. I am trying to give him a break. I am trying to keep the debate on a level of some truth. If the hon. member wants to get up and dispute what I am saying, let him do it, but to sit there and heckle me for making a statement is not acceptable to me. Get on your feet and tell us what you think.

Mr. Fontana: I did.

Mr. Young (Beaches—Woodbine): Well, get up again. You will have another opportunity, and then I will respond to you, my friend.

The question is whether in 1990 a woman is viewed as being a person responsible enough to make a decision on her own. I think she is. This bill, by placing abortion back in the Criminal Code, is going to be making criminals out of an awful lot of women and an awful lot of people in the medical profession. I would put money on it that in a few years from now we will be faced with a larger problem than we are today without this bill.

I will be voting against the amendments before the House today except for Motion No. 24. I do not agree that any of the amendments which have been put forward will help women who find themselves with an unwanted pregnancy. I think probably Motion No. 24 would do that. If we have to live with this bill—which I certainly hope we will not have to—then I would adopt Motion No. 24 to get rid of it because that is what Motion No. 24 will do.

When that amendment comes before the House this evening I urge members to vote in favour of Motion No. 24, and defeat the rest of them.

Mrs. Sheila Finestone (Mount Royal): Mr. Speaker, this is a very difficult and thorny issue that pleases no one. It is difficult to resolve, whichever side of the issue you find yourself on. The minister said that a delicate balance was what was required.

I originally voiced my opinion on this bill when it was first tabled. I said that there were very serious flaws in it. However, in the democratic process in which we are fortunate enough to live, I voted that the bill go to a legislative committee for serious study and evaluation. At that time groups which were particularly concerned, including women, medical practitioners and families could be heard so that we would be able to bring forward amendments that would improve the bill. We could then decide if the minister's view, that putting this in the Criminal Code would be the only way to ensure access and to ensure fair payment with respect to a medical procedure, that a woman would have the right to choose, if she so desired.

At that time I considered that the bill was flawed. However, I thought that we had the obligation to send it to a legislative committee. It was sent to a legislative committee. The government has indicated that it is not interested in any kind of amendments. It is resisting all amendments saying that they would unbalance the very delicate compromise that has been found in this bill. It is not prepared to consider any kind of amendment.

A woman's right to choice, her right to consult a doctor, which I consider to be very important, not for his permission but for his advice and guidance so that she could make an enlightened decision was what was important when this bill was studied in the legislative committee. I do not believe that what was heard is faithfully reflected in the kind of amendments that we have before us. The majority of these amendments are very one-sided.

I am concerned about the constitutionality of this bill. I recall for you, Mr. Speaker, the opinion that was expressed by Chief Justice Brian Dickson of the Supreme Court on the Morgentaler case, which struck down the old abortion law. He said that forcing a woman by threat of criminal sanction to carry a foetus to term unless she meets certain criteria unrelated to her own priorities and aspirations is a profound interference with a woman's body and thus an infringement on security of the person.

I do not believe that this bill would meet a test of constitutionality. I also believe that where the foetus needs some protection—and that was also indicated in the decision of the court—that protection is not to be found in this bill.

A woman's right to choice, not permission, a woman's right to make decisions on her own reproductive obligations has been a conflict which has been present

throughout history. It indicates that abortions will happen. If you close the door to any kind of option, you can be sure that we will be back into some very serious medical health problems. We have been without an abortion bill, or without any constraints on access to the right to terminate a pregnancy if a woman wishes, and we have not seen an increase in any abortions. Ninety-nine per cent of those abortions take place before 12 weeks.

• (1800)

I think that we are going to have to trust women. I think women deserve to be trusted. They will make the right choice. I would say to you, Mr. Speaker, that the number and spacing of children in a society that is free of violence, free of abuse, free from hunger, free from poverty, free from rape and incest are all factors that families take into consideration, but the final decision must be that of a woman in consultation with her doctor. She makes the final decision.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, I do not see anything in this bill that would ensure, either through the Canada Health Act or the Criminal Code, the kinds of things that I feel are necessary to enable a woman to enjoy and rejoice in the pregnancy and in the anticipation of a child being added to her life. This is not found in this bill.

I would suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that the threat of legal action, which could persuade many doctors to stop performing abortions and many women to fear ending up as criminals within our criminal justice system, does not answer the needs of this society.

The delicate balance has not been found. We have not found the proper kind of accommodation. Respect for constitutional guarantees has not been tested or found in this bill. Respect for individual rights and freedom of personal decision is not found in this bill. Because these issues have not been addressed, I would choose to vote against all amendments at this time and I will certainly vote against the bill at third reading.

Ms. Mary Clancy (Halifax): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to say that I too will vote against this bill on third reading, as I did on second reading, and as I did on first reading.

The only possible amendment I can see myself supporting is that amendment of my colleague in the New Democratic Party for New Westminster—Burnaby.

I stand here, Mr. Speaker, feeling sad about what we are doing. I am unhappy about the way the government is treating Canadian women. Perhaps I should not be surprised, but I was one of those members who considered Bill C-43 in the legislative committee. We listened to women from every province and territory in this country. We listened to cries from the heart from these women. We heard stories of horror about conditions that women and children are forced to live in. We heard stories that would have been laughable were they not so sad, about the lack of access to medical care, the lack of access to proper contraception, the lack of access to proper education, the lack of access to a social service support network.

What was painted for us in that committee was a Canada that is not friendly to women and particularly not friendly to the children that we have within our care today.

I recall very clearly the presentation to the committee of Shirley Carr of the Canadian Labour Congress. She said to us: "I was here 25 years ago making the same plea. I cannot believe that we have progressed so little that I am back again 25 years later saying the same things".

This bill is an insult to both sides. On one hand, it says that abortion is illegal. On the other hand, it says that here is an exception so large that anyone who is prepared to make a few concessions here and there about what is actually going on will be able to slide through. Canadian women do not want to concoct stories. They do not want to have to worry that someone, a neighbour, a disgruntled ex-husband, a disgruntled boyfriend will lay a charge over something as personal and as personally agonizing as the question of whether or not to terminate a pregnancy.

Another thing I think women on the legislative committee had in common was the idea that if one is in favour of a woman's right to control her own body, to self-determination, that one is pro-abortion. Let that phrase be thrown out now and forever. The majority of Canadians who support the option for choice are not pro-abortion. We all know that, as an option, abortion is

a last resort. It is one with which no one is happy. It is one with which no one is comfortable. It is one that Canadian women wish they did not have to choose.

If this country were all it could be, abortion is an option that Canadian women would rarely, if ever, choose.

The polarization that this debate has created leaves women and children as victims. We expend time and energy arguing the question of abortion and choice and arguing legislation brought forward, and we spend time and money on committees et cetera. These are energies of people who must come forward to speak to committies which would be far better spent in solving the social problems that create the need for abortion. Nobody in this chamber is going to be prepared to say that poverty or child and wife abuse do not exist in this country. We know they do. All too frequently we see incidents of this. Violence in the family against women and children is something that is a norm in Canadian life.

I do not think anyone in this Chamber would have the temerity to rise and suggest that as a society we properly educate our children or our citizenry in general on sexuality, on responsibility or on what it is to maintain adult relationships, giving them the proper intellectual wherewithal to choose when to begin them.

Nobody, after sitting in the legislative committee and listening to the lack of access to proper medical care across the country suffered by so many women, could possibly say that women can make a choice freely in our society as it exists today.

Contraception is not adequate for vast numbers of Canadian women. Education in sexuality has left many women and children short of the mark in knowing what it is they must do. The lack of facilities has left them, in many regions of the country, with an inability to get the facilities and the contraception they need.

With those situations existing, the option of abortion for many is the only option. I heard the expression from one of the witnesses that if you make your bed, then you must lie in it and this was said with sort of a sneer. It is absolutely unbelievable to me in 1990 that we still treat women and children in the manner in which we do, and that we still look at situations of human misery as ones where punishment must be inflicted. Canadian women know what they need and what is necessary to ensure that our society is fair and just. They know that they do not have it.

• (1810)

Whatever happens with this law, it will not change one thing. While social problems exist, such as violence against women and children, and a lack of care in our society for those who need it, then abortion will exist.

The only question to be answered by individual members of the House when they vote is whether abortion will be performed in a safe medical facility or whether it will exist outside these safeguards, because no legislation will stop abortion while society condones the treatment of women and children that we see before us today. Violence against women has been part of our history and that, sadly, will be part of our future. The only question we have to ask is, do you want abortion performed in a safe situation or do you want it performed in an unsafe situation?

I suggest that these amendments do nothing to improve the situation for women and children in this country. These amendments, if passed, will do nothing to improve a bill which is a flawed and unacceptable piece of legislation.

I suggest that the Government of Canada leave these decisions to the women of Canada, but that the Government of Canada take the necessary steps to create a climate wherein the women of Canada can make these choices freely, with the proper knowledge, the proper equipment and in a proper atmosphere which gives dignity and value to human life. If we do not treat the lives we have on this earth and in this country with dignity, then there is no reason to suppose that women who give life will want to do so.

Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina—Lumsden): Mr. Speaker, after 22 years in the House, this is the third time I have spoken on this issue. One wonders when society in general and successive governments in particular will take action that will substantially reduce, if not eliminate, the demand or the perceived need for an abortion.

I do not support abortion on demand totally, and I have said so frequently. I oppose it as a method of birth control or as an irresponsible solution for misbehaviour. That is a choice which I have made myself and one that each of us has to make individually.

I say to my pro-life colleagues that I respect their views and deeply held convictions. But, to merely sit still and wring your hands and tinker with legal machinery is not opposition. That is blind adherence to a dogma. Making abortions legal or illegal does nothing toward solving the problem—and witness prohibition outlawing liquor which did not stop people from drinking.

Canada's social structure is presently so poorly balanced that it invites violence of which abortion can be seen as one form. It is in redressing this inequality that I and my colleagues are engaged. Ultimately, a just society will have fewer invitations to this kind of violence. I have constantly fought and worked for, as my colleagues have, legislation to support troubled families and unduly burdened women so that the real or perceived need to resort to abortion will become obsolete.

It seems to me that women do not resort to abortion just because they suddenly do not love babies. It is because they find themselves caught in a frightening and terrifying squeeze: no housing, no job, no husband, no help, no acceptance, no love, no support.

I hope with the work of all of us in the House of Commons that we can restructure society to make it hospitable to life so that any child brought into this world would not go wanting or be so disadvantaged that no one would want to undertake that child's sustenance. To decry abortion without the restructuring of society is to beat the air. We must have wide-sweeping reforms favouring social security for single parent families and other poor families. Do not talk to me about immorality. When government shows—this one and the preceding ones—the immorality of refusing to implement legislation on child care, it is an immorality that invites abortions.

We must have more affordable and accessible child care centres so that parents continue both their work and their education. We must have a legal requirement for every employer in Canada to provide for a minimum of two years' leave of absence for an employee who is becoming a new parent, with a real guarantee that that employee can return to the same or a better position with that employer.

Chartered banks must be directed to use a significant part of their funds to lower mortgage loans so that housing costs will no longer cripple young families struggling to make ends meet. Medicare of which we in Saskatchewan are so proud must be strengthened and must become a norm for society all over Canada and the world. Federal funding must be available to the provinces to educate about all forms of birth control, starting in the schools, to encourage responsibility and decrease the ignorance that exists on the subject. Then each person may be informed and intelligently adopt a method of birth control that best meets one's own religious beliefs, economic situation, and family needs. There are, in short, many massive social changes that have to be made before we will see the day that the recourse to abortion is no longer the evident way out. There is much to be done. My colleagues and I invite all my colleagues in the government and the Official Opposition to join in redressing our social ills. The New Democratic Party is not interested in defending the wealthy. They have always been able to find an abortion somewhere, and I have had experience with that. We, on the contrary, are very concerned with helping those whom society has so shortchanged or ignores such that all other hope seems to have expired.

The statement of April 1973 by the Canadian Catholic Conference of Bishops has been of great help to me, and I want to quote it:

> To be involved in the task of making this society hospitable to life is a foremost requirement of social justice. That is why we must take most seriously the rebuke that those who oppose abortion care too little about the special problems of mothers and the burdens of rearing children once they are born.
>
> If respect for life seems to end with birth, our perceptions and values are truncated and incomplete. The call of Christ, that we should bear one another's burdens, demands that we reach out in practical ways to share all the burdens of parenthood. The indicated aid and support will include working to change economic and social realities in the direction of justice and respect for life. From doing this, we must not flinch.

• (1820)

Whatever law we have—and I would prefer we have none—must be equally enforced. Hospitals which are funded by taxpayers' dollars should provide the services the law allows.

When society demands and all levels of government implement the measures I have illustrated—and there are many others—then I believe we will see a dramatic reduction in the number of abortions; not a reduction because women will go somewhere else to have an abortion, but because thousands of Canadian women will no longer need to resort to abortion as the best or only avenue left open to them. They will have a real choice,

and though I am pro-choice, what kind of a choice do they have?

I ask my pro-life colleagues what a retarded 16 year old girl from a poor family made pregnant by a 19 year old brother is supposed to do? She has no help. What about a 15 year old girl made pregnant by a drunken father? What is she supposed to do? What is a woman made pregnant after a beating and a rape by a husband or other attacker, I ask my pro-life friends, supposed to do? Don't say adoption, because I can take you to a home in Regina to see a woman who should be a saint. She is looking after six children, two of whom are vegetables, no one will adopt. When I challenged the pro-life groups in my city that came to see me in my office on numerous occasions—and I always showed them the courtesy of hearing them out and meeting with them—to go to that home with me and adopt them, they said: "We will find some way to have them looked after". That is hypocrisy of the worst kind.

May I say in closing that while hundreds of thousands of kids in this country are homeless or hungry, we have no business passing legislation such as this. I will vote against all the amendments except Motion No. 24, and I will vote against the bill.

Mr. Bruce Halliday (Oxford): Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to say a few words on Bill C-43. As you know, it is not my custom to be talkative in the chamber, although I participate a lot in committee work. This is one bill before the House on which I think most members want to say something on this occasion.

I want to explain my position a little by indicating that I am neither from the classical pro-choice side nor the classical pro-life side. My position on abortion is somewhere in between. I listened to my colleague from Regina—Lumsden and I agreed with a number of points he made, although I do not think we see eye to eye on the subject.

As a nation and a government we should try to prevent the need for abortion by trying to give parents the education and the opportunity to take steps that preclude anyone wishing to have an abortion. This is the ideal way, obviously. I think that governments over the years have failed to implement policies to the extent that they might to move in that direction.

Having said what is my position, as a physician I have been acquainted with the issue of abortions in a practical way having been involved with them from time to time. I must say that over the years, the longer I spend in the House, the more closely I come to the pro-life side, to the extent that I feel we should do all we can to discourage abortions when possible.

I was interested enough in this whole issue that when there was difficulty coming to a conclusion as to what kind of law we should have in this country and what kind of bills that come before the House, I was pleased to participate with other colleagues on the government side in a unique committee which came up with the bill that is before the House now, Bill C-43.

In spite of the fact that I would like to see abortions discouraged to the extent that is humanly possible, I would like to indicate my support for Bill C-43 for several reasons. I happen to believe that it is probably preferable to have some law in this nation that does indicate some concern and protection for the foetus. As I understand the interpretations given by the Supreme Court, I think the message we got from it too was that there was reason this Parliament might want to see some protection for the foetus. I can see that possibly that may well be coming down the road.

I had a lot of soul-searching to do with this bill. It is somewhat like the bills on capital punishment. I was involved in those two debates as well back in 1975 or 1976 and again more recently. Although those were bills that called for a free vote, as it were, they were slightly different. One could vote either for or against capital punishment, but here we are not voting for or against abortion. There are many situations in between. I see that the majority of Canadians, by the pollings that were done, are certainly in between this issue. The majority prefer not to be in the pure classic pro-life position or in the pure pro-choice position.

I was very impressed by what was done by the committee that was put together to bring forward a consensus on the bill before the House. It was co-chaired by two people. In terms of their own personal convictions, one was strongly pro-life and the other was strongly pro-choice. To see those co-chairpersons and representatives

from various parts of the spectrum between the pro-life and pro-choice sides come together as a group and come up with Bill C-43 was very impressive.

I have actually had a number of representations from constituents. I have had many sincere letters, telephone calls and petitions from those who represent the pro-life side of this issue. I respect their position very deeply. I know how sincere they are about it. I know from whence they come and the source of their strong convictions based on religious background, training and scruples which I respect.

I am convinced that the decision of the Supreme Court of Canada was such that if we came up with a bill that would represent what it wanted us to do, we would probably find that law to be ruled unconstitutional when it was challenged and brought to the Supreme Court of Canada.

What impressed me the most was something I read recently in one of the journals that comes into our house. It is called *Contact* and is put out by people who have a very strong Christian conviction. The heading of an article on the front page of a recent edition read: "Christians urged to support pro-life abortion law amendments." The staff of the Calvanistic Contact wrote this article, but they quote extensively from Mr. Gerald Vandezande who is the public affairs director for Citizens for Public Justice, CPJ. They have been quoted here in the House previously during this debate.

• (1830)

I happen to know a bit of the background of Mr. Gerald Vandezande because he comes out of my constituency. I know his parents and I know the strong convictions that he and his family and others who belong to the same church as he belongs to in my area adhere to. I respect him very deeply. In fact, my wife comes out of that same tradition as well and I have a strong conviction for their position.

I want to read part of this article which impressed me. As I indicated, Mr. Vandezande is the public affairs director for Citizens for Public Justice and knowing him to be a committed pro-life person, he shows some insight which I think supports my position in favour of this bill. I want to quote from this article because I think it has some bearing on this issue. I am quoting now from the article, not from what he said, although he is being paraphrased by the staff writer of this particular article:

> At issue is whether Canada will have a law governing abortions or not. If Bill C-43 is defeated, with or without some of the proposed amendments, Parliament is likely to give up trying to bring forward an abortion bill.

I believe that to be true, Mr. Speaker. The article further states:

> Christians may need to decide, says Vandezande, whether the bill now before Parliament is better than no abortion law at all.

This is something I have raised with many of my pro-life people, whether or not we should have no bill at all. When I am challenged to vote against this bill, I say that we may then have no bill at all. I happen to agree with what Mr. Vandezande is saying here, namely, that we have to decide whether the bill now before Parliament is better than no abortion law at all.

The article goes on for another sentence or two and states:

> CPJ is urging all Christians to phone or write their MP—to vote for the most life-affirming legislation and social policy measures possible today.

I want to emphasize those last two words. He is calling upon us as Christians, calling upon Christians in Canada, to phone and write to us as MPs asking us "to vote for the most life-affirming legislation and social policy measures possible today".

It is my conviction, after sitting on the committee that came up with this bill, that this is the only bill that is going to gain the support of this House.

If the bill is amended either way, either on the pro-choice side or the pro-life side, it is going to be defeated and we will then have no bill at all.

I feel very strongly and I feel very much encouraged that somebody who comes from a very strong pro-life position has the courage and has the insight, I would have to say, to recognize the predicament that we as parliamentarians are in, and if we want to have any bill at all, and I think some bill is better than no bill, it is essential that we vote for Bill C-43.

Based on that, it is my intention this evening when the vote is called to vote against all the amendments, and come third reading of the bill, I will want to support it because I feel it is the one bill that will possibly and hopefully sustain the support of this House.

Mr. Ray Skelly (North Island—Powell River): Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a few comments on listening to the hon. member's presentation, a person over the years in whom I have had a great deal of confidence in his judgement and opinion. I do take exception to the statements made in the House concerning the legislation before us on the abortion issue.

I do not believe that this is a consensus bill at all, nor does anyone in the party that I represent. I think many of the members of the government are very upset with this particular piece of legislation. It is not a compromise. It is probably the worst choice that could have been made.

I am absolutely astounded that a bill could come before this House and generate the antipathy of both sides, that a bill could be presented in this House and be absolutely opposed by both the anti-choice and the pro-choice forces in this country. I would point out to the member that this bill is not better than not having a bill. This is a bad bill. The people who drafted it, presented it to this House, forced it on the government members and the Cabinet and are attempting to sell it as, a compromise, are doing a great disservice to this House.

We have missed the mark as legislators. The price we will pay is that in the next federal election we will be torn to pieces on the platform, as both sides of the issue, who will be completely dissatisfied with this, will carry this issue on. This Parliament is not finished with this issue because it is a bad bill.

All but one of the amendments are bad amendments. Virtually all of my colleagues have stood in this House to oppose the amendments that basically curtail the choice of women on an absolutely fundamental issue. It is wrong. I will vote against every single one of the amendments except the one proposed by my colleague from New Westminster—Burnaby. In the end I will vote against this bill.

It is my hope that other colleagues on all sides of this House will join myself and other members who believe this legislation is very detrimental to the work of Parliament and, indeed, to women in Canada and that they will also vote against this bill.

[*Translation*]

SITTING SUSPENDED

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Pronovost): Pursuant to order adopted on Thursday, May 10, the sitting is suspended until 9 p.m.

Sitting suspended at 6.36 p.m.

SITTING RESUMED

The House resumed at 9 p.m.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*Translation*]

CRIMINAL CODE

MEASURE TO AMEND

The House resumed consideration of Bill C-43, An Act respecting abortion, as reported (without amendment) from a legislative committee, and on Motions Nos. 4, 5, 10, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17A, 17B, 19, 22 and 24.

Mr. Speaker: In order to assist hon. members, it is very important to pay attention, because the Chair must notify all hon. members.

[*English*]

It being nine o'clock, p.m. pursuant to Order made Thursday, May 10, 1990, it is my duty to put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the report stage of Bill C-43, an act respecting abortion.

[*Translation*]

I will take a few minutes so that all hon. members can be present.

[*English*]

May I have your attention for a moment, please? I would ask hon. ministers and members on both sides of the House to take their seats.

If all hon. members would give me their attention for a moment, I can give some guidance which will help us all this evening. Strictly speaking, of course, I was required to announce that, it being nine o'clock, we would commence with these motions. In full realization that some members were in the lobby, I have delayed that. I hope that all members are here now.

I am going to proceed very slowly because these votes could become complicated and we do not want in any way to affect the democratic process by making an error.

It is important that you listen carefully to this. We are going to go through each of the motions, one after another, and there will be a voice vote only. We are going through each of the motions in the first round and

there will be a voice vote only. If the voice vote is clear with respect to an affirmative or a negative, I will say so. If five members rise, the vote will be deferred. When we have gone through all the motions with a voice vote, we will then come back to those motions that are remaining and there will be a formal vote.

What we are doing now is going through all the motions on a voice vote first. I want everybody to understand that, if all the Speaker hears is "yeas", then the Speaker will declare the motion passed with a voice vote. If all the Speaker hears are "nays", the Speaker will declare the motion negatived with a voice vote. If hon. members have doubt, five members standing will ensure that the vote is deferred so that there is a full vote of every member in the Chamber.

[*Translation*]

It is very important to understand the process and the procedure exactly. Every member must also pay attention.

[*English*]

The first question is on Motion No. 4, standing in the name of Mr. Boudria. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: No.

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

An hon. member: Yea.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: In my opinion the nays have it.

And more than five members having risen:

Mr. Speaker: Pursuant to Standing Order 76(8), the recorded division on the motion stands deferred. The recorded division will also apply to Motion No. 22.

• (2120)

[*Translation*]

The next question is on Motion No. 5 standing in the name of Mr. Boudria.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

Mr. Speaker: All those in favour will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: In my opinion, the nays have it.

And more than five Members having risen:

Mr. Speaker: Pursuant to Standing Order 76(8), the recorded division is deferred.

[*English*]

The next question is on Motion No. 10, standing in the name of Mr. Pagtakhan. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

Mr. Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: In my opinion the nays have it.

And more than five members having risen:

Mr. Speaker: Pursuant to Standing Order 76(8) the recorded division on the motion stands deferred.

The next question is on Motion No. 12 standing in the name of Mr. Belsher. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

Mr. Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: In my opinion the nays have it.

And more than five members having risen:

Mr. Speaker: Pursuant to Standing Order 76(8), the recorded division on the motion stands deferred.

The next question is on Motion No. 13, standing in the name of Mr. Reimer. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

Mr. Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: In my opinion the nays have it.

And more than five members having risen:

Mr. Speaker: Pursuant to Standing Order 76(8), the recorded division on the motion stands deferred.

[*Translation*]

The next question is on Motion No. 14 standing in the name of Mr. Boudria.

Is is the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

Mr. Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: In my opinion, the nays have it.

And more than five members having risen:

Mr. Speaker: Pursuant to Standing Order 76(8), the recorded division on the motion stands deferred.

[*English*]

The next question is on Motion No. 16, standing in the name of Mr. Pagtakhan. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

Mr. Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: In my opinion the nays have it.

And more than five members having risen:

Mr. Speaker: Pursuant to Standing Order 76(8), the recorded division on the motion stands deferred. Consideration of Motions No. 17A and 17B is also deferred.

• (2130)

Perhaps I can give an explanation to hon. members. Subsequent to deferring Motion No. 16 I declared as follows: "Consideration of Motions Nos. 17A and 17B is also deferred". Those matters are still in front of the House, and I do not want hon. members worrying that those motions have disappeared. They have not.

Are the hon. members satisfied that they understand the situation?

Some hon. members: Yes.

Mr. Speaker: The next question is on Motion No. 19 standing in the name of Mr. Pagtakhan.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

Mr. Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: In my opinion the nays have it.

And more than five members having risen:

Mr. Speaker: Pursuant to Standing Order 76(8), the recorded division on the motion stands deferred.

I want to make something clear to hon. members. Because of the nature of Motion No. 24, procedurally it is not possible to proceed with it at this time. Having said that and depending on what happens in the recorded votes on all the other motions, Motion No. 24 may well be back in front of the House. I do not think I need to go into a lengthy explanation.

The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred divisions at the report stage of the bill now before the House. Call in the members.

Mr. Gauthier: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I think you will find unanimous consent to dispense with the ringing of the bells at this time and proceed with the vote immediately.

Mr. Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: The first question is on Motion No. 4, standing in the name of Mr. Boudria. A vote on this motion also applies to Motion No. 22, standing in the name of Mr. Boudria.

The House divided on the motion, which was negatived on the following division:

(Division No. 257)

YEAS

Members

Boudria
Dionne
Grey (Beaver River)
Mitges
Vankoughnet—9
Crawford
Flis
Jordan
Nunziata

NAYS

Members

Althouse
Anderson
Angus
Attewell
Baker
Beatty
Bellemare
Benjamin
Bird
Black
Blackburn (Jonquière)
Blenkarn
Bourgault
Brewin
Butland
Callbeck
Cardiff
Catterall
Champagne (Champlain)
Clancy
Clark (Brandon—Souris)
Collins
Cooper
Côté
Crosbie (St. John's West)
Danis
DeBlois
de Jong
Desjardins
Dingwall
Dorin
Edwards
Fee
Finestone
Fontana
Friesen
Gaffney
Gardiner
Gérin
Greene
Anawak
Andre
Atkinson
Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing)
Barrett
Bélair
Belsher
Bernier
Bjornson
Blackburn (Brant)
Blais
Bouchard (Roberval)
Boyer
Brightwell
Cadieux
Campbell (Vancouver Centre)
Casey
Chadwick
Charest
Clark (Yellowhead)
Cole
Cook
Corbeil
Couture
Crosby (Halifax West)
Darling
de Cotret
Della Noce
Dick
Dobbie
Duplessis
Epp
Ferland
Fontaine
Fretz
Fulton
Gagliano
Gauthier
Gibeau
Guilbault
Gustafson
Harvard
Harvey (Edmonton East)
Hockin
Hopkins
Hudon
Hunter
Jelinek
Jourdenais
Karygiannis
Keyes
Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)
Koury
Landry
Langdon (Essex—Windsor)
Larrivée
LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso)
Littlechild
MacDonald (Rosedale)
MacDougall (Timiskaming)
MacLellan
Malone
Marin
Martin (Lincoln)
Mayer
McCreath
McDermid
McGuire
McLean
Milliken
Monteith
Mulroney
Nault
Nowlan
Oberle
Ouellet
Parent
Plamondon
Porter
Redway
Reimer
Richardson
Riis
Robinson
Rodriguez
Roy-Arcelin
Schneider
Scott (Hamilton—Wentworth)
Siddon
Skelly (Comox—Alberni)
Soetens
Speller
Stupich
Thacker
Tremblay (Rosemont)
Tremblay (Lotbinière)
Valcourt
Van de Walle
Vien
Wappel
White
Wilbee
Assiniboia)
Winegard
Worthy
Young (Beaches—Woodbine)—210
Halliday
Harvey (Chicoutimi)
Hawkes
Hogue
Horner
Hughes
James
Johnson
Karpoff
Kempling
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)
Kindy
Kristiansen
Langan (Mission—Coquitlam)
Langlois
Layton
Lewis
Loiselle
MacDonald (Dartmouth)
MacKay
MacWilliam
Marchi
Marleau
Masse
Mazankowski
McCurdy
McDougall (St. Paul's)
McKnight
Merrithew
Mitchell
Moore
Murphy
Nicholson
Nystrom
O'Kurley
Paproski
Pickard
Plourde
Pronovost
Reid
Ricard
Rideout
Robichaud
Robitaille
Rompkey
Saint-Julien
Scott (Victoria—Haliburton)
Shields
Skelly (North Island—Powell River)
Sobeski
Sparrow
Stevenson
Tardif
Thorkelson
Tremblay (Québec-Est)
Turner (Halton—Peel)
Vanclief
Vézina
Vincent
Weiner
Whittaker
Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek—
Wilson (Etobicoke Centre)
Wood
Young (Gloucester)

Mr. Speaker: I declare the motion lost. Therefore, I declare Motion No. 22 lost.

• (2150)

I want to bring to the attention of the House information which has just come to me. There was an error in my presentation of the motion, not one that is serious, but I

know that Mr. Pagtakhan did not second the motion. The motion was seconded by Mr. Rocheleau.

The next question is on Motion No. 5 standing in the name of Mr. Boudria.

The House divided on the motion, which was negatived on the following division:

(Division No. 258)

YEAS

Members

Bélair	Bellemare
Boudria	Comuzzi
Corbett	Crawford
Crosby (Halifax West)	Dingwall
Dionne	Domm
Flis	Fontana
Grey (Beaver River)	Hopkins
Jordan	Karygiannis
Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)	Kindy
LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso)	MacAulay
MacDonald (Dartmouth)	MacLellan
Marchi	McGuire
Mitges	Nunziata
Ouellet	Pagtakhan
Parent	Pickard
Proud	Rideout
Robichaud	Rocheleau
Scott (Hamilton—Wentworth)	Speller
Thompson	Vanclief
Van de Walle	Vankoughnet
Wenman	Wilbee

Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek—Assiniboia)—43

NAYS

Members

Althouse	Anawak
Anderson	Andre
Angus	Atkinson
Attewell	Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing)
Baker	Barrett
Beatty	Belsher
Benjamin	Bernier
Bird	Bjornson
Black	Blackburn (Brant)
Blackburn (Jonquière)	Blais
Blenkarn	Bouchard (Roberval)
Bourgault	Boyer
Brewin	Brightwell
Cadieux	Callbeck
Campbell (Vancouver Centre)	Cardiff
Casey	Catterall
Chadwick	Champagne (Champlain)
Charest	Clancy
Clark (Yellowhead)	Clark (Brandon—Souris)
Cole	Collins
Cook	Cooper
Corbeil	Côté
Couture	Crosbie (St. John's West)
Danis	Darling
DeBlois	de Cotret
de Jong	Della Noce
Desjardins	Dick
Dobbie	Dorin
Duplessis	Edwards
Epp	Fee
Ferland	Finestone
Fontaine	Fretz
Friesen	Fulton
Gaffney	Gagliano
Gardiner	Gérin
Gibeau	Greene
Guilbault	Gustafson
Halliday	Harvard
Harvey (Chicoutimi)	Harvey (Edmonton East)
Hawkes	Hockin
Hogue	Horner
Hudon	Hughes
Hunter	James
Jelinek	Johnson
Jourdenais	Karpoff
Kempling	Keyes
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)	Koury
Kristiansen	Landry
Langan (Mission—Coquitlam)	Langdon (Essex—Windsor)
Langlois	Larrivée
Layton	Lewis
Littlechild	Loiselle
MacDonald (Rosedale)	MacDougall (Timiskaming)
MacKay	MacWilliam
Malone	Marin
Marleau	Martin (Lincoln)
Masse	Mayer
Mazankowski	McCreath
McCurdy	McDermid
McDougall (St. Paul's)	McKnight
McLean	Merrithew
Milliken	Mitchell
Monteith	Moore
Mulroney	Murphy
Nault	Nicholson
Nowlan	Nystrom
Oberle	O'Kurley
Paproski	Plamondon
Plourde	Porter
Pronovost	Redway
Reid	Reimer
Ricard	Richardson
Riis	Robinson
Robitaille	Rodriguez
Rompkey	Roy-Arcelin
Saint-Julien	Schneider
Scott (Victoria—Haliburton)	Shields
Siddon	Skelly (North Island—Powell River)
Skelly (Comox—Alberni)	Sobeski
Soetens	Sparrow
Stevenson	Stupich
Tardif	Thacker
Thorkelson	Tremblay (Rosemont)
Tremblay (Québec-Est)	Tremblay (Lotbinière)
Turner (Halton—Peel)	Valcourt
Vézina	Vien
Vincent	Wappel
Weiner	White
Whittaker	Wilson (Etobicoke Centre)
Winegard	Wood
Worthy	Young (Gloucester)

Young (Beaches—Woodbine)—183

• (2200)

Mr. Speaker: I declare the motion lost.

The next question is on Motion No. 10 standing in the name of Mr. Boudria.

The House divided on the motion, which was negatived on the following division:

(Division No. 259)

YEAS

Members

Attewell	Bellemare
Belsher	Boudria
Casey	Chadwick
Cole	Corbett
Crawford	Crosby (Halifax West)

Della Noce
Domm
Ferguson
Fontana
Grey (Beaver River)
Hopkins
Jourdenais
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)
Littlechild
MacDonald (Dartmouth)
Malone
Marin
Mitges
Nicholson
O'Kurley
Parent
Porter
Proud
Ricard
Saint-Julien
Scott (Hamilton—Wentworth)
Thompson
Van de Walle
Wappel
White
Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek—Assiniboia)—60

Dionne
Fee
Flis
Fretz
Gustafson
Jordan
Karygiannis
LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso)
MacAulay
MacDougall (Timiskaming)
Marchi
McGuire
Nault
Nunziata
Pagtakhan
Pickard
Pronovost
Reimer
Rocheleau
Scott (Victoria—Haliburton)
Speller
Vanclief
Vankoughnet
Wenman

NAYS

Members

Althouse
Anderson
Angus
Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing)
Beatty
Benjamin
Bird
Black
Blackburn (Jonquière)
Blenkarn
Bourgault
Brewin
Cadieux
Campbell (Vancouver Centre)
Catterall
Charest
Clark (Yellowhead)
Collins
Cooper
Côté
Crosbie (St. John's West)
Darling
de Cotret
Desjardins
Dingwall
Duplessis
Epp
Finestone
Friesen
Gaffney
Gardiner
Gibeau
Guilbault
Harvard
Harvey (Edmonton East)
Hockin
Horner
Hughes
James
Johnson
Kempling
Koury
Landry
Langdon (Essex—Windsor)
Larrivée
Lewis
MacDonald (Rosedale)
MacLellan
Marleau

Anawak
Andre
Atkinson
Barrett
Bélair
Bernier
Bjornson
Blackburn (Brant)
Blais
Bouchard (Roberval)
Boyer
Brightwell
Callbeck
Cardiff
Champagne (Champlain)
Clancy
Clark (Brandon—Souris)
Cook
Corbeil
Couture
Danis
DeBlois
de Jong
Dick
Dobbie
Edwards
Ferland
Fontaine
Fulton
Gagliano
Gérin
Greene
Halliday
Harvey (Chicoutimi)
Hawkes
Hogue
Hudon
Hunter
Jelinek
Karpoff
Keyes
Kristiansen
Langan (Mission—Coquitlam)
Langlois
Layton
Loiselle
MacKay
MacWilliam
Martin (Lincoln)

Masse
Mazankowski
McDermid
McKnight
Merrithew
Mitchell
Moore
Murphy
Nystrom
Ouellet
Plamondon
Redway
Richardson
Riis
Robitaille
Rompkey
Schneider
Siddon
Skelly (Comox—Alberni)
Soetens
Stevenson
Tardif
Thorkelson
Tremblay (Québec-Est)
Turner (Halton—Peel)
Vézina
Vincent
Whittaker
Wilson (Etobicoke Centre)
Wood
Young (Gloucester)

Mayer
McCurdy
McDougall (St. Paul's)
McLean
Milliken
Monteith
Mulroney
Nowlan
Oberle
Paproski
Plourde
Reid
Rideout
Robinson
Rodriguez
Roy-Arcelin
Shields
Skelly (North Island—Powell River)
Sobeski
Sparrow
Stupich
Thacker
Tremblay (Rosemont)
Tremblay (Lotbinière)
Valcourt
Vien
Weiner
Wilbee
Winegard
Worthy
Young (Beaches—Woodbine)—160

Mr. Speaker: I declare the motion lost.

The next question is on Motion No. 12 standing in the name of Mr. Belsher.

The House divided on the motion, which was negatived on the following division:

(*Division No. 260*)

YEAS

Members

Attewell
Casey
Cole
Corbett
Domm
Fee
Fontana
Friesen
Guilbault
Hopkins
Jordan
Karygiannis
Kindy
Littlechild
MacDonald (Dartmouth)
Malone
Marin
McGuire
O'Kurley
Pagtakhan
Pickard
Pronovost
Reimer
Robichaud
Scott (Victoria—Haliburton)
Speller
Vanclief
Wenman
Wilbee
Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek—Assiniboia)—58

Belsher
Chadwick
Comuzzi
Crawford
Edwards
Flis
Fretz
Grey (Beaver River)
Gustafson
Johnson
Jourdenais
Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)
LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso)
MacAulay
MacDougall (Timiskaming)
Marchi
McCreath
Nunziata
Ouellet
Parent
Porter
Proud
Ricard
Saint-Julien
Scott (Hamilton—Wentworth)
Thompson
Van de Walle
White

NAYS

Members

Althouse
Anderson
Angus
Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing)
Barrett
Bélair
Benjamin
Bird
Black
Blackburn (Jonquière)
Blenkarn
Bourgault
Brewin
Cadieux
Campbell (Vancouver Centre)
Catterall
Charest
Clark (Yellowhead)
Collins
Cooper
Côté
Crosbie (St. John's West)
Darling
de Cotret
Desjardins
Dingwall
Dorin
Epp
Finestone
Fulton
Gagliano
Gérin
Greene
Harvard
Harvey (Edmonton East)
Hockin
Horner
Hunter
Jelinek
Kempling
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)
Kristiansen
Langan (Mission—Coquitlam)
Langlois
Layton
Loiselle
MacKay
MacWilliam
Martin (Lincoln)
Mayer
McCurdy
McDougall (St. Paul's)
McLean
Milliken
Mitges
Moore
Murphy
Nicholson
Nystrom
Paproski
Plourde
Reid
Rideout
Robinson
Rodriguez
Schneider
Siddon
Skelly (Comox—Alberni)
Soetens
Stevenson
Tardif
Thorkelson
Tremblay (Québec-Est)
Turner (Halton—Peel)
Vankoughnet
Vien
Weiner
Wilson (Etobicoke Centre)
Wood
Young (Gloucester)
Anawak
Andre
Atkinson
Baker
Beatty
Bellemare
Bernier
Bjornson
Blackburn (Brant)
Blais
Bouchard (Roberval)
Boyer
Brightwell
Callbeck
Cardiff
Champagne (Champlain)
Clancy
Clark (Brandon—Souris)
Cook
Corbeil
Couture
Danis
DeBlois
Della Noce
Dick
Dobbie
Duplessis
Ferland
Fontaine
Gaffney
Gardiner
Gibeau
Halliday
Harvey (Chicoutimi)
Hawkes
Hogue
Hughes
James
Karpoff
Keyes
Koury
Landry
Langdon (Essex—Windsor)
Larrivée
Lewis
MacDonald (Rosedale)
MacLellan
Marleau
Masse
Mazankowski
McDermid
McKnight
Merrithew
Mitchell
Monteith
Mulroney
Nault
Nowlan
Oberle
Plamondon
Redway
Richardson
Riis
Robitaille
Roy-Arcelin
Shields
Skelly (North Island—Powell River)
Sobeski
Sparrow
Stupich
Thacker
Tremblay (Rosemont)
Tremblay (Lotbinière)
Valcourt
Vézina
Wappel
Whittaker
Winegard
Worthy
Young (Beaches—Woodbine)—160

Mr. Speaker: I declare the motion lost.

The next question is on Motion No. 13 standing in the name of Mr. Reimer.

The House divided on the motion, which was negatived on the following division:

(Division No. 261)

YEAS

Members

Attewell
Belsher
Butland
Casey
Cole
Cooper
Dingwall
Edwards
Ferguson
Fontana
Friesen
Guilbault
Hopkins
Jordan
Karygiannis
LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso)
MacAulay
MacDougall (Timiskaming)
Malone
Marin
Nunziata
Pagtakhan
Pickard
Pronovost
Reimer
Robichaud
Scott (Victoria—Haliburton)
Speller
Vanclief
Wenman
Wilbee
Bélair
Boudria
Callbeck
Chadwick
Comuzzi
Crawford
Dionne
Fee
Flis
Fretz
Grey (Beaver River)
Gustafson
Johnson
Jourdenais
Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)
Littlechild
MacDonald (Dartmouth)
MacLellan
Marchi
McCreath
O'Kurley
Parent
Porter
Proud
Ricard
Saint-Julien
Scott (Hamilton—Wentworth)
Turner (Halton—Peel)
Van de Walle
White
Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek—Assiniboia)—62

NAYS

Members

Althouse
Anderson
Angus
Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing)
Barrett
Bellemare
Bernier
Bjornson
Blackburn (Brant)
Blais
Bouchard (Roberval)
Boyer
Brightwell
Campbell (Vancouver Centre)
Catterall
Charest
Clark (Yellowhead)
Collins
Corbeil
Couture
Danis
DeBlois
de Jong
Desjardins
Dobbie
Duplessis
Anawak
Andre
Atkinson
Baker
Beatty
Benjamin
Bird
Black
Blackburn (Jonquière)
Blenkarn
Bourgault
Brewin
Cadieux
Cardiff
Champagne (Champlain)
Clancy
Clark (Brandon—Souris)
Cook
Côté
Crosbie (St. John's West)
Darling
de Cotret
Della Noce
Dick
Dorin
Epp

Ferland
Fontaine
Gaffney
Gardiner
Gibeau
Halliday
Harvey (Chicoutimi)
Hawkes
Hogue
Hudon
Hunter
Jelinek
Kempling
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)
Kristiansen
Langan (Mission—Coquitlam)
Langlois
Layton
Loiselle
MacKay
Marleau
Masse
Mazankowski
McDermid
McKnight
Merrithew
Mitchell
Monteith
Mulroney
Nault
Nowlan
Oberle
Paproski
Plourde
Reid
Rideout
Robinson
Rodriguez
Schneider
Siddon
Skelly (Comox—Alberni)
Soetens
Stevenson
Tardif
Thorkelson
Tremblay (Québec-Est)
Valcourt
Vézina
Vincent
Weiner
Wilson (Etobicoke Centre)
Wood
Young (Gloucester)
Finestone
Fulton
Gagliano
Gérin
Greene
Harvard
Harvey (Edmonton East)
Hockin
Horner
Hughes
James
Karpoff
Keyes
Koury
Landry
Langdon (Essex—Windsor)
Larrivée
Lewis
MacDonald (Rosedale)
MacWilliam
Martin (Lincoln)
Mayer
McCurdy
McDougall (St. Paul's)
McLean
Milliken
Mitges
Moore
Murphy
Nicholson
Nystrom
Ouellet
Plamondon
Redway
Richardson
Riis
Robitaille
Roy-Arcelin
Shields
Skelly (North Island—Powell River)
Sobeski
Sparrow
Stupich
Thacker
Tremblay (Rosemont)
Tremblay (Lotbinière)
Vankoughnet
Vien
Wappel
Whittaker
Winegard
Worthy
Young (Beaches—Woodbine)—158

Mr. Speaker: I declare the motion lost.

We will now proceed to the next question which is on Motion No. 14.

Mr. Boudria: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

Motion No. 14 deals directly with Motion No. 10. Since Motion No. 10 was defeated, I would submit that there is probably little need to take the second vote on Motion No. 14.

I would suggest to the House that we could perhaps apply the vote on Motion No. 10 to Motion No. 14.

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed, and so ordered.

The House divided on Motion No. 14, standing in the name of Mr. Boudria, which was negatived on the following division:

(Division No. 262)

YEAS

Members

Attewell
Belsher
Casey
Cole
Crawford
Della Noce
Domm
Ferguson
Fontana
Grey (Beaver River)
Hopkins
Jourdenais
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)
Littlechild
MacDonald (Dartmouth)
Malone
Marin
Mitges
Nicholson
O'Kurley
Parent
Porter
Proud
Ricard
Saint-Julien
Scott (Hamilton—Wentworth)
Thompson
Van de Walle
Wappel
White
Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek—Assiniboia)—60
Bellemare
Boudria
Chadwick
Corbett
Crosby (Halifax West)
Dionne
Fee
Flis
Fretz
Gustafson
Jordan
Karygiannis
LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso)
MacAulay
MacDougall (Timiskaming)
Marchi
McGuire
Nault
Nunziata
Pagtakhan
Pickard
Pronovost
Reimer
Rocheleau
Scott (Victoria—Haliburton)
Speller
Vanclief
Vankoughnet
Wenman

NAYS

Members

Althouse
Anderson
Angus
Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing)
Beatty
Benjamin
Bird
Black
Blackburn (Jonquière)
Blenkarn
Bourgault
Brewin
Cadieux
Campbell (Vancouver Centre)
Catterall
Charest
Clark (Yellowhead)
Collins
Cooper
Côté
Crosbie (St. John's West)
Darling
de Cotret
Desjardins
Dingwall
Duplessis
Epp
Finestone
Friesen
Gaffney
Gardiner
Gibeau
Anawak
Andre
Atkinson
Barrett
Bélair
Bernier
Bjornson
Blackburn (Brant)
Blais
Bouchard (Roberval)
Boyer
Brightwell
Callbeck
Cardiff
Champagne (Champlain)
Clancy
Clark (Brandon—Souris)
Cook
Corbeil
Couture
Danis
DeBlois
de Jong
Dick
Dobbie
Edwards
Ferland
Fontaine
Fulton
Gagliano
Gérin
Greene

Guilbault
Harvard
Harvey (Edmonton East)
Hockin
Horner
Hughes
James
Johnson
Kempling
Koury
Landry
Langdon (Essex—Windsor)
Larrivée
Lewis
MacDonald (Rosedale)
MacLellan
Marleau
Masse
Mazankowski
McDermid
McKnight
Merrithew
Mitchell
Moore
Murphy
Nystrom
Ouellet
Plamondon
Redway
Richardson
Riis
Robitaille
Rompkey
Schneider
Siddon
Skelly (Comox—Alberni)
Soetens
Stevenson
Tardif
Thorkelson
Tremblay (Québec-Est)
Turner (Halton—Peel)
Vézina
Vincent
Whittaker
Wilson (Etobicoke Centre)
Wood
Young (Gloucester)
Halliday
Harvey (Chicoutimi)
Hawkes
Hogue
Hudon
Hunter
Jelinek
Karpoff
Keyes
Kristiansen
Langan (Mission—Coquitlam)
Langlois
Layton
Loiselle
MacKay
MacWilliam
Martin (Lincoln)
Mayer
McCurdy
McDougall (St. Paul's)
McLean
Milliken
Monteith
Mulroney
Nowlan
Oberle
Paproski
Plourde
Reid
Rideout
Robinson
Rodriguez
Roy-Arcelin
Shields
Skelly (North Island—Powell River)
Sobeski
Sparrow
Stupich
Thacker
Tremblay (Rosemont)
Tremblay (Lotbinière)
Valcourt
Vien
Weiner
Wilbee
Winegard
Worthy
Young (Beaches—Woodbine)—160

Mr. Speaker: I declare the motion lost.

The next question is on Motion No. 16, standing in the name of Mr. Pagtakhan.

The House divided on the motion, which was negatived on the following division:

(*Division No. 263*)

YEAS

Members

Boudria
Crawford
Flis
Grey (Beaver River)
Johnson
Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)
LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso)
MacDonald (Dartmouth)
Nunziata
Pickard
Robichaud
Speller
Vanclief
Wenman
Corbett
Fee
Fontana
Hopkins
Jordan
Kindy
MacAulay
Marchi
Pagtakhan
Proud
Scott (Hamilton—Wentworth)
Thompson
Van de Walle
White
Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek—Assiniboia)—29

NAYS

Members

Althouse
Anderson
Anawak
Andre
Angus
Attewell
Barrett
Bélair
Benjamin
Bird
Black
Blackburn (Jonquière)
Blenkarn
Bourgault
Brewin
Cadieux
Campbell (Vancouver Centre)
Casey
Champagne (Champlain)
Clancy
Clark (Brandon—Souris)
Collins
Corbeil
Couture
Danis
DeBlois
de Jong
Desjardins
Dingwall
Duplessis
Epp
Finestone
Fretz
Fulton
Gardiner
Gibeau
Guilbault
Harvard
Harvey (Edmonton East)
Hockin
Horner
Hughes
James
Karpoff
Keyes
Koury
Landry
Langdon (Essex—Windsor)
Larrivée
Littlechild
MacKay
MacWilliam
Marin
Martin (Lincoln)
Mayer
McCurdy
McDougall (St. Paul's)
McLean
Milliken
Mitges
Moore
Murphy
Nicholson
Nystrom
O'Kurley
Paproski
Porter
Redway
Reimer
Rideout
Robinson
Roy-Arcelin
Schneider
Shields
Skelly (North Island—Powell River)
Sobeski
Sparrow
Stupich
Thacker
Tremblay (Rosemont)
Tremblay (Lotbinière)
Valcourt
Vézina
Vincent
Weiner
Wilbee
Winegard
Worthy
Atkinson
Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing)
Beatty
Bellemare
Bernier
Bjornson
Blackburn (Brant)
Blais
Bouchard (Roberval)
Boyer
Brightwell
Callbeck
Cardiff
Chadwick
Charest
Clark (Yellowhead)
Cole
Cook
Côté
Crosbie (St. John's West)
Darling
de Cotret
Della Noce
Dick
Dobbie
Edwards
Ferland
Fontaine
Friesen
Gagliano
Gérin
Greene
Halliday
Harvey (Chicoutimi)
Hawkes
Hogue
Hudon
Hunter
Jelinek
Kempling
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)
Kristiansen
Langan (Mission—Coquitlam)
Langlois
Lewis
Loiselle
MacLellan
Malone
Marleau
Masse
Mazankowski
McDermid
McKnight
Merrithew
Mitchell
Monteith
Mulroney
Nault
Nowlan
Oberle
Ouellet
Plamondon
Pronovost
Reid
Ricard
Riis
Rodriguez
Saint-Julien
Scott (Victoria—Haliburton)
Siddon
Skelly (Comox—Alberni)
Soetens
Stevenson
Tardif
Thorkelson
Tremblay (Québec-Est)
Turner (Halton—Peel)
Vankoughnet
Vien
Wappel
Whittaker
Wilson (Etobicoke Centre)
Wood
Young (Gloucester)—172

Mr. Speaker: I declare the motion lost.

[*Translation*]

The next question is on Motion No. 17A standing in the name of Mr. LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso).

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

Mr. Speaker: All those in favour will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: In my opinion the nays have it.

And more than five Members having risen:

Mr. Speaker: Shall I dispense with the ringing of the bells?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The House divided on the motion (Mr. LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso), which was negatived on the following division:

(Division No. 264)

YEAS

Members

Bélair
Boudria
Crawford
Dionne
Fontana
Hopkins
Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)
LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso)
MacDonald (Dartmouth)
Malone
McCreath
Nunziata
Parent
Proud
Robichaud
Speller
Vanclief
White
Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek—Assiniboia)—36

Bellemare
Corbett
Dingwall
Flis
Grey (Beaver River)
Jordan
Kindy
MacAulay
MacLellan
Marchi
McGuire
Pagtakhan
Pickard
Rideout
Scott (Hamilton—Wentworth)
Thompson
Wenman

NAYS

Members

Althouse
Anderson
Angus
Attewell
Barrett
Belsher
Bernier
Bjornson
Blackburn (Brant)
Blais
Bourgault
Brewin
Cadieux
Campbell (Vancouver Centre)
Casey
Chadwick
Charest
Clark (Yellowhead)
Cole
Cook
Corbeil
Couture
Danis
DeBlois
de Jong
Desjardins
Dobbie
Edwards
Ferland
Fontaine
Friesen
Gaffney
Gardiner
Gibeau
Guilbault
Harvard
Harvey (Edmonton East)
Hockin
Horner
Hughes
James
Johnson
Karpoff
Keyes
Koury
Landry
Langdon (Essex—Windsor)
Larrivée
Lewis
Loiselle
MacDougall (Timiskaming)
MacWilliam
Martin (Lincoln)
Mayer
McCurdy
McDougall (St. Paul's)
McLean
Milliken
Mitges
Moore
Murphy
Nicholson
Nystrom
O'Kurley
Paproski
Porter
Redway
Reimer
Richardson
Robinson
Rodriguez
Saint-Julien
Scott (Victoria—Haliburton)
Siddon
Skelly (Comox—Alberni)
Soetens
Stevenson
Tardif
Thorkelson
Tremblay (Québec-Est)
Valcourt
Vézina
Vincent
Weiner
Wilbee
Winegard
Worthy
Young (Beaches—Woodbine)—175

Anawak
Andre
Atkinson
Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing)
Beatty
Benjamin
Bird
Black
Blackburn (Jonquière)
Bouchard (Roberval)
Boyer
Brightwell
Callbeck
Cardiff
Catterall
Champagne (Champlain)
Clancy
Clark (Brandon—Souris)
Collins
Cooper
Côté
Crosbie (St. John's West)
Darling
de Cotret
Della Noce
Dick
Duplessis
Epp
Finestone
Fretz
Fulton
Gagliano
Gérin
Greene
Halliday
Harvey (Chicoutimi)
Hawkes
Hogue
Hudon
Hunter
Jelinek
Jourdenais
Kempling
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)
Kristiansen
Langan (Mission—Coquitlam)
Langlois
Layton
Littlechild
MacDonald (Rosedale)
MacKay
Marin
Masse
Mazankowski
McDermid
McKnight
Merrithew
Mitchell
Monteith
Mulroney
Nault
Nowlan
Oberle
Ouellet
Plamondon
Pronovost
Reid
Ricard
Riis
Robitaille
Roy-Arcelin
Schneider
Shields
Skelly (North Island—Powell River)
Sobeski
Sparrow
Stupich
Thacker
Tremblay (Rosemont)
Turner (Halton—Peel)
Vankoughnet
Vien
Wappel
Whittaker
Wilson (Etobicoke Centre)
Wood
Young (Gloucester)

Mr. Speaker: I declare the motion lost.

• (2300)

[*English*]

Mr. Scott (Hamilton—Wentworth): Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. Since we have the sense of the House on the previous motions, perhaps we could apply the previous vote to Motion No. 17B and move on to the next motions which are of a different context.

Mr. Attewell: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I appreciate what the hon. member said but Motion No. 17B is quite different. It is more explicit and I would like to vote on it.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Hamilton—Wentworth has suggested a mode of proceeding, but that requires unanimous consent and the hon. member for Markham—Whitchurch—Stouffville has not given his consent.

The next question is on Motion No. 17B standing in the name of Mr. Attewell.

The House divided on the motion, which was negatived on the following division:

(*Division No. 265*)

YEAS

Members

Attewell	Belsher
Boudria	Butland
Casey	Chadwick
Cole	Corbett
Crawford	Crosby (Halifax West)
Dionne	Edwards
Fee	Flis
Fontana	Fretz
Friesen	Grey (Beaver River)
Guilbault	Gustafson
Hopkins	Johnson
Jordan	Jourdenais
Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)	Kindy
LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso)	Littlechild
MacAulay	MacDonald (Dartmouth)
MacDougall (Timiskaming)	Marchi
Marin	McCreath
McGuire	Nunziata
O'Kurley	Parent
Pickard	Porter
Pronovost	Reimer
Ricard	Rideout
Robichaud	Saint-Julien
Scott (Victoria—Haliburton)	Scott (Hamilton—Wentworth)
Speller	Thompson
Turner (Halton—Peel)	Vanclief
Van de Walle	Wenman
White	Wilbee

Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek—Assiniboia)—57

NAYS

Members

Althouse	Anawak
Anderson	Andre
Angus	Atkinson
Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing)	Barrett
Beatty	Bélair
Benjamin	Bernier
Bird	Bjornson
Black	Blackburn (Brant)
Blackburn (Jonquière)	Blais
Blenkarn	Bouchard (Roberval)
Bourgault	Boyer
Brewin	Brightwell
Cadieux	Callbeck
Campbell (Vancouver Centre)	Cardiff
Catterall	Champagne (Champlain)
Charest	Clancy
Clark (Yellowhead)	Clark (Brandon—Souris)
Collins	Cook
Cooper	Corbeil
Côté	Couture
Crosbie (St. John's West)	Danis
Darling	DeBlois
de Cotret	de Jong
Della Noce	Desjardins
Dick	Dingwall
Dobbie	Duplessis
Epp	Ferland
Finestone	Fontaine
Fulton	Gaffney
Gagliano	Gardiner
Gérin	Gibeau
Greene	Halliday
Harvard	Harvey (Chicoutimi)
Harvey (Edmonton East)	Hawkes
Hockin	Hogue
Horner	Hudon
Hughes	Hunter
James	Jelinek
Karpoff	Kempling
Keyes	Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)
Koury	Kristiansen
Landry	Langan (Mission—Coquitlam)
Langdon (Essex—Windsor)	Langlois
Larrivée	Layton
Lewis	Loiselle
MacDonald (Rosedale)	MacKay
MacLellan	MacWilliam
Malone	Martin (Lincoln)
Masse	Mayer
Mazankowski	McDermid
McDougall (St. Paul's)	McKnight
McLean	Merrithew
Milliken	Mitchell
Mitges	Monteith
Moore	Mulroney
Murphy	Nault
Nicholson	Nowlan
Nystrom	Oberle
Ouellet	Paproski
Plamondon	Plourde
Proud	Redway
Reid	Richardson
Riis	Robinson
Robitaille	Rodriguez
Roy-Arcelin	Schneider
Shields	Siddon
Skelly (North Island—Powell River)	Skelly (Comox—Alberni)
Sobeski	Soetens
Sparrow	Stevenson
Stupich	Tardif
Thacker	Thorkelson
Tremblay (Rosemont)	Tremblay (Québec-Est)
Tremblay (Lotbinière)	Valcourt
Vankoughnet	Vézina
Vien	Vincent
Wappel	Weiner
Whittaker	Wilson (Etobicoke Centre)
Winegard	Wood
Worthy	Young (Gloucester)

Young (Beaches—Woodbine)—159

Mr. Speaker: I declare the motion lost.

• (2310)

We will proceed to Motion No. 19. Before doing so, the hon. member for Winnipeg North has a point of order.

Mr. Pagtakhan: Mr. Speaker, I sense the sentiments of the House will likely be identical for Motions Nos. 16 and 19. With unanimous consent, I request through you, Mr. Speaker, that the vote on Motion No. 16 be applied to Motion No. 19.

Mr. Speaker: Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: The next question is on Motion No. 19 standing in the name of Mr. Pagtakhan.

The House divided on the motion, which was negatived on the following division:

(Division No. 266)

YEAS

Members

Boudria
Crawford
Flis
Grey (Beaver River)
Johnson
Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)
LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso)
MacDonald (Dartmouth)
Nunziata
Pickard
Robichaud
Speller
Vanclief
Wenman
Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek—Assiniboia)—29
Corbett
Fee
Fontana
Hopkins
Jordan
Kindy
MacAulay
Marchi
Pagtakhan
Proud
Scott (Hamilton—Wentworth)
Thompson
Van de Walle
White

NAYS

Members

Althouse
Anderson
Angus
Attewell
Barrett
Bélair
Benjamin
Bird
Black
Blackburn (Jonquière)
Blenkarn
Bourgault
Brewin
Cadieux
Campbell (Vancouver Centre)
Casey
Champagne (Champlain)
Clancy
Clark (Brandon—Souris)
Collins
Corbeil
Couture
Anawak
Andre
Atkinson
Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing)
Beatty
Bellemare
Bernier
Bjornson
Blackburn (Brant)
Blais
Bouchard (Roberval)
Boyer
Brightwell
Callbeck
Cardiff
Chadwick
Charest
Clark (Yellowhead)
Cole
Cook
Côté
Crosbie (St. John's West)
Danis
DeBlois
de Jong
Desjardins
Dingwall
Duplessis
Epp
Finestone
Fretz
Fulton
Gardiner
Gibeau
Guilbault
Harvard
Harvey (Edmonton East)
Hockin
Horner
Hughes
James
Karpoff
Keyes
Koury
Landry
Langdon (Essex—Windsor)
Larrivée
Littlechild
MacKay
MacWilliam
Marin
Martin (Lincoln)
Mayer
McCurdy
McDougall (St. Paul's)
McLean
Milliken
Mitges
Moore
Murphy
Nicholson
Nystrom
O'Kurley
Paproski
Porter
Redway
Reimer
Rideout
Robinson
Roy-Arcelin
Schneider
Shields
Skelly (North Island—Powell River)
Sobeski
Sparrow
Stupich
Thacker
Tremblay (Rosemont)
Tremblay (Lotbinière)
Valcourt
Vézina
Vincent
Weiner
Wilbee
Winegard
Worthy
Darling
de Cotret
Della Noce
Dick
Dobbie
Edwards
Ferland
Fontaine
Friesen
Gagliano
Gérin
Greene
Halliday
Harvey (Chicoutimi)
Hawkes
Hogue
Hudon
Hunter
Jelinek
Kempling
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)
Kristiansen
Langan (Mission—Coquitlam)
Langlois
Lewis
Loiselle
MacLellan
Malone
Marleau
Masse
Mazankowski
McDermid
McKnight
Merrithew
Mitchell
Monteith
Mulroney
Nault
Nowlan
Oberle
Ouellet
Plamondon
Pronovost
Reid
Ricard
Riis
Rodriguez
Saint-Julien
Scott (Victoria—Haliburton)
Siddon
Skelly (Comox—Alberni)
Soetens
Stevenson
Tardif
Thorkelson
Tremblay (Québec-Est)
Turner (Halton—Peel)
Vankoughnet
Vien
Wappel
Whittaker
Wilson (Etobicoke Centre)
Wood
Young (Gloucester)—172

Mr. Speaker: I declare the motion lost.

[*Translation*]

The next question is on motion No. 24, standing in the name of Mrs. Black.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the said motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

Mr. Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: In my opinion the nays have it.

And more than five Members having risen:

Mr. Speaker: May I dispense with the bells?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The House divided on the motion (Ms. Black), which was negatived on the following division:

(*Division No. 267*)

YEAS

Members

Althouse
Angus
Barrett
Black
Brewin
Clancy
Finestone
Gardiner
Harvard
Hunter
Kristiansen
Langdon (Essex—Windsor)
MacWilliam
Mitchell
Nystrom
Riis
Rodriguez
Skelly (Comox—Alberni)
Whittaker
Anawak
Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing)
Benjamin
Blackburn (Brant)
Catterall
de Jong
Fulton
Grey (Beaver River)
Harvey (Edmonton East)
Karpoff
Langan (Mission—Coquitlam)
MacDonald (Rosedale)
McCurdy
Murphy
Plamondon
Robinson
Skelly (North Island—Powell River)
Stupich
Young (Beaches—Woodbine)—38

NAYS

Members

Anderson
Atkinson
Beatty
Bellemare
Bernier
Bjornson
Blais
Bouchard (Roberval)
Bourgault
Brightwell
Callbeck
Cardiff
Chadwick
Andre
Baker
Bélair
Belsher
Bird
Blackburn (Jonquière)
Blenkarn
Boudria
Boyer
Cadieux
Campbell (Vancouver Centre)
Casey
Champagne (Champlain)
Charest
Clark (Brandon—Souris)
Collins
Cooper
Corbett
Couture
Crosbie (St. John's West)
Danis
DeBlois
Della Noce
Dick
Dionne
Domm
Duplessis
Epp
Ferguson
Flis
Fontana
Friesen
Gagliano
Gérin
Greene
Gustafson
Harvey (Chicoutimi)
Hockin
Hopkins
Hudon
James
Johnson
Jourdenais
Keyes
Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)
Koury
Langlois
Layton
Lewis
Loiselle
MacKay
Malone
Marin
Martin (Lincoln)
Mayer
McCreath
McDougall (St. Paul's)
McKnight
Merrithew
Mitges
Moore
Nault
Nowlan
Oberle
Ouellet
Paproski
Pickard
Porter
Proud
Reid
Ricard
Rideout
Robitaille
Saint-Julien
Scott (Victoria—Haliburton)
Shields
Sobeski
Sparrow
Stevenson
Thacker
Thorkelson
Tremblay (Québec-Est)
Turner (Halton—Peel)
Vanclief
Vankoughnet
Vien
Wappel
Wenman
Wilbee
Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek—Assiniboia)
Wilson (Etobicoke Centre)
Wood
Young (Gloucester)—183
Clark (Yellowhead)
Cole
Cook
Corbeil
Côté
Crawford
Crosby (Halifax West)
Darling
de Cotret
Desjardins
Dingwall
Dobbie
Dorin
Edwards
Fee
Ferland
Fontaine
Fretz
Gaffney
Gauthier
Gibeau
Guilbault
Halliday
Hawkes
Hogue
Horner
Hughes
Jelinek
Jordan
Kempling
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)
Kindy
Landry
Larrivée
LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso)
Littlechild
MacDougall (Timiskaming)
MacLellan
Marchi
Marleau
Masse
Mazankowski
McDermid
McGuire
McLean
Milliken
Monteith
Mulroney
Nicholson
Nunziata
O'Kurley
Pagtakhan
Parent
Plourde
Pronovost
Redway
Reimer
Richardson
Robichaud
Roy-Arcelin
Schneider
Scott (Hamilton—Wentworth)
Siddon
Soetens
Speller
Tardif
Thompson
Tremblay (Rosemont)
Tremblay (Lotbinière)
Valcourt
Van de Walle
Vézina
Vincent
Weiner
White
Winegard
Worthy

Mr. Speaker: I declare the motion lost.

• (2320)

[*English*]

Hon. Kim Campbell (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada) moved that the bill be concurred in.

Mr. Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: In my opinion the yeas have it.

And more than five members having risen:

Mr. Speaker: Shall I dispense with the ringing of the bells?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:

(Division No. 268)

YEAS

Members

Anderson
Andre
Atkinson
Beatty
Belsher
Bird
Bjornson
Blackburn (Jonquière)
Blais
Blenkarn
Bouchard (Roberval)
Bourgault
Boyer
Brightwell
Cadieux
Campbell (Vancouver Centre)
Cardiff
Casey
Chadwick
Champagne (Champlain)
Charest
Clark (Yellowhead)
Clark (Brandon—Souris)
Cole
Collins
Cook
Cooper
Corbeil
Côté
Couture
Crosbie (St. John's West)
Crosby (Halifax West)
Danis
Darling
DeBlois
de Cotret
Della Noce
Desjardins
Dick
Dobbie
Dorin
Duplessis
Edwards
Epp
Fee
Ferland
Fontaine
Fretz
Friesen
Gérin
Gibeau
Greene
Guilbault
Gustafson
Halliday
Harvey (Chicoutimi)
Hawkes
Hockin
Hogue
Horner
Hudon
Hughes
James
Jelinek
Jourdenais
Kempling
Koury
Landry
Langlois
Larrivée
Layton
Lewis
Littlechild
Loiselle
MacDougall (Timiskaming)
MacKay
Malone
Marin
Martin (Lincoln)
Masse
Mayer
Mazankowski
McCreath
McDermid
McDougall (St. Paul's)
McKnight
McLean
Merrithew
Milliken
Monteith
Moore
Mulroney
Oberle
O'Kurley
Paproski
Plourde
Porter
Pronovost
Redway
Reid
Reimer
Richardson
Robitaille
Roy-Arcelin
Saint-Julien
Schneider
Scott (Victoria—Haliburton)
Shields
Siddon
Sobeski
Soetens
Sparrow
Stevenson
Tardif
Thacker
Thorkelson
Tremblay (Rosemont)
Tremblay (Québec-Est)
Tremblay (Lotbinière)
Turner (Halton—Peel)
Valcourt
Vankoughnet
Vézina
Vien
Vincent
Weiner
Wenman
White
Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek—Assiniboia)
Wilson (Etobicoke Centre)
Winegard
Worthy—132

NAYS

Members

Althouse
Anawak
Angus
Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing)
Baker
Barrett
Bélair
Bellemare
Benjamin
Black
Blackburn (Brant)
Boudria
Brewin
Callbeck
Campbell (South West Nova)
Catterall
Clancy
Corbett
Crawford
de Jong
Dingwall
Dionne
Domm
Ferguson
Finestone
Flis
Fontana
Fulton
Gaffney
Gagliano
Gardiner
Gauthier
Grey (Beaver River)
Harvard
Harvey (Edmonton East)
Hopkins
Hunter
Johnson
Jordan
Karpoff
Keyes
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)
Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)
Kindy
Kristiansen
Langan (Mission—Coquitlam)
Langdon (Essex—Windsor)
LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso)
MacAulay
MacDonald (Rosedale)
MacDonald (Dartmouth)
MacLellan
MacWilliam
Marchi
Marleau
McCurdy
McGuire
Mitchell
Mitges
Murphy
Nault
Nicholson
Nunziata
Nystrom
Ouellet
Pagtakhan
Parent
Pickard
Proud
Rideout
Riis
Robichaud
Robinson
Rodriguez
Scott (Hamilton—Wentworth)
Skelly (North Island—Powell River)
Skelly (Comox—Alberni)
Speller
Stupich
Thompson
Vanclief
Wappel
Whittaker
Wilbee
Wood
Young (Gloucester)—86

Mr. Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Andrée Champagne (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot): Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, on a point of order.

Mrs. Champagne (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot): Mr. Speaker, although I was in the House this evening, I preferred not to vote at the report stage since you appointed me chairman of the legislative committee.

Mr. Speaker: I thank the hon. member.

Pursuant to order made Thursday, May 10, 1990, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 11 a.m, pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

The House adjourned at 11.30 p.m.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, May 24, 1990

The House met at 11 a.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*Translation*]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

TABLING OF INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Madam Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 32(2), I would like to lay upon the table in both official languages a number of international agreements which are already in effect.

* * *

[*English*]

COMMONWEALTH COMMITTEE OF FOREIGN MINISTERS

MEETING IN ABUJA, NIGERIA—TABLING OF LETTERS

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Madam Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 32, I would like to lay upon the table three documents emanating from the recent meeting of the Commonwealth Committee of Foreign Ministers dealing with southern Africa which met in Abuja, Nigeria, on May 16 and 17.

I would like to table the concluding statement of that meeting, a copy of the Abuja commitment that was signed at that meeting and the text of a letter sent to the foreign ministers of the European Community and the foreign ministers of the G-7 signed by the nine ministers who are members of the Commonwealth committee on events in southern Africa.

With the indulgence of the House, I might perhaps ask members to pay particular heed to the letter, a quite extraordinary document, signed by nine ministers sent to members of the European Community and the G-7 setting forth our view on the appropriateness of maintaining sanctions now in place with respect to South Africa.

* * *

• (1110)

[*Translation*]

PETITIONS

THE GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Madam Speaker, I have the honour to lay upon the table a petition signed by numerous electors of Sarnia and other places in Ontario. This petition is being submitted pursuant to Standing Order 36.

The signers of this petition object to the GST because they consider it unfair and regressive, and they call upon Parliament to reject it.

Mr. Boudria: Let us do it now!

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Madam Speaker, I have here a petition signed by numerous residents of the electoral riding of Ottawa—Vanier; this petition was circulated in the riding by way of circulars, and it is meant to express strong disagreement with the government's proposed goods and services tax.

These Canadians fear that the proposed tax will have an inflationary impact and will decrease our ability as Canadians, to maintain our standard of living. They therefore humbly submit a proposal to the effect that this House, and this Parliament in particular, reject the proposal to impose on Canadians a 7 per cent goods and services tax beginning in January 1991.

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Madam Speaker, it is also my honour and privilege to submit a petition pursuant to Standing Order 36. This petition is signed by a number of residents of the riding of Kingston and the Islands, who, since the last election, have been so well represented in this House by my distinguished and erudite colleague.

I would like to voice my support for this petition which the electors of Kingston and the Islands have signed to ask the Conservative Government to withdraw its proposed goods and services tax forthwith.

I am convinced, Madam Speaker, that we could all make up our minds immediately and withdraw this tax which is so regressive. Let us do it now!

[*English*]

Mr. Jack Whittaker (Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt): Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure today to present, pursuant to Standing Order 36, a further petition signed by people in my riding from such places as Osoyoos, Penticton, Summerland, as well as other places in the province of British Columbia such as Hope and Kelowna.

These are a further 163 names that I am adding to the thousands of names on petitions which I have already placed before the House from people within British Columbia asking this government to reject the current proposal for the goods and services tax. This petition asks the government to cease with its proposal that would shift the tax burden on to ordinary Canadians through a regressive consumption tax instead of through real tax reform.

* * *

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Madam Speaker, I ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Shall all questions stand?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

CRIMINAL CODE

MEASURE TO AMEND

Hon. Kim Campbell (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada) moved that Bill C–43, an act respecting abortion, be read the third time and passed.

Mr. Gauthier: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

I know that there is a special order which has been adopted by the House concerning the debate on third reading of Bill C–43. If one reads it attentively, a Whip can stand in his place and propose to the House that his party would like to split the allocated 20 minutes speeches, plus the 10–minute questions and comments allowed after each of our rounds.

I would like to give notice to the Chair that as Whip of the Liberal party we would like to split our time into two 10–minute periods, each period followed by a 5–minute question and comment period.

Mr. Angus: Madam Speaker, I just wish to advise the House that the speakers for the New Democratic Party will take their full 20 minutes as individual speakers.

If we have a decision later on to split our time between two members, we will advise the House at the beginning of that speech where we will split into two periods of 10 and 5.

We assume that the normal rotation will be adhered to.

Mr. Gauthier: Madam Speaker, may I make one further comment. In the interest of all members knowing what is going on, since the debate will probably last until late tonight and could collapse some time tomorrow morning, by 9.59 a.m. at the latest, I wonder if we could have notice from the other parties as to when they intend to go to 10–minute speeches, plus 5 minutes for questions and comments, so that we can organize our people around that arrangement.

Mr. Angus: Madam Speaker, I think the suggestion by the House leader of the Official Opposition is most appropriate.

We have already started to try to get a sense of the length of time that the House will be functioning today, tonight, and perhaps tomorrow morning so that we do have an indication of when the debate may end rather than have some accidents occur, which has happened from time to time.

Mr. Cooper: Madam Speaker, I can just indicate from our side that at the moment we have about 13 speakers who wish to participate in the debate. We do not have an indication yet as to whether or not any of those members are willing to split their time. However, we will do all in

our power to inform the House and the other members in order to help them in their planning.

While I am on my feet, may I suggest that perhaps all three parties would agree to sit through the lunch hour to make sure that we have a little more time for people to speak and to give more opportunities to members.

Mr. Gauthier: Madam Speaker, on the proposal that we sit through lunch hour I really do not have any objections. Members understand that there will be no supper break. Once we start at three o'clock after Question Period we will proceed continuously until the debate collapses.

Thus, if we do sit through the lunch hour, it would mean that our assistants in the House, the clerks, messengers and others, would be well advised to plan their lunches appropriately because we will not get any.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Mrs. Campbell (Vancouver Centre), seconded by Mr. Cooper, moved that Bill C–43, an act respecting abortion, be now read the third time and pass. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Mr. Gauthier: I rise on a point of order, Madam Speaker. In the interest of keeping things in order, I do not think a parliamentary secretary can second a motion. If so, may we have a ruling from the Chair as to whether it is in order for a parliamentary secretary to second a motion.

Mr. Milliken: There are 38 of them. Surely to goodness more than one of them can be here.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The hon. parliamentary secretary can properly second a motion, so the motion is seconded by Mr. Cooper.

Mr. Milliken: He is so competent he should be a minister.

Ms. Campbell (Vancouver Centre): Madam Speaker, I appreciate the commentary from the other side of the House on the competence of our members who should all be ministers.

I rise today to address you, Madam Speaker, on the issue of abortion, one of the most controversial and divisive issues in society today, an issue about which we all have very different views.

As colleagues and parliamentarians, our roles have been challenged as never before on the subject of abortion.

We have been challenged by the strongly held views of our constituents and by the debates which have occurred over every element of the physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual aspects of abortion.

• (1120)

[*Translation*]

The members who sat on the legislative committee on abortion heard arguments from individuals and groups representing all sides of the debate.

The arguments advanced by the proponents of free choice as well as by the representatives of the pro life movements were founded on principles and were convincing.

As individuals, our views on abortion are no less strong than those of the voters whom we represent or of the lobby groups defending a particular position.

In fact, certain ministers and members have publicly expressed their personal views on this matter, and rightly so.

[*English*]

As parliamentarians, we are all aware of our duty to act not in our own interests, but in the interests of those we represent.

Given the diversity of beliefs held, there are those who might question whether it is possible to find some common ground to meet the expectations of Canadians in our role as representatives of the Canadian people.

The Supreme Court of Canada stated in the Morgentaler case that while the function of the Supreme Court is to review legislation in order to determine if a particular legislative balance of interests was consistent with constitutional guarantees, it is up to parliament, first, to strike that balance.

Two years have passed since the Supreme Court declared the former abortion law unconstitutional. All three majority judgments of the court concurred that Section 251 of the Criminal Code, which had been the law for 19 years, was a violation of the security of the person and the principles of fundamental justice as guaranteed under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

In so stating, the highest court in the land has recognized that there is a balance to be made in society between what they describe as the state's interest in the foetus and the rights of a woman.

It is our job to strike that balance.

[*Translation*]

Despite the problems this represents, it is possible for us, as parliamentarians, to find a common ground on which to meet the expectations of Canadians.

If we hope to find this common ground, it is very important for us to understand that the legislation will necessarily reflect more than one viewpoint.

When we speak of common ground, we are not necessarily speaking of a compromise, but rather of coming to some sort of arrangement. An accommodation on such a thorny issue as abortion is extremely difficult for those who were involved in the drafting of the proposed legislation.

Nevertheless, Bill C–43 is the end result of a marvelous exercise in parliementary responsibility, in that it reflects the different viewpoints and interests of society, while upholding constitutional guarantees.

[*English*]

I have enormous respect for the process by which this bill was created and for what it represents in terms of common ground.

Very often, as I said in my speech at second reading, we have shared common ground, but for very different reasons.

Bill C–43, in my view, is a remarkable creation and a tribute to those who put it together.

We have been elected to provide leadership in dealing with the situation we now face.

As the Prime Minister said in his speech before you in November of 1989, "we must achieve a solution that is philosophically sound, constitutionally correct, politically acceptable and administratively practicable; that is, a solution which can be understood and implemented".

Bill C–43 exemplifies such a solution.

The Minister of National Health and Welfare, who has been a committed supporter of the pro–life position over the years, supports Bill C–43.

In the debate on second reading I explained why I, committed to pro–choice, was able to support the bill before the House.

I remain confident that Bill C–43 reflects a balance of the views of the Canadian people and protects their vital interests in a way that will be acceptable to the majority of Canadians.

I would now like to present a brief overview of Bill C–43.

The government has proceeded by using the criminal law power because this bill is primarily related to the protection of fundamental values, reflecting our commitment to the protection of life, health, human dignity, equality, and social order.

Criminal law embodies deeply held social values and attempts to balance them with the rights of individuals. It is therefore appropriate that we deal with the abortion issue within a legal framework which is based on these considerations.

All of the judges of the majority, in the Morgentaler case, recognized the usual purpose of the Criminal Code provisions relating to abortion, that is, the protection of the life and health of the woman, and the protection of the foetus.

[*Translation*]

The justices also acknowledged the validity of the legislative objective aimed at offering this protection. Mr. Justice Beetz stated that it was a valid objective in Canadian criminal law.

The Supreme Court of Canada showed that it was mindful of the role of the legislative branch. We realize that the legislative balance we are seeking will be examined by the courts to ensure that it is consistent with the Charter. However, we must first begin by assuming our responsibilities in the democratic process and seeking out this balance.

However imperfect it may be, the legislative process is still the best way to achieve a consensus. We cannot refuse to do our duty, which is to resolve this matter. Nor can we force the courts to do our job for us.

[*English*]

I wish to emphasize that provinces cannot stiffen the criminal law, nor can they weaken it. The criminal legislation should enable us to establish a uniform

standard for all of Canada, something that does not exist at the present time in the area of abortion.

Abortion has been put into the Criminal Code in order to balance and protect throughout the pregnancy the rights of the woman who seeks an abortion and the societal interest in the protection of the foetus.

It is thoughtless and misleading to say that Bill C–43 is making criminals out of women and doctors. This bill prohibits a number of specific activities: abortions performed by non–medical practitioners who may carry out abortions under unsanitary and unsafe conditions, abortions performed without forming an opinion as to the health grounds, the unlawful sale of unauthorized abortifacients, toxic devices or equipment used to induce abortions, and self–induced abortions.

To understand the effects of Bill C–43 on access to abortion, it is necessary to appreciate its implications for clarifying and helping to establish a national standard of entitlement to abortion.

The provision of abortion services as a health care issue falls under the jurisdiction of the provinces. Thus, it is the responsibility of each province and territory to deal with access to abortion services.

The federal government does not have the jurisdiction to regulate health practices in Canada.

Nevertheless, this bill does assist in providing access.

Not only does it lack a number of legal impediments that existed under the old law, such as therapeutic abortion committees, restrictions on which doctors could perform abortions, and hospital requirements, but it also improves upon the current situation.

Bill C–43 will give the provinces the guidance they have asked for on the legal framework and national approach to entitlement to abortion.

[*Translation*]

From a constitutional perspective, I would like to point out that the provision of health care services is not regulated under the Canada Health Act. Rather, this act is a financial statute adopted pursuant to the federal government's spending power.

To suggest that it would be possible to incorporate in the Canada Health Act a provision ensuring access to abortion services is wrong. This reflects a poor understanding of Canada's constitutional reality.

The federal government does not have the power to regulate the provision of health care services. The definition of "health", which includes physical, mental and psychological health, is consistent with the Supreme Court ruling in the Morgentaler case according to which the provisions of Section 7 of the Charter respecting the security of the person include physical and psychological security.

It is important to look at health as it relates to the human being as a whole. The circumstances which compel a woman to seek an abortion will most certainly be taken into account by the medical practitioner when he or she arrives at a decision and determines whether not performing an abortion is likely to threaten the physical, mental or psychological health of the woman.

This decision by the medical practitioner is not an abstract one. Rather, it takes into consideration the personal situation of the woman.

This approach allows the medical practitioner to examine all the repercussions, should he or she decide not to perform the abortion, and not only to consider the effects that continuing the pregnancy would have.

• (1130)

[*English*]

The foetus is protected throughout the pregnancy because of the non–gestational approach of the bill. Those who oppose abortion do not wish to see gestational limits in the legislation because such limits suggest a varying value of human life at different times of pregnancy. Those who favour a woman's choice view gestational limits as unnecessary and based on the myth that women seek abortions late in pregnancy when, in actual fact, 89 per cent of abortions are performed in the first 12 weeks of pregnancy.

The bill achieves protection for the foetus in the Criminal Code which generally protects fundamental social values. The bill does not allow for abortion on demand since specific health grounds must be met. Only therapeutic abortions are permitted based on health grounds and a doctor's opinion.

The generally accepted standards of the medical profession apply to any opinion formed by a doctor. The decision a doctor makes is an opinion formed in good faith as required by the canon of medical ethics of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada.

The Canadian Medical Association has expressed a concern that the doctors of Canada will be under a fear of prosecution if this bill becomes law. Doctors should not be afraid. I would suggest that what this bill describes as legal behaviour is nothing more than good medical practice. It must be remembered that the responsibilities of doctors under the terms of Bill C–43 are similar to their responsibilities under the former legislation.

The very real difference from the old law is that no extraneous administrative procedures or outside opinions are required. Under the new bill the doctor will apply accepted medical standards in order to decide whether or not to induce an abortion, how and where to do so, and whether or not to seek outside opinions.

[*Translation*]

Given all the benefits of the bill that I have outlined for you, I believe that Bill C–43 is the best legislative formula and that it can stand up to any legal challenge based on the Charter.

It achieves a balance reflecting the concerns raised by the Supreme Court.

The bill provides that the decision to have an abortion or not is based on health reasons.

A person desiring an abortion must consult a physician, as for any other medical procedure.

The definition of "health" is broad and allows taking into consideration all factors essential to the protection of the woman's right to security of her person.

[*English*]

But the Supreme Court did not speak only of a woman's rights under the Charter. There were a number of references to the importance of the protection of the foetus by all.

Madam Justice Bertha Wilson who wrote one of the reasons for judgment said in the Morgentaler case: "The situation respecting a woman's right to control her own person becomes more complex when she becomes pregnant and some statutory control may be appropriate."

In introducing Bill C–43 we have made a very careful effort to comply with constitutional requirements and we believe that the proposed bill would be a workable law within constitutional parameters.

The federal government cannot prevent people from attempting civil actions since civil actions are governed by provincial law. However, in the Daigle decision the Supreme Court of Canada gave a strong indication against the availability of civil actions to prevent women from exercising their rights.

[*Translation*]

Private prosecutions are extremely rare in this field.

Anyone can lay charges under a provision of the Criminal Code.

However, the attorney general in each province has the power to suspend proceedings in a case where the private prosecution is undertaken for frivolous or malicious motives or is not in the public interest.

In light of past experience and the requirements for evidence for charges laid under this provision, an unfounded lawsuit is very unlikely.

[*English*]

As the Minister of National Health and Welfare has made clear, there is no intention that this bill be used to harass Canadian women or doctors. Aside from the factors I have just mentioned which make such harassment highly improbable, attempts to abuse the criminal process themselves incur severe legal penalties.

[*Translation*]

Many Canadians did not hesitate to express their various interests, which occasionally reflected contrary opinions.

We respect their opinions.

Nevertheless, we must assert our responsibilities and fill the void created by such divergent views.

If we are unable to achieve this balance, we are not meeting our responsibilities as representatives of the people.

[*English*]

Earlier I spoke of leadership in our roles as parliamentarians. Leadership means having the courage to bring forward an abortion bill which seeks to answer the concerns of Canadians. Parliament is not perfect but each of us comes here as a representative of Canadian people with particular outlooks. If we take our responsibilities seriously, we will not simply be advocates of one particular position but we will recognize that the most important issues in our society are not always black and white.

[*Translation*]

Our work as elected members requires us to try to "square the circle" and seek common ground.

This bill is remarkable evidence of the finest parliamentary tradition and we have the required expertise to find the common ground on which Parliament can pass a law on this most controversial issue.

[*English*]

We may not be imbued with all wisdom and knowledge in this endeavour, but there can be no doubt that we have given every ounce of our energy to arriving at a suitable solution and we have fulfilled our duty in addressing the issue of abortion in the best interests of Canadians.

My colleagues and I are convinced that this bill comes closer than any practical alternative in a moderate, practicable and balanced solution. It is philosophically sound, constitutionally valid and workable. I would ask that you support Bill C–43 and vote in favour of its successful passing into law.

Ms. Dawn Black (New Westminster—Burnaby): Madam Speaker, I listened very carefully to the Minister of Justice and her rationale for the government proceeding with this bill.

She said that the bill is in the interests of those whom we, as members of this House of Commons, represent. I would like to comment that by reducing access for women who are seeking abortion by throwing this issue back into the courts of this country, which is sure to happen as women have already said, and by agonizing doctors and women in this country, I do not believe is in the interests of those we represent.

She talked about a balance of views. Whose views, Madam Speaker? Sixty–two per cent of Canadians in an Environics poll in November said they did not want criminal legislation on abortion. The majority of Canadians are opposed to it. She said we cannot refuse to perform our duties as legislators. I would say to the Minister of Justice that we do have a duty. Those of us, particularly those of us who are women and have articulated a position in favour of the integrity of Canadian women, have also a duty to those women. The minister has articulated that position in the past and she is now reversing that position.

Our role should be to do something effective about this issue, to do something that is truly effective and compassionate about unwanted pregnancies. Of course, that would be to support families and research into family planning, to support research into safe and effective methods of contraception, to support women and children and not to throw this bill into the Criminal Code.

She said it was misleading to say that Bill C–43 criminalizes women and doctors but it is not. That is what this bill does. She talked about national entitlement. The constitutional experts and the lawyers in the universities across this country have written to her and said that this is legal nonsense. They have said that she is relying on jurisprudence that is 20 years out of date as far as federal paramountcy goes.

My final comment is that the minister said she was committed to the pro–choice position in this country. I would like to ask her, in view of supporting this legislation and in view of standing in this House last night and voting in opposition to the only pro–choice amendment that was before this House, how can she stand here and tell Canadian women and the people of this country that she is committed to pro–choice?

• (1140)

Ms. Campbell (Vancouver Centre): Madam Speaker, I am quite pleased to say that I am committed to the pro–choice position and have been. The point that I have made is that I think this bill is consistent with the pro–choice position. The hon. member has made a number of comments which I would like to address but I realize that there is limited time.

One thing that I would like to point out though is that she makes reference to lawyers' opinions which have challenged my view on the relationship of this bill to other legislation. First of all, those opinions which were commissioned have never been provided to me. People

have felt free to call into question my competence and integrity without providing to me the opinions on which those were based. I have succeeded in getting some of them, not all of them, and I understand that the group which commissioned the opinion is not circulating the opinion which happens to agree with me.

I would refer the hon. member to the footnote of Mr. Bruce Ryder's opinion which in fact makes the point. All I have said with respect to the relationship between this bill and provincial legislation is that I believe that this bill will make it more difficult for provinces to use their jurisdiction in ways that will reduce access to abortion. I believe the effect of actually having a federal law on the books is a positive one and will be taken into account by the courts.

One of the opinions that was solicited, and I refer the hon. member to it, in fact makes that point. I suggest most of the opinions are worthless because they address things that I have never said. By parodying my views, of course you can solicit whatever opinion you want.

Mr. Ryder makes the point in footnote 14 or 16 of his views, quoting Professor Peter Hogg, who is one of the great authorities on Canadian constitutional law, in a line of authority that culminated in the Westendorp case, which is still good law in Canada. It is a Supreme Court of Canada decision of 1983. He says perhaps in theory the courts should not take into account the existence or absence of a federal law in determining the validity of provincial law, but in practice the case law shows that the presence of a federal law does, in fact, influence the courts in determining the validity of provincial law.

That is the point that I have made. It is a point well founded in the law of Canada, in the 1983 decision of the Supreme Court of Canada, which has not been departed from by the Supreme Court of Canada. I am quite content to allow the courts to vindicate me in that view because it is a well-founded view. I assign no value whatever to legal opinions which attempt to challenge views that are a parody of what I have said, as opposed to a realistic representation of what I have said.

The hon. member says that 62 per cent of Canadians have said they do not want criminal law in this area. Most Canadians do not understand the division of powers in this country and the limited authority that the federal government has because, in fact, a majority of Canadians have said they would prefer to see some legal framework.

The only constitutional power that we can use to do that is the criminal law power and the criminal law power is a very important power of this Parliament. It enables this Parliament to do some very important things and there are many every-day activities in Canadian society that for some purposes come under the purview of the criminal law power. To caricature that power and to use the term "criminalization" in emotive terms that have nothing to do with the way the law functions, I think is not very helpful in helping Canadians to understand the role of parliamentarians and the effect of legislation.

Of course, we should be doing things that are effective for women and children, but those are not answers to the problem that is before us.

This law attempts to recognize the fact that abortion is characterized in two fundamentally different ways in Canadian society. For people on my side of the issue, a view the hon. member shares, it is fundamentally an equality rights issue, but for other Canadians it is basically a moral issue. It is very difficult to reconcile these two points of view.

This bill attempts to reconcile these two points of view. It is a conciliatory gesture. It says to those great many Canadians, for whom abortion will never be just another issue, that it is an issue we take seriously as a society. At the same time it is a bill that is deeply respectful of the relationship between a woman and her doctor. It is deeply respectful of the professional ethics of the medical profession in Canada. It does not seek to intrude into that relationship or look behind opinions formed by doctors, opinions which they must form to practise ethical medicine under the canons of their own college. It does not seek to look behind those opinions but to recognize them and to provide in those opinions and in a standard of good medical practice, a protection for doctors from any kind of legal sanction.

Ms. Black: Madam Speaker, the Minister of Justice indicated some question of morality here and that this

was a moral position of her government. For two years in this country, we have had no criminal law on abortion. Has she seen any indication that Canadian women have not behaved with integrity or have not taken this issue very seriously themselves? Does she truly believe that the state knows better than Canadian women, on their own, when they agonize to make this decision themselves? Does she not respect the morality of Canadian women?

Ms. Campbell (Vancouver Centre): Madam Speaker, I think that is a foolish question and typical of the way the hon. member tries to characterize questions which bear no relation to what I have actually said.

Many Canadians regard this as a moral issue. It is an issue that is troubling to them. In making a moral balance between the question of ending a pregnancy and the right of a woman to make that choice, I come down very strongly on the right of a woman to make that choice. I recognize that there is a moral balance and a moral dilemma. It is an appropriate function for Parliament to recognize that this is an issue unlike any other in Canadian society.

Women make this decision best. The determination of the health and well being of a women, in the context of medical practice, is one in which the woman's own aspirations play a very significant role. Doctors do not ask their patients to be quiet while figuring out what their situation is. The patient is a fundamental participant in the determination of what is in the best interest of the patient. It is precisely that relationship which is respected in this bill. It is precisely the formation of that opinion which a doctor must form to practise ethical medicine which is not intruded into or looked behind in this bill.

I think it is very sad that the hon. member cannot recognize that this is a troubling issue for many Canadians. It is appropriate in the House to come up with some kind of legislative structure that will pay homage to the concerns of a great many Canadians who send people to the House of Commons and who also have a right to be represented. I believe this bill does so, but not at the expense of the security of the person of Canadian women. That is a value which we have to respect. The Supreme Court of Canada has told us that. We have done that in this bill.

I believe this bill is an honourable accommodation between two fundamentally different ways of characterizing one of the most divisive issues in Canadian society. I am sorry that the hon. member does not see, within her role as a parliamentarian, the obligation to find that common ground. If her party has aspirations ever to be government, she will find that the positions it takes on many issues do not translate well into public policy which will command the support of all Canadians. All Canadians are represented in the House, and require some acknowledgement of their position.

Mr. Friesen: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I do not mean to interrupt, but I just want to announce that there is agreement among the parties that the debate will continue on through the lunch hour.

Mr. Jim Jordan (Leeds—Grenville): Madam Speaker, the motions to amend the bill, which we all know failed last night, were largely an attempt to improve the bill in the interest of protecting the most defenceless, smallest, and weakest members of our society, the preborn.

Abortion kills a human being. This bill, if passed, is a licence to kill human beings. It does not matter that the human being is in its early stages of development. What matters is that this bill, if passed, will permit open season on defenceless human beings.

The dispute lies in whether it is right or wrong to kill defenceless human beings. In attempting to explain their position on the abortion issue, civil leaders frequently speak of not wanting to impose their morality on others. Let me remind them that all civil law involves the imposition of someone's moral principles on someone else, including those who do not agree with them and on those who believe they should be exempt from those rules.

• (1150)

The Criminal Code prohibits rape, theft, arson, and many other things. Obviously the rapist, the thief, and the arsonist do not subscribe to the Criminal Code's principles. However, no sensible person would suggest that these offences should be removed from the Criminal Code because they impose someone else's morality.

The civilization of a society can be judged best by how it treats its most defenceless members. Compassion dictates that we protect children in the womb and, just as importantly, provide real and substantial help to their mothers. That is what a civilized society would do. Distressed pregnant women need and deserve and have

a right to the assistance required to help them give life and support to their children, as much before as after birth. This is an obligation which society must address.

Compromise on abortion means legalizing the deaths of some unborn children. We would not legalize the rape of some women or the abuse of some children. Neither is the murder of some victims acceptable.

The true test of an advanced civilization, which we purport to be, is how society treats those in the dawn of life, the margins of life, and the twilight of life. There is no place in our society for select living and select dying.

In general, should Bill C–43 become law, access to abortion will be even easier and quicker than under the 1969 law which permitted the killing of over a million and a half preborn children in the country. This bill will remove the few restrictions that the 1969 law had imposed and, regardless of how one looks at it, Bill C–43 is nothing more than abortion on demand. Anyone who thinks otherwise either has not read the bill or refuses to believe what history has taught us.

Instead of approval from a therapeutic abortion committee, the opinion of only one doctor will suffice and an abortion may be performed by anyone under his or her supervision. Instead of being restricted to hospitals, abortions may be carried out anywhere: doctors' offices, clinics, homes.

Even the pretence of needing a reason or an indication, as was previously required in requesting an abortion, has now been removed by permitting abortion for physical, mental, and psychological reasons, which may even include economic and social factors.

Bill C–43 is the worst gestational law possible in that it places absolutely no time limit on when an abortion can be performed.

Let me quote the last sentence from the 1974 book, *Morality and Law in Canadian Politics*:

> For a society to have many illegal abortions is no doubt a very serious situation. It will be very difficult to stop them. But to legalize abortions is to corrupt the law and, thereby, ultimately to corrupt society. It will prove far more difficult to stop that corruption than it will be to stop illegal abortions.

A child on the verge of being born is developmentally indistinguishable from a newborn infant. The mere fact that the unborn child is inside someone else's body does not imply that it is not a person. If it is not a person at this stage, presumably the reason is that it is still physically dependent on the mother. But if personhood is diminished in this way, the matter of dependence being the determinant, then the personhood of seriously ill people on life-support systems would come into serious question, as would the personhood of other seriously dependent or handicapped persons.

Surely, a woman's right to have control over her own body should not be extended to the level at which it gives the mother the right to terminate the life of someone else.

We get upset and very disturbed when we read about or watch on TV the terrible atrocities that go on almost daily in our society. The mass killings of a group of students recently in Montreal is an example, as are the needless slayings of innocent people, young and old in our society. These things prompt us to ask what is wrong in our society. Why is there this lack of respect for life in our society? Are we growing immune and becoming more accepting to these indignities that we cause one another? The answer is yes. If Bill C–43, which will allow abortion on demand, becomes law, it will be a major setback for our society which is attempting to present itself as a highly civilized nation.

In closing, what I am asking for is a new approach to something that is very old. If we take away life as a basic right, then all other rights that we would extend to the foetus are meaningless. Why not reject this proposed law in favour of a family policy that is positive? That policy would see the family elevated above every other social unit or organization as being the ultimate unit, the one of prime importance if we are going to advance as a society on the world scene.

Canada has an opportunity to show leadership. Forget about Party differences. What I am proposing is developing an attitude that will respect the family and will transcend all petty things such as party lines and differ-

ences. I think if we permit ourselves we could elevate our purposes and, for once, do something because it is right, although it may not be popular in all quarters.

Our obligation as human beings is to protect the lives of others who are in no position to protect themselves. The inconvenience that one life may cause to another is not a justifiable reason for the dominant one to discontinue the life of the innocent one.

I ask hon. members from all sides, if they are not sure what position to take, if they have not thought it through, or if for one reason or another they cannot make up their minds, to vote for life. Come down on the side of human dignity. Be a promoter of life. Defeat this bill and ask the government to come up with a new bill with its soul purpose being to protect life. To vote in favour of this bill as it is now is so final. All we are saying is give life a chance.

Mr. Chris Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing): Madam Speaker, I wonder if I could ask the hon. member how he thinks criminalizing abortion, making women and/or doctors criminals, will possibly deal with abortions taking place?

He will remember, prior to any criminal provisions with regard to abortion, that abortions were generally unsafe, back-street operations, essentially for poor women, and that rich women could always find appropriate doctors to perform abortions, here or elsewhere.

• (1200)

Perhaps the hon. member could deal with that one point. If the point is that we should try to reduce the number of abortions, how does he feel that criminalizing the matter would achieve that, bearing in mind that past practice and history would not substantiate any suggestion that that would happen?

Would there not be a greater likelihood of success in reducing the number of abortions if we addressed concerns such as child care, effective education and effective contraception, and essentially give women an opportunity to see their way clear to raising children in other than poverty? He knows as well as we do that one in four Canadian children is raised in poverty.

The main point is, how does he feel criminalizing women and criminalizing doctors could possibly deal with the question of abortion?

Mr. Jordan: Well, it is not a question of criminalizing women and doctors. Members of his party seem to be presenting themselves as the social conscience of the world and not seeing that the basic need is to create conditions in this country—we are a rich country—in which those conditions would not exist that require abortions.

If it is through poverty, let us correct that. If it is through poor housing, let us correct that. If it is through lack of education, let us correct that. But if we are going to start with the assumption that this is going to go on and we have no intention of trying to jar society into elevating its sights at all, how are we ever going to address the problem?

I know abortions have gone on and probably will continue to go on. But I do not think that should be the base from which to start to improve conditions under which abortions go on. Let us correct the social conditions that create the need for women to have abortions in this country.

Mr. Vic Althouse (Mackenzie): Madam Speaker, I am sure no one in the House would disagree with the sentiment presented by the hon. member for Leeds—Grenville that society should be doing more for families and for children.

I remind him that in the last 20 or 30 years we have had deindexing of family allowances, a reduction in the proportion of family income that is free from income tax for raising children, and an inadequacy of social services for the increasing number of single-parent families, most of them headed by women. Society has failed miserably. Governments all across the country, federal and provincial, and the two main parties that have been in power federally have not addressed that. In fact, they have exacerbated the problem.

Can he perhaps explain why there has not been emphasis on correcting those problems, rather than attempting to portray the difficulty, so-called, as one of being a moral issue when there are social and economic factors to it? Among those economic and social factors, the experiment that has existed for the last year and a half or two years where women and doctors were free to make these decisions does seem to indicate that they were conducting themselves appropriately.

I wonder if he could tie those two factors together and explain why?

Madam Deputy Speaker: A very short comment from the hon. member. The time has expired.

Mr. Jordan: If you are asking me to defend the record of previous governments, regardless of politics, I would not be prepared to do that. There have been some horrible examples, perhaps with good intentions, of trying to create the social climate that I am proposing should be created, so that women are not put in a position where their only alternative, seemingly, is to have an abortion. I think that indicates a preposterous kind of economy. We have a great economy in this country, if we wanted to direct it in the right fashion. There seems to be a tendency to have all kinds of money for certain programs but the one that is most basic, the protection of human life, seems to be the one that gives way whenever there is any kind of a crunch.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member. The time for questions and comments has now expired. Resuming debate with the hon. member for York West.

Mr. Sergio Marchi (York West): Madam Speaker, as everyone knows, the question of abortion is a very emotional and complex one, one that is so fundamental that it continues to occupy this House and this country.

It is complex and fundamental because it incorporates a number of different overtones, whether they be moral, religious, social, or philosophical. It also incorporates a debate between individual rights, in this case of women, versus collective rights of a family, of a society. Finally, important among those elements are the rights of the unborn.

This is the third occasion I have participated in a debate on the matter of abortion. I spoke in the second reading debate of Bill C–43 a few months ago. In the last Parliament, I also participated in the debate on the number of various options offered to the House of Commons. At that time, I certainly was in favour of the pro–life option.

I wish to say again today that there are three exceptions that I feel very strongly about that were not incorporated in the official pro–life option; where an abortion was performed if the life of the mother was seriously endangered, where the pregnancy was the result of a rape, and where the pregnancy was the result of incest.

I realize that in some of those cases the numbers are few, but nonetheless we have to legislate for all possible and potential possibilities. Therefore, in my judgment, those exceptions are certainly real and must be addressed. I feel very passionately about them.

I also voted against second reading of Bill C–43, mainly because the legislation as drafted is essentially abortion on demand. The law would make it very easy and very open–ended for most women in this country to obtain an abortion; open–ended for any health reason, which is loosely defined; open–ended for any medical practitioner to approve the abortion; open–ended for ending a pregnancy at any stage. The fundamental question that I asked myself during second reading and I continue to ask myself now at third reading is, what is the difference between this piece of legislation, and abortion on demand, or no legislation at all?

There was no attempt to define the rights of the unborn, the rights of the foetus, which is a very central dilemma that we as a Parliament in 1990 are supposed to resolve. Previous Supreme Court decisions challenged Parliament to come to grips with the question of the rights of the unborn, and at what point in the pregnancy do we have the right as a society and as legislators to protect that life.

• (1210)

It seems to me that this piece of legislation skated away completely from that challenge, from toiling with that dilemma so that we can somehow as legislators and as a country come to grips with that very moral question.

What alternative or encouragement through legislation or programs did this Parliament and government provide or offer those women in Canada who may have wanted to stop their pregnancy through abortion?

Are we to accept that an unwanted pregnancy must equal an unwanted child? I am not prepared to accept that. Must we accept that somehow an unwanted pregnancy must hurt a woman or stop her career or penalize her because there are no structural elements or programs to allow for that option? I do not buy that.

Are we to say that we should not be encouraging the gift of adoption for those who unfortunately cannot have children and who would love to know the feeling of parenthood but who have to go through red tape abroad in order to bring in an adopted child because there are

not enough children in this country to adopt. I am not prepared to accept that.

Those were some of the challenges for me that were inherent in the abortion debate. People are looking to this Chamber and this government to resolve these dilemmas. We chose to exclude the most difficult variables and deal with those which are perhaps easier to deal with at this particular junction.

I voted against the bill at second reading because in my opinion and in the opinion of many constituents of York West, whom I have the honour to represent, the legislation was bad legislation. I thought that it was so seriously flawed that it had to be sent to committee so that it could be amended to make it a better bill.

I voted against this bill because the government signalled very early in the debate that it would not permit any amendments, that not one comma would be changed. Therefore, I was not prepared to put my feelings aside in the hope that a committee would come up with amendments that would somehow correct the flaws and right the wrongs.

There were many individuals who wanted the pro–life option who were prepared to vote in favour at second reading in the hope that some amendments would see the light of day. We found out that the committee experience was a different story. We also found out last night about that story when all amendments were defeated, that the so–called free vote of my friends and colleagues on the opposite side was a three–line whip to ensure that all members on the government side supported the piece of legislation unchanged.

In my judgment, the defeat of those amendments was the defeat of any possibility that we would have legislation in this country that would try, on the one hand, to protect the unborn and, on the other hand, encourage alternatives to the abortion option and facilitate this option by supporting women in Canada with mechanisms that would enable them to continue with the pregnancy without any cost to their personal being.

Therefore, I return to the principle of my debate at second reading. What is the difference between this piece of legislation and abortion on demand? What is the message that we are transmitting through this bill to a society at large, above and beyond the elements surrounding the question of abortion?

I believe that this bill has failed the country badly. I believe that this piece of legislation is morally bankrupt and does not speak to or embrace any set of values that a civilized society with concern for the multifaceted elements of this debate should have had and obtained. That is the first message it sends out.

Second, I believe that this debate has failed in addressing the inherent variables that were at play in the question of abortion. We chose to exclude many variables that are pressing and that we think have gone away or have been resolved, because we chose to ignore them.

Third, this debate and this legislation have failed to come to grips with the rights of the unborn. For me, this bill was not worth supporting at second reading. It is not worth supporting at third reading. Instead of participating in a debate over a piece of legislation that has very little substance and is more of charade than anything else, I believe that parliament should have come to grips with a piece of legislation that should have had the courage and the integrity to address all the elements in the abortion debate; not some, but all of them.

Ms. Margaret Mitchell (Vancouver East): Madam Speaker, yesterday I spoke against the very restrictive and punitive criminal measures that were presented in this House by men who in my view wanted to punish severely women and doctors who have performed abortions.

As I listened to the debate I became more and more upset. It was very difficult to try and be sensitive to why members were feeling this way and to respect their different views, which are very different from my own. I became very upset and very angry, because it seemed to me that the principles and the policies that were advocated in these extreme amendments were akin to the dreadful situation that has existed for some time in Romania, which we learned about recently, where women have been treated as handmaidens of the state and forced to become baby factories. That is not a nice term, but that is in fact what was happening. Unwanted children, as a result, were neglected and abused. We remember those frightening and sickening pictures on TV of children in institutions where they were left to die or vegetate.

I am sure that many women who would not go through with pregnancies, as the state required, died or were permanently damaged from illegal or self-induced abortions. It was really sickening.

I was extremely disappointed in many of the Liberal MPs, particularly, for supporting these amendments. I expected more to come from the other party. The majority of people who stood up time after time to support those amendments were from the Liberal caucus. I was sickened that they and Canadians who support this position would support such punitive measures in the name of life. I will not pursue this point, because I am sure we have different views on it, but that is the way it seemed to me and it was very sickening and depressing. Fortunately all these amendments were voted down by members from all parties.

• (1220)

I was particularly moved by the remarks of the member from the eastern Arctic. He was telling us about the culture and the caring of the Inuit communities where children belong to the whole community, where pregnant women are treated with great care and the children can be adopted in a very positive way by other people and still share relationships with their natural parents. This was a very moving statement and an example of the kind of caring community I wish we could somehow recreate in our southern urban communities. We have much to learn.

Today I want to try to be more positive in speaking on this final third reading of Bill C-43. Last November 22, I outlined my objections to the bill in considerable detail and tried to present positive alternatives we in this party see which would allow personal reproductive choice, would help to prevent unwanted pregnancies, and would provide support for parents and children in a caring society.

I want to summarize once again at third reading why we in the New Democratic Party oppose Bill C-43 and why I personally will be voting against it.

First, there is no need for a bill that will recriminalize abortion. It just is not needed, and the last two years have shown this. We know that this bill attempts to be a compromise. Some would like it to have tougher sanctions, but the sanctions under the Criminal Code affect both women and doctors, and this really is not necessary.

If we look at what has happened since the Supreme Court decision in the Morgentaler case over two years ago which struck down the previous abortion law, women and doctors have been left to make their own private decisions concerning abortion. I think this has worked well. There is no evidence that this has been abused or irresponsible.

The main concern that continues is that access is limited across the country, particularly in the Atlantic region and in rural and remote areas. This bill will not extend that access. In fact it will further restrict access, and I will come back to this point later.

The rate of abortions has not risen over the last two years. The kind of openness and the privacy of this access to abortion mean that a whole range of services has been offered in clinics such as Every Woman's Clinic in Vancouver, which has offered a first-rate service despite the protests that continue outside its doors. Hospitals also have been able to proceed without those cumbersome and delaying committees that formerly were a legal necessity.

Second, as we have said over and over again women can be trusted. As we have said over and over again—and the women of Canada have said it— this is insulting to women. It says that the state will tell a woman what she should do about plans for her own reproductive choice and if and when she should have a family despite what her conditions and her situation are.

Abortion is not used as a method of birth control. I have not personally met anyone who is in favour of abortion. I must say that I really wish, when referring to those who support the so-called choice position, people would not interpret this as a pro-abortion position. It certainly is not.

If a woman has to make a very difficult decision on the question of abortion she should be able to speak with counsellors, as she does now under the present situation, and consult with her doctor, but only she can and should have the right to make the final decision. After all, she is the one who has to care for the child, often without the support of a partner, and only she knows the real situation in her case.

No law can make this decision for her. This is what this bill is doing. It is saying that the state will interfere, that the state will impose the kind of situation, and that the state will also have criminal sanctions against women and doctors.

As the minister herself said this morning, women and doctors are responsible. Eighty-nine per cent of abortions are in the first 12 weeks of pregnancy. Both women and doctors know, if the difficult decision of having an abortion is what they conclude is right for them, that this must be done long before a foetus is viable.

I should not have to say this, but I want to stress that women do have rights in this country. We are not in Romania. We no longer are chattels of men or chattels of the state. Surely everyone in the House appreciates this fact.

Women do not have to be told what to do. They can make their own decisions, particularly on this all-important decision of child birth and pregnancy.

Our rights have been spelled out in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. This was recognized by the Supreme Court when it declared that the former abortion law was unconstitutional. As the minister said this morning, it was judged to be "a violation of the security of the person and of fundamental justice". The courts in the Daigle case also recognized a woman's right to make her own independent decision about abortion and denied the injunction of a boyfriend who tried to prevent this for very questionable reasons.

An abortion should be treated as a private medical procedure, as it is now, performed by qualified persons under medical regulations in safe conditions. Access will be restricted by this bill. We know that anxious, desperate women who may fear that they will not qualify for an abortion under the restrictions imposed, or who sense that their doctors are reluctant to get into any legal complications under Bill C-43, will find another way of having an abortion. It is not going to stop abortions.

History shows repeatedly that legal prohibitions and criminal sanctions do not stop unwanted pregnancies or abortions that result. The experience in Italy showed that when it had the toughest possible law, there was the highest incidence of abortions and deaths. Since there has been a more liberal policy, this rate has gone down.

Undoubtedly this bill will result in an increase in self-induced abortions and illegal back street abortions which are so dangerous, as well as being illegal.

Doctors also can be trusted. Physicians do not need to have punitive criminal laws to overrule their medical judgments. They operate under professional ethics and under provincial regulations. Good doctors will take cognizance of the total person: her needs and desires as well as health factors, her family, and her economic situation. He or she will respect the right of a woman patient to make her own decision as to whether or not to terminate a pregnancy.

This bill imposes a whole new situation. I am sure it will intimidate doctors. We already had an indication of this point. The Canadian Medical Association is very much opposed to recriminalizing abortion. It has stated the following:

> Our figures indicate that approximately 800 of the 45,000 physicians in the CMA perform abortions. Approximately 325 perform the majority of abortions. We understand that a significant majority of physicians providing abortion services would seriously re-evaluate their position.

• (1230)

That is, if this law is imposed. It is quite easy to understand why. As I said, the bill will intimidate doctors. It limits legal abortions to only situations where the continuation of a pregnancy would threaten a woman's physical, psychological or mental health.

There were some medical doctors who said in the House yesterday that they want to have "health" interpreted very, very narrowly rather than having the UN definition of it. I am sure that if they are faced with a possible legal challenge they are not going to be willing to take a risk. It is going to be very difficult for clinics to hire physicians if they are going to be threatened with two years in prison and costly legal charges.

This means that access for women will be seriously limited. The CMA has pointed this out. It is also grossly unfair and insulting to doctors who can make their own judgment on this matter. Doctors prefer to work under medical rather than criminal legislation and regulations.

I would now like to talk about alternatives to Bill C-43. As I have said many times, we must lessen the need for abortions. I know of no one who favours abortion. It is far preferable to prevent unwanted pregnancies. Why has the federal government then not addressed this question as its priority? Why have we had to spend so much time on this negative, punitive bill and

all the public furore it has created when the need for abortions could be done away with if the government would only put an emphasis on finding that solution?

It is extremely important, first, that men take a much greater responsibility for birth control and family planning. We have to change our culture in this respect. We must promote male contraceptives. Men have to see and accept that it is their responsibility. They contribute to the need for abortions and they must prevent unwanted pregnancies. They cannot just leave it to women, which seems to have been the old way of thinking in so much of our culture.

Young people, from childhood, must learn healthy sexuality. As adolescents they must have open discussions of sexual relations, pregnancies and contraception, and it should be done in schools openly. We need youth clinics and peer group discussions. We do not want contraception to be associated only with the prevention of AIDS, although this is very important. It should also be taught as part of a positive family planning and family life education program.

This is why the government must provide increased funding for school programs, for public education, and particularly for public media such as TV. It must especially reinstate and increase funding for planned parenthood associations. They have expertise in all of these areas. They are not just going to go out and promote abortions as one alternative.

Abortion is a symptom of our societal inadequacies. It is really a sign of our failure. This bill is the extreme negative way of dealing with this failure. We need prevention, but we also need many more supports for both fathers and mothers and for their children. Children and parents need programs to ensure their economic and emotional security. They must have this kind of security to plan for, bear and raise children. This is not always easy in the very competitive, costly society in which we live.

We must end child poverty and offer many more supports and opportunities for single mothers or fathers. This should be a government priority for funding and a first priority in our social policy.

It is deplorable and unconscionable that this government continues to ignore the urgent need for quality, affordable child care despite two task forces, constant presentations from witnesses across this country and repeated promises to introduce a national child care program. This is unconscionable.

We also need to extend parental leave and encourage family benefits for working parents. Employers should contribute to this and the government could start as a federal employer, another thing it is neglecting.

Immigrant parents must have language instruction and support programs to encourage their easy settlement into a new country, particularly women who often do not get the same opportunities because they are rearing children. They need opportunities for their children, including child care, as well as employment for themselves.

There are many things that we need to do to achieve a caring society, a society where people are valued and respected, where there is opportunity for people—women, men, young people and children—to develop their full potential, where they are allowed to determine their own future and make their own choices, not on only this question of reproductive choice but on all matters that affect them. We particularly want a society where children are wanted and loved, where they are nourished by parents or by alternate parents, by extended families and by a caring community.

I am pessimistic but I hope that there will be support to defeat this bill and I hope that the government and all of us in this House and across the country will work for these goals.

Mr. Sergio Marchi (York West): Madam Speaker, the member and I share the wish that the bill be defeated, although for very opposite and polarized views. I respect the member's full right to explain her views.

In a previous Supreme Court ruling one of the female judges on the bench wrote, in her own personal decision, that Parliament should be debating and challenging itself to come to grips with the rights of the unborn. She said in her decision that she felt that at some point in the pregnancy the right of the foetus becomes paramount.

I know that the hon. member has spoken at great length about the paramountcy of trying to cope with the woman in this debate of pregnancy and abortion, as we should. However, could she perhaps cast her mind on that decision written by a woman on our Supreme Court bench and explain to Parliament her opinion of the right of the foetus, at some stage in the pregnancy, becoming paramount over some other factors.

Ms. Mitchell: Madam Speaker, I think that is a very important question. Of course, the member is referring to the comments of Justice Bertha Wilson. If he read the full judgment he would know that it was this judge who spoke so strongly on the question of the rights of women and the need for them to not be controlled by the state.

I do not recall that Bertha Wilson used the term "should". If I recall correctly, she raised the question in a very thoughtful and important way on the rights of women, and she certainly gave that paramountcy in the early stages of pregnancy, and also raised the question of rights of the foetus. She talked about the possibility of time limits.

Let us not forget that that was two years ago. I would be very interested in what her position might be today having consideration for what has happened over the last two years. She did not direct Parliament at all, she offered that as one question for Parliament to struggle with.

• (1240)

I would point out to the member that the minister said this morning, and our figures would certainly substantiate this, that 89 per cent of abortions are done in the first 12 weeks of pregnancy. That is certainly the period when Bertha Wilson herself said that the woman's rights should be predominant. And although you cannot put an exact timing on it, it could perhaps go up to 20 weeks.

I would think that those cases where the abortion is done a little later would predominantly be cases of teenagers, adolescents. I have known young children, actually, in their early teens, who were not aware that they were pregnant until later. That is another very deep concern that we have.

I cannot speak for Bertha Wilson, but I do not think she suggested that Bill C–43 was the answer to the balance of rights.

Mr. Ron MacDonald (Dartmouth): Madam Speaker, I listened to and have read the comments the member for Vancouver East made yesterday on the report stage of the bill. I have to say that I am a little disturbed at what I believe to be the unnecessary, overt partisanship that she exhibited in her remarks today. Members on this side of the House have been freed to vote as they see fit on this legislation. I have carefully followed the debate in the House through all stages and have found that there has been a marked absence of partisanship on this issue. It is a fundamental issue and many members feel very differently on it. I think the NDP caucus is voting as a party on this and that is fine, as long as those members want to do that.

Members on our side have varying views on this very fundamental issue. Yet the member started her remarks today by taking a wide partisan swipe at some people who voted for amendments, saying that she was absolutely sickened by that. I am on a particular side of this debate, but I would hope the hon. member would read my comments on second reading of the bill, because I tried my very best, as I think most people did, to be conscious and respectful of points of view other than the ones that we individually hold. I have listened to her position, which she has articulated very carefully and very well.

I am concerned with some of the comments that she made today and, in particular, comments that she made yesterday about those members of the House who were supporting or putting forward some of the amendments which were debated yesterday. She said:

> It is sickening to know that there are people in Canada, and members in this House, who support these resolutions, who want to impose the kind of inhumane policies that we saw in Romania where women were forced to have babies and these babies were neglected and abused.

That is a very strong comment which perhaps is unwarranted, knowing the spirit and the complexity of the debate that is at hand. I would certainly hope that no one who holds a point of view contrary to hers would be so loose in condemnation of her point of view.

I would like the hon. member to comment on that. I would hope that she did not mean to put that particular light on all members who have a different point of view than her on the resolutions that we voted on last night.

Ms. Mitchell: Madam Speaker, the member raises two points. First, he says that I am partisan. I think that is probably true for a reason, although I hope I am expressing this as a person who cares very deeply for the women of Canada and the whole question of abortion.

The reason I mentioned that I was surprised that so many Liberals took what I consider to be an anti-choice stance—I do not like to use those terms but I guess everybody is using them—is that the member's party is aspiring to be the next government. So are we, of course. I think it is very important that the women and men of Canada know what the Liberal Party position is on abortion, and I take it that there is no position. There is a chance, God forbid, that the Liberals will be in government in the not-too-distant future. If this happens, what is going to be the policy then? What kind of criminal sanctions are we going to have at that time? Can women expect that the new government will be more progressive than the present government and will rescind this recriminalization of abortion that is represented in this bill? I do not think so. I think it is very important that people in Canada know what they are in for.

I do apologize to my colleagues if I personally insulted them yesterday. I was feeling very, very upset, to tell the truth. I do not like to criticize people personally because they have the right to their views, even though I get very upset at what those views are.

I would like to pay tribute to a number of the Conservative members, women in particular. In the debate on this issue a year or two ago, some of them spoke so movingly. Several of them said they were Catholics and they would never have an abortion, as many of us would not. But they felt so strongly for women who were in very desperate situations and had no alternatives. They respected their decision and their right to make that decision. I wanted to mention that because I know there are some very caring people on all sides of the House, but I was very disappointed that there were not more of them in the Liberal caucus.

I do respect peoples' right to have a different opinion, even though I do not respect those opinions that are, in my view, anti-women. I would urge members to listen again to what the member from the eastern Arctic said yesterday. To paraphrase it, he said: "If men were able to bear children, I do not think we would have this bill".

Madam Deputy Speaker: I am sorry, I must interrupt the hon. member. The time for question and comments has now expired. Resuming debate, the hon. member for Surrey—White Rock.

Mr. Benno Friesen (Surrey—White Rock): Madam Speaker, I have been participating in debate on this issue for about 15 years.

I want to begin by thanking the Prime Minister for exercising leadership on this issue last summer when the country was torn by what we saw on television. He determined then that the government would introduce legislation and that Parliament would make a decision. I want to thank him personally for taking that leadership and exercising that initiative.

In these past 15 years there has been an emotional tug of war in our land between what is right and what is wrong. As that emotional tug of war developed, the confusion increased as to what is right and what is wrong. It brings to mind the famous lines by that great Irish poet, W.B. Yates, who said, about 55 years ago:

> Turning and turning in the widening gyre
> The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
> Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
> Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
> The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
> The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
> The best lack all conviction, while the worst
> Are full of passionate intensity.

• (1250)

Yates was being very prophetic about the days in which we are living, particularly on this issue.

We are living in a period of a redefinition of norms. All through civilization there has been an aspiration for freedom which has been the norm. But that freedom was always integrated with our relationship with our fellow human beings. It was never seen as individual islands of freedom, but rather communities of freedom. Today we are facing a redefinition of that term and it is becoming increasingly individualistic, narcissistic, and egocentric, as though the rights of the other person do not matter as long as my own freedom is preserved.

There has always been a norm about the sanctity of life. Strangely enough now, with the increasing knowledge that science has given us, there are other views regarding the sanctity of life. Is it not strange that the planet and all of life on the planet now is sacred and we are doing everything we can to preserve the planet, but

we want to take the opposite view when it comes to the life of the unborn? It is strangely ironic.

In Vancouver last winter there was a bizarre theatre. A young man was going to drop a stone or brick on a rat and there was public outrage about that demonstration in the name of art, as there should have been. But at the same time, bystanders were asked if they were pro-life and they said no. You would almost believe, as one writer put it, that society was pro-rat but not pro-life. We are destroying that norm.

We are seeing also the disintegration of the moral leadership of institutional influence. In the midst of the redefinition and a growing moral confusion about what is right, we need a reference point. Since the institutions are not fulfilling their functions in instructing us on what is right and wrong, as they did at one time, we do need moral reference points and that has seemingly been left to the law.

We need the law. Without that, society cannot function in a coherent way. For this coherence we must have dependable responses to one another. We must be able to depend on our responses to each other.

I would say that the first universal principle accepted around the world is the preservation of life. That is a universal principle accepted in all societies. There is a dependable group response to that principle everywhere. Societies have as their first goal the preservation of life, but this is now clashing with personal agendas.

We heard in committee that 95 per cent of abortions are performed for socioeconomic reasons. Regardless of how that is defined, it comes down to personal agendas clashing with the right of the unborn and the defenceless to life. To preserve self-will we want to dispose of a defenceless life. But to do that and still preserve our conscience, we have to rewrite the definitions.

Rather than talk of the unborn child, we want to talk about a foetus. That becomes a little less personal and easier to deal with. We can destroy the norm that way. We do not want to talk about an abortion. We want to talk about terminating a pregnancy, or evacuating the womb. That becomes less personal, less offensive, easier to handle.

The whole focus and goal is to disintegrate the norms that have governed our society throughout the centuries. It is the self-will and the personal agendas that we have established that are doing this. Yet, we still want to cling to the notion that there is respect for life at any stage.

The second erosion is the institutional influence on moral issues. There is a confusion of positions in spite of empirical evidence regarding all this. Science is telling us so much about life.

We had before the committee a world renowned geneticist who said the following:

> Using Jeffrey's method, we can determine the bar code for each human being. It has been shown that there is a unique code for each human being. One person cannot be mistaken for another. From the moment of fertilization, every human being has his or her unique bar code. Using another method, the in-vitro polymerization of DNA, we can study the bar code in a single cell.
>
> We thus have an experiment that proves that each human being is unique and therefore irreplaceable, from the moment of fertilization on. The only difference between the genetic bar code which defines each of us and the bar codes we find in the supermarket is that when we run the item over the optical character reader in the supermarket, the bar code tells the computer how much the item costs. The genetic bar code does not show the price of a human being. Science tells us that each human being is priceless.

That is what science tells us.

But then we heard from a woman from one of the leading churches in our society in Canada, with one of the largest denominations, who said:

> I did not miscarry a person, I miscarried something that looked rather like a mass of liver. That sounds crude, but it was not a person physically, and all women know in their hearts that this is so.

On the one hand, science gives us the empirical evidence that every person is unique and priceless. On the other hand, a woman from the church says it looks rather like a mass of liver.

The geneticist went on to say:

> I know that the embryo, before becoming a foetus, was already that same being, and I know that you and I too were once 2.5-cm beings in our mothers' wombs.
>
> In other words, what we have learned from genetics and embryology, is that the Tom Thumb story, the story of the man who is no taller than a thumb, is not an old wives' tale. It is the truth. It is a very factual story—it is biologically absurd to imagine that you can measure human dignity by the size of the body. I have never measured the dignity of a human being in kilograms or centimetres. Only one parameter can be used for measurement: is it a member of our

species—and then it deserves respect whatever its colour, size or state of health—or is it a member of another species? I do not hold the same respect for a mouse foetus as for a human foetus.

That is what science tells us.

But the Canadian Medical Association, which ought to be protecting our values, stated that "the CMA is in fact in the process of preparing a position paper on the status of the human foetus".

The institutions that ought to be protecting and educating our values are no longer the guidance mechanisms we need to make moral decisions. When we cannot trust the institutions, then there has to be a law that gives us some guidance as to the ultimate—the furthest we can go in our behaviour. We do not have to go that far, but there has to be a guidance mechanism.

Bill C–43 is an attempt to provide that. Basically, Bill C–43 says that life is important, it is sacred from the beginning, and it deserves protection. The Supreme Court has said that there are justifiable limits of choice and that society has a legitimate interest in the welfare of the defenceless or the foetus.

But there are exceptions, and here is where the avenue of freedom lies in the bill. I want to say this with some caution. This is important. The ability to choose is important in our society if we want to be unique beings. It is our ability to choose that defines our uniqueness. The freedom of choice determines moral growth or moral deterioration. If we remove the freedom, we begin to deteriorate. Choice must be an integral part of our society.

The exceptions and the definitions of "health" introduce an incredible risk in this legislation because they introduce the freedom to choose, to do right or to do wrong. The fact is people do make wrong choices. I am appalled at the wrong choices we are able to make. When we do make wrong choices, we must know that we are making wrong choices. Unless there is a law, we have no way of measuring whether we are right or wrong. This is the moral morass in which society will be if we have no law. The ten commandments were given to prevent people from doing wrong, to let them know when they were in danger of doing wrong.

• (1300)

The failure of the so-called pro-choice concept is not in the freedom to choose—and we respect the freedom to choose—but it is their desire to choose in the absence of any reference points of what is right or wrong. There is nothing to guide them, they want no law, so people will never know if they are doing right or wrong.

We are not talking about the arrangement of potted plants, or how to arrange the books on a shelf, or whether to get rid of a used car or not, we are talking about human life. We have to know beyond a shadow of a doubt, are we right or are we wrong? In the absence of moral guidance systems, which have deteriorated over the years, we need a law. It is not good enough to say, "If this law is not perfect then there should be no law". We need a law. That law has to define the value of human life.

There will be some patients who will exaggerate their health problems in order to get an abortion. There will be some doctors who will exaggerate the diagnosis in order to provide an abortion. I think that that is a fact of life. We cannot have the freedom to do right without the opportunity to do wrong. That is the risk in our society. The alternative is a state sponsored morality. You cannot have the option to do right without the opportunity of doing wrong.

Bill C–43 sets the standard around which people must make conscious decisions and deliberate choices about what is right and wrong. What the bill does is establish the value of human life from the very beginning. Abortion, it says, is wrong. It is a criminal offence to provide an abortion because human life is important from the beginning. That is what Bill C–43 does.

At the same time, we cannot stop there because the law is not enough to give us a moral guidance system. We have to rebuild the laws of institutions that once gave us that guidance. I think churches have to re-examine their instructional system to teach people how to come to grips with right and wrong. The Canadian Medical Association and all other institutions, such as universities, must have a code of ethics consistent with the universal norms that say life is sacred in all forms and at all times. We have to get these institutions to rebuild a moral framework which will help people to make individual choices that will enhance their own personal morality.

The law sets the limits of morality that should control our behaviour. It should control that behaviour long before we reach those limits. Therefore, we must rebuild a moral support system superior to the law that will help

us all to be more complete human beings capable of making moral decisions.

Bill C–43 is a balance, which establishes the right of the human being to exist from the moment of conception, and tries to introduce and reintroduce the notion that we all have a right to be. People must make a choice about their own integrity and morality based upon a code of ethics that has a universal norm built into it. Then we can go on to be the kind of people we ought to be.

We have lived in the kind of a world that W. B. Years prophesized would come, that there would be anarchy and,

> The blood–dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
> The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
> The best lack all conviction, while the worst
> Are full of passionate intensity.

It is not acceptable that Canadians should tolerate 80,000 abortions a year. It is not acceptable that we should have such disdain for human life. It is not acceptable that we should reduce human sexuality to a mere biological coupling without any coherent relationship between the two parties. It is not acceptable to live that way.

This bill is the threshold of what we can do as a society in order to build the kind of moral framework that will help our people to decide the moral issues that influence their lives in a way that is acceptable to all and preserves the right of freedom.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker. I want to take this opportunity to congratulate you on your appointment as Assistant Deputy Chairman of Committees of the Whole, and I hope you will be able to perform these duties for several years or at least several months.

The bill on abortion before the House today is not an easy subject to discuss, and it is with some trepidation that I rise in the House to take part in this debate.

[*English*]

Mr. Speaker, the options in this debate have been made clear over many months. The bill we are discussing in this debate has been before the House for some time and many of us, as members of Parliament, have had the opportunity to express our views on this issue over an extended period.

In June, 1988, shortly after my nomination as a candidate in the election for this House, I was asked for my views on this very important subject. I gave those views forthrightly, openly and honestly whenever I was asked, notwithstanding my knowledge that the views would be unpopular in some quarters throughout my riding and indeed throughout the country where they were promulgated. Nevertheless, I felt it was my duty as a candidate to inform the electorate of Kingston and the Islands in particular, as to what I thought on this issue and I did so.

Bill C–43, now before the House, comes close to what I said would be my preferred legislation. It is not the same, it is not identical, and in a way it is a disappointment, but nevertheless the bill is close to what I thought was a reasonable attempt to deal with an issue that is extremely difficult.

I indicated to the press in my riding shortly after the bill was introduced last November that I would support this legislation through all stages, assuming that no amendments could be made. I indicated I would seek amendments to the bill. These amendments have been considered and rejected by the House and, somewhat as expected, this bill has come through this debate at third reading without any amendments. The choice that we face today as members of Parliament is to accept or reject this particular bill that is now before us and no other.

I have indicated in discussing my views on this subject—I have indicated this freely in my riding when asked—that my opinions are shaped by my experience as a lawyer. They are shaped by my training in legal matters and in jurisprudence. I want to say at the outset that while that training has shaped my views on the subject, it is not the sole criterion by which I weigh the issue of abortion and on which I made my decision to support this particular legislation.

• (1310)

The bill is a balancing of rights. That is really what this debate on abortion is all about. We are balancing on the one hand the rights of a woman and on the other hand the rights of an unborn child or a foetus.

I want to state at the outset that I firmly believe in the rights of the woman. I think that the question of her right to make a decision or a conscious choice is paramount and must remain paramount.

I know there is disagreement on this view with some of my colleagues and the public, but the woman who is living and breathing deserves all the protection the law can afford. I believe this bill does exactly that. I believe the Supreme Court cases, Morgentaler and others, have reflected this, but the foetus also has rights. Those rights are undefined in our law. The bill does not define those rights but does give some protection.

The rights of the foetus must increase as the birth date gets closer. I believe the bill recognizes that, perhaps not to the extent that many would prefer, and perhaps not to the extent that I would prefer, but it does recognize it in that it requires a doctor's consent for an abortion. The limited value of that consent in the early stages of pregnancy is well recognized.

Members of this House who have spoken eloquently on the pro-life side said that this bill gives away everything. In the early stages, it may. The pro-choice groups on the other hand argue that it does not. Perhaps it does not. We will have to wait to see how judicial interpretation treats it. My thinking on this is influenced by the fact that under the old law, which contained similar words to this bill, there was not a single successful prosecution of a medical doctor for performing abortions under the law.

Given that, and given the extended definition contained in Bill C-43, it is very unlikely that a physician would be convicted of an offence under this act without having carried on in a way that is grossly outrageous and in apparent violation of the idea of sanctity of human life, both of the mother and of the unborn child or foetus.

The bill has been before the House since November last year. It was considered at second reading and debated extensively. It was considered in committee with many amendments put forward and defeated. I am sorry that our rules prevented some of those amendments from being voted on last night when we voted on the other amendments debated at that time.

Last evening there were eleven separate votes on different amendments before this House. Every single one of the amendments was defeated. Those amendments presented a range. They were strong pro-life amendments, for the most part, and one was a very strong pro-choice amendment from the other side. Every one of them was defeated by a substantial margin.

As a result of those votes last evening and the activities of the committee, no other bill could pass this House of Commons except Bill C-43. I do not believe it is possible for a majority of members of this place to pass any other bill. If that is so, what is our responsibility as members of the House of Commons? In my view, we are elected as members to represent the views of our constituents, yes; to represent our country, yes; and to make decisions on issues such as this one. Parliament must speak on this issue. We cannot leave this matter of abortion, and the great debate that rages in our country on this issue, to the courts. As members of a legislature, we have an obligation to speak on this issue.

Parliament does not speak just through speeches. Each of us can be here and make our own speech and say we are representing or making our views known in Parliament, whatever they may be. Parliament speaks through legislation, through pieces of legislation or resolutions that are adopted in this House.

We have before us a bill which in my view represents the collective will of the majority of the members of this place. This is the way we deal with the public and this is the way we speak for the public: by enacting legislation and by dealing with resolutions. This bill, as it does in representing that majority view, is the way in which we as a Parliament ought to address the Canadian pubic on this issue.

In my view Bill C-43 does that. It says to the Canadian public that we regard abortion as something very important. We feel that there should be some protection afforded to both women who may be pregnant and to unborn children. Therefore we will put a law in place that will require that a woman who wishes to have an abortion will obtain the consent of a physician before obtaining that abortion. That is all that is required in this law. It allows the physician to grant the abortion whenever he feels the physical, mental, or emotional health of the woman is threatened. That is included and any other health matter will also be included. It says: "when the health or life of the mother is threatened".

In other words, it is a very wide discretion given to physicians in Canada to make those decisions in consultation with the woman who comes to them for an abortion. I believe that is a reasonable and fair compromise, given the very significantly different views held on this issue by members of the House.

This may not be the first choice for any member of the House. It may be a second choice for most of us, but I say that as members of Parliament we have an obligation. Sure, we have difficulty. Sure, our constituents have very widely held views and very sincerely held views on this issue. I expect that very few members have been written to, demonstrated against or heard from so many constituents by telephone or otherwise as I have on this issue.

I recognize there is a divergence of view, but surely as legislators, as members of Parliament, we have to act together and make a decision. Having voted down all other options and having come up with a bill which in its evident simplicity is and which is very short, I think we have an obligation now to say: "All right, we cannot do anything else. The only thing we can do is adopt this bill".

I say to hon. members that although it may not be their first choice—and it is not mine—we have to look at it and ask: "Is there anything else we can do? Is this not a reasonable thing to do, to balance the rights that we all wish to protect in Canada and to give some recognition to the competing interests reflected in this great debate that has gone on for so many years in Canada?" It is time to bring the debate to an end, to pass this legislation, and to see how the courts interpret it.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Lise Bourgault (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I am sorry I did not arrive sooner to hear the speech by the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands who, I feel, has shown considerable leadership today by recognizing the fact that the abortion issue is controversial, complex and divisive, and that pro-choice and pro-life supporters are miles apart on this issue, so much so, that—and the hon. member is absolutely right—it is incumbent upon Parliament to take a serious look at this question, because Canadians expect us to produce a bill that seeks to reconcile these two views.

I want to ask the hon. member, who was elected for the first time in 1988, whether he thinks this issue is so important it could mean losing one's seat in the next election. Will his constituents hold it against him—There are members who say: I have no choice, because otherwise I would lose my seat on this issue. Does he believe that the abortion issue can have this kind of impact on the electoral process?

• (1320)

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): I will be quite frank with the hon. member who asked the question, and I want to thank her, if I may, for her compliment.

I don't know the answer to this question because I don't know how many people in my riding consider this policy, this bill to be very important. I don't know how many.

I believe that if this bill is passed by Parliament, by this legislation, the court decisions on this bill will be very important. I think they will show Canadians, especially those who are pro choice, that the bill is not a disaster at all. It is a good bill for everyone.

I imagine people who are pro life will not be very pleased with this bill. However, if the Supreme Court or other courts decide that the rights granted women under this legislation are more restrictive than they are without the bill, then we will have a problem.

I am almost certain that this bill gives women the rights they desire, and despite speeches by hon. members in the New Democratic Party and others, I think we will have fewer problems with this bill than the gentlemen of the NDP have suggested.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Pronovost): The time for questions and comments has expired. The hon. member for Dartmouth on debate.

[*English*]

Mr. Ron MacDonald (Dartmouth): Mr. Speaker, I am participating in this debate for the second time. The last time I participated was at second reading. I said then, and I repeat, that this is perhaps one of the most difficult debates members from all sides of the House would probably face in their period of time in the House of Commons.

I say this for a couple of reasons. With all due respect to my colleagues in the NDP, one reason is that this issue does not lends itself easily to strict party discipline or ideology. It is an issue with which each and every

member of Parliament has had to grapple and to find a rationale to determine how we as legislators at this particular time and how Parliament, given the importance of this debate, fit in.

During debate there has been frequent mention of the rights of women and the rights of the foetus. It seems that the debate has centred on those very rights. Indeed, if we go back to the Supreme Court ruling, it seemed the ruling that struck down the current legislation was primarily concerned with the rights of women. I quote from the ruling of the Supreme Court of last January 28 when Chief Justice Dickson wrote:

> The precise point in the development of the foetus at which the state's interest in its protection become "compelling" should be left to the informed judgment of the legislature.
>
> Like Beetz and Wilson, I agree that the protection of foetal interests by Parliament is also a valid governmental objective. It follows that balancing these interests with the lives and health of women as a major factor is clearly an important governmental objective.

He has clearly outlined the complexity and the nub of the current debate in trying to balance rights.

In the initial debate in the House I said that the labels have done nothing to assist in finding common ground. The level of debate in this place has been refreshingly calm, well reasoned, and well put. Only a few times has it got down to the partisanship to which we are all used and in which we participate in most nearly every debate that takes place in this House.

I said during second reading that I would support the bill at that time to get it into committee. I wanted to see if it could be improved upon in committee.

As much as I dislike labels, I have been labelled as someone who leans more toward the protection of the rights of the foetus and are therefore pro-life. I do not like labels because I have been criticized by people on both sides of the debate. That is the nature of politics and human nature.

During the debate and committee hearings I hoped there would be a better definition of some of the key elements of this legislation. I hoped some amendments would come forward which would better define health and at risk. I hoped that through those amendments there would be recognition of the balance between foetal rights and the rights of women.

I want to quote from page 11666 of *Hansard* for May 22 when at report stage the Minister of Justice said:

> This bill has been carefully drafted to achieve a delicate balance between the conflicting views on the abortion issue.
>
> It complies with the ruling of the Supreme Court of Canada in the Morgentaler case with respect to a woman's constitutional right to security of the person guaranteed in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and to reflect the societal interest in the protection of the foetus.

I submit at this point at third reading that this bill has failed, even though the minister opposite holds the point of view that it has not. Nothing has been changed since introduction of the bill in Parliament. There has been necessary debate in Parliament, by parliamentarians in committee, and by Canadians on this issue. I regret to say that I still cannot see that the bill has been altered in any way, shape or form to strike, in my view, the balance between the rights of women and the rights of the foetus.

The bill still leaves the decision as to whether an abortion is warranted to medical practitioners who, with all their medical training and professional experience, will subjectively make the decision as to whether or not an abortion is warranted, as to whether or not the physical, mental, or psychological health of the woman is at risk as broadly defined in the bill. We saw amendments defeated last night after thorough and proper debate, as was the will of members present in the House of Commons. I can no longer look with any hope at this bill being refined to the point where I—and I have been labelled by others to be on the pro-life side of the debate—can support it.

I want to tell the House that I did not come here so wildly zealous that I did not want to see or could not understand other points of view in the debate. I have listened carefully to people on the other side of the issue, people whose judgments I truly trust. They seem to me from past experience to be logical and fair in their comments in opposition to particular points of view. I have heard the debate of other people who are perhaps closer to pro-life, and the quandary in which I found myself when this issue was first raised in the House has not been lessened.

When the vote is taken at third reading I will have no choice but to vote against this bill. I know some will criticize me for my position, as members on the other side have been criticized for their position. I am not here

to talk about taking rights away from women. That is not my intent.

People who characterize the debate as my way or the doorway or harshly criticize anyone in this debate do a great disservice to the issue. I have listened to some members in the Commons during this debate who got perhaps a little too entrenched in their own position and maybe did not listen to what some of the other people were going through.

• (1330)

This is not one of those bills where you come in and say: "Okay, what is the party line? How do we deal with this? What are the zingers? What are the things that we do to try to make the government or whoever proposed the legislation look bad?" It is not one of those debates.

This is a unique debate that is taking place in the House. Some people still claim this is a compromise piece of legislation. I cannot accept it as such. I might be able to change my position if I thought this bill could somehow would progress so that glaring omissions, such as the social net that should be in place so that women never again have to look at abortion as an option because of economics, could be added.

If I had seen a willingness or undertaking by the government to address that particular economic problem, if I had seen a consensus developing and a program and timetable put into place whereby education was the basis for progress, perhaps I would have been a little more able to move my position. This has been such a divisive debate and I have heard members on all sides of the House say they will be thankful when it is gone. They say, "It will be out of the House and we will not have to deal with it again, to answer those letters that we don't like to answer from people who just cannot stand our point of view, whatever it is".

I do not believe that when this bill is passed, imperfect as it is, it will voluntarily ever be revisited in this place. So when people say that it is a start, I say it is a start and a stop because, if passed, this law will grant almost unrestricted abortion on demand. I do not think that that bodes well for the Supreme Court ruling, nor do I think that it protects those who have no voice, the foetuses. I will be voting against this at third reading.

Ms. Margaret Mitchell (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, I would like my hon. friend to comment on what he feels is the male responsibility in the whole question of preventing unwanted pregnancy.

He talked about wanting to see social programs, or something to that effect, in the bill. This seems to be after the fact and directed again to women having the sole responsibility.

What is the primary responsibility of men in reproductive planning, family planning, and prevention of unwanted pregnancies? What does he think can be done so that there would be greater responsibility on the part of men so we would not have this need for abortions?

Mr. MacDonald (Dartmouth): Mr. Speaker, I am going to start off by saying to my hon. colleague that I read her remarks of yesterday and I have already commented on them earlier. I find it distressing that she has intimated, at least in her remarks yesterday, that perhaps men do not have a right to participate in this debate, or to vote.

Now that is what I read in yesterday's *Hansard*. It shows the entrenchment of some positions. Some people who believe as the member does will still quote men who support their particular point of view.

The whole area of prevention is not solely a woman's nor a man's responsibility. It is a joint responsibility because it does not take only one gender to procreate and create new live. It takes both.

There has to be a determined, well-directed approach to prevention of unwanted pregnancies. It is true that perhaps at this time many in our society believe that the woman is solely responsible for not getting pregnant. Maybe that is the way it was when I grew up as well. But I think it is incumbent upon society and its legislators, such as ourselves, to ensure that we embark on a national program of education so that we do not have unwanted pregnancies. If that means making contraceptive technology more easily and readily available in the schools and across the counter, so that nobody ever has an economic reason for pregnancy because they cannot afford contraception, then so be it.

The whole area of preventing unwanted pregnancies is something that, as a society, we often decided to ignore. Many times parents will not sit down at an early enough age and discuss these real problems with their children. Inevitably, we end up dealing with the consequences of our own insecurity in dealing with the sexuality of our own children. The consequences of not being able to

deal with the sexuality of our own children through education, through prevention and through dialogue is unwanted pregnancies; it is the new scourge of the eighties and nineties and perhaps the next century in communicable diseases such as AIDS.

What I am saying, in response, is that it is equally the male and the female responsibility. It is the responsibility of families, legislators and educators. It is a societal responsibility to ensure that we deal with these very major issues so that we are not forced to deal with the consequences. Many women, and men because they also play a part in this debate, have to deal with the consequences of being ill-informed about sexuality and such things as unwanted pregnancies, abortion legislation and the crippling and deadly illness called AIDS.

In conclusion, I think that governments have to play a role and I would like to see governments play a much more pro-active role in that direction.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Lise Bourgault (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, this being the first time I have the floor while you are in the chair, I should like to extend to you my sincere congratulations and best wishes in the performance of your duties. I am sure you will prove to be an outstanding Assistant Deputy Chairman of Committees of the Whole.

Mr. Speaker, of all the debates in which I spoke the one on abortion has to be the debate to which I devoted most time and consideration, first as a woman, second as a politician. I am sure that being a woman member of government faced with the decision involved in a vote on a measure such as Bill C-43 does not have the same implications as for our male colleagues—like yourself, Mr. Speaker—if only because nature did not intend them to carry a foetus.

In 1978 I had a miscarriage after three and a half months of pregnancy. Quite sincerely, I had yet to feel the presence of a child in my womb. It was not unwanted and the only bad memory I have is the fact that a small army of medical students kept parading through my room over the weekend. Mr. Speaker, when that topic is being debated I feel as if my intimacy as a woman has been invaded.

I am deeply shocked when I hear pro-lifers say that women are immoral and child killers. Given the various comments I heard in this debate, I was outraged when a physician told the legislative committee members that the best thing that could happen to a 12-year-old girl impregnanted by her father was to bear his child. This is undue imposition of one's personal views on the entire life of a poor child victim of incest. Conversely it would be just as outrageous to hear a woman say she is seeking an abortion for purely esthetic reasons.

That being said, here we are again debating Bill C-43. Never have I witnessed such antagonism as I did when people appeared before the legislative committee to give evidence on Bill C-43.

• (1340)

With a few exceptions—two, I think—all those who took part opposed the bill, but for opposite reasons: for some, C-43 was pro-choice; for others, it was pro-life.

Every day, from coast to coast, we had almost equal numbers of witnesses with diametrically opposite opinions appear before us. It was very hard, Mr. Speaker, because as legislators, we must weigh the pros and cons to be in touch with all the people, who expect their government to make decisions. This led me to think further on the real significance of Bill C-43—access to abortion.

I do not at all share the viewpoint of the Canadian Medical Association that physicians, for fear of prosecution, will no longer perform abortions. Come on! Physicians are constantly liable to prosecution for any medical act they perform. Why should abortion, which is a medical procedure, be subject to different standards?

Neither, Mr. Speaker, do I share the opinion of those who say that the doctor, rather than the woman, will make the decision to have an abortion. Come on, Mr. Speaker, with or without a law, a woman must talk to her doctor in any case! She does not sit in front of him speechless. She must explain her situation; the doctor must examine her, whether there is a law or not. The doctor will tell her that the pregnancy has reached a certain stage and that according to his standards, he may or may not—We know that even Mr. Morgentaler, who

is the most open on this issue, does not perform abortions after 18 weeks, or at least he thinks it over seriously.

Actually, Mr. Speaker, Bill C–43 is a formal acknowledgment of what is now current practice. I listened to hon. members talking about their draft amendments, and once again I noticed that in many cases—I am not saying all, but in many cases—there is a tendency to ignore the fact that women are quite able to make such important decisions, which are never made lightly. People seem to think that women like having abortions. When a woman has to decide, who are we, who are you to judge or decide on her behalf?

In other words, Mr. Speaker, it is none of our business. To say that women who are faced with unwanted pregnancies should carry those pregnancies to term and then put these children up for adoption is narrow-minded and shows contempt for women.

I would remind those who feel insulted by what I just said of the case of a young single woman in Vancouver. In 1948, after being denied an abortion by Dr. William McCallum, who is still living with this on his conscience, she committed suicide. You may say that she committed suicide for other reasons, but in any case, she gave that particular reason, and that was one too many.

There are also thousands of women who are victims of family violence in their relationships with spouses or boyfriends. What about young women in blended families who experience situations that are extremely complex? For instance, one of my constituents came to see me, Mr. Speaker, and told me her mother's boyfriend had made her pregnant and that her mother was pregnant as well. Lovely family!

Where are all those members who are against abortion, when these women need your compassion and your understanding so that they can live like human beings? Why do you lavish all your attention on the foetus, instead of giving these women the moral support they have a right to expect? What kind of logic is this, that a foetus has as many rights as a living human being who needs help?

Over the past three years, Mr. Speaker, I have often put this question to pro-life men with whom I had lengthy discussions: You who are so adamantly pro-life, as I too am pro-life— People who believe that pro-choice advocates are against life are completely off the track. We are all pro-life. I would ask such a man if his beliefs were strong enough that he would readily tell his legitimate wife that his mistress is pregnant and that henceforth the family would have to make sacrifices in order to support that woman and her child. This may sound funny, but such is reality. That sort of thing is a common occurrence, Mr. Speaker. You are aware of that, take a look in your own backyard. I was given a very simple answer: Of course not, its up to society to look after that. Some people profess to be pro-life because it seems to be the thing to do, but it is a different ball game when concrete gestures are called for.

I know I will be called everything under the sun, but I have had enough being branded as irresponsible for accepting baby killings. The day before yesterday the hon. member for Hillsborough told the House, and I quote:

> I am horrified that anyone could say that a procedure which kills one human being for the convenience of another is a medical procedure.

A few statistics might enlighten the House. In 1985 only 3 per cent of abortions were performed at 17 weeks, and 89 per cent at 13 weeks. As you can appreciate, Mr. Speaker, this is a far cry from what pro-life advocates would have us believe, a far cry indeed. Women do not kill babies.

Pro-life radicals tell me that no matter how conception took place—abuse, violence, incest, you name it—the foetus has the right to live. We are not thinking about the woman who will have to bear this child conceived in extraordinarily violent conditions. It is like being forced to bear children. I wonder what these people would do to enforce an anti-abortion law. We can talk and make long speeches all we want but, in the end, we must think about the consequences. What are they going to do? Build more prisons for women? Issue an injunction against my belly? Nobody in Canadian society has a right to do that to me.

We should perhaps listen to reason and realize that women have rights, as the Supreme Court recognized in the Morgentaler case as well as in the famous Dodd and Chantal Daigle cases. It is easy to spout out great moral principles. Of course, Mr. Speaker, we all wish no woman had to go through an abortion. If that were the case, it would mean that women's economic and emotional situation is perfect. There would not be a problem.

But that is not the reality. As you know, most single mothers live below the poverty line. They are destitute. In the name of morality, some people want to— The women having abortions will only be judged after they die and come face to face with God like everyone else. It is not up to us human beings to decide for them.

Mr. Speaker, I do not know how much time I have left but I hope the bill is passed by the House. At last, after all these years of wrenching debates, I am sure it will be challenged before the courts, as the Committee was told. Has there ever been an act of Parliament that has not been challenged before the courts? They all are. In the final instance, the Supreme Court will decide.

Mr. Speaker, the Supreme Court will decide that Parliament has made its decision, and I think that after royal assent, people will say: This bill isn't so bad after all. Of course, personally, I would have preferred no legislation at all. However, I was elected and I have a seat in the House, on the government side. Decisions must be made. If I were on the other side, it would be easy. I would say no, no legislation, and I would object to any legislation at all. That is how things work in this country. That is how democracy works in our political parties. I am on this side of the House, however, and I am faced with Bill C–43. What I want is for the House to finish this debate, because I want to go on to something else. I want to make the public aware and demand public attention for the worst crisis in society today, and I am referring to the sexual abuse of children. It is a tragedy, and a national disgrace, and we must come out and say so. We have to rescue these children and give them love and affection. We have to get them out of the horrible environment in which they live. We cannot let this go on.

• (1350)

Mr. Speaker, we have seen what is happening in the case of Judge Andrée Ruffo in Quebec City, a woman who has my unqualified admiration and who is fighting the bureaucracy because she believes in children. We all believe in children. I was so pleased when the former leader of the New Democratic Party decided, in his last debate in the House, to talk about child poverty. That is another disgrace we must talk about. Instead of having these futile discussions, instead of trying to make women do certain things and prevent them from doing others, we should sit down and talk about what we can do to deal, once and for all, with child poverty. What can we do to deal with the tragic financial circumstances of Canadian women? In my riding there are women who have trouble making both ends meet, who are poor, sick, and the rest. They have to cope with just about everything, and their husband, the father of their children, has left. Sometimes they don't even know where he is. He is in love with some other woman. Great! That is reality. Those are the sordid facts. Mr. Speaker, in concluding, I hope that all members will realize we are going to pass Bill C–43. It isn't perfect. Nothing is ever perfect. However, I was closely involved in preparing this legislation, and it was a long, complex and difficult process.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all my colleagues on the government side who worked with me, in the Conservative caucus and on the legislative committee, so that finally we were able to produce a bill that in the circumstances, I believe, provides the best possible compromise Canadian society can expect from a government that has shown leadership.

[*English*]

Mr. Len Hopkins (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member feels very strongly about what she has just said. Her emotions came across the House very strongly, but she mentioned one thing that bothered me a bit.

This is a free vote in the House of Commons on the abortion issue. The hon. member said that, because she is sitting on the government side of the House, she must make a decision, and that it is harder for her because she is on the government side of the House than if she were sitting on the other side. I want to state very clearly that, in a free vote in the House of Commons, it is up to every individual, no matter where he or she sits in the House, to make that personal decision on his or her own.

Is the hon. member telling us that she has been pressured by the government into voting for this bill or is she, indeed, voting in accordance with her conscience? I am sure I am speaking for people in every corner of the House when I tell her that, on this issues, all members have to stand and be counted. Whether they belong to one party or another does not matter. They are still

accountable to their constituents and a free vote in the House must be precisely that, no matter where we sit.

Mrs. Bourgault: Mr. Speaker, I have not received any pressure, none whatsoever, from anybody on this side of the House regarding this bill. I just say, because the debate has been going on for 10 years or more, since the first legislation came into force under the Trudeau government, that I hope we can deal with this bill now and then go on to more important questions.

I am sure that *Hansard* tomorrow will show that I said that, as the government, we have the obligation to present legislation. The Prime Minister has said that because of the various views on this question there is going to be a free vote. No one on this side of the House, certainly not myself, has been pushed to vote for this bill. I think the hon. member is as sick and tired of the debate as we are. I would hope that he would vote for the bill so that we can carry on to other important matters. That is what I was trying to say to him, and that is what I hope he is going to do next Tuesday.

Mr. Jim Jordan (Leeds—Grenville): Mr. Speaker, I, too, would like to congratulate the hon. member on a very passionate, forceful speech, although I disagree with most of what she said.

Through the process of committee hearings in which she claims to have participated, did the hon. member have any remorse at all at the fact that the bill has a wide-open gestational period? There is no limit as to when a woman could ask for and receive an abortion. The child could be hours, days, or weeks from delivery and there would be no problem at all if the doctor agrees an abortion should be performed, for whatever reasons. Did that cause any qualms in the hon. member's mind at all?

Mrs. Bourgault: Mr. Speaker, the facts speak for themselves. In the 1985 Statistics Canada report, it is very clear that no abortion was performed after 20 weeks unless for a very, very important reason. Only 0.3 per cent of abortions are performed after 20 weeks, and I suppose then only for very dramatic and important reasons. The facts speak for themselves. Doctors in the country do not perform abortions after a certain period.

The Chantal Daigle affair was a different matter because it is one case among thousands and thousands of cases. Are we going to legislate regarding this one case? No, because the facts are there and I will urge the member to read the 1985 report.

Of course, I totally disagree with a woman having an abortion after 20 weeks, unless it is for very dramatic and important health reasons.

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S. O. 31

[*English*]

VETERANS AFFAIRS

Mr. Gilbert Parent (Welland—St. Catharines—Thorold): Mr. Speaker, more than 5,000 aging Canadian veterans residing in long-term care hospitals were dealt a blow in the government's harsh cutting measures contained in the Wilson budget.

They will have to pay more than $3,000 each for their lodging in an effort by the government to save $18 million. In addition, as a result of the government attack on the Veterans Independence Program, 16,000 veterans who are living at home will lose some of the help provided for their heavy house cleaning because of an $18 million cut from this key program to aging veterans to which the government refers to as streamlining.

This saving of $35 million against of a deficit of $30 billion, on the backs of the veterans, is a poor way to show our appreciation of their valiant deeds on behalf of all Canadians during the war. It is especially so as these veterans' sources are severely limited.

This shameful and disgraceful way to go about finding means to reduce the deficit will not be taken lying down. That message is coming in more clearly every day. We hope that the Prime Minister and his government will listen to the plea to rescind these cuts and allow our veterans to retain their well-earned dignity.

* * *

• (1400)

[*Translation*]

TEXTILE INDUSTRY

Mr. Jean-Guy Guilbault (Drummond): Mr. Speaker, Dominion Textile recently won an award of excellence in the Quebec business community's most prestigious competition for the growth of its business outside the country. Dominion Textile won the Mercure prize for international development. This competition was started by the Quebec Chamber of Commerce 10 years ago to

celebrate the outstanding achievements of business people.

As a result of their acquisitions and expansion of their operations, Dominion Textile has become the world's largest denim producer and a leader in many other products as well. The corporation went ahead with major investments in technology for several plants, including a $35-million modernization program now under way in Drummondville and Saint-Timothée—all this without subsidies.

Dominion Textile, which began business in 1905, is the largest supplier of textiles and related products in Canada. Its international network of offices, factories, subsidiaries and associated companies now extends to nearly 50 countries.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to offer the management and workers of Dominion Textile my warmest congratulations.

* * *

[*English*]

THE LATE VELMA ORLIKOW

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona): Mr. Speaker, my NDP colleagues and I were saddened today to learn of the death of Val Orlikow, wife of our former colleague David Orlikow and the former member for Winnipeg North, who served this House and his constituents with distinction for over 26 years. I am sure all members would want to join with me in expressing sincere condolences to David at this very difficult time.

Val Orlikow has a place in Canadian history independent of David. She has a place as one of the victims of CIA psychiatric experiments conducted in Canada at the Allan Institute in Montreal. One of her goals in life was to see justice done with respect to these experiments, and others like them, not just those done by the CIA. The case of Linda McDonald of British Columbia comes to mind.

Val Orlikow has died without the Canadian government ever admitting its own complicity in the CIA experiments that so damaged her life.

Out of court settlements in the United States are one thing, but having your own country own up to its part and promising never to do again what was done to her, was something worth waiting for, and wait she did.

For Mrs. Orlikow the wait is over. For the government, the shame continues.

* * *

THE BALTIC STATES

Mr. Gus Mitges (Bruce—Grey): Mr. Speaker, the Presidents of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania met in Tallin, Estonia on May 12 to reinstate the 1934 treaty that established close political and economic ties between the Baltic republics when they were previously independent.

At this meeting they issued of the Joint Baltic Council statement requesting that the conference on security and co-operation of the European member countries arrange a hearing in Copenhagen in order to present a mutual declaration and statement requesting that Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania be admitted as members.

The 35-country membership currently includes such countries as Cyprus, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, both Germanys, Poland, Yugoslavia and Romania.

I believe it is only fitting that legitimate member states of the east European community be allowed access to address a plenary session at a human rights conference in Copenhagen.

I urge the Secretary of State for External Affairs to draw this issue to the attention of the Canadian delegation to Copenhagen, to develop a favourable stance and to report subsequently back to the House his suggested stance.

* * *

TRANSPORT

Ms. Catherine Callbeck (Malpeque): Mr. Speaker, since deregulation came into effect two years ago, the trucking industry has suffered at the hands of the federal government. This government did not plan ahead for deregulation. It has refused to listen to the concerns of the industry.

This past week and until this morning we were faced with a crisis. The various blockades represent the anger

and the frustration that truckers feel because the concerns of their industry have been continually ignored.

This situation demands attention. In my riding of Malpeque, one trucking organization had 150 trucks delayed on the highway between Prince Edward Island and Ottawa.

I urge this government to resolve immediately the concerns of the trucking industry. It is time to begin listening to the industry, and to ensure that concerns are attended to so that critical emergencies like the one we have experienced do not happen again.

* * *

[*Translation*]

CANADA'S FITWEEK

Mrs. Nicole Roy-Arcelin (Ahuntsic): Mr. Speaker, tomorrow, Friday, May 25, is Sneaker Day, when all Canadians, including members of Parliament, are invited to wear their sneakers in order to promote a healthy active lifestyle. Sneaker Day marks the beginning of Canada's Fitweek, a week of activities which runs from May 25 to June 3.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to add that Canada's Fitweek is the most important celebration of its kind in the world. All Canadians should be proud of this achievement. Last year, eight million people from coast to coast took part in over 14,000 events.

The Government of Canada, through Fitness Canada, is a major supporter of Canada's Fitweek, which is presented in co-operation with the provinces and territories, 17 national organizations and 12 sponsors. Canada's Fitweek is really a popular event.

Over the next 10 days, I call on all hon. members to join Canadians across the land by promoting and participating in the many activities planned for their ridings.

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[*English*]

FORESTRY

Mr. Brian L. Gardiner (Prince George—Bulkley Valley): Mr. Speaker, the government's Green Plan is collapsing with the resignation of the minister and the appointment of a part-time Minister of the Environment.

One way the government can show its commitment to the environment and our forests would be for the Minister of Forestry to announce today, as forestry ministers in the west, especially British Columbia, are expecting him to do, that a new tree planting agreement will be signed today to help renew our forests.

The Minister of Forestry has not lived up to five previous commitments to sign a B.C. agreement. He should help himself, this government and our forests by moving immediately to have these agreements signed and implemented.

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CANADA'S FITWEEK

Mr. John E. Cole (York—Simcoe): Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to announce the kick-off of Canada's 1990 Fitweek which starts tomorrow, May 25.

All Canadians are invited to join me and my House of Commons colleagues in donning their sneakers, no matter how flashy or conservative they happen to be—mine are pink—to partake in a physical activity such as running, rope jumping or a stroll in the park.

Canada's Fitweek, May 25 to June 3, is the largest annual celebration of physical activity in the world. Again this year over eight million participants will take part in every type of physical activity available.

It is truly an event where collaborative efforts between the public and private sectors promote a united message about the importance of an active lifestyle.

Sneaker Day is just one of 12 national projects. In addition, municipalities have organized activities in the spirit of friendly competition with other municipalities.

On this Sunday in my riding of York—Simcoe there is the Persechini Easter Seals Fitness Centre Walk-a-Thon to raise funds for crippled children.

In Ottawa, we have the run for retinitis-pigmentosa research.

Sneaker Day could be the mark of a new day in each of our lives, a day where physical activity, a healthier lifestyle becomes the national, the Canadian way of life.

We are all aware of the increased benefits of maintaining an active life. I invite all members to join Canadians

in promoting and participating in the many events planned in their own constituencies as part of Canada's Fitweek.

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WESTERN DIVERSIFICATION

Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, western diversification was supposedly the answer to western Canada's economic woes. It was going to produce less dependence upon the agricultural sector.

Interestingly enough, eight months before the election there were expenditures that exceeded $400 million. In the fiscal year after the election, expenditures were only $136.8 million. What a coincidence!

This year's Estimates have no reference whatsoever to the Centre for Sustainable Development, no reference whatsoever to the renewal of infrastructure program that was promised for rural Manitoba, and mentioned by the Prime Minister in Portage la Prairie when he visited.

We note with much chagrin that Manitoba and Saskatchewan do not have their fair share. Sixty-three per cent of these projects are in urban areas, and only 37 per cent in rural communities.

Tory ministers and big business—and I do not say that, it is the Canadian Federation of Independent Business—are getting too much of these funds.

There is a large bureaucracy—over 300 people—which is consuming 20 per cent of the expenditures.

We can only diversify if we look at diversification in the total context of high interest rates, the reduction in expenditures for health, education, agriculture, and the shutting down of VIA Rail. We must take all of those into consideration.

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• (1410)

[*Translation*]

MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Mr. Marcel R. Tremblay (Québec-Est): Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity today to say a few words about the Meech Lake Accord because I think that what is happening to the Accord is unacceptable.

The Meech Lake Accord as signed on June 3, 1987 by all First Ministers has been criticized, debased and worse by people who are negative, suspicious, impatient and lacking in any kind of generosity towards each other.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is intolerable that negative feelings that have sush a destructive impact on the goal of national unity set by our government and its leader, Mr. Mulroney, should be allowed to prevail. We should all realize that the little guy from Baie-Comeau, as he has often said, this great Quebecer and this genuine Canadian, will never again let Quebec be insulted as it was under the Trudeau and Chrétien régime.

For him and for us, the elected Conservative representatives from Quebec, it is more than a question of honour, it is a matter of the heart.

I have confidence in our Prime Minister and his sensible attitude, and I hope I will never have to doubt the intelligence of some of our provincial First Ministers.

* * *

[*English*]

ARGENTINA

Mr. Jesse Flis (Parkdale—High Park): Mr. Speaker, tomorrow, Argentina commemorates its National Day. It will be the 180th anniversary of what has become in Argentinian history the most important event, an event that marks Argentina's true independence and its existence as a free country.

The Argentine revolution of May 1810 was the initial step of a long process in the region which culminated in the independence of various countries of Latin America.

In 1983 Argentina was one of the first countries to initiate a remarkable process of democratization that rebounded through every country in the whole region.

Just a few days ago we hosted a very important commercial mission from Argentina. That mission was headed by two governors, Dr. Eduardo Angeloz and Dr. Rodriguez Saa, both of whom happen to be representatives of two major political parties in Argentina, indicating that every co-operation is possible if there is enough will.

As former principal of Argentina School here in Canada and in my present role I would like to extend to Argentina my very best wishes and every success in all future endeavours as they commemorate Argentina National Day.

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MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Mr. J.W. Bud Bird (Fredericton—York—Sunbury): Mr. Speaker, within the text of the Special Meech Lake Committee Report—which I had the honour with other colleagues in this House to help prepare—are some passing observations about our hearings which may in fact be more powerful for current considerations than any of the other important messages it contains.

Witness after witness, even those most critical of the Meech Lake Accord, expressed support for Canadian unity and the need to make Canada's second most populous province, Quebec, a participating member in the Canadian constitutional family. There was also general agreement that Quebec's five proposals were reasonable for that purpose.

Surely by now most will realize that therein lies the very essence of the Meech Lake Accord, and it is attainable if only we have the resolve to take it within our grasp.

Let us all support and encourage our First Ministers throughout Canada to bear this over-powering single purpose above all other considerations as they reflect upon the future of our country in these critical days ahead.

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CANADA POST

Mrs. Christine Stewart (Northumberland): Mr. Speaker, Canada Post continues to cut back on service to rural Canadians. It is contracting out its rural delivery in such a way as to make effective service impossible.

According to officials in Percy township in my riding, Canada Post's tender form for delivery in that area states all mail is to be delivered by three o'clock in the afternoon, seven hours after the local post office opens.

The route is 168 kilometres long with 480 delivery points. Sorting takes at least three hours. To drive from one end of the route to the other at the speed limit and without stopping takes over two hours. Even if driving up to each mailbox and inserting the mail were to take only a minute for each delivery point, this activity alone would take a total of eight hours. Simple calculations indicate that deliveries would only be finished at nine o'clock at night.

Canada Post not only needs outside help to deliver the mail, it seems to me it needs outside help to do its math.

I urge Canada Post to ensure it reduces the size of its new rural routes to ensure timely delivery. As the Liberal report on the post office specifies, the minister responsible should ensure Canada Post consults in a meaningful way with its best source of information, local citizens, before making major changes.

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CORPORATE TAXATION

Mr. John R. Rodriguez (Nickel Belt): Mr. Speaker, the corporate welfare bum of the week salutes the wheeler-dealers of Canadian finance. The first nominee is Burns Fry Ltd. which gave $56,000 to the Conservative party in 1988 and $21,000 to the Liberals.

The second nominee is Merrill Lynch which gave $106,000 to the Conservative party in 1988 and only $43,000 to the Liberals.

The third nominee is RBC Dominion Securities which gave $50,000 to both the Conservative and the Liberal parties in 1988.

Now for the winner. The envelope, please.

The winner is Merrill Lynch. It bet on the Conservative party in a big way in 1988. For mastering the art of the deal, Merrill Lynch is the corporate welfare bum of the week.

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MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY TELETHON

Mr. Harry Chadwick (Brampton—Malton): Mr. Speaker, I speak of an event which knows no political boundaries, no racial boundaries, no prejudice of any kind. It is an event which springs from compassion and the kind of caring of which humans at their best are capable.

The annual Muscular Dystrophy Telethon taking place May 26 to May 27 gives residents of Brampton—Malton and surrounding communities an opportunity to come together as one community and support this very special cause.

I would like to pay particular attention to the involvement of our Brampton fire-fighters in the telethon. Not only do these men and women protect our communities every day, without their support the fight against muscular dystrophy would surely be a much harder battle.

I urge everyone in the riding of Brampton—Malton to play their part, as usual, in the race against this debilitating disease and to prove once again that in Brampton—Malton muscular dystrophy faces a tough opponent.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[*English*]

MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I have questions for the Prime Minister about the constitutional situation, a matter of growing concern for Canadians.

Yesterday in the House the Prime Minister told us that he and Senator Murray were developing new proposals, that he would be speaking to the premiers about them and, further, that he would be reporting to the House on the results of these contacts.

Will the Prime Minister inform the House and therefore Canadians of the exact content of these proposals, of the reactions of the premiers to them, and the extent to which the recommendations of the special committee, the Charest committee, are being taken into account in these efforts to bring about a fair solution to the constitutional impasse?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I plan to begin a series of direct meetings with the premiers beginning tonight at six o'clock at 24 Sussex with Premier Don Getty of Alberta.

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I think this will be encouraging news for Canadians.

However, yesterday, the Premier of Ontario, Mr. Peterson, and Mr. Getty met in Toronto. Both of them called for an early meeting of all first ministers—the Prime Minister of Canada together with all the premiers of all the provinces.

Speaking of the present constitutional accord the Ontario Premier said:

> We don't have a lot of time. I think at best we have another week.

Premier Getty said:

> So how do we make progress without meeting?

I think he was talking about a meeting of the Prime Minister with all the premiers.

Even though the meeting the Prime Minister has spoken about I hope will be helpful, I ask the Prime Minister: in view of the views of Mr. Peterson and Mr. Getty, does he not now agree that the time has come to call an early meeting of all the first ministers on this constitutional situation?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I think we are going about it in the proper way.

I have been in touch with the premiers. This is an effort to meet individually with all of them to attempt to narrow the differences and at the conclusion, hopefully, if it is at all possible, it will give rise to the reasonable possibility of calling a First Ministers' Conference that might be successful.

• (1420)

By way of illustration, I point out to my hon. friend who raised the question of Premier Peterson, that he neglected to mention that Premier Peterson yesterday made a very thoughtful and compelling call to the three premiers, who have either repudiated or failed to sign the Meech Lake Accord, to do so, and to consider doing so urgently, because of the importance of the constitutional family being made whole.

I think Premier Peterson was speaking on behalf of a growing number of Canadians when he called upon those three provincial governments to do everything they could to honour the signatures provided at Meech Lake by predecessor governments.

I can inform my friend that after I meet with Premier Getty this evening I will be meeting with Premier Peterson tomorrow at one o'clock at 24 Sussex.

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, in my second question I made specific reference to the views of Premier Peterson because of the constructive approach he has been taking to the matter of nation building and his openness and understanding of the concerns not only of Quebec but of all the regions and provinces of our country.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, when people ask him to call a First Ministers' Conference to get us out of the constitutional impasse, the Prime Minister keeps answering that the chances of failure are too high. Doesn't the Prime Minister realize that the risk is far greater if we do not call a conference, if we do nothing, than if there is a conference?

[*English*]

Surely, I ask the Prime Minister, is it not better to meet and risk failure than to fail by not meeting at all? Why not have a Conference of all the First Ministers before June 23?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I know that my hon. friend had questions prepared in advance, but I have been trying to convey to him that there is serious movement going on and there are very serious meetings that have been lined up. I begin this evening with the Premier of Alberta, who was the host of the premiers' conference in Edmonton in 1986 that gave rise to the unanimous call for the equivalent of a Quebec round to seek to bring Quebec into the Constitution following the failure of 1981–82 to do so.

Premier Getty has been a staunch and unfailing ally of Meech Lake ever since.

Premier Peterson, speaking on behalf of the province and the people of Ontario, provided very significant leadership at Meech Lake. He, too, has been unfailing in his support of the Meech Lake Accord as a great instrument of national unity.

It was in that spirit I think that Premier Peterson, well qualified to speak to this issue, called upon the three recalcitrant provinces, if I may put it that way, to sign the Meech Lake Accord as quickly as possible so that we could in a very constructive and thoughtful way get on with the process of building a greater Canada.

The meetings that we have called are designed to do precisely that. I think my hon. friend would agree that at this particular point some prudence in meeting with the premiers and trying to prepare an effective First Ministers' Conference is worth the time rather than calling a First Ministers' Conference simply for the sake of having called one that might result in failure. I want success for Canada. I want a Constitution that binds all Canadians together.

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THE ECONOMY

Mr. Douglas Young (Gloucester): Mr. Speaker, the country is being plunged into an economic crisis by the government's monetary policy. Today there was an increase in the Bank of Canada rate by 25 basis points.

How far is the Minister of Finance prepared to let the Governor of the Bank of Canada go in his obsession with zero inflation? Is he prepared to ruin the manufacturing sector in this country? Or, will he come to his senses and direct the Bank of Canada Governor to reflect the reality of the Canadian economic condition?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, my hon. friend is correct when he says that there has been a 25 basis point increase in the bank rate today.

I would say that this is in good part due to some of the uncertainties surrounding the ongoing constitutional discussions. The sooner we can get these discussions behind us in a successful way, the sooner we can get behind this uncertainty.

My hon. friend refers to policies of the government. I think that the policies of the government are on track. We are consistently following a series of policies.

I might say to my hon. friend that the financial requirements that were evident for the year ending in March of this year indicate that the budget deficit is about $1 billion less than what we had previously projected.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): I think this indicates quite clearly the consistent and conscientious approach that we have been taking to economic policy.

This is the fourth consecutive year in which the budget deficit has come in less than the projections that we have made. The policies that we are following are paying off. They are producing effective results for this country.

Mr. Douglas Young (Gloucester): Mr. Speaker, on February 20, the Minister of Finance projected an annual average of 11.1 per cent for interest rates in this country.

He talks about his revised deficit figures. Are the minister and his government going to continue with this high interest policy in the face of evidence from every sector of our economy that it is destroying the economy of this country?

The interest rate today of 14.05 per cent is the highest it has been in eight years. How high does it go before the government realizes it is on a track to destruction?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I do not think my hon. friend wants to lead with his chin and talk about the heights of interest rates, since I only need remind him that what we are trying to do is stop inflation from getting out of control so that we can avoid the very high interest rates that we had between 1980 and 1982 when inflation did get out of control.

My hon. friend refers to inflationary pressures. We started in 1989 with an increase in unit labour costs to 4.5 per cent. This is the best example of the broadest measure of how our industry and businesses are competing with the rest of the world.

They started the year at 4.5 per cent and ended at 6.9 per cent. That is the best measure that we can show of how our companies are gaining business.

That increase in inflationary pressures means lost business. Lost business means lost jobs.

We are trying to turn that 6.9 per cent number down so that we can get the pressures and the cost structures of Canadian business under control in order to save and build jobs as well as to have a much brighter future.

MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton—Melville): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Right Hon. Prime Minister.

I want to say at the outset that I am pleased that the Prime Minister is going to begin meeting directly with the premiers of this country to discuss the serious situation that we are in.

I would also like to say to the Prime Minister that the objective is a united Canada. The winner in the end has to be Canada itself. I am glad there is now some movement in terms of meeting with the premiers.

In light of these discussions with the premiers and the Prime Minister's talk in the House yesterday about some new proposals now being discussed with them, is he now ready to elaborate a bit on what these new proposals might be?

I realize the sensitivity and delicacy of some of these issues. In light of that, is the Prime Minister in any position today to elaborate to some degree on the direction of these new proposals he is taking to the premiers of this country?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, first, in a personal way, but probably on behalf of all members of the House on this very important issue, I would like to convey congratulations to the member of the NDP for his role on the questions of national unity that has been unfailingly positive and constructive at all times.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): You just dropped 20 points in the polls, Lorne. There goes your re-election.

Mr. Marchi: The kiss of death.

• (1430)

Mr. Mulroney: Mr. Speaker, I did not mean to hurt the hon. member with that comment, but I think he knows exactly what I mean. This is a delicate subject which, as Premier Peterson pointed out yesterday, requires a great deal of statesmanship and a very constructive approach because the stakes are very high. What we are talking about is the future of Canada.

Yesterday, Premier Getty said "I was at Meech Lake, as were the other premiers. I put the signature of Don Getty and the signature of the Government of Alberta on a piece of paper which was designed in Alberta's interests, in the interests of western Canada, and most of all in the interests of a united Canada". He said "I propose to honour that because it is indispensable that we all do so in the interests of Canadian unity".

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mulroney: I will discuss some ideas we have with the premiers. I will ask for some of their thoughts. There have been a number of conversations ongoing among them and, hopefully, out of these intensive consultations will come a consensus reasonable enough to give rise to the view that we might hold a constructive first ministers' conference which will result in what every member of this House wants, a firm irrevocable statement of a united Canada.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton—Melville): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question to the Prime Minister is in the same vein, about a national problem that we have. I wonder if the Prime Minister can account for the latest tremendous jump in interest rates in this country? We now have an increase of 25 basis points. It is the highest bank rate in the country since August, 1982. The inflation rate has dropped to 5 per cent. I wonder if the Prime Minister agrees with the Minister of Finance that the latest increase in the bank rate of this country is due to the constitutional impasse and, if so, does that not create more of a sense of urgency to try to resolve this question as quickly as possible?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I agree with both my honourable friend and the Minister of Finance that it is due in part to the political instability that has been engendered because of serious questions raised here and in money markets around the world about our ongoing discussions. It is precisely for this reason why it is so absolutely indispensable for every Canadian, particularly those first ministers whose predecessors had signed a constitutional document, to understand the importance of constructive and thoughtful compromise.

I thought Premier Getty, and I am paraphrasing, put it best of all when he said that to some extent constitutional discussion among Canadians is an act of faith. He said Alberta did this in the interests of national unity, believing that in subsequent discussions Alberta, which has been a chief proponent of Senate reform for many years, would be able to achieve that in ongoing and subsequent discussions.

Premier Getty is right. I believe that the faith he showed at Meech Lake will never be abused by any first minister or by any Canadian. Any first minister who would do that, I think would be doing a profound disservice to Canada and to Canadian unity. Premier Getty, Premier Peterson, and others, are entirely right. Some degree of good faith, of course, is required from Canadians among one another so that the document, having been signed, can give rise to Quebec coming back home into the constitutional family and will allow us to move on finally to second and third, and no doubt fourth rounds, into the future, as one strong, united Canada.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton—Melville): Mr. Speaker, my final supplementary is directed to the Minister of Finance. I suggest that the interest rate policy itself is creating instability in this country. I wonder whether the Minister of Finance is ready to send a clear signal across the country and around the world that this country is indeed strong by insisting that the Bank of Canada, and the Governor of the Bank of Canada, drop interest rates immediately in this country?

Is he willing now to stand up and say to John Crow that enough is enough? High interest rates in this country are hurting ordinary Canadians from coast to coast, our bank rate is now 5 per cent higher than the American bank rate, our inflation rate is dropping in the country, and because of these factors, because of the situation in the country, let us send out a strong signal to say that we are a strong country. Let us drop those interest rates so we can appropriately become more productive as an economy in this country.

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I have no hesitation in saying that this is a strong country and that we do have a strong economy. That is precisely why the budget deficit has come in $1 billion less than we had projected.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): The policies we have been following, whether they be monetary policy, interest rate policy or budgetary policy, or policy to improve the efficiency of the economy, all of these are broadly supported by the major international economic organizations, such as the International Monetary Fund or the Organization for Economic Co–Operation and Development in Paris. These organizations state that our policies are the right policies we should be following. The facts are there themselves.

Canada has been second only behind Japan over the last five years in economic growth. We are number one of the major industrialized countries in the creation of new jobs. Ten years ago we were number ten of the trading countries in our trade performance. In the latest figures, we are number seven in ranking. We are improving our ranking in many, many ways. That says a good deal about the strength of our economy. It also says a good deal about the wisdom of the policies we have been following.

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PRESENCE IN GALLERY

Mr. Speaker: I wish to draw to the attention of hon. members the presence in the gallery of a delegation from British Columbia to the Government of Canada headed by the Honourable Stan Hagen, Minister of Regional and Economic Development and the Honourable Bruce Strachen, Minister of Advanced Education, Training and Technology of British Columbia, and two distinguished scientists, Nobel prize recipient, Dr. Carlo Rubbia, Director of Cern in Geneva and Dr. Val Fitch, Dean of Phsyics of Princeton University and 1980 Nobel prize recipient.

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TRANSPORT

Mr. Joe Comuzzi (Thunder Bay—Nipigon): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport. The trucking crisis in Canada is a direct result of this government's policy of deregulation.

Since last Monday, General Motors in Quebec sent home 3,000 workers; 15,000 workers were sent home in Oshawa; Chrysler's van plant in Windsor was shut down and Ford shut down three plants in St. Thomas and Oakville. Fresh produce needed by Canadians was left rotting at border crossing points.

Will the minister inform the House of the commitments he made to Canadian truckers today, and, in particular, the remedies that will go into effect to protect truckers against cabotage and the unfair pricing practices that American truckers have been imposing on Canadian truckers?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Interestingly enough, Mr. Speaker, the truckers did not mention deregulation as their problem at all.

I went to Windsor last night in order to meet with representatives of the independent truckers. We had very helpful discussions during which we agreed to examine further methods of eliminating cabotage in co–operation with the Minister of National Revenue and the Minister of Employment and Immigration.

Second, there was some concern with respect to unfair competition. I agreed that we would look into that matter. We went into some discussions as to whether the appropriate amount of fuel tax is being paid at all times by all carriers. We are prepared to look into methods to sort that out. I also would say that I had the assistance of the Minister of Transport for Ontario in this matter.

When the discussions were concluded, the representatives of the independent truckers were satisfied and undertook to see that the barricades would be lifted.

• (1440)

Mr. Joe Comuzzi (Thunder Bay—Nipigon): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the same minister. The big question remains: why must there always be a crisis before we get involved in settling the problem? Look at the air traffic control problem, the airport security and shipping problems and the unfair competition that was levied against the Canadian truckers. We warned the government about what deregulation would do to the Canadian trucking industry.

When will the minister deliver a new transportation policy for Canada and Canadian workers that will not only protect the Canadian trucker but will protect all Canadian workers in the transportation industry? This government has an obligation to do that.

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I think perhaps a discussion with my friend's colleague from Winnipeg might be a little helpful in informing him as to exactly when deregulation started. It was before the hon. member's time but deregulation started certainly in my hon. friend's time.

All of those problems occur from time to time. We have taken the necessary steps. We went down to Windsor to look at the problem and to come up with some answers. We have come up with some answers. The truckers said they would lift the barricade. I take them at their word.

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THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Jack Iyerak Anawak (Nunatsiaq): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the right hon. Prime Minister. Today the crucial consultation sessions on the government's Green Plan for the environment began the long-awaited legislation on the environmental assessment process is expected in the House of Commons shortly. Despite the importance and the fullness of the environmental agenda in Canada, the Prime Minister has appointed a minister who admits he can only be a part-time environment minister.

Does the Prime Minister believe protection of the environment is a part-time job?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, no. Indeed the protection of the environment is a full-time job. It is one of the highest importance which is why, I believe for the first time in Canadian history, under this government the environment minister was brought into the Priorities and Planning committee of the Cabinet of Canada, indicating the highest priority that this government attributes to the environment. I may be mistaken on that but I think it is right.

With regard to the question, my hon. friend knows that there was—how might I delicately put this—an unplanned vacancy in the department, as a result of which I have asked to act on an interim basis one of the most senior ministers of the government, the President of the Treasury Board. He is also a member of P and P, he has been a member of the ministerial committee preparing The Green Plan from its inception and was specifically charged by me, as Prime Minister, from the beginning with ensuring that full financing was there for The Green Plan. I can think of no one more qualified than him to do it.

Mr. Jack Iyerak Anawak (Nunatsiaq): Mr. Speaker, the fact remains that the minister in question did say in answers to some questions from the news media that he could only be a part-time environment minister.

A part-time environment minister is not acceptable to Canadians. Will the Prime Minister agree today, because of the very busy schedule of the President of the Treasury Board, to assign these important responsibilities to a full-time senior minister with the authority and mandate to provide the leadership necessary to meet today's environmental challenges?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, while I indicated in the release yesterday that this assignment of responsibilities is on an interim basis, all who know the President of the Treasury Board and know his work habits will know that he will work full and complete days at the environment ministry to make sure that that job is done exactly the way my hon. friend would want it to be done.

Speaking of which, because of his interest in the environment, I know my hon. friend would want to celebrate today the fact that, after some six years of hard slugging by this government and by many members of the House, yesterday the House of Representatives in the United States passed the Clean Air Act. We are now well on our way to an acid rain treaty with the United States.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, the government wants me to congratulate the government. I will wait until the acid rain legislation is through the United States process before I give any accolades to anyone.

My question is also directed to the right hon. Prime Minister and is about the environment. Canadians are deeply concerned about pollution, about drinking water quality, about global warming and about the inaction of the government.

By nature of the portfolio, the recent resignation of the former Minister of the Environment has meant the loss of two years time, hope, and energy put in by

Canadians across the country in pursuit of policies on the environment. My question to the Prime Minister is also in relation to his appointment of a part-time minister. The Minister of the Environment is here but the hearings are being launched today in Winnipeg and the Minister of Energy is there. Would the Prime Minister at least assure Canadians who are participating in the consultations in Winnipeg that the part-time minister he has appointed will be the minister who carries through the consultations and carries through implementation of the Green Plan when it comes before the House?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I think my hon. friend is needlessly churlish in regard to a situation that I have explained at great length. He implies that the resignation itself of the minister means that two years of effort and energy have been lost. If that were true, then the recent resignation of Ed Broadbent would mean that two years of energy and effort were lost by the NDP and that is clearly not true. You are as energetic and as brilliant as you have has always been and I congratulate you.

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, let me respond with great celerity, as the Prime Minister would always want to say, and ask a question of the new part-time Minister of the Environment, who himself described to me yesterday the job as being part-time. The most important cabinet portfolio in Canada today is a part-time one.

Another minister drafted the Green Plan over the past year. A minister who has continuously sent out mixed signals on the environment and is generally seen by Canadians as being anti-environment, the Minister of Energy, is at the launch of the Green Plan hearings today. Does the new Minister of the Environment plan to participate in the consultations fully and completely, and does he intend to stay for the implementation of what he learns from the consultations, or will some other minister take on that job?

Hon. Robert de Cotret (President of the Treasury Board and Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, I would just like to tell my hon. colleague across the way that there are at least three things that have not changed at all.

The first one is the timetable that we are following on our environmental agenda. That timetable will be respected and I expect that we will be able to meet our targets as announced before.

The second thing is that our commitment has not changed. The environment is at the top of our agenda as a government and will remain there.

The third point which has not changed is that there is a full-time Minister of the Environment. I expect to be in Halifax on Monday morning, I expect to be at all the hearings and I expect to see the process through.

* * *

• (1450)

[*Translation*]

AGRICULTURE

Mr. Jean-Guy Guilbault (Drummond): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State for Agriculture and concerns the Canadian Egg Producers Council which complains that importers of table eggs from the United States repack eggs imported in bulk in containers labeled "Product of Canada".

Can the minister reassure this House and the producers and tell them what he intends to do to stop this fradulent labeling practice?

Hon. Pierre Blais (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Minister of State (Agriculture)): Mr. Speaker, we were informed of this matter in recent months.

Canada's position is very clear: table eggs must show the country of origin. The Canadian Egg Processors Council, unfortunately, does not support us in this position.

On several occasions, we have brought those concerned together and it is obviously in our interest, that this policy be respected by people here in Canada. I can assure my colleague that this matter has already been discussed and we will continue to work on it so that consumers who buy products on the market know the country of origin of these products.

I can assure you that we will take it into account.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Hon. André Ouellet (Papineau—Saint-Michel): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Secretary of State for External Affairs.

Mr. Speaker, we on this side of the House echo the remarks made by the minister last Tuesday when he expressed Canada's dismay concerning the unprecedented violent acts following the murder of seven Palestinians at Richon-Letion near Tel-Aviv.

We also believe that the current deadlock in the peace process contributes to create instability and violence.

This is why I want to ask the minister whether Canada is prepared to support the Americans who would send United Nations observers to the occupied territories, and what will our ambassador have to say at the Security Council sessions scheduled for tomorrow or Saturday?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): In fact, Mr. Speaker, neither the United States nor any other Security Council member have actively advocated dispatching such an observer team. However the American Secretary of State did say that the U.S. administration would certainly entertain this kind of proposition.

For our part we in Canada are also prepared to consider this proposition because our country has always been a strong supporter of peacekeeping activities and observer teams. Hon. members would know that Canada did lend strong support to the rather limited but no less important UNRWA mission concerning the Palestinians.

Canada's ambassador will indeed play a significant part in the Security Council discussions.

[*English*]

Hon. André Ouellet (Papineau—Saint-Michel): Mr. Speaker, will the minister and the Prime Minister raise the issue with UN Secretary General Perez de Cuellar and also with President Gorbachev during their respective visits next week in Ottawa? If so, what will he tell them regarding Canada's position?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, we certainly do intend to discuss the question of the Middle East and, particularly, the matters now before the Security Council with the Secretary General of the United Nations and with the leaders of the Soviet government when they are here next week.

We will indicate to them that Canada is prepared to support any constructive activity that might be taken by the United Nations, and we will certainly take the opportunity to reiterate the point that was made by the hon. member in the introduction to his question and that is that the situation now is creating circumstances of increasing instability. One cannot assume that the status quo is neutral in terms of the lives of people in the territory. It is becoming increasingly dangerous. Among other things, the capacity of moderate leadership on both sides to retain their efforts to exercise restraint is put under strain every day.

* * *

FITNESS AND AMATEUR SPORT

Mrs. Beryl Gaffney (Nepean): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Fitness and Amateur Sport.

The Sports Federation of Canada, in its brief to the finance committee, stated that "the application of the GST would have a devastating effect on the activities of amateur sport".

My question to the minister is this: In recognition of the importance of amateur sport here in Canada, will the minister increase the funding to these organizations to offset the negative impact of the GST?

An hon. member: I hope so.

Hon. Marcel Danis (Minister of State (Youth) and Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, I have met with the Federation of Canadian Amateur Sport. I understand that prior to my becoming minister in that portfolio, it had met with the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Revenue. As a matter of fact, it was very happy with the solutions they proposed and what the Minister of Finance had done for sport in Canada.

Mrs. Beryl Gaffney (Nepean): Mr. Speaker, I would have liked to hear what benefits are being given to amateur sport.

Point of Order

I have here a copy of a 20-page report filed by the Nepean Minor Hockey Association which has concluded that the total adjusted impact of the GST will result in thousands of dollars in over-all price increases to the annual operating budget of the MHA.

Will the minister take steps to persuade the Minister of Finance to exempt amateur sport from the GST or, better yet, to scrap the tax?

Hon. Marcel Danis (Minister of State (Youth) and Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance, in the GST bill proposed to the House, has put in a number of special provisions to assist non-profit amateur sport organizations. I think he has done a tremendous job for amateur sport and should be congratulated.

* * *

TRANSPORT

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Transport. I am glad to see that he has returned alive from Windsor. It is something for which he deserves congratulations.

The Minister knows that the negotiations which he undertook with truckers in Windsor led to some kind of an agreement which he was finally required to promise to put in writing. Has he, in fact, sent those promises in writing to the truckers in Windsor? If he has done so, will he stand in the House and make a commitment to make them public, here and now, so that truckers all across Canada can see what the minister has decided to do?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise my hon. friend that those commitments were made public by myself and the Ontario Minister of Transport immediately after our discussions. They are already public.

I had offered to put commitments I made, with my word, in writing. We are in the process of formulating such a letter. The minute we have it formulated, then it will be in writing as well as on camera being made public by myself at about 10 o'clock this morning.

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question. I think it is important that those commitments be publicly put to truckers. If it does not happen, I can tell the minister, frankly, he will not see that demonstration end.

[*Translation*]

I have a supplementary question for the Minister. Quebec truckers have also decided to hold demonstrations on this issue. After this morning's discussions, will the Minister promise them that, in areas of federal jurisdiction, legal or police action will not be taken against the protesters?

• (1500)

[*English*]

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): As to the first part of my hon. friend's question, vis-à-vis Windsor, I am sorry, but I cannot think of anything more public and more on the record than a media conference with all of the reporters and the television cameras there. If there is something more public than that, I would like to know what it is and that will be done.

[*Translation*]

In the case of Montreal, I can assist the provincial Minister of Transport but any police intervention would fall under Quebec's jurisdiction.

[*English*]

Mr. Speaker: The Right Hon. Prime Minister on a point of order.

* * *

POINT OF ORDER

COMMENTS DURING QUESTION PERIOD

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. During Question Period I referred to the fact that I believed that the Minister of the Environment, who had just resigned, was the first to serve on the Priorities and Planning Committee of Cabinet. This in fact is a serious error, because Your Honour himself was the Minister of the Environment and a member of P and P in the government of the distinguished member for Yellowknife.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mulroney: Indeed, his tenure is widely remembered with great admiration by all environmentalists across Canada.

But I make the correction for two reasons. First of all, that it had to be made and, second, if I had not, my chances of speaking again in this Chamber will be greatly reduced.

Mr. Speaker: Under all the circumstances, I shall refrain from speaking.

* * *

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

WEEKLY STATEMENT

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, it being Thursday, I would like to ask the Government House Leader to give us the legislative menu for the coming days.

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, tomorrow will be an allotted day, and I understand that the Liberal party will be leading off the debate. I would appreciate knowing what the subject is so that we might prepare.

On Monday, we will commence report stage consideration of Bill C-69, if there are report stage amendments. If not, we will proceed with third reading.

On Tuesday and Wednesday it is my intention now to call Bill C-58, the Young Offenders bill, followed by Bill C-63, establishing the Canadian Race Relations Foundation, and Bill C-65, technical amendments to Customs Tariffs.

Thursday, May 31, will also be designated an allotted day.

Mr. Gauthier: Mr. Speaker, since the minister has now designated the day, I guess we can name the subject matter. It will be on municipal infrastructure and how the federal government needs to get involved in that again.

Mr. Andre: I thank the hon. member. I hope that included in the debate will not only be how we should get involved, but how we should finance it.

Mr. Gauthier: No comment, Mr. Speaker. We will debate that tomorrow.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

CRIMINAL CODE

MEASURE TO AMEND

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Ms. Campbell (Vancouver Centre) that Bill C-43, an act respecting abortion, be read the third time and passed.

Mr. Len Hopkins (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke): Mr. Speaker, it is quite obvious from having heard many speeches in this House that the bill before us has brought from individuals many very deep-lying emotions. It has been a very strong debate. It has been a debate in depth, as far as the issue is concerned.

In order to understand the positions of some people, it is important to have an idea of what in their lives promotes the feelings in them that they are expressing on the floor of the House and then we will understand this debate very clearly. Obviously, those who have spoken very strongly fully understand that there is something in their background, in their thinking, and in their life's experiences with other people that has led them to feel the way that they do.

In a debate of this nature, Mr. Speaker, I am sure that you would agree it is very important that common sense and coolness rule the day.

I have some very important points that I want to make. I realize that this is a very crucial debate and the feelings that I will put on the record this afternoon are very sincere and they are certainly the way I feel about this issue personally. No matter how one looks at the abortion issue, I feel in all conscience that I have no right, and I do not think that any of us has any right to unnecessarily destroy life before or after birth.

God brings us into this world and he takes us out. Sometimes it is extremely difficult to accept the death of a loved one, but there is a purpose and there must be a faith. Therefore, we must talk about this debate today in good faith, because as we discuss it we must bear in mind that we are talking about the future of young people in this country, whether or not they are going to be born.

On the other hand, you can imagine the horrible thought, Mr. Speaker, that those loved ones that we have lost would have never been here if their father and

mother had believed in abortion and you would have never known them. So this begs the question, how many potential friends, how many potentially great citizens, how many community leaders, how many leaders in general, how many internationally influential people, how many professional people, how many farmers and other people in various walks of life have never had the opportunity to play their roles in life because they were not allowed to be born? That is a serious question.

In this debate, it has been mentioned that the Liberal party has no policy on the abortion issue. I for one make absolutely no apology for that, because there are two types of debates in this House that by tradition and by practice have become free votes on the floor of this House. When a political party decides that it is going to have a strict policy that everybody must obey and then calls it a free vote, it is hypocrisy.

Mr. Nicholson: It's not true though, Len. They have not forced everybody.

Mr. Hopkins: The hon. member for Niagara Falls felt touchy when I said that, but I am not saying it in the sense that he is thinking about it and I want him to know that. I am saying it in the sense that no political party should be accused of not having a policy.

It is true that the government must bring forward a bill, but to say that it is the total policy and sincere belief of every member of a Cabinet is probably being inaccurate too. We know that the Minister of Justice who brought in this bill has some very strong views on it. That is her right and it is possible that the bill mirrors her feelings. Let us not argue that point. She is part of the government and has the right to bring in the bill. Every member of every party in this House has the right to vote on that bill as they see fit. We have the right to bring in amendments to it. If our amendment is accepted, that is fine. If it is not, we have to live with the parliamentary system. It is a fact of life.

• (1510)

So let us not get hung up on the idea that parties as a whole must have a very definite policy on these great emotional issues, that are personal and conscience issues to many members on both sides of this House. I feel very strongly about that.

The public at large also has its personal feelings and agendas. That is why we get representations from all sides of an issue such as this. That is why we have to rely, as I said at the beginning, on cool heads and common sense in an emotional debate such as this.

The old argument as to whether or not the foetus is a human life will go on *ad infinitum*. The foetus follows through to a human life. There is a right to be born, in my view, and there is a right to live. We have no right to destroy life before birth any more than we have a right to destroy life after birth. I emphasize that the health of the mother is indeed a crucial decision, and a must.

One can take a look at a happy teenager today and realize that that person would never be here if the parents had decided that they would have the abortion. I remember a great moment of silence one day when speaking to a group of students here on Parliament Hill. There was one student who asked a question on the abortion issue and argued very strongly, quoting the parents, until one of the other students said: "Do you realize that with what you are proposing today, you may not have had the opportunity of being here with us in this group if your parents had exercised the philosophy that you are espousing?". These questions put forward the seriousness of this issue.

Economics has been mentioned as a factor in this debate. I feel very strongly that family planning must become a far greater priority than the economic factor. Are we going to allow economics to control whether or not people are going to be born in this democracy, this western society of ours? Do we as human beings have the right to make that decision? Some of us in this House would never be here today, if it was not for our parents wanting to bring us into this world.

I think of my own mother and father raising a family in the depression years of the 1930s. If economics had come into consideration, I certainly would not be here today and neither would my brother or sister. We had that kind of respect in our family. My mother and father took their duties as parents seriously.

Let us be a nation of understanding. Let us be a nation of love in the sense of respect and of help to others at all times. Common sense goes a long way in solving difficult problems.

I was not born in a hospital. I was born in a farmhouse during the depression years. The next door neighbour was the midwife. If economic considerations had been brought to bear at that time, I would never have been born and would not be here today.

I was born into a family that had no money. We could hardly pay our taxes during those years. However, there was love, caring, and understanding. I look back to my childhood days and I think of my parents. I consider them to be martyrs for what they went through. With no money they raised a family. They put three square meals a day on the table. They tried to give us guidance, and they gave us direction and encouragement. I well recall that if we did not take that guidance willingly, there were other methods of encouragement that persuaded us to take that guidance, and I do not regret that either.

If there is any side of economics that we should be looking at here, it is on the tax policies for young families. They should be given greater tax allowances. There must be some consideration given for the costs of raising a family today more so than we are doing.

I can remember when family allowances first came in. I was going to high school at that time. What a great thing that was for the family. To get a cheque at the end of the month for either $6 or $7—and eventually it became $8—was a real gift. We had never witnessed that before. It relates back to the situation where the economics of a family are indeed very important. If we are not going to help them out in that route with family expenses, then we should be helping them out through the tax system at their level of income.

Love at a time when young people become pregnant is a must. Love to people who experience unwanted pregnancies is a must. It is a time for understanding. It is not a time for self-righteousness. We must give them encouragement and no hypocrisy.

I know cases where mothers and fathers of young people have taken the daughter and the child and looked after them every day until they were on their own. I have every respect for people like that, because it shows that they are willing to face up to reality, that they have a great sense of decency, and that they accept the full responsibilities of parenthood.

The earlier or later stages of pregnancy do not really have anything to do with the rights of the foetus because it is on its way to becoming a full-fledged individual from the day of conception onward. It does not matter at what stage you destroy that foetus, you are still destroying that child's right to be born and to live a fair life.

• (1520)

My feelings are very strong on this issue because of personal experiences. I would just like to outline some of those personal experiences. I suppose in a way, as I said earlier, I have certain prejudices.

Our first child was born on Mother's Day 1961. After a very serious and long period for my wife, the baby was stillborn. It was a very difficult situation for a mother going full term. It also turned out later that that baby and we as a family were one of the first victims of thalidomide. I do not know how many times I counted every square of concrete on the sidewalk that encircled that hospital during those many hours. It put real emphasis in my mind as to the protection of the mother when it comes to any legislation that we are discussing, whether it be this or any other legislation.

When our second child came along, perfectly healthy, it was a great joy. When the third one came along, it was another great joy. Quite frankly, my only regret is that we do not have five or six more like them.

The old law that the Supreme Court struck down on January 28, 1988 was brought in with good intent in 1969. I was also here for that debate. However, the good intent of that legislation was not always followed in spirit over the years.

I get conflicting messages on the adoption of the argument: is there a real desire to adopt babies today? Some say that the system is working, and some say it is not.

There is one thing I want to put on the record, and it is that no father should be allowed to leave mother and child economically unprotected after having brought that child into the world. That father should not be allowed, simply because he lives in another province or territory, to fail to provide for that child's keep. He has an obligation.

In that regard, there is a real economic argument for this point. Part of this whole debate should be that once parents bring a child into the world, both of them are responsible. Certainly the father should not be allowed

to walk out and get off scot-free. I think that is what is building a lot of resentment in our society today.

In conclusion, I would like to see strong action taken at both the federal and provincial levels on that issue.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Peter L. McCreath (South Shore): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to participate in this debate on Bill C-43. I have been following this bill since the beginning.

[*English*]

I have been involved with this issue for several months, starting with the caucus committee where I was privileged to serve with the hon. members for Argenteuil—Papineau, Kitchener, Surrey—White Rock, and others. I was with the legislative committee studying Bill C-43 for many weeks and grappling with this issue. Now here we are finally before the House at third reading.

I believe that this very contentious, emotional, intellectual and human issue is one that challenges people in many ways and in many parts of our country. As is well known, it is one that divides Canadians in many ways. It is a many-sided issue. I believe that first and foremost the debate in this place is not about philosophy. It is not about morality. It is about governance. It is about law, legislation, and the administration of justice in Canada. It is with respect to those matters that I wish to address myself today.

This issue of abortion in Canada represents a challenge to Canadians, one of many challenges that we have had throughout our history. It is a challenge which charges us with the task of reaching consensus in a country of great diversity. Indeed, this week of all weeks, all members present and people from coast to coast are aware of the challenge to compromise that has been an inherent part of the history of this country since its origins: those days when people like John A. Macdonald, George Etienne Cartier, Charles Tupper, and others came together to try to find the compromise that would create this great and wonderful country of ours.

Here we are again, not undoubtedly for the last time, after several occasions in Parliament debating this very contentious, social, moral and philosophical issue. As I said, I wish to address this issue from the context of what I believe is our role and function here, not as a group of moralists but rather as a group of parliamentarians, as a group of people who have been selected by our fellow citizens to come here and seek the compromises that are the basis upon which Canada can work.

During the course of my remarks I wish to make reference to my own personal views on this matter. In so doing, I say to this House that many of the things that I would say if debate was not limited have already been said by my hon. friend, the hon. member for Surrey—White Rock, who gave what I thought was a very outstanding, inspiring address on the subject. I look forward to hearing from the hon. member for Kitchener. I expect that I will be as well able to associate myself with his remarks as I wish to associate myself with the remarks of my hon. friend for Surrey—White Rock.

I wish to focus on the legislative and political aspects of this issue because, after all, we are here to govern. We are here to seek a resolution to a contentious issue that has been with Canadians for generations but has once again been with parliamentarians for a little over two years since the previous bill relating to this subject was struck down by the Supreme Court of Canada.

As parliamentarians our job is to legislate for Canadians. In doing so, we have to put to ourselves a series of questions. We have to ask ourselves: What is in the best interest of Canada? We have to ask ourselves: What do Canadians want with respect to this issue? We have to take cognizance not only of the processes of Parliament and the dynamics of having things pass this place and indeed the one down the hall, but we have to take cognizance of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, other legislation, and the Constitution of Canada which, like it or lump it, does impose limitations on what we can or cannot usefully do in this place.

We can stand and say that we should pass a law that says this or that or something else. But, in the final analysis, if that law does not meet the tests that will be applied when it is taken to the Supreme Court of Canada, we have failed in our responsibility as the governors and parliamentarians of this country who have been sent here to act in a responsible manner.

Dealing with contentious issues is not an easy task. Indeed, this country is faced with many challenges and contentious issues today. It is my judgment that the country is fortunate to have leadership that does not shy away from challenges, be they the economic problems of the country, the challenges of our Constitution, or a contentious social issue like the question of abortion and how it should be handled within the legislative framework of Canada. We are fortunate, in my judgment, to have the inspired leadership of the Prime Minister we have today. It is primarily through his leadership and his willingness to take on challenges that we are in the process of concluding a debate on the contentious issue of abortion.

• (1530)

When we began last fall to try to develop legislation, our responsibility as parliamentarians was to develop a bill that could meet the test of this House and be able to pass through Parliament. Otherwise, it would not be a useful exercise. Second, it has to satisfy the Supreme Court of Canada and, ultimately, meet the test of Canadian public opinion. That is the next question we have to look at.

I believe that the bill before us today will pass. I will vote for it and I urge all members to vote for it regardless of their personal feelings on this very contentious subject. There are people in this House, in all caucuses, who are of diametrically different opinions. Our responsibility, as a collective group of parliamentarians, is to come together and find the reasonable balance, which I think is reflected in Bill C–43.

I believe it will pass the test of the Supreme Court. There is no doubt in my mind that it will be challenged, in court but I believe it will pass that test and, ultimately, I believe it will meet the test of the people of Canada.

As the member for South Shore I can ask what the people of the South Shore want with respect to this issue. But we as parliamentarians must ask what the people of Canada want. I believe that the people of the South Shore reflect very well the views of the people of Canada with respect to this issue. There are people in the South Shore who are absolutely, unequivocally, opposed to abortion. There are people who are absolutely, unequivocally of the opinion that abortion should be available on demand under any circumstances, at any time. There are people who have opinions that vary between those extremes.

I believe this bill represents a balance that will be acceptable to the overwhelming majority of Canadians. The people of the two extremes will not be satisfied and they have made that known fully, including those people, whom I admire, who stand out in front of this building every day as they have for months, fasting for life. I respect the courage, the commitment and the integrity of those people. But those people are not charged with governing Canada; we are. While I may share their sentiments, the fact of the matter is that a bill that reflects their position would be thrown out in a minute by the Supreme Court of Canada and we would have failed in carrying out our responsibilities.

I believe the overwhelming majority of Canadians want an end to the public chaos that has existed with respect to abortions in Canada. Last summer we in this country witnessed on television young people's lives in turmoil, young people going before the courts to fight out whether there should be or should not be an abortion in a particular circumstance. I think the Canadian public wants an end to that kind of thing. Canadians say that the role of government is to bring as much order as possible where there is chaos. That, I believe, is the challenge that the public has put to us. That, I believe, is what will be accomplished.

We will not satisfy everybody. We cannot satisfy everybody. Canadians are fundamentally reasonable people. That is why Canada has existed for 123 years. That is why Canadians met the challenge of the conscription crisis in 1944, the schools crisis in the 1890s, and indeed that is why I am confident Canadians will come together and resolve the constitutional crisis of 1990. That has been the essence of our history. Canadians are people who fundamentally understand the necessity of and indeed have the ability to cope with the need to compromise. That is what we have reflected in this bill before us here today.

I might take a moment or two to talk about my own feelings. When I became a candidate for public office early in the fall of 1988, I knew that I would have to think about the issue of abortion and ask myself how I will be counted when the time comes.

I have never hidden my views on that subject. I consider myself a pro-lifer. I am one of those who believes, as was so eloquently articulated by the hon. member for Surrey—White Rock earlier today, that life begins with conception. I believe that from the moment of conception, no matter what language is used, we are dealing with a life. I am one of those who believes that life should not be lightly taken away. I believe that one of the most basic human rights that exists in society is the right to life. Therefore, I essentially oppose abortions.

Frankly, there are circumstances under which abortions are appropriate. One has to look at abortion as an issue of conflict of interest, the interest and the rights of the mother on the one hand and the interests and the rights of the unborn child on the other.

If one is pushed to draw a line and is not constrained by things such as constitutions or charters or anything else, the appropriate line should be drawn where the self-interests of the one imposes upon the right to life of the other. If I were the draftsman or the technician, my line would recognize that where the health or life of the mother is threatened it may indeed be appropriate to have an abortion performed.

Inasmuch as you are dealing with that kind of conflict, in the final analysis I believe that abortion should not take place simply because somebody, as a matter of choice, does not wish to allow a baby to be born.

What is the best solution? There is no question that the way to deal with abortions is not through legislation. The best way to deal with abortions is to remove the need for them. It seems to me that a responsible government, in dealing with abortion, is not only going to address itself to defining a circumstance under which abortion can or cannot take place. Rather, it is going to ensure that education is in place so that unwanted pregnancies do not occur. It is going to ensure that appropriate birth control methods are readily available to those who have need of them. That is the way to deal with it.

We must ensure that the support systems exist in society so that if a young girl becomes pregnant she is not forced to give up that child because she is not in an economic circumstance where she can care for that child. Not only is she making a decision about that unborn child, she is making a decision that affects her. She may prefer to have that opportunity but if the support services are not in place she is unable to take it.

A very good friend of mine has often said to me that there is no such thing as an unwanted child; there is somebody who wants that child. There are people in this country today who would like to have babies but cannot have their own. We have to come to grips with that as well.

In conclusion, I believe Bill C-43 achieves a balance that is reasonable. I believe it will meet the test of this House and, indeed, of the other place. I believe it will meet the test of the Supreme Court of Canada. Most important of all, I believe it will meet the test of the Canadian people. It recognizes the fundamental principle of life and when it begins. It recognizes that abortion should take place for some medical reasons. Personally, I would have preferred to have this bill more definitive, with a greater incumbency to demonstrate a medical necessity as opposed to what is, frankly, a fairly wide-open piece of legislation.

Nevertheless, the bill we have before us is unequivocally a step in the right direction. It is a piece of legislation that will serve the interests of Canadians. It is a piece of legislation that will bring an end to the chaos that has existed in this country.

Consequently, I am prepared to support this bill. I commend it to my fellow members of this House and urge all members to support it for the benefit of all Canadians.

Ms. Lynn Hunter (Saanich—Gulf Islands): Mr. Speaker, I have a number of questions for the hon. member. The first relates to his analysis that this legislation is a matter of the "administration of justice". I put that last phrase in quotes because I think we have to talk about justice in a broader sense than just the legalistic term.

• (1540)

He also says that this a resolution of this contentious issue. I believe that he is fooling himself and fooling the rest of Canada with that analysis. There is not going to be a resolution of this contentious issue by recriminalizing abortion. The only means by which there is going to be a resolution of this contentious issue is to give adequate support, funding and understanding to enable women to exercise birth control and men to exercise responsibility in their relations with women. The Cana-

dian government should also participate in that in a really meaningful way.

The member talked about the public chaos of last summer. Once again, I think his analysis is totally wrong. This legislation would in no way stop injunctions of men wanting to use the court system to take control of women. There is no way that recriminalizing abortion will do that. His logic is rather strained.

I want to ask the member a question about his analysis that women are acting out of self-interest should they seek abortions. This type of logic speaks of the utter contempt in which some men in this House hold women. It makes me exceedingly angry. Women who have gone through this process and this painful decision have not done so out of self-interest. Abortion is always a tragedy.

I would commend the previous speaker to please have a little understanding. He has never experienced an unwanted pregnancy. He knows not of what he speaks. I would ask him to please address his comments with respect to Canadian women.

Mr. McCreath: Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague opposite raises some very important points. I was taking notes to try to ensure that I address all of the points she raised. I will endeavour to do so.

Possibly she misunderstood my intent or I did not articulate my position adequately. I unequivocally recognize that an abortion is an option of the absolute last choice. I understood the hon. member to say that no woman has an abortion just for something to do, frivolously or otherwise. In no way whatsoever would I ever think that or suggest it.

I think, though, that it is incumbent on all people in Canada to act responsibly; men and women. As the member quite rightly points out, men are as much involved in the decision to create pregnancy as are women. However, the bottom line is that men cannot have abortions and I do not think it is a legitimate suggestion to therefore say that men have no interest in the subject whatsoever.

This is a subject that involves all Canadians because when we are talking about abortions we are not just talking about women. We are talking about an unborn child, about another human being. Where is the consultation process for that individual? Where is the choice for that individual? That is why, in my judgment, we cannot lightly give away or abrogate the right of that individual to have his or her interest considered in the decisions that are taken.

With respect to the member's comments on the need for adequate support and funding, I believe that I addressed that point in my remarks. I feel very strongly, as I said, that the best way to deal with abortions is to eliminate them by making them unnecessary. The overwhelming number of abortions which are taking place in this country today need not take place if there was adequate support of the type the member speaks of, if there was proper education of young people. We have come a long way, but we have a long way to go.

The subject of criminalization has been a contentious issue from the beginning. It is important to recognize two things. First, people look to the Government of Canada to deal with this issue. The Government of Canada can only do so within the context of the jurisdiction provided it in the Constitution of Canada. The access to the Government of Canada came to this issue through the criminal process.

I should remind my hon. friend opposite that what is criminalized, if that is what is going on, is not abortions, but abortions held outside the law. This law, among other things, seeks to create an environment in which, in reasonable circumstances as defined in the law, abortions can take place where they should take place, under the authority of properly qualified medical practitioners.

Finally, as to the resolution of the issue, my hon. friend opposite is absolutely right. This bill will not end the debate on the subject of abortion in Canada. I never suggested that it would. I do not recall having suggested that. I doubt that any member of the House would suggest that this bill, or for that matter any other bill, would end debate on the subject of abortion in the country.

I suggested that this bill represents a reasonable compromise between diametrically opposite positions. It is a reasonable compromise that will be acceptable to the overwhelming majority of Canadians who fundamentally are not on the extreme of any given issue but are people who learn to understand. One might say it is the Canadian way of understanding, the way of reasonable compromise. That is what this bill is. For those people,

the vast majority of Canadians, this will mean a resolution to the issue, as I indicated.

Mr. Tom Wappel (Scarborough West): Mr. Speaker, in a number of circumstances, the hon. member referred to the test of the Supreme Court and how, in his analysis of Bill C–43, it would meet the test of the Supreme Court.

Would the hon. member state for us what his view is of the test of the Supreme Court and how Bill C–43 will specifically meet that legal test?

Mr. McCreath: Mr. Speaker, I am not going to stand here and pretend to be an expert in jurisprudence. Nevertheless, I will not hesitate to comment on the subject.

The lines were essentially drawn by the decisions that have been brought down in the Morgentaler case, the Daigle case, and others. I am sure, Mr. Speaker, that you do not want a 45–minute legal dissertation from me, which I would otherwise be delighted to present. But, essentially, those decisions stated, first, that Parliament should create a law. Second, they stated that, within that law, Parliament should make provision for women to have access to abortions in Canada and that the law should create an entitlement for women to have abortions in Canada. I prefer the word "entitlement" to "access". The access is something that is determined within the health services of the provinces.

At the same time, the decisions indicated that there is an incumbency on Parliament to take cognizance of the rights of the unborn. Therein it seems to me that the court has told this Parliament to find a middle road between the two positions. The courts have very clearly indicated that a choice on either of those extremes would not be acceptable to them. The courts have made it perfectly clear that we must find a middle road. That, I submit, is what we have attempted to do with Bill C–43.

Mr. David Barrett (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to participate in this debate. At the outset I would like to state that I am opposed to this bill. I will persuade the rest of the House to take my position and I will give you the reasons why I will persuade them.

Even those who are opposed to abortion should understand that this bill is a political bill to deal with a social problem. It attempts to find a political solution to a problem that does not have a political solution.

• (1550)

If a member on either side of the House argues that in their opinion and moral conviction life begins at conception, then they cannot vote for this bill. It is sanctimonious cant to suggest that somehow this bill is a compromise and will allow them to abandon their principles and argument about the sanctity of life because the state somehow, with this piece of legislation, has defined when life is sanctified and when it is not. That is hypocrisy. It does not serve the debate that is necessary for the public to come to some acceptable resolution socially about this problem.

This government has set the debate back by using a political instrument to cover itself within the polls, rather than taking a responsible position as a government either for or against the right of a woman to make a choice as to whether or not she should have an abortion.

Those who hold to the argument—and I do not dispute their right to do it, I hold to a different argument—that life begins at conception cannot morally justify a vote for this legislation. It does a great deal of damage to those people who are sincere in holding their position—just as I am sincere in holding mine—that life begins at conception. It is a mockery of that argument to stand up in the Chamber and say they believe that and then allow themselves to vote for this bill.

Having said that, I want to outline why, after wrestling with my own conscience about this situation, I have decided to vote against the bill and why I am pro–choice.

There is indeed merit in the argument about when life begins. It is a human decision based upon the scientific and religious evidence in front of us. We have to make that decision in true conscience. I do not make my decision frivolously. It is based on true conscience because of an accumulated series of experiences I have had in my life through my chosen profession as a social worker.

I was 22 years old when I had my first caseload of children at the Children's Aid Society of Vancouver. In those days I was responsible for 78 children. This private agency hired me at the age of 22 to be, in a sense, a substitute parent for those 78 children. I had graduated

from university and it was presumed, because I had four years of university education, that I was somehow qualified to be a surrogate parent for those 78 children.

Nothing could have been further from the truth. I was not prepared to deal with the real problems of those children. All the book learning I had relative to the needs of those children was absolutely invalid in terms of the practical situation with which I was faced.

Most of the children for whom I was responsible had an absence of love. They were unwanted children. They were not desired by their mothers. It was an accident of fate as a result of a situation that existed in the country at that time.

You could not even buy condoms in a drugstore when I was a teenager. The attitude of the state at that time was to bury its head in the sand. Condoms were not even discussed. The only reason we discuss birth control or access to information on birth control is the threat of AIDS. What logic and reason could not do to our society, AIDS has forced us to do.

Now that we have had an open discussion about the problems of sexually-transmitted diseases, we are talking about preventing sexually-transmitted diseases without even putting it in the context of human sexuality and human physiology.

Those 78 children for whom I was responsible were disadvantaged from day one. They had no opportuntiy parallel to any normal child out there. My colleague made the bland statement: "Well, don't worry, there is somebody out there who will love the child". Would that be true!

Today, caseloads are not 78 children. They are 250 or 300 children per social worker and they are just as inadequate in dealing with those as they were in my day.

How many trained social workers with a Masters degree are in the line carrying a caseload? Very few. How many are there in the age group of 45 to 55, when they have accumulated at least some life experience to make some sensible judgments about the tremendous problems that are in front of them? Very few. We still have denied the fact that we reject children in our society. We reject those unwanted children in archaic social systems that guarantee us a population in our prisons and in our mental institutions.

What chance does a child have if that child is unwanted and shuffled along to an agency with the hope that someone will adopt the child? In the argument of the previous two members I heard speak, economics has nothing to do with it. Like blazes, Mr. Speaker.

However, let us assume that economics had nothing to do with it and that wealthy people would be benevolent enough to embrace these children to their bosom and raise them. Money does not guarantee the raising of a good child. If there is an absence of love in a relationship between a man and a woman, it does not matter whether they live in a house with a dirt floor or in a mansion in one of the most expensive suburbs. That kid is headed for trouble.

Do we do any pre-marital counselling in the country? Not a whit. On a basis that the state says that we should—

Mr. Wappel: That's not true.

Mr. Nicholson: Only if the state pays for it?

Mr. Barrett: I am glad I have their attention. In the province of British Columbia, we asked the religious community to make itself available on a voluntary basis for pre-marital counselling of those couples who chose to take it. They responded positively and we initiated a program. Then I said that we should delay giving marriage licences for a six-week period. If the state is going to give permission to people to get married, then the state should have some evidence that they voluntarily had pre-marital counselling.

What do we do with people who drive cars? The state requires not only that they take lessons in driving a car but that they pass an examination before they get behind the wheel. The state even goes further and requires that they drive on the proper side of the road.

What an interference of freedom of choice. Why in the heck does the state have the right to examine whether or not you can drive a car? Why does the state have the right to tell you what side of the road to drive on? Why does the state do that? It does so because it is in the role of social order, to ensure that there is a sense of public safety and discipline in the state.

I submit to you, Mr. Speaker, that if the state feels that secure about requiring a licence before you drive a car and telling you what side of the road to drive on, the state at least can make birth control information and pre-marital counselling available to make sure that we are not raising a generation of ignorant children who have no awareness of what human sexuality is all about.

When I grew up I was supposed to learn, as a male, about human sexuality by hanging around the street. When I was a teenager, every young man was supposed to be an expert in sexual matters and every girl was supposed to be a virgin. I never knew how, socially, we were to reach that desired goal in our male-female roles unless two people tangoed. There was a tacit admission in our society that sex did not exist. Yet, males were supposed to be experts and women were supposed to be virgins. The absurd hypocrisy of our society in dealing with human sexuality knows no limits and the progeny of that kind of ignorance fills up our institutions and mental hospitals.

I spent five years working in jails. In almost every single instance of young boys whom I worked with, there was an abysmal lack of information about human physiology and also an absence of love. They were bitter and hateful simply because they were not wanted. Now if the state says that you cannot have an abortion, then the state has a moral right to ensure—just as they do with drivers' licences or telling people what side of the road to drive on—that every child has the maximum opportunity to reach any potential level of success they can. We do not.

• (1600)

Look at our poverty rolls. Look at people on welfare. I have yet to hear a significant voice in the pro-life community demand a bill of rights for children in this country, and demand a guarantee of minimum services for those children. If they put the same amount of energy in their argument against abortion into the defence of those children who are already born, I would feel a little more comfortable.

The absence of child care in the institutions we provide, the scandals we see in the housing residences we have for young boys and girls, is shocking. In my own province, Willingdon School for Girls and Brandon Lake School for Boys guaranteed a succeeding class of occupants for Kingston penitentiary and the British Columbia penitentiary. At one time 60 per cent of the occupants of the women's penitentiary in Kingston were graduates of the same Willingdon School for Girls.

There is a lot of hypocrisy going on and I want to address myself partly to that. Where in the world are those screaming battalions of voices and placards out in front of this building, demanding that basic child services be guaranteed by law for every child in this country? Where are they? Where are those screaming-meemies who are determined to tell every woman what she must or must not do about her body, or her choice? Where are those screaming-meemies when it comes to the number of children in this country who are going to school ill-housed and ill-fed?

I hear this pious clap-trap about love and understanding and commitment. It is b.s., Mr. Speaker. And you know what b.s. is? That's the Blarney Stone, Mr. Speaker—I do not want anyone to misinterpret what I am saying.

I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, there is an absence of commitment to children in this country.

Now I want to deal with the choice of some woman who finds herself with an unwanted pregnancy. Can you tell me what the hell the state has to do with the decision that she must make? Can you tell me what role this Chamber, a group of citizens representatives of all Canadians—and Lord help us, sometimes I think it is below the average of most Canadians—has got to do with telling that women, who is a victim of incest or rape, that she must carry the child to term? Fie on your head! Nonsense! Suggesting that any young woman, a victim of incest or rape, must carry a child to term is the most horrendous kind of scenario that one could possibly expect, and I think in this sense it is male-dominance visiting those attitudes on a woman in that situation.

I find it incredible that we are faced with this bill. I deeply respect those people in this House who say they are going to vote against it because of moral conviction and their belief that life starts at conception. I respect them deeply. And I hope that they, in turn, respect my point of view. But I do not respect the hypocrisy of those who are rationalizing that this bill somehow solves the problem.

Since you know my point of view and how I am going to vote and why, I make an appeal to this House. When this debate is over will we hear again about children in need in this country? When this debate is over will members get up and demand that the government set national standards for child care in this country? Will we hear a debate in this Chamber that no caseload of children in a child care agency, either private or public, goes over 30 or 40, just as we expect in classrooms? Will we hear a demand in this Chamber that never again will we set up community based and funded homes where children are placed in unsupervised situations and assaults on those children take place? Do you think this is new? It has gone on generation after generation after generation in this country and I dare say, unfortunately, it is probably still going on in some instances in this country.

We still jail children in this country, Mr. Speaker. Go and take a look at your own province's set-up for dealing with "juvenile delinquents". Check out what we do with children when they come into court. Find out what is going on day after day in a court system that denies children the same basic protection that any adult will get in any court situation in the country.

Hypocrisy reeks through this whole debate. Unless there is a guarantee that every child in this country is given some basic elementary human rights and protections from the law, the persuasion of my argument is going to fall on deaf ears. I have emptied the Chamber with my eloquence.

Having had the debate, it is incumbent on this Chamber, regardless of the side we take on this bill, to see that the government initiates legislation to deal with the companion problems of what is happening in our society. I appeal to members to understand that there are unwanted children in our society. Someone is responsible for them and that someone is us, the collectivity of the state that makes the laws. We are morally responsible to ensure that those children have a decent chance at life.

When this bill passes away, I would like to hear the sanctimonious voices that argue against it or for it, based on protecting their own political rear ends, focus on the leftover problem of the neglected children in our society who need our attention and care. I thank you for listening, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. John Nunziata (York South—Weston): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member speaks about sanctimony. He said: "Hypocrisy reeks through this whole debate". It is not often that I agree with the hon. member but, with respect to this particular statement, I agree.

Coming from a member of Parliament who belongs to a political party that speaks about choice and the freedom to choose, the member talks about choice. Yet, in his own political party—and you speak about hypocrisy and sanctimony—his colleagues do not have the choice to vote in this House according to their own conscience. The party says that if you are a member of the New Democratic Party, then you must vote in this particular way, regardless of what your own morality tells you, regardless of where you stand on the issue. Members of the New Democratic Party are not permitted to vote according to their own conscience.

The member speaks of hypocrisy, but he and others in his party participated in the capital punishment debate. I recall it well. The member was not in the House a few years ago when we debated that issue. I recall very vividly and specifically his colleagues standing up, one after another, talking about the sanctity of life, about how important it was to protect life and how morally wrong it is, for the Government of Canada to destroy human life through the process of capital punishment.

These same members—and you speak of hypocrisy—now argue a different point. Now they no longer argue how sacred and how much sanctity there is to human life, all of a sudden they approach it from a different perspective.

In view of the position of his party; first, can he explain why members of his party do not have the choice to vote according to their own consciences? Second, I would like to ask the hon. member to explain very clearly where he stands on the issue of when life begins? He took others to task for suggesting that life begins at the moment of conception. In his view, given his position—

Mr. Rodriguez: Let him answer.

Mr. Nunziata: You will have a moment to answer. The hon. member says prior to birth. There ought not be a law in Canada to recognize life before birth. Is the hon. member arguing and suggesting that human life begins at the moment of birth? If not, how can he reconcile his

position on the issue of abortion with the fact that he must agree that life begins at some point before birth?

• (1610)

Mr. Barrett: It is very hard to follow my predecessor's logic. First of all, I will deal with his question about the votes in my party. I want to make this very clear, I would never belong to a party that does not allow everybody, in true conscience, to make their own decisions.

Mr. Nunziata: That's nonsense.

Mr. Barrett: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member says that that is nonsense. I do not question the integrity of the members of his party. I believe every member who comes to this Chamber votes in true conscience. No party tells anybody what to do because, on that basis, it would hardly be worth our being here in the first place. If you presume that our party tells people how to vote, come to a caucus meeting some time and enjoy the experience.

Having said that, the next question is about the beginning of life. I do not believe it happens at conception. I spent six years in Catholic universities; I studied with the Jesuits; it was an incredible experience. Their position and my position are different. They worked on me for six years, I worked on them for six years. It was a draw, Mr. Speaker.

My opinion is different from that hon. member's. If he suggests life begins at the moment of conception then I have to accept, on the basis of that argument, that all those sperm that are being wasted are killers. All those sperm that have not performed their duty must be corralled by law and fined or locked up for not completing their job. We cannot have loose sperm running around this country, without completing their job. If life begins at conception, all those sperm are acting immorally by not performing their task, as predesigned under that theory. Now, I do not want to be a sperm rounder-upper, Mr. Speaker, I do not want to be a sperm counter, but if you follow that argument logically, then we can go into menopause as well and say that every month there has been a natural abortion, and save me from that argument. That rigidity is so stupid that it defies—

Mr. Wappel: What is your position?

Mr. Barrett: I am not God, neither are you. You have to make your own decision and at what point you make that decision.

Mr. Nunziata: What is your view? Are you afraid to state your view?

Mr. Barrett: Mr. Speaker, if that member wants my view, rent me a hall, gather me a crowd, and I will tell him my view, how hypocritical it is to take the line of argument that member takes.

Mr. Nunziata: You're afraid to answer the question, Barrett. You're chicken.

Mr. Barrett: Mr. Speaker, even the church had a different position 130 years ago. Read your own history, my friend. It is a man-made decision and man-altered decision. I do not tell you what to do, I do not play God and you do not play God either. That kind of sanctimonious camp, especially for women, telling them what they have to do, is frankly absurd.

I want to thank you, Mr. Speaker, for letting me participate in this debate and I want to thank my hon. friend who is so wrong but so sure of himself.

Mr. Benno Friesen (Parliamentary Secretary to Solicitor General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, the way the member was talking about sperm and knowing the opposition that the NDP have to banks, I am sure that they are opposed to sperm banks too.

I listened to the member's speech with attention, and he kept impeccably intact his long tradition of having a stirring speech on a subject that was totally or almost totally unrelated to the subject before us, unless he is suggesting that to deal with all the housing problems, we ought to have abortions freely available. And to deal with all of the other social issues in life, we ought to have abortions freely available. If that is his solution to all the social problems, then he certainly misled us in his speech. He centred on one particular subject that fascinated me, because I have wondered about this for many years. He said when he was premier he invited the community to have a test for marriages, I thought I heard him say that.

Mr. Barrett: Pre-counselling.

Mr. Friesen: Pre-counselling or some kind of test. I would like to ask him how the community responded to him. What happens if people flunk?

An hon. member: They take another course.

Mr. Friesen: I am fascinated by the suggestion. I have often been intrigued by the fact that people have to take a course to drive a car, which is a lot simpler than maintaining a solid marriage.

An hon. member: All the more reason for some instruction.

Mr. Friesen: Right. I would like him to answer that question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Pronovost): I think the hon. member should use the next 60 seconds very carefully.

Mr. Barrett: Mr. Speaker, I had difficulty in convincing my own colleagues in the House that legislation would be appropriate before issuing a marriage licence so I asked for voluntary participation. I asked the religious communities if they would participate, and they responded positively. We set up a family life council in the province of British Columbia that had the backing and the role of the religious community.

I am very sorry that my successor, the then minister of welfare, was the one who killed that program, the Hon. William Vander Zalm, the great spokesperson for family life. However, the program was reinitiated after public demand.

Referring to the consequence of it, it is not a question of asking people to write a test. It was a commitment from the religious community that I admire and respect on a non-sectarian basis to participate in encouraging and giving an opportunity to those people who had convictions or were seeking some guidance to discuss them with someone who was knowledgeable in that field. I was looking to cut down the number of divorces in our society. I am still looking for a way to solve that problem. I do not have the magic answer. However, I wanted to expand the options available to couples who were serious about their marriage vows to talk to somebody on a whole range of subjects before they went into marriage.

Furthermore, I would hope that such programs would be encouraged today. I conclude by making the same appeal. There are children out there who need basic services. Can we put the same emotion into an argument to ensure that those services are provided?

Mr. John Reimer (Kitchener): Mr. Speaker, I have struggled with how I should vote on this bill at third reading. As a legislator I accept my duty of legally protecting the most vulnerable of all human beings within our society: the unborn.

Today, as I stand in this House, I appeal to my colleagues to contemplate the historical importance of this moment. We are doing what we have been elected to do: to make law. We have had no law since January 1988. For the previous 19 years we had a law that did not adequately protect the unborn. I have been a part of this continuing struggle since my involvement as a hospital board member in Kitchener for nine years and as a member of Parliament from 1979 to 1980 and again since 1984. I have submitted private members' bills on this topic and have participated in every debate on abortion and most recently as a member of the legislative committee on Bill C-43.

Earlier today we heard two excellent presentations by two other members of that committee. We heard a moving and inspiring speech by the member for Surrey—White Rock. We also heard an excellent address from the hon. member for South Shore.

Since the Morgentaler decision of the Supreme Court in January 1988 our country has been without a law on abortion. For many, the debate on what should be done about abortion has been based on the assumption that the only law which would be constitutionally acceptable to fill this vacuum is one that is based on the gestational approach. This approach would in effect guarantee abortion on demand for up to 16 weeks or 20 weeks.

The present bill is not what I would like it to be. To develop a law on the assumption of gestation would violate my fundamental understanding of life and that of the world-renowned scientists such as Dr. Jerome Le-Jeune who appeared before our committee.

My colleagues and I have worked long and hard to change the kind of bill the government would introduce into the House from one that permits abortion on demand for up to 20 weeks to one that protects life from conception.

• (1620)

I am pleased that Bill C-43 has implicitly accepted that life affirming approach to law and has rejected the gestational approach. After an all-party legislative committee examined the proposed legislation and after this House last night turned down amendments which would have strengthened the legal protection of the unborn, we are now faced with the key question of saying yes or no to

Bill C-43 unamended. Now I have come to this moment of declaring my position and my reasons for that position.

I will be supporting Bill C-43 as it stands at third reading. My reasons are as follows. First, if this bill passes it will signify an important shift in the debate since the Morgantaler decision of January 1988. The gestational approach, which even the Law Reform Commission in its 1989 study paper offered as the only way to reach a compromise, was rejected.

With the passage of this bill, arguments on the taking of the life of the unborn can no longer be based on the assumption that life before birth can be taken at will. Why? Because this bill has in effect rejected the pro-abortion ideology. If this bill is passed, future debates should focus on the reasons abortion should or should not be allowed.

Since January 1988 we have been forced to argue why the unborn should be protected. If this bill passes, the operative assumption is that life of the unborn is indeed deserving of some legal protection from conception. Now the burden lies with those who favour abortion to provide medically valid reasons it should be allowed. Therefore we have begun to build on the principle that life must be protected from conception.

Second, there is at least an attempt to deal with the very difficult challenge of protecting both the unborn child and the mother. While that attempt is incomplete the bill recognizes the existence of two lives. By so doing, the legislation recognizes a reality which cannot be and indeed must not be avoided.

The third reason I support this bill is that abortion is again in the Criminal Code and subject to a criminal sanction in the case of unlawful abortion. Let us not underestimate the value this communicates to the Canadian public. It makes a statement to our nation that abortion is no longer regarded by law makers as a simple or casual medical procedure. Abortion is again a criminal act unless it meets the requirements of the law and the standards of the medical profession. Law not only serves to contain unacceptable behaviour but also serves as a guide upholding values for all to see and to respect. As the Law Reform Commission stated:

> The criminal law is our nation's fundamental statement of public policy—ultimately the criminal law is a mirror of what we are; it reflects our commitment or lack of commitment, to human dignity and equality. The law does not exist for the sole or primary purpose of punishing illicit acts. It exists, as an expression, in a broad sense, of the kind of people we are. It does not merely regulate our behaviour, it articulates and symbolizes our values and beliefs.

Furthermore, the Supreme Court will be required to recognize the principles of justice reflected in this bill. As well, this bill calls on the medical profession to deal with the life of both the unborn child and the mother. Doctors are expected to exercise their professional responsibility to the best of their ability, recognizing that they must consider the human right to life of both patients.

Finally, this bill provides us with a foundation on which we can build in the future. By rejecting the assumption and approach of gestation and by implicitly recognizing the protection of life from conception, we now have a basis on which to build stronger protection for the unborn. We can then better balance the mother's right to the security of her person and the state's interest in the protection of the foetus. However, there is a very serious weakness in this bill. The definition of health is far too broad and far too inclusive. This major weakness created such difficulties for me, to the point of almost voting against the bill at third reading. However I have come to recognize that the bill at least points us in the right direction.

Many ask if this bill will save any lives. I believe it could. Cardinal Carter commented:

> If the medical profession takes its new responsibilities seriously, if the attorneys general of our provinces apply the law as it is written, if our law officers, particularly our judges, enforce the prescriptions, we may save some lives.

Surely, if doctors took their responsibilities seriously under this bill individually and collectively, they could ensure that good medical practice according to their own medical standards and professional ethics would not permit some of their colleagues to disregard all that they have been taught. Through peer pressure and the enforcement of professional ethics, doctors could stop the vast majority of abortions that have absolutely no medical validity because they are socio-economic in origin, as they themselves testified and admitted before the committee.

For me, this bill is not a denial of my principles. I am not for a moment forsaking the principles which have guided and will continue to guide me in my ongoing struggle to protect the unborn. I am engaged in a long and difficult struggle for justice for the unborn. To vote for this bill is therefore part of a long-term strategy to

help bring about public respect for life at all stages of development.

In October 1989 my colleagues and I turned the Department of Justice and the cabinet from a gestational approach. Indeed, for me to vote against this bill now would be a compromise. It would be an admission of defeat, an opting for no law, and a cop-out. This would be an abdication of my responsibility as a law maker.

When Bill C-43 was debated at report stage my colleagues and I introduced amendments. Frankly, I am deeply disappointed that none of them passed. We pressed for at least three amendments.

The first one would have added the word "seriously" before the word "threatened".

The second one would have required the physician to first conclude that there is no other medically acceptable treatment to alleviate the health risk.

The third amendment would have stipulated that the definition of the word "health" specifically exclude psychological considerations which the Minister of Justice before the committee interpreted to include socio-economic factors.

If these three amendments had been accepted they would have changed this bill into one which would have adequately responded to the Supreme Court's invitation to Parliament to balance the mother's rights to security of her person and society's interest in the protection of the foetus.

We are still making progress. In advising pro-lifers Dr. J. C. Wilke, President of the American Right to Life Movement said:

> Their choice is either to be unrealistic and seek legislation they are sure to lose and then watch the holocaust continue, or realistically pass the best possible measure, stopping (some) of the killing now, and then come back another year and save some more lives—with the passing of years it has become painfully obvious that we are not going to stop abortion in one single step. All responsible pro-life leaders accept that it will have to be done step by step.

With this bill we are taking one small yet important step today for the unborn. My prayer is that many more steps will follow. To give up on the bill and to do nothing is to stand idly by as tens of thousands of lives per year are snuffed out. I personally do not see that stance as a form of higher Christian integrity. We must work to restrain evil and save as many lives as we can whenever we can.

• (1630)

Some would argue that no law is better than this law. I believe they are mistaken for the following two reasons. First, we would be missing an opportunity to use the fulcrum of law to shift the influence of law toward justice for the unborn.

Second, it will be years before another government will attempt to write a law on abortion. As a legislator today, I cannot say: "Let's kill this bill so that hopefully in the future we can do better". That is compromising my task today by hiding behind the skirts of an unknown future and that, to me, is not leadership.

Furthermore, Cardinal Carter stated: "We are pleased that we will have a law, even one so imperfect".

Archbishop Ambrosic, who recently succeeded Cardinal Carter, stated on April 14, 1990:

> Abortion is always wrong. We can never be at peace with a law that permits abortion. Having said this, I ought to add that in my opinion, some law is better than no law. As it stands, the proposed law at least criminalizes abortion although I would like to make it much more restrictive than it is.

Further, I agree with the Law Reform Commissions's testimony to the committee. I would like to quote from what Justice Linden said to us:

> Bill C-43 does not solve all the problems of unwanted pregnancy. It is not meant to. It is just meant to solve a legal problem, a small aspect of this general problem. For a long-term solution, we need better education, better reproductive counselling, and greater social and economic support for child care. We need more help for women who get pregnant as a result of failed contraception, or because of incest or rape. We need to ensure that pregnant women have a real choice about their future, so that abortion does not seem to them to be the only answer. We need as a nation to be more compassionate and supportive of families, of mothers and their children. So let us recognize that Bill C-43 is only one step, albeit an important one, in dealing with this complex problem.

William Wilberforce fought for 19 years as a member of Parliament in England to end the slave trade, and for another 26 years to end slavery itself within the British Empire. Throughout all those years he never compromised on his ultimate goal and principles. However, he

did make concessions in timing and he did vote yes to incremental improvements. He even agreed to pay slave traders money out of the public purse to provide an extra six inches of sleeping space on their ships carrying the slaves. But he did not compromise on his ultimate goal and principles.

Therefore, I say to my pro-life friends, let us keep our eyes clearly on the goal of achieving a real balance which recognizes both the mother's right to the security of her person and society's interest in the true protection of the unborn. In the meantime, let us say yes to whatever moves us toward that goal, even if the steps may seem very small indeed. At least they are steps in the right direction.

Today, we on the pro-life side of this debate, do not have the numbers, but we are strong enough to defeat any gestational law. We are strong enough to produce a bill that includes abortion in the Criminal Code. We are strong enough to make sure that there are some criminal sanctions against unlawful abortion and that the principle within that bill implicitly protects human life from conception or, more technically, from implantation.

We are also strong enough to ensure that by passing this bill we are taking the first step toward a stronger and better law in the future. Further, we are teaching that abortion is a serious moral issue and that society at large, and doctors in particular, should start acting responsibly. Our laws and our lives should express our commitment to compassion and justice for the lives of the unborn and their parents. This is my commitment. That is what I will work for as long and as best I can.

Mr. John Nunziata (York South—Weston): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member and I happen to agree with respect to the issue itself and that life must be protected from the moment of conception. However, I have very serious difficulties in accepting the reasons why he and others who consider themselves pro-life are supporting this piece of legislation.

He speaks of incremental gain. He feels that it is better to have this bill than no bill at all. I suggest to the hon. member that if this bill carries, and it appears that in fact it will carry on Tuesday, then the likelihood of a new bill or changes to this bill being introduced in the foreseeable future are negligible in that the government today, and perhaps future governments, will not feel the pressure necessary to address again the issue of abortion.

As well, I would like to say to him in all sincerity that when we are talking about rights surely he would agree that rights are rights. If we agree that life begins at the moment of conception, how then can he and others who consider themselves pro-life support a bill, which in my view is a fraudulent piece of legislation, that would allow abortion on demand, a bill that differentiates between life after birth and life before birth, in that if a life after birth is taken there follows a specific penalty?

In my view there is absolutely no adequate protection for life in this particular bill. The penalty is different for the taking of a life before birth, whether it be an hour before birth, a month before birth or three months before birth.

How can he reconcile his views with a bill that will, for all intents and purposes, allow abortion on demand? If one truly and sincerely believes in life and the sanctity of life, then how can one support a bill that treats life before birth differently than life after birth?

Mr. Reimer: Mr. Speaker, I will be pleased to try and respond to the questions raised by the member for York South—Weston.

The comment he made about incremental gain is correct. I am saying that we are at least gaining something. We are gaining a law. In the first place it is in the Criminal Code. It has a criminal sanction. It implicitly recognizes that there is a need to protect the unborn child, from conception.

He said that the government may not feel the pressure now if we pass this bill, and therefore, we will not be able to do anything further. I know the member was listening to me. He will recall what I said about one example from the British Parliament concerning William Wilberforce who worked for 19 years to end the slave trade, then 26 years more to end slavery itself. That is a long, long time.

If someone had come to him after the first attempt and said: "You are not going to get it. Give up", or if someone had come to him and said: "You are making a slight concession here. You cannot do that. Go for all or nothing," would he have ended it? No. He had to keep his eye on the ultimate goal and keep working at every step possible to get something. That is what we have to do.

The member asked if the government was not going to feel the pressure. That never stopped him before the law was struck down, or since it was struck down by the court from bringing in his own private members' bills. It did not prevent me from bringing in private members' bills. It did not prevent any of us from speaking in support of those private members' bills. We will continue to do it. I hope that he does that. I intend to do that. We have to keep working at this.

• (1640)

The question now is whether or not we are really acting responsibly as lawmakers if we say that it is better to have no law with no restraints, meaning full abortion on demand for at least another four years, plus the two we have already just passed as a minimum. I say no.

However, if this was a gestational bill before us, then I would say its principles are wrong. At least the principles in this bill are implicitly going the right way. That is why I say build on the little bit of good that is there. Therefore we will have a law. Therefore we implicitly say something must be protected. Therefore we are teaching society, and there is value.

Let us start doing what we did in terms of smoking. For many years smoking was perfectly acceptable. It was legitimate. Then some of us started to learn in our health classes that it is not acceptable. As a health and physical education teacher I taught that. Then we worked hard. I worked hard as a hospital board member to get rid of it. Finally, everybody started to listen to the evidence. Then we finally started to see some change.

Let us bring in a law that says it is criminally wrong. Let us now use that to teach. Let us use all the information that people like Dr. Jerome LeJeune gave us. Let us keep reminding people that they are dealing with life from conception.

Just as we got society to turn around on smoking, maybe we will begin to get society to turn around on this issue and start doing what I know the hon. member wants, what I want as well.

Ms. Dawn Black (New Westminster—Burnaby): Mr. Speaker, the member opposite made comments about a member of Parliament in the British Parliament who worked for years to ensure an end to slavery. It was a laudable goal, and he was eventually successful.

I want to say that women in Canada have struggled for 20 years to get abortion out of the Criminal Code of Canada. Women have struggled long and hard to get abortion out of the Criminal Code of Canada.

I want to ask him how he feels about the majority of Canadian women who see this kind of legislation, and who see the kinds of remarks that he has made in this House today, as really insulting to them. Women do not take this decision lightly. Women struggle. Women search within their own souls and their own consciences before they make a decision to have an abortion.

How can he justify this criminal legislation and his attitude of the state and he having the right to decide when and if a woman will have a child?

Mr. Reimer: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby mentions the fact that there are women in Canada who do not want to see abortion in the Criminal Code. That is correct. There are also some men who do not want to see it in the Criminal Code. But there are also many other women who do want to see it in the Criminal Code. She did not mention that.

I presented in this House a petition with the signatures of women only—over 220,000 signatures—from across this country who wanted a law that would protect the unborn. What about those 220,000 women?

What about the many other women in Canada who say that according to all the available medical evidence we are dealing with two lives when we talk about abortion? We are dealing with the life of the mother and the life of the child within the mother.

I always find it incredulous to say that we have to balance those interests as though the mother somehow or other has to balance the choice of whether or not her own child within her has a right to life. My goodness, that is a denial of everything a mother wants. It makes no sense.

We know that in the sense of where there is a case of real threat to the mother's life, then there is a need to ask: "Is there a time when we take one life to protect another life?" There is then a legitimate role to play. The Supreme Court invited us to play that role. In fact, it said to us that the precise point in the development of that foetus is up to Parliament to decide. We have. This

bill, even in its weak form, states that it implicitly starts at conception. That is why I say, let us take at least the good in this bill and let us vote for it so that we can build on it and keep working in the future to improve it.

Mr. Tom Wappel (Scarborough West): Mr. Speaker, in the brief time that I have to discuss Bill C–43 tonight, I would like to divide my remarks into three distinct categories.

First, I would like to state my position with respect to this issue. Perhaps a better way of putting it is to say that I will restate my position on this particular issue.

Second, I would like to discuss Bill C–43 and the inherent flaws that I see in it.

Third, I would like to make some responsive remarks to the speeches made by some other members and some of the points raised by them. I will then, of course, draw a conclusion.

My position is fairly clear. There is no greater right than the right to live. It is upon this right that all other rights rest. In that context, we have to look at what we are talking about when we speak about Bill C–43. Of course, we are speaking about abortion.

What is an abortion? With the greatest of respect, that is the question so many members of the House refuse to come to grips with. Precisely what is an abortion? If we look in the dictionary we find that abortion is defined as the procuring of premature delivery for the purpose of destroying offspring. I emphasize those words, "for the purpose of destroying offspring". That is the point. For me, human life begins at conception. Of course, if you have a human life and you have an abortion—a medical procedure designed to destroy offspring—you are clearly destroying human life.

Because an abortion kills a human being, it is wrong. It must be prevented, just as we prevent the killing of all other human beings, including convicted criminals. The reason the House is in this turmoil with respect to this issue is the overwhelming revulsion of society about the topic of abortion.

If we were not talking about the killing of a human being, but about something equivalent to cutting your hair or nails, or to mowing the lawn, no one would be upset. That is not what we are talking about. We are talking about the destruction of human life. That is what gets people into the state in which they have to air their grievances and about which they feel that there is no position other than their own.

That is why we have to come to grips as a country and as a Parliament with the fundamental question. We have to admit to ourselves that an abortion destroys a human being.

Why would I say that there is a revulsion in society? Let us look at the medical profession. We know that the Canadian Medical Association has approximately 45,000 member doctors. Out of that membership of 45,000 we know that there are approximately 800 who will do abortions. That is 1.7 per cent of the doctors in the country.

We further know from the Canadian Medical Association that out of these 800 doctors only about 325 do the majority of abortions. That is 0.72 per cent of the doctors in the country.

I ask rhetorically: Why is it that an infinitesimal percentage of the medical doctors in the country will perform an abortion? I will provide an answer. It is because those doctors know scientifically, from medical school and biology class, that an abortion destroys a living entity.

• (1650)

I would like to move on to address the flaws, as I see them, of Bill C–43, and, in doing so, to speak directly to those members of Parliament who oppose the allowing of abortions and yet consider that it is appropriate to vote in favour of Bill C–43.

This morning the Minister of Justice declared that this bill protects the foetus. We heard the member for Kitchener say time and time again how this bill implicitly—and he emphasized the word "implicitly", not explicitly but implicitly—protects the foetus.

The Minister of Justice said that this bill protects the foetus. I would like to say two things in that regard. Why is it appropriate for our society to protect the foetus? It can only be because the foetus is a human being. If the foetus is not a human being, why protect it? Why should we be involved in this debate at all? Of course the foetus is a human being. It needs protection. The government

recognizes that it needs protection. The Minister of Justice says that this bill protects the foetus.

With the greatest of respect, I say that this bill does not protect the foetus. It will not stand the scrutiny of the Supreme Court of Canada. That is why I asked the member for South Shore what was the test of the Supreme Court of Canada. I will tell you, Mr. Speaker, what the test of the Supreme Court of Canada is.

I have in my hand the decision of the Supreme Court of Canada in the Daigle case. I refer specifically to a section in which the Supreme Court is dealing with the Quebec Charter of Rights and the argument that a foetus is protected thereunder, and I quote:

> In our view the Quebec *Charter*, considered as a whole, does not display any clear intention on the part of its framers to consider the status of a foetus. This is most evident in the fact that the *Charter* lacks any definition of "human being" or "person".

This bill lacks any definition of human being or person. Yet, because it is in the Criminal Code, the only definition of human being or person contained in the Criminal Code provides that one becomes a human being when one is born. That is the definition of a human being in which this bill is being incorporated. How that protects the foetus is beyond me.

In any event, note that the Supreme Court finds that there is no specific definition of human being or person. The decision continues:

> One can ask why the Quebec legislature, if it had intended to accord a foetus the right to life, would have left the protection of this right in such an uncertain state—If the legislature had wished to grant foetuses the right to life, then it seems unlikely that it would have left the protection of this right to such happenstance.

That is precisely the point. That is precisely, in my view, what the Supreme Court of Canada is going to say with regard to this bill.

There is a definition of health in the bill, a very comprehensive definition of health, but there is no definition of foetus, no definition of human being, and no definition of what it is that this bill is attempting to protect and why. That failure is a fatal flaw in this bill. In my view, it will not pass the scrutiny of the Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court has stated clearly in the passages that I have cited that if you want to protect the foetus, Parliament has the right to do so, but you must do it explicitly. That is why the member for Kitchener, at least four times in his speech, said "implicitly". The member recognizes that the test is to be explicit. This bill is not. In fact, as I said, there is no definition.

If this bill passes it will institutionalize abortion. It will, in fact, make the procedure of abortion legitimate. In my view, the respect for life which it pretends to try to engender, will be diminished.

The member for Kitchener was talking about step-by-step procedures. In the United Kingdom, there is an abortion law which allows an abortion up to 28 weeks. Simply dividing the four weeks that there are in a month into 28 weeks shows that we are talking about seven months. In England abortion is allowed up to seven months. That was passed on the basis of putting it into law, and then working backward. It has not happened. Not only has it not happened, but society has become desensitized to the respect for life.

The next step has already been played out. Because of the lack of respect for life, embryo experimentation has been authorized in the United Kingdom. The next step, of course, is foetal experimentation. Is that the kind of society that we can look forward to in Canada?

I will now quickly address a few of the points that have been raised up by other members. A statement has been made that a woman has the right to choose. The question must be, a right to choose what? The answer is, to terminate a pregnancy. Quite frankly, that is an antiseptic way of saying, the right to choose to destroy the living entity within the person. I submit that that is unacceptable in a civilized society.

Another statement which has been used is: "It's my body". The fact is that there are two bodies involved. There is the mother and there is the child within her. Both those bodies are entitled to respect. Both those bodies are entitled to protection.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Pronovost): I will have to ask the hon. member to conclude, please.

Mr. Wappel: Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, I would like to quote Martin Luther King who said: "A law may not change the heart, but it will restrain the heartless."

What kind of law? The law must recognize explicitly civilized society's recognition of the right of the unborn to be alive. This bill does not do that. I urge members to defeat it for that reason. No law is better than a flawed law, because a flawed law will lend legislative legitimacy

to the greatest violation of human rights in history—the denial of the fundamental right to exist.

Ms. Dawn Black (New Westminster—Burnaby): Mr. Speaker, when the member was stating his views on Bill C–43, he indicated that only a small proportion of doctors perform abortions in this country. He said it was because they knew or had scientific knowledge that when they were performing an abortion it was destroying a human life.

The truth of the matter is that only a small number of doctors perform abortions because they are harassed and because it is not a well–funded service for doctors. They find it a difficult question, there is no doubt about that, just as many of us find it a difficult question. But it has nothing to do with scientific knowledge.

I have a letter from the Canadian Medical Association. In part, it states: "We believe that, if passed, Bill C–43 will place at risk both the confidentiality and trust so essential to the physician–patient relationship. Further, we are convinced that this law will effectively limit access to this medical procedure resulting in greater danger to the pregnant woman's physical or mental well–being as the process for seeking an abortion becomes lengthier, one of the reasons the old law was struck down".

I would like the member to comment on the position of the Canadian Medical Association. I sat on the legislative committee. We saw no scientific knowledge from any of the scientific community, from the Canadian mental health community, or from the Canadian Medical Association, that supported his thesis. There simply is none. There was none. He is wrong.

• (1700)

Mr. Wappel: Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for her question. I believe that the answer that I can give is that there are divisions in the medical community as there are in this House, as there are in society. No matter what anybody says, less than 1 per cent of the doctors in this country do abortions. It is not because we do not pay doctors enough to do the abortions, it is because they find them distasteful. They find them distasteful because they know precisely what they are doing.

Every obstetrician in this country knows that when he treats a pregnant woman, he is treating two patients, his pregnant patient and the child within her. Every single doctor who treats that pregnant woman is perfectly aware that there are two patients. We cannot deny simple biology. We cannot deny that there is a living entity within the womb that is growing. We cannot deny that biological fact.

To say that life begins at birth is to say that anything can be done before birth because there is no inherent human value to be protected. I do not accept that. I hope that our Canadian society does not accept that, but this is the forum to discuss those points. This is what we should be discussing, talking about when life begins, deciding those questions and not hiding from them and pretending that they do not exist. We have to come up with the facts and decide when human life begins. Once we decide that as a legislative body, then we will decide when, if ever, human life should be terminated.

Mr. Nicholson: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I just wanted to let you know that the procedure on the government side of the House from now on will be that each member will divide the 20 minute time, so that each member will have 10 minutes, followed possibly by a five minute question period. From this point on, on the government side, that will be the procedure.

Mr. Joe Comuzzi (Thunder Bay—Nipigon): Mr. Speaker, first let me start off by offering to you my personal congratulations on the choice the Prime Minister announced in the House the other day. I think you and I have spent have spent time in this House together and at different committees, and I was absolutely thrilled with the announcement. I wish you the very best and look forward to working with you and being recognized as time goes on.

I am not going to enlarge on the substance of what I have said in this House on two other occasions on this very important subject, those dates having been October 30 and November 22. I have some hesitation in getting up again today to speak on this subject but I found I

should get up and speak from a procedural aspect rather than from a substantive aspect of the abortion bill.

Let me quote from the comments I made on November 22, as reported at page 6016 of *Hansard*:

> —it is the duty of every member of this House, to address these very important issues. We have now come to the point where decisions should be made. The decisions that are before us are: When do we terminate a pregnancy, what rights do individuals have in our society, and what are the rights of the unborn child from the moment of conception?

These are awesome questions that sometimes we have difficulty in answering. The reason that I rise today to address, not the substance of that issue, but some procedural aspects is that, prior to this first debate and as we get on to the situation of voting on this issue tonight, there is a group in our society that is determined to put an end to all abortions.

Unfortunately, in their zeal to protect the rights of the unborn, they often contravene, infringe upon, and fail to respect the rights of the living. They fail to respect the most fundamental right of all Canadians under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the right to free speech. On a personal note, this has happened to me and, as a result, I have some hesitation in getting up and speaking about it, not about the substance or because of the substance—I cannot change from my original position—but from the procedural aspects and the type of tactics they use in order to get you to change your position.

They use letters and magazines. The one that I am going to refer to is *Vitality*, Volume 3, No. 8. It says that, despite the fact that I had issued no new statement and had made no public statement calling for full legal protection of the unborn, which is absolutely wrong. The article reads, "Joe Comuzzi won in this election, a man who has made no public commitment to work to protect the rights of the unborn". That again, is wrong. What they were looking for in that statement is for me to sign some document which I could not sign. I had given them the reasons why I could not sign that document. It was not acceptable, it did not fit their very tight philosophy and, as a result, they were trying to blackmail me into signing. I refused to do so and these were the tactics they used.

The other modes of trying to coerce people into adopting position are letters to the editor from people who are obviously in the pro-life movement. They try to embarrass you in your local community. I consider these types of procedures to be unacceptable and they are the reason for my rising today to make these statements.

Despite our personal beliefs, the subject we are discussing today must be approached with compassion, tolerance and understanding. Only through this reasonable dialogue between reasonable men and women can we attack and expect to resolve this very difficult societal issue that is before us today.

In my analysis of what we have heard and what we have seen, I particularly liked the speech that was given by the Governor of the State of New York, when he was addressing the convocation class in 1984 at Notre Dame University. I thought it would be interesting to quote from Governor Cuomo's speech where he said: "It would be tragic if we let the dialogue that we are involved with today become a prolonged and divisive argument that destroys or impairs our ability to practise and to love one another, to practise any part of our morality, to practise our sense of touching and healing our fellow human being, and to affirm that great life that surrounds all of us in this country".

In that quote I think is the compassion which I referred to earlier in my speech. I am afraid it is a compassion that has been missing in the procedural movement of those people who claim to be pro-life and use the tactics I referred to earlier to get people like myself to change our minds or be more adamant in our positions.

I think there was no more compelling meeting in this whole process than the meeting in my office in Thunder Bay, when I visited with the people of the pro-choice movement. They came into my office and for the first time I listened to them intently. They said that they are not on the other side of the fence. They are not against life because they oppose those principles and the philosophy that the other side chooses. That was the most sincere statement I heard in this whole process. I do not think anyone in this debate is against life. I compliment and thank the people who took the time out in the area I represent, Thunder Bay—Nipigon, and all those people throughout Canada who have taken an interest in this very important topic, people who came and expressed their views and helped us make our decisions as politicians, in a reasoned and compassionate way. As I said,

Mr. Speaker, it was the best lesson that I had heard, and the best lesson throughout this whole process.

• (1710)

At the outset I made my views known on this topic very clearly. I reconfirmed my position. I did not want to leave anyone uncertain as to where I stood. The result the pro-life movement has tried to accomplish is where I really stand on this issue. My position has not changed. Substantively, I am with those people who are against the termination of pregnancy and I am certainly against the procedural issues that the pro-life movement stands for and how they approach the problem. I reconfirmed that position in the House today. I intend to vote against the legislation.

Philosophically, I am on their side but, personally, I separate myself from any association with that group which fails to exhibit the compassion towards our fellow human beings which this sensitive subject demands. I think I have made my position clear. This group that represents the substantive issue that I represent fails to exhibit the compassion, it fails to listen to a reasoned approach, it fails to acknowledge that there can be another side to an issue, and it fails to respect the freedoms that all of us in Canada have come to enjoy.

There is a group which in their zeal attempts to protect the life and rights of the unborn but they fail to protect the rights of those of us already here.

Mr. Geoff Scott (Hamilton—Wentworth): Mr. Speaker, I extend to you my sincere congratulations in assuming your very high position. I also thank you for recognizing me during this critical and emotional debate for so many Canadians.

I will be brief as I make my position clear one more time, as I have done debate after debate, vote after vote, election after election, and Parliament after Parliament.

I believe that life begins at the moment of conception, period, full stop. I believe that nothing should interrupt that life if we are truly trying to protect the rights of the unborn.

While I can modify my anti-abortion stand in a couple of ways, and I will refer to them in a moment, I must stand on my own personal beliefs, whether or not there is a consensus among the people I represent, whether or not I am adhering to the government line, as expressed by the Prime Minister and the Attorney General of Canada, both of whom know exactly where I stand.

On that point, I want to commend the Right Hon. Prime Minister, his House leader, and my friend from Calgary West, the chief government whip for allowing a free vote according to the individual conscience of members of Parliament. I exercised that opportunity to vote freely during a number of amendments to Bill C-43 and a motion of concurrence last evening.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot tell you, or anyone who is looking in, or listening to, or reading the transcripts of this debate, how agonizing, how emotionally difficult this matter of abortion is for any member of Parliament, regardless of the party that he or she represents. Here is what I said in my weekly, or in my semi-occasional weekly column to my constituents in the *Flambouroulgh Review* of July 20, 1988:

> Abortion is an extremely volatile issue. It is philosophical. It is emotional. It affects everybody, deeply and personally. I will therefore exercise my vote conscientiously and responsibly.

I said earlier that I could soften my pro-life stand in a couple of obviously difficult circumstances: first, in the case of rape or incest and, second, in the case of a medical emergency. This comes down to a fundamentally important point which some of our colleagues have touched upon, but I want to reinforce it. I am not equipped to play God. No politician is. Any politician who thinks she or he is equipped to play God had better not be in this business.

Only when there is a really true medical emergency which affects the life of the mother to be should the matter become a case between the woman and her doctor. In that case I can certainly support the medical side of this issue.

As an adjunct to that, I also soften a little in terms of the psychological aspects if there is severe mental distress or harm to the mother and/or to the foetus. Then I think that again it becomes a matter between a woman and the appropriate medical authority to make that decision, but that is where it stops in my view.

I have one very deep regret about some of the signals I have been sending on Bill C-43, and that is my profound respect for women, not only for my colleagues on all sides of the House but for the women's movement in

general. I truly admire those women who have wrestled in physical, psychological and legal ways with this issue.

I do not want any of my female colleagues in this place to think for one moment that my very deep and proper conscience votes on the amendments have anything to do with my respect for the women colleagues in this place who vote the other way. Not in the slightest do I acquaint my affection for women with the direction that my votes take on the abortion issue.

We are talking about life itself. Male and female foetuses are at stake here. We respect life. We spare life. I see no way that I can support this bill next Tuesday, May 29, unless there is some recognition of the protection of the unborn. There may be some. I am willing to withhold my final decision in terms of how I vote. There may be some of that protection. Maybe some law is better than no law at all, but I ha'e me doubts.

I really feel that I cannot support the legislation, not because my constituents feel that I should do so, not because I have received countless letters from across the country in support of my stand to vote against this bill unless amendments are passed, and certainly not because anyone on this side has ordered me one way or the other how to vote on this issue. No, sir.

I do not respond favourably to write-in campaigns or orders from above anywhere. I am simply voting according to my conscience, as I have said, the Prime Minister has graciously allowed members of Parliament to do.

I sympathize with those who want to vote pro-life according to their consciences. I heard very clearly, as we all have if we have been listening to this debate, the opposite arguments so very eloquently stated by the hon. member for Surrey—White Rock and the hon. member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, both distinguished representatives from British Columbia. I found their arguments fascinating, and in the case of the former premier of British Columbia, great theatre. It still does not change my mind. I owe it to my constituents and my fellow believers across the country to promote the sanctity of life and the protection of innocent unborn children.

• (1720)

Some will tell you, Mr. Speaker, that some compromise law is better than no law at all. As I said earlier, some do not want any law regarding abortion. As I said, I am not God and, certainly the former premier of British Columbia said the truest words that I have heard from him, neither is he.

This is a non-partisan debate. This bill in my view does not strike a balance between the rights of the woman and the rights of the foetus. I want a law which truly protects the rights of the unborn children who have no right or chance or opportunity to speak in this chamber as we do today. I will be keeping my own counsel about how to vote on Bill C-43 at third reading.

Mr. Ron MacDonald (Dartmouth): Mr. Speaker, I must say to the member for Hamilton—Wentworth that I think that was truly one of the better speeches I have heard in the House. It was one of the better speeches because it came straight from the heart. I said earlier today that many times we are engaged in rhetoric. This is one of those rare occasions in the House where the rhetoric has lessened and the emotion and humanness of the members of this place is shown to be at its best.

I do not know whether the hon. member heard my speech earlier, but I find myself in almost the same position of trying to grapple with that balance which in the Supreme Court decision said that parliamentarians had a right and should by right look at the societal interest and the rights of the foetus. I firmly believe, as a reasonable, rational individual such as my friend from Hamilton—Wentworth is, that the bill simply does not go far enough.

I guess I do this at some risk, and I hope I am not putting the member at some risk, but many times in my position of trying to find that balance with the societal rights of the foetus, people will say: "You are against women". Absolutely nothing could be further from the truth in my case, and I know in the case of the hon. member. The hon. member mentioned something that I have not heard in this debate before. It is that when we are dealing with the rights of the foetus, we are dealing with the rights of the foetus, male and female, so we are indeed dealing with the rights of women which must in my view be protected under any law. I want to commend him for striking a particular note with me on that

remark. I would hope that others who find this debate to be divisive would see the compassion and the deep reflective thought the hon. member put into his remarks.

I want to ask a question. The hon. member mentioned that he had been looking in the bill for some better definition of what "at risk" means when an abortion would be permitted under law. I am wondering, not to put words in the hon. member's mouth, if he is as concerned as I am and as some members are that the definition of when an abortion would be permitted under this legislation is just a little too loose and a little too open to interpretation. In a legalistic sense when those things happen, sometimes we err on the side of leniency and expansion. That is a great concern that I have.

Could the member elaborate a little more about the type of amendment he would have liked to have seen which would have better defined "at risk" and "health"?

Mr. Scott (Hamilton—Wentworth): Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend across the way for his kind comments.

One of the problems that I and a number of us on this side have about the current legislation is that one could drive trucks through the legal definitions of what at risk is, what health is, whether health means physical health, mental health, psychological health, or whatever. That is one of the things that will ultimately have to be resolved once we in this House decide what to do about this legislation.

I am being persuaded that some law, some foot in the door, some restriction on the Morgantaler–type mentality on abortions, is better than no law at all. I am being persuaded that maybe we have a chance in this House of Commons to do something which some Parliaments down the road may never have a chance to do. We have got a pretty good consensus kind of legislation. As I say, one can drive trucks through some of the phrases and the points such as at risk, for example.

All I can say to my hon. friend is that it is something that all of us are wrestling with. When I talked about male and female foetuses I thought that maybe I should draw attention to that end of the spectrum, because male and female members of Parliament are debating this issue and yet this issue is perceived to be strictly a woman's issue. It is. It is very much a woman's issue. None of us men have to go through abortions, but I still think that because we are talking from one end of the spectrum to the other we are talking about the need for all members of society to take a very serious look at this question and at this bill.

Mr. Ken Atkinson (St. Catharines): Mr. Speaker, as my friends have previously outlined, this is obviously a matter that causes us a great deal of concern. All of us have wrestled with the various aspects of the matter. As was previously mentioned it is also a balancing of rights.

In looking at the evidence before the parliamentary committee, the balancing of rights was mentioned quite a bit in term of various rights such as the foetal rights and the rights of the mother. It was a thread that seemed to go through the evidence all the time. Obviously that is the result of the Morgentaler decision and the striking down of the previous Section 251 because it infringed upon Section 7 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and affected a woman's security of her person.

In looking at what type of law can be drafted, we look at the decision and we see the remark that society has an interest in the foetus which has to be balanced with the rights of the mother.

How do we do that? Obviously it is very difficult. Bill C–43 is an attempt to reach that balance between the woman and the security of her person and society's interest in the protection of the foetus. When we are drafting the law we have to realize that we are within those parameters and have to deal with that particular aspect of the matter. Otherwise, if we have a law that is too restrictive, it will be struck down.

In looking at that, as well as looking at the woman's right to security of her person and also other matters under Section 2A of the charter, her equality rights under Section 15 and also her sexual equality rights under Section 28, we realize all those matters have to be taken into account in drafting the law.

It would not be easy to take a stand that would say no abortion ever, but if we decided to pass such a law we know that it would be struck down immediately. Are we being true to ourselves or am I being true to myself if we do that? I do not think I am. Where does that leave us?

I noticed in the evidence before the committee there was some indication that we could use Section 33 of the charter in order to make whatever law we produced valid for five years. I cannot accept that. I cannot accept that. We have a Charter of Rights and Freedoms and our country has evolved to the point where we feel confident enough that we can use that charter. Our laws should be within that charter. In that respect, I cannot see using

Section 33 in order to validate any law that we put forward.

• (1730)

If we wanted to go even further, to say that life begins at conception, this would require a constitutional amendment, with the obvious difficulties we all know that entails. But that also introduces a legal regime for the foetus itself. We do not even know the implications of that legal regime.

After a decision regarding foetal rights in the United States, and I do not mean to be frivolous, an action was launched by individuals claiming that nine months should be added to everybody's age, showing how that would affect individuals. There is also the question of accidents, and what happens in that matter. It is something that has not been thought through and I cannot go in that direction and I would not like to see the country go in that direction. So I reject Section 33 and I reject any constitutional amendment.

That leaves us with a framework as set out in the Morgentaler and Daigle cases in order to try to balance the rights of the woman under the Charter of Rights and balance the rights of the foetus. It is obviously a difficult task, and we have heard people make comment here that it has not occurred in this legislation.

This is something that is obviously going to change over a period of time. It is not going to remain static. I think that we all realize that the matter is not going to end in this particular chamber once this bill is dealt with. If the bill is defeated, we are faced with the reality that there will be no law in place. Although the Daigle case speaks to it, we do not want to see the events of last summer repeated, with the degradation of people and their emotions and private lives being exposed on the televisions of the nation. We need some law that will give us stability in this area.

This legislation is the best attempt at finding a a balance of the rights of the woman and the rights of the foetus. Many of the aspects of the Morgentaler decision in terms of access have been removed. One doctor is involved in this particular law. We see a definition of health to deal with previous concerns about that definition. Those are a couple of matters that seem to deal with the objections in terms of access that were raised by two or three of the judges in the Morgentaler decision. The attempt is being made to try to deal with the defects that were found in the previous Section 251 in this particular law.

The gestational approach originally proposed by the Law Reform Commission as a way to balance the rights of the foetus and the rights of the woman has been rejected. I have to agree with that decision because that approach could raise many difficult questions.

The Daigle case indicated that rights begin at birth. Looking at that particular aspect of it, it seems the Supreme Court did not want deal extensively with the legal aspect of rights of the foetus. I have my own personal views on the subject matter, but I do not feel that I can force them on to any other individual.

As I say, I start with the premise that we have a Charter of Rights and we must have a law that fits within that. To be true to myself and to ensure the inclusion of such a law, while recognizing the woman's rights, I think the balance provided within Bill C–43 is the best that can be achieved at this time.

I did not vote in favour of any the amendments that were put forward last evening. If any of those amendments were passed, they would have made the bill too restrictive.

If this law is passed, we are going to have a determination on it, I am sure, and this matter will not end here. But for those reasons, I feel that this is the best that we can do at the present time, in balancing the rights of the woman and the rights of the foetus. That is why I will be supporting this bill on third reading.

Ms. Dawn Black (New Westminster—Burnaby): Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to what the member on the government side of the House had to say. I think that he has tried very hard to be sensitive to many of the issues that people in the House and people from coast to coast in this country are struggling with on the whole issue.

I did, though, wonder when he said that part of his rationale for supporting Bill C–43 would be that he felt that this bill would prohibit or stop the kinds of horrific spectacles we saw last summer when the most personal

and intimate details of the life of a young woman, Chantal Daigle, were displayed across the country.

The anti-choice people, the anti-choice zealots, have already indicated clearly that if Bill C-43 becomes law, they will take that law and use it as a new legal tool in order to harass doctors and women who are seeking abortions. They have made that very clear.

I want to ask the hon. member to reconsider the idea that Bill C-43 will stop that. It will not stop that. What has stopped those civil injunctions has been the Supreme Court of Canada. It has been very busily going about its work shutting down these legal avenues to estranged boyfriends and others who would use the legal avenues to harass women.

However, these same people have indicated that if this bill becomes law they will use it in order to harass women and doctors. I would like him to comment on that, please.

Mr. Atkinson: Mr. Speaker, I would submit that the harassment, if there is any, will not go on too long. I share her concern and I do not want to see that sort of thing start up again.

By the same token, society's interest in protecting the foetus has to be recognized, as well as the woman's right. It has to be done through the mechanism that is set out here, with a doctors' opinion which is arrived at using generally accepted standards of the medical profession. I am sure that no court is going to allow a frivolous application to come forward. You are going to have to deal with that particular matter. You are going to have to show that that has not been taken care of.

I see my friend shaking her head. We disagree on that particular point. It is set out and the definition is there and a frivolous matter, I know, will be quickly taken care of.

• (1740)

Mr. John Nunziata (York South—Weston): Mr. Speaker, as you know, last evening Parliament was called upon to decide on a series of amendment that were introduced. Each of the amendments were defeated and the bill itself was concurred in at report stage by a significant number of members of Parliament. I believe the number was 132. That would suggest that when the final vote is called on Bill C-43, the legislation will, in fact, become law. I find that extremely regrettable.

When this bill was introduced into the House of Commons and debated at second reading stage, I voted for Bill C-43, not because I agreed with the bill. I indicated at the time that I had very serious reservations about Bill C-43, but I supported the bill at second reading simply to allow the bill to proceed to committee in order to enable members of Parliament, including myself, to present amendments in order to more accurately reflect my particular point of view with respect to this subject matter.

In their wisdom, the members of the legislative committee who considered Bill C-43, did not accept any amendments to the bill in the form that it was presented to them and given first reading on November 3, 1989.

In spite of the fact that the Prime Minister indicated to the House and to the country that it was a free vote, that members of Parliament in his caucus, the Conservative caucus, would be permitted to vote according to their own conscience, we know that in reality it was not a free vote. Members of Parliament were not free to vote according to their own conscience. In fact, the Prime Minister said that members of his cabinet were not free to vote, that they would all have to toe the party line and endorse Bill C-43. The message went out very clearly to the Conservative back-benchers that they should support Bill C-43.

At this point, I would like to salute those Conservative members of Parliament who broke with their party and rejected to date Bill C-43. I have great respect for them, knowing the possible consequences that might follow as a result of them not supporting the Prime Minister and cabinet on this particular issue.

This bill will become law on Tuesday. As I indicated at second reading stage, and I have since indicated time and time again in speeches that I have given across the country, this bill is the most fraudulent and hypocritical piece of legislation that I have seen in the six years that I have been in Parliament.

Bill C-43 resulted from the decision of the Supreme Court of Canada over two years ago that declared Sections 287 and 288 of the Code unconstitutional.

For a long period of time the government dithered, delayed, procrastinated and hoped that somehow the issue would disappear. It waited for the Morgentaler follow-up decision on the Borowski case. It then wanted to test the will of Parliament by introducing a multiple choice type of resolution.

Then, finally, it introduced amendments to the Criminal Code in the form that we have before us, Bill C-43. I submit to you, Mr. Speaker, that the government would not have introduced Bill C-43 had it not been for the so-called pro-life members of the Conservative caucus who decided to compromise on the issue and support the bill.

I am convinced that, if those members of Parliament had stood by their views and stood by their convictions and insisted on a piece of legislation that would accurately reflect how they felt about the issue, then the government would not have introduced this bill. It would not have perpetrated a fraud on the people of Canada by suggesting somehow that this bill was a compromise, a common ground, a bill that would try to bridge the gap between those who believe there ought to be no law at all and those who believe there should be a law protecting life from the moment of conception onward.

The only redeeming aspect of Bill C-43 is that it is legislation that would amend the Criminal Code of Canada. In effect, it would reintroduce the subject of abortion back into the Criminal Code of Canada. That is the only redeeming aspect of it.

Members of Parliament will know that the only jurisdiction that Parliament has to deal with this issue is the Criminal Code of Canada. The only place that a law could be dealt with is within the criminal law jurisdiction. The health jurisdiction is within the powers of provincial governments. So, if the government wanted to deal with this issue, it had to deal with it in the Criminal Code of Canada.

Why is this bill hypocritical and fraudulent? Prima facie at the outset, this bill states that, because they are introduced into the Criminal Code of Canada, abortions are illegal and contrary to the Criminal Code. That is what it says at the outset. The government thought that those who believed that the innocent unborn must be protected from the moment of conception onward would be happy and rejoice and say: "Thank you, Prime Minister. Thank you, Conservative government. You have recognized the sanctity of life."

The bill then defines the circumstances under which abortions could be obtained in such a broad fashion as to allow abortion on demand, abortion on request.

I would like to read the operative clause. It is a short bill, a page and half of text, two sections of the Criminal Code. The operative section would be 287(1) which states:

> Every person who induces an abortion on a female person is guilty of an indictable offence and liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years, unless the abortion is induced by or under the direction of a medical practitioner who is of the opinion that, if the abortion were not induced, the health or life of the female person would be likely to be threatened.

What does all that mean? First, it means that the abortion does not have to be done by a doctor, a medical practitioner. It simply states that in order to be legal, the abortion has to be done by a doctor or under the direction of a medical practitioner. In other words, as long as the medical practitioner or the doctor directs the person, a nurse, a clerk—anybody—can conduct an abortion. The doctor does not have to be present. The doctor could be elsewhere in the office, elsewhere in the city, or elsewhere in the country. All the doctor has to do is form the opinion—and I will get to how he forms that opinion in a moment—and that opinion could be formed as a result of a telephone conversation with the woman. Once that opinion is formed, the doctor could direct a nurse, a clerk, or anyone in the office, to perform that abortion.

How does the doctor arrive at the opinion that the abortion ought to take place? The doctor has to form the opinion that, if the abortion were not induced, the health or life of the female person would be likely to be threatened. The latter part of that is clear and straightforward, "the life of the female person would be likely be threatened". That is specific. Although it uses the word "likely", we are talking about the life of the female person.

• (1750)

But where the bill becomes totally broad and open is with respect to the word "health". Health is defined in the bill itself in subsection (ii) as including physical, mental and psychological health. In effect, under every circumstance, the doctor could form the opinion. There is no restriction. Mental, physical and psychological

health—that is the definition of health by which the doctor could form the opinion.

The likelihood of any doctor ever being prosecuted for an offence under Bill C-43 is extremely remote, to say the least. How could any doctor ever be successfully prosecuted? How could any prosecutor ever decide to prosecute under this particular section? It would be impossible and the government knew that. The bill is hypocritical in that it purports to be all things to all people.

Yesterday, I supported each of the amendments that were presented to the House that would make the bill a more restrictive bill. I regret that the motions did not carry, particularly Motion No. 10 which was introduced by my colleague and friend, the hon. member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell. That particular motion would have allowed abortions only in the circumstance in which the life of the mother was threatened.

The amendments were all defeated. It is my intention to vote against the bill and to encourage and urge other members of Parliament to vote against the bill, because I believe it is a bad piece of legislation.

I believe it is bad, not only because of its nature, in that it tries to be all things to all people, but because it does not address the central issue which somehow politicians in this place are afraid to deal with and which the government was afraid to deal with, and that is the issue of when life begins.

The Supreme Court of Canada in the Morgentaler decision did not have the courage and backbone to render a decision in terms of when life begins. How can the issue of abortion be dealt with, and all the consequent considerations of the issue of abortion, without deciding first when life begins?

I put a question to a member of the New Democratic Party earlier today. I asked him when life begins, in his view, and he refused to answer. He made a joke about the issue. That is where the argument of the so-called pro-choice element of this debate completely collapses.

According to the pro-choice—those who would have no abortion law at all—the logic of their position is that life begins at birth. They are saying that they want no law at all, absolutely, under no circumstances. In effect, they are saying that life begins at birth.

That position cannot be reasonably argued because any reasonable person must conclude that there is life before birth. We know that as a scientific fact that there is life before birth. When that life begins is the question. Some might ask, who am I to try to decide when life begins?

We are all mere mortals. We are all mere human beings. We are called upon as parliamentarians and as legislators to make difficult decisions and to make tough decisions. Yet, the government and members on the government side and on this side of the House refuse to deal with the question of when life begins.

We all agree, or at least the overwhelming majority of members of the House agree, that life is sacred, that life is sacrosanct. I participated in the capital punishment debate a few short years ago. I listened to members of the New Democratic Party, members of the Conservative Party, and my colleagues in the Liberal Party. Notwithstanding the views of the overwhelming majority of Canadians, the House said no to capital punishment. The House, in a very significant vote, said that life is sacred, life must be protected, and life cannot be taken by the state under any circumstances, regardless of how criminal that life may be. It was the right decision. It was a day to be remembered in the House of Commons.

Those arguments somehow are lost when we are dealing with life before birth. They are equally as applicable. We heard the arguments about the sanctity of life and how life must be protected, and surely that must be extended to life before birth. Yet, the argument or the debate has not centered around the issue of life before birth and when it begins.

The position that I have taken, as a member of Parliament and as an individual, is that life begins at conception. To my mind, there is no other logical place where life begins. How can it be reasonably argued that in the nine-month span that life begins at some point other than conception? I state, and I have stated before, that in my view life cannot begin after birth, that there is life before birth. What argument, what medical-legal logic can be applied to determine when life begins before birth, other than at conception?

If one concludes that life begins before birth, at any point before birth, or that it begins at conception, surely that life must be afforded every protection that we have

as living, breathing, human beings. Who are we to distinguish between life?

As parliamentarians, we do not distinguish between a disabled person and an able-bodied person. We believe that all life is sacred after birth and must be protected. Who are we to say that that life before birth somehow is less deserving of the protection of law as life after birth? That is the central issue. It is not a question of choice and denying women the right to choose, or anything of the sort, in my view.

Yes, it is a difficult issue. No one likes to see the situations in which women find themselves with an unwanted pregnancy. We would all like to see that every pregnancy is a wanted pregnancy, but that is not reality.

Unless there is protection in law for life, from the moment of conception until natural death, I cannot support any legislation. I urge members of Parliament to defeat this bill and to encourage and force the government to bring in a more restrictive bill and allow the debate to carry on in a free and unfettered fashion in order to recognize the sanctity of life and the protection of the innocent unborn in our country.

Mr. Greg Thompson (Carleton—Charlotte): Mr. Speaker, this is the third time that I have spoken on abortion during the debate on Bill C-43.

I am probably one of the more fortunate members of Parliament because, from my arrival in the House a couple of years ago, there has been no question in my mind as to how I would vote on this matter. I made it known publicly two years ago or more now that I am a pro-life member of Parliament and that I intend to stay. Because of that, I do not have to put myself through the mental turmoil that many members of Parliament have to in grappling with this issue. I am pro-life and that I will remain.

• (1800)

Bill C-43 is simply not a pro-life bill, not at all. It is a compromise piece of legislation which compromises human life and because of that I cannot support it.

The last time I spoke on this bill, in the fall of 1989, I concluded by reiterating a conversation I had with my son. I want to continue with that conversation. My son Christian, who is eight years old, asked me one evening: "What is abortion?" To answer an eight year old child in a way which does not disturb the innocence of that child is very, very difficult. If all members of Parliament had to stand before a classroom of children, whether they be six year olds, seven year olds or ten year olds, and describe to them what abortion is, the reality of what we are talking about would come home to them.

In the course of conversation with my son I attempted to explain to him what abortion actually is. In that process I was attempting to disguise my words. I was trying to protect the innocence of a child without distorting human values. Immediately that child begins to ask questions: "What is abortion, Dad? What happens to that baby inside the mother, Dad? Does the baby actually die, Dad?" That is what we are talking about. That is coming to grips with what abortion really is. It is not an easy subject to talk about with a child or in front of a group of children because that is exactly what it is, it is the destruction of human life.

As the member who spoke just previously mentioned, if you are pro-life, if you are for human beings, you have to act on the premise that life begins at conception. If we believe that life begins at conception, and if we believe that a human being exists at the moment of conception, we have to believe that when that life is destroyed a human being is actually killed. The reality of abortion is simply that. It is the taking of a human life.

Bill C-43 does not address that reality. Every member of Parliament can ask him or herself this simple question: If Bill C-43 becomes law, will we be preserving human life? In other words, will there be less abortions after Bill C-43 is enacted? The answer is simply that there will not be. It will not make one bit of difference. We will still have abortions in this country and they will still be legal. We will not have done what we have to do as parliamentarians—protect the life and innocence of those unborn. We will not have dealt with the reality of the situation and this is masking that reality. We have to honestly ask ourselves whether we are protecting the lives of the unborn with Bill C-43. Obviously we are not because, again, we are attempting to compromise human life.

It is not a question of being holier than thou because, I am just a human being. I am not a constitutional lawyer or a doctor, but I am a human being. Those are the kinds of people whom I represent. Certainly there are doctors in my riding. There are doctors in this House. There are lawyers in my riding. We can get into the nitty-gritty of when life begins. We can have doctors debating doctors as to when that magic moment of life actually begins. We can have constitutional lawyers arguing whether Bill C-43 is constitutional or whether a solidly pro-life bill would be constitutional. Some argue that it would be, some argue that it would not be. Others argue that if we are going to bring in a pro-life bill we would have to change the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, in other

words, change the Constitution so that it does protect the life of the unborn child.

Some lawyers argue that that would be an impossibility. Some parliamentarians argue it would be an impossibility to change the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in this country. Maybe it is an impossibility, but unless we strive for the ultimate, that is the protection of the human being, we have not fulfilled our roles as parliamentarians.

We are talking of the most defenceless of all human beings, the unborn child. That, in essence, is what this debate is all about, whether we as parliamentarians can come to grips with that reality. I say we are not doing that with Bill C–43. It is, in a sense, a classic Canadian compromise, but it is not doing what we set out to do as pro–lifers. It is not protecting the life of that unborn child.

From the first vote onwards I never supported Bill C–43. I attempted, through the amendment process, to make Bill C–43 a pro–life bill. That was not successful. We tried. I tried. Many of us have tried but we have not achieved that pro–life bill that we attempted to achieve since many days ago. We have failed.

With that, we are left with a bill that has not achieved the desired objective, that is to protect the life of the unborn. Because of that, I cannot support this bill. Again, I will only support abortion when the life of the mother is clearly endangered. I cannot support a bill that does not support the life of the unborn child. For that reason, I will not support Bill C–43. Human life cannot be compromised.

Mr. Jim Jordan (Leeds—Grenville): Madam Speaker, I would like to congratulate my colleague on a very passionate speech, with which I agree. I would like to get his reaction to something that I heard from one of the earlier speakers today who was also a strong pro–lifer. He said that with this bill we are making an incremental gain and therefore we should take this opportunity. He meant, I guess, that at some point down the road there would be some more gains made and eventually society would look upon this in the way it should be looked upon, as taking a life.

• (1810)

Would my colleague like to comment on the thought that if we miss this opportunity to make Bill C–43 law, we will miss the opportunity for incremental gain toward reaching the long–range goal of having total and complete respect for life in all stages?

Mr. Thompson: Madam Speaker, I think that we have already missed the opportunity to do what we should be doing. It is strictly hypothetical to look down the road to what might happen based on something which did not happen.

Again, this is the classic compromise. Maybe in some cases a compromise is good enough, but unless we strive for perfection, unless we strive for the ultimate, which is protection of the foetus, I think we have done ourselves an injustice.

I believe that the hon. member who posed this question believes the same thing. I think we will have done ourselves a disservice if we look down the road to what might have happened. The opportunity is now and we have to seize it now, not later.

Mr. Walter Van De Walle (St. Albert): Madam Speaker, many positions have been put forth in this debate on Bill C–43 showing the wide diversity of opinion that exists in Canada with regard to the matter of abortion and the degrees of respect for life. It is my privilege to join in this debate and to give a point of view which I believe is held by many Canadians.

Yesterday members of the House of Commons dealt with the amendments. I regret that some of the amendments that I thought were so vital and so important did not carry, in particular, Motion No. 10 which dealt with the life of the mother.

Let me make it clear from the outset that I have always had and continue to have the utmost respect for human life from conception to natural death. It is a matter of conscience that I must speak out in the strongest possible terms in favour of the preservation of the life of the unborn. One of the marks of a civilized society is the high regard in which it holds life and the

right to life of all humans, especially those unable to defend themselves.

The more society advances in its civilization, the more the various countries realize that too many lives are being wasted by the permissiveness that has allowed so many human unborn babies to be sacrificed. In Great Britain, the leaders are striving to chip away at the present laws to cut down on the number of abortions. The President of the United States and his predecessor both made it clear that laws must be changed to stop the great number of unborn children being killed.

A recent survey showed that almost two-thirds of Canadians are not even aware that one million abortions have been approved in Canada since 1969. Half of those surveyed did not know that medicare paid for most of those abortions. That same survey showed that a majority of Canadians believe that abortion should be illegal unless the mother's life is in danger. Surely we in Canada are civilized enough, Christian enough and caring enough to take measures to stop the slaughter of so many innocent victims. As a man of conscience I cannot and I will not accept any legislation that does not protect the sanctity of human life. I urge my colleagues to take the same stand.

We are told that abortion is a very complex matter. There are some who feel that it is not that complicated at all. For example, Mother Teresa sees it as a very simple matter. Abortion is the taking of a human life, and it is wrong. That is all. Of course saints are very uncomplicated people, which makes it so difficult for journalists to interview them. There is no way they can twist her words or the meaning she puts across. When they say that some women do not want their baby, she replies: "Give it to me. I want the child". We know she means exactly that because she has taken so many unwanted children.

I believe that abortion is the destruction of an innocent child. I frankly do not think that anyone, no matter on which side of the argument he or she may be, wants to see the destruction of an innocent child. That is why I call upon my fellow parliamentarians in this House to make sure that their decision regarding abortion is an informed one.

When does life begin? Does abortion really solve social problems, or does it create them? These are the questions I would like to help answer.

When the United States Senate conducted an extensive hearing on this subject in 1981, over 50 international authorities testified. The official report reads as follows: "Physicians and scientists agree that conception marks the beginning of the life of a human being—a being that is alive and is a member of the human species. There is overwhelming agreement on this point in countless medical and scientific writings."

It is clear then that it is not the time of birth that represents the creation of a new human being. Actual birth is only a change in the place of residence of the already living, active person.

Abortion is the violent killing of an unborn. Others have described it in various ways. I do not want to go into a description of the grisly details with regard to abortion, because others have. Suffice it to say that whether we refer to abortion as killing or as an induced death, it is largely a question of semantics. The effect on the child is the same: it dies.

Dr. Bernard Nathanson, who once was the director of the world's largest abortion clinic and is now a staunch pro-life supporter, has stated that there is seldom any purely medical indications for abortion.

We can go on to raise questions with regard to the safety of legal abortions. Very often we do not hear very much said about that. In a book written by David Reardon, he points out that of the 252 women surveyed, approximately half of them complained of suffering from at least one type of physical complication following abortion. The facts are clear that the so-called health problems during pregnancy are not a real factor. Rather, the true health problems exist after the abortion. The post-abortion syndrome is a very well-known phenomenon which is becoming more and more known as follow-up is being recorded.

This fact was made abundantly clear to the committee when Ms. Beverly Hadland, executive director of the Abortion Crisis Centre in Toronto, appeared and shared with the committee her considerable experience.

• (1820)

The natural order, regardless of one's religious belief, is a law which must be respected by all. A person of religious convictions has an even greater reason to

uphold the sanctity of human life. It is the law of God. These same principles have been enunciated over and over again by Pope John Paul II.

I want to conclude with a couple of other remarks about the role of society with regard to this matter because I believe there is a social issue that must be addressed.

We live in a society that is becoming more and more permissive, a *laissez-faire* society where moral values have been shoved aside. I believe that the school and the home have a very important role to play in the education of our children. Should a pregnancy occur, what then? Good counselling must be readily available. Too many of the so-called counselling centres only offer information on where to get an abortion. These pregnant women need love and understanding, comfort and care. The killing of a baby is not the answer.

Where needed, society should provide housing and day care assistance for these pregnant mothers so that they can make the choice of whether or not to have the child. At the time of the birth of the child the mother would decide whether to raise the child or to give it up for adoption.

Why is it that couples wishing to adopt a child have to wait years? There is a need to examine our adoption procedure with a view to speeding up the process.

I firmly believe that society as a whole has a role to play in providing more education, improved counselling, housing, and day care availability. I urge all Canadians to join together to resolve a social problem. I believe that as parliamentarians we have reached a point in time when we must make a choice and that choice is clear: whether we stand for life or stand by idly and surrender to a philosophy of death. I will be voting for life against the bill.

Mr. Robert E. Skelly (Comox—Alberni): Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity at this late hour to be discussing Bill C-43, the abortion legislation, at third reading. I want the House to know that I also oppose Bill C-43 and will be voting against its passage at third reading, but perhaps not for the reasons that some of those who have just spoken have enunciated.

I believe that this bill goes some distance toward criminalizing abortion. As the member for Kitchener has outlined, it is part of a transition toward criminalization of abortion in Canada and a reversal of the procedure that has been happening in this country over the past several years.

Part of the problem with this legislation is that it is going to create an untenable situation for doctors and an untenable situation for mothers who have made the decision to have an abortion, in that they will have both disgruntled boyfriends and so-called pro-life agencies looking over their shoulders and questioning in the courts and otherwise whether this was done for the reasons permitted under Bill C-43.

This is going to create an absolutely untenable situation for those women and those doctors, and it is going to make it more and more difficult for people who seek abortions for legitimate reasons to obtain abortions.

That is not to say that I have not listened carefully to the arguments that have been made by members on all sides of the House. I think members have made those arguments in good conscience and good faith. I do not think we should question the integrity, the agony, or the study that has gone into the speeches that have been made in this House. Members speak out of strongly held beliefs. There are some who believe that life begins at conception and therefore that the extension of the law of this land to the foetus while in its mother's womb is a legitimate extension of the laws of this Parliament.

I reject that position. I think it is going to create a very difficult situation with respect to the balancing of rights. I believe that extending the law of this country into the womb of a mother makes that women a second-class citizen and undermines the rights she enjoys as an individual who is due all of the rights of a Canadian citizen. It is going to create some serious difficulties by imposing the rights of two individuals on the body of a single person. Again, that is untenable for women and this would be a very difficult piece of legislation to implement and uphold. It is going to be very difficult.

The argument about when life begins seems like a very abstract argument, very distant from the situation of a woman who finds herself with an unwanted pregnancy agonizing over whether to give birth to another mouth to feed or to give the child up for adoption. Those are decisions which many of the people who are making that argument, and certainly myself, have never been compelled to make. It is very easy to be abstract, theoretical, dry, and scientific on this issue and to discuss it as if it is

nothing more than the usual dry debate we hear on legislation and scientific abstractions.

For many people faced with this decision, it is a very real and terrifying decision which the majority of us in this room are so remote from that we cannot possibly bring ourselves close enough to understand it, other than from an abstract point of view.

Over the years, having examined the subject and having had discussions with people who were presented with the decision of whether or not to abort, I have come to the conclusion that I support the pro-choice position. This piece of legislation is so antagonistic to that pro-choice position that I am compelled to vote against it.

I have had some experience with the issue of abortion. I used to work in the criminal justice system of the province of British Columbia. I worked in the prison system at a time when abortion was illegal under the Criminal Code. Consequently, on those occasions when an abortionist was captured and ended up under my control in the prison system, I was introduced to the people who carry out this process under a criminalized regime, how they act, and what type of people they are.

They are not the type of people you would want yourself, Madam Speaker, your daughter, your granddaughter or your nieces ever to come in contact with. The abortionists whom I met are looking at this legislation and rubbing their hands in glee because they have reason to believe that their profession is now going back to what it was before and that it will be as lucrative as it was before, with very minimal risks involved, because people who go to such abortionist do not go to the newspapers and tell tales about them. The only times it comes to the attention of the media is when these people fail and mutilate or kill their clients. That happens time after time.

It is a very lucrative profession. Those people whom I kept in jail under the previous regime saw prison as a holiday before they went back to their work, which earned them a great deal of money with very little risk at all. I can see them now, rubbing their hands together, as the Parliament of Canada is talking about supporting life and arguing abstractly about when life begins. For these people this is when their business begins and then they can get back to work in the back alleys of Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver and every city of any size in this country. This law is going to guarantee them customers.

• (1830)

I hear people talk about the concern they have for life, and I mentioned this in my previous speech on second reading. I recall reading a magazine about UNICEF, the United Nations Children's Emergency Fund, and the work that UNICEF does around the world. In our discussion we talked about the abstractness of when life begins, whether it begins at conception or at some other time, or at birth. There are children who are born in this world who do not live, who starve to death. I am told by UNICEF about the number of children who die every single week in the world because they have inadequate food, or because they have inadequate protection from disease, or because they have inadequate sewage and clean water supplies, or inadequate shelter. That number of children is a quarter million a week. They die before the age of five years.

When we are talking about life, somebody in this debate has to give some consideration to the quarter million children who die around this world because we in this Parliament, by the way we handle our foreign aid, have made sure that many of those children will die before the age of five. Those children die of humiliating diseases, like dysentery, things that could be easily cured with a very small expenditure of money, money that we have cut back in our foreign aid program in this country.

I talk about a quarter million people around the globe dying before the age of five. According to UNICEF statistics, every two days more people around this world die before the age of five than abortions are done in Canada in a year.

Really we are not talking here about respect for human life, because if we were talking about respect for human life, at the top end of the priority list would be that quarter million children around the world who are dying, having been born, and having lived to the age of five. Those children were the hopes of their parents, their aspirations for the future, children as loved as any other children in this country or anywhere else in the world. Yet they have to go through the agony of seeing

those children die of terrible diseases prior to the age of five.

Here we are talking about when life begins. Does it begin at conception? Does it begin at birth? A quarter million people will die before this week is out and this legislation is passed.

I do not believe that the pro-life movement has given itself a name that it is justified to have. It is a movement around the world that has been seeking to outlaw abortion, to outlaw access to abortion. It has been successful in a number of countries. It has been successful in Ireland for example, and in Ireland I am told that the rights of a foetus are enshrined in the constitution of that country. Ireland is the country my ancestors come from.

In Ireland the rights of a foetus are enshrined in the constitution of that country, yet it has been demonstrated in WHO statistics that Ireland has the highest per capita abortion rate of any developed country. Some are wealthy enough to be able to go to England to obtain an abortion, or to the continent of Europe. Those who are not wealthy enough either go to back-room abortionists or else attempt to perform the operation on themselves. But Ireland, where the foetus is protected in the constitution, has the highest per capita rate of abortion in the world.

I would like to quote statistics from Brazil because I just came back from there a few days ago. In Brazil abortion is also frowned upon by both the church and the state. I am told that in Brazil there are abortion clinics where one can obtain an abortion for something like $100 to $1,000. Most women in Brazil cannot afford to pay that kind of money for an abortion and so they perform abortions on themselves. As a result, an estimated three to five million clandestine abortions take place every year in Brazil, a country with a total population of 145 million. This gives Brazil the leading share of the world's 65 million abortions, according to the World Health Organization. Research in Brazil estimates that 10,000 Brazilian women die each year from self-induced abortions. World-wide, 150,000 to 200,000 women die annually as a result of complications related to abortions.

Thirty to forty per cent of the half million pregnancy-related deaths that are estimated by the World Health Organization to take place each year, are the result of botched, clandestine abortions. The statistics indicate that another 200,000 Brazilian women are put into hospital each year because they have been mutilated by or suffered complications from abortions.

What I am suggesting to members of the House of Commons is that we should clearly think about what we are doing here today. Why are we passing this legislation? What we are doing to doctors is making sure that the public and the anti-abortion activist groups can look over their shoulders to determine whether they are making the right medical decisions. I am not sure that that is the right thing to do.

What we are doing is making sure that disgruntled boyfriends, spouses or organizations that have taken it upon themselves to protect foetuses are going to examine every single abortion operation that takes place in this country and perhaps drag it into court in order to prevent abortion, disqualify doctors or make abortion much more difficult.

I am against the number of abortions that are taking place in this country. I think at roughly 65,000, the number of abortions in Canada is far too high. But I think there are ways of dealing with that problem without going through the process of criminalizing abortions. As I said before, you do not do away with abortions by criminalizing them, you simply create a lucrative industry for a criminal element in this country that mutilates your wives, your mothers, you daughters, your nieces and your granddaughters; you do not do away with abortion by this kind of legislation.

The way to do away with abortions or reduce the number of abortions is to make it possible for children in this country to be wanted children and to make it possible for children to get information about birth control and contraception so that they can understand the nature of their own sexuality and how to prevent pregnancy when, at a certain age, they begin to experiment with their own sexuality.

I recall a statistic from the American Medical Association. Doctors who were members of the AMA were saying that the highest number of cases coming before them were girls in the age range of 15 years whose first question they asked of their doctors was about pregnancy. The second question they asked was about acne. This is a serious problem when girls of that age do not even understand the basic elements of their sexuality and end

up in their doctors' offices wondering if they are pregnant or not.

Surely, this is a failure of our educational system. If this government wants to do something to stop unwanted pregnancies and therefore to stop abortions, what it should be doing is making the kind of education available to our young people and to adults that will assist them in understanding their sexuality, understanding the process of contraception and understanding what their options are.

The second thing the government should be doing is making it possible for families in this country to see all children as wanted children and having children as something exciting, expected and anticipated. I have two children, and my wife and I looked forward to having these children, to bring something into our lives which we did not have before. They were wanted children. There was no consideration on our part, ever, to see those pregnancies terminated because these were wanted and loved children, and they are to this very day.

• (1840)

Not all families look upon a new child that way. To some mothers a new child is an absolute terror. How is she going to feed this child? If she is married or partnered with a husband or boy–friend who is abusive, or is likely to sexually or physically assault this child, how can she feel good about bringing this child into the world?

There are 1.3 million Canadians in a country as rich as ours who live below the poverty line. How can families who find themselves living below the poverty line, through no fault of their own, have any hope and expectation? How can they want to bring a child into the world who is the result of an unwanted pregnancy?

What this government must do, and what this Parliament must do, is support families across this country, to make sure that children can be brought up in decent, happy and hopeful surroundings, free of poverty and abuse. That is the kind of thing that this government should commit itself to if it wants to reduce the number of abortions that are taking place in this country.

I think we can reduce the number of abortions in this country, but we cannot do it by recriminalizing abortion. The only way we can do it is by making it possible for Canadian families and Canadian people to bring up their families in healthy, happy, hopeful surroundings, free of poverty and abuse.

The reason I am voting against this legislation is because it does not do that and it does not provide any hope for that to happen. I would like to see members of the House defeat this legislation and defeat it overwhelmingly.

Mr. Arnold Malone (Crowfoot): Madam Speaker, the abortion issue has two views that divide our population into opposing communities of thought. Unlike most difficult issues, this one is characterized by the unique fact that neither side has much, if any, capacity to understand or appreciate the views of the other.

What makes a political resolution most difficult is the fact that the pro and anti–abortion persons both hold to their views for moral reasons in an environment charged with emotion, while asserting that their views are logical. Unfortunately, on this issue, I am no different than anyone else. With my vote I will make roughly one–half of my constituents happy, the other may feel somewhat abandoned.

At the outset, I want to indicate that I do not believe that the issue of criminalization of abortion lends itself to the kinds of compromises that would allow for overwhelming public support in light of the range of public attitudes that exist.

Just as importantly, I want to extend my regrets to those whose views are different from mine and at least to allow that while we differ in our understanding of a deeply moral issue, I do not conclude that these are amoral persons, but rather, individuals who have, for whatever reason, come to understand the question of abortion from another perspective.

If there is a correct view, and I believe there is, then its resolution will not be found in law at this time. Likewise, the passage of Bill C–43 will not conclude the national debate. Society will continue to change, and one day a law will likely exist that reflects a significant majority position. In the interim, it is incumbent on those to whom this issue matters most to do what they can to influence society.

My views are pro–life. Therefore, it is only natural that I would, in a perfect world, seek to restrict and limit abortion.

As an ethic, I believe that every human being is duty bound to uphold the sanctity of life. If life is to be precious then it must be precious in all stages. By contrast, if one stage of life can be deliberately diminished, can any other stage be reasonably assured?

At the root of this debate on abortion is the fundamental question of when does life begin. There are those who argue that an embryonic foetus is not yet human. I have asked such persons on frequent occasions: "Is it wrong to abort a nine-month old foetus just prior to natural partition?" The answer is a universal yes. Therefore, if it is wrong to abort a child just prior to birth, how can we back up through the gestational period, one second at a time, and find the moment when this developing person is not human?

Mr. Speaker, are not you and I persons who are still developing today? Is not aging a stage of development?

Some have argued that a foetus is not human until after the cerebral cortex is fully developed. They claim that this development is what distinguishes mankind from animals. However, if this to be an accepted standard, then what is to become of those persons who develop Alzheimer's disease?

Those who base their human evaluation of a foetus on the mere question of reasoning power also bring into question the value of those less privileged adult persons whose reasoning powers are, unfortunately, sub-standard. A caring and loving society embraces all persons, with all of their failings and at all stages.

With respect to human value, when any one person is allowed to be restricted from reaching their potential, we are all, in turn, diminished. Our challenge is to seek an ideal world and such a world is one in which each and every human has the opportunity to achieve fulfilment by maximizing their potential.

Now, we come to the matter of the bill that is before us. I believe the bill is an important improvement over the 1968 legislation.

First, it proclaims that abortion is wrong and can only be obtained with the support of a trained medical opinion. Moreover, the bill defines abortion to be wrong to the extent that a breach of condition is considered to be a criminal act and defined as such in the Criminal Code. Finally, the notion of an arbitrary gestational time period in which abortions are allowed is abandoned in favour of a definition that proclaims it to be wrong to have an abortion at any time except for medical cause.

For all these reasons, I agree with the bill. My single concern is that the medical requirements for the protection of health are too loosely defined. There is a part of my analysis that encourages me to vote against the bill on principle. Abortions will still be allowed, and from my perspective that is wrong. Therefore, a negative vote might be justified.

The counter balancing analysis is, however, more compelling. We must recall the process by which we came to be in this situation.

• (1850)

In the summer of 1988, the Supreme Court ruled that Canada's existing abortion law was unconstitutional, largely because of unbalanced access in various regions of the country. In their judgment, the members of the court effectively ruled out the possibility of a new law that absolutely protected the foetus at all stages for all causes. At the same time, the court indicated that the Parliament of Canada had the right to limit, through law, the basis upon which an abortion could be obtained.

The House was given an opportunity to seek out, from a range of options, a perspective upon which the law could be designed and drafted. What proved to be the case was that there was no more consensus on this issue in the House of Commons than there was in the nation. The House was then faced with the dilemma of accepting a less than perfect law or living in a vacuum of no law.

I recognize that law alone cannot transform a human heart or soul. Law is an important ingredient in the process that involves other institutions and other persuasions.

What I have had to consider is, what kind of society would we have, what kind of protection would there be for the unborn, and what are the possibilities for improved legislation if this bill fails to pass? I am convinced that we need a law, even if the present Parliament cannot grant the law that meets my ideal.

The proposed law does underline the view that human life has unique value. It does make a wrongfully acquired abortion a criminal act. It does avoid an arbitrary

judgment about the value of a human being at various stages of gestation.

The single fact that a medical definition is, in my view, imprecise would be the wrong reason to allow society to live for an untold period of time without influence of law on this issue. If the bill were defeated, there would be an absence of a signal for the guidance of society. Moreover, an imperfect law can be built upon and changed over time. The absence of law could propel society into a set of attitudes from which we might never recover.

It is incumbent upon me to express my deep gratitude to the literally thousands of constituents of Crowfoot who have helped me comprehend and resolve my position on this issue. The issue is not concluded. The case is not resolved. However, Parliament and society must walk together for a while longer until a stronger consensus is acquired.

Finally, I want to say that it is not merely a question of abortion. It is also a question of our attitudes towards each other as human beings with respect to sexual relationships.

Sex is not a dirty or smutty issue, or a subject to be hidden from conversation. Rather, it is a matter upon which Canadians everywhere must become more comfortable. Sex education does not mean abandoning responsibilities to the school system and certainly it does not imply that the subject be dismissed in silence.

Too often, pre-school children are given a lesson in sex relations when what they wanted to know was, "Where did I come from?". Likewise, and unfortunately, frequently, teenagers are given lessons in biology when their curiosity is about interpersonal relationships. The matter of "how I am to behave with another" or "what am I to do about these powerful feelings that I have" cannot be answered by showing charts and graphs of the human reproductive system.

We must seek to achieve a society that embraces sexual respect. Sex must be thought of as an instrument of communication in relationships. Sex cannot be an object, exclusive and apart from all other obligations. As a society, we have to mature in the nature of our human relationships and, as a society, we have a long way to go.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Questions or comments? On debate, the hon. member for Wetaskiwin.

Mr. Willie Littlechild (Wetaskiwin): Madam Speaker, I too welcome the opportunity to express my concerns on Bill C-43. I supported the bill on second reading so that we all could be afforded the benefit of a committee addressing this complex and highly controversial issue. That has of course occurred. Unfortunately, no amendments were recommended to support more fully my pro-life views. Consequently, I tried to move specific amendments. Again, unfortunately, all were ruled inadmissible. Last night's votes now leave me and all of my colleagues in a very serious and difficult predicament. As others have said this is a very personal and emotional issue.

To begin with, I would like to quote from Mr. Justice Bernier who, on July 26, 1989, in the unreported Daigle case stated:

> The child conceived but not yet born, whatever the definition of his civil status, is a reality which we must acknowledge. He is not an inanimate object, he is the property of no one, he is a living human entity, different from the one of his or her mother who carries him; he is an entity who exists because of two human beings who gave him life, who procreated him; he, to begin with, has a right to life and to protection from those who conceived him or her.

I concur with Mr. Justice Bernier. I too believe we must acknowledge the child conceived but not yet born. This was the major reason for my moving amendments: to protect specifically the unborn child and to define what in law is a foetus.

The Supreme Court of Canada has clearly requested of Parliament to state its intentions. In the Morgentaler case the justices unanimously were of the opinion that the protection of the foetus was a worthy legislative intent. I believe that the majority of this House would agree as well that the protection of the foetus is a worthy legislative intent. Many of my constituents have clearly indicated that the foetus must be protected. This protection is a duty of the state; just as it appropriately is the duty of the state to protect others who are unable to protect themselves, such as perhaps the mentally ill. However, its intent must be clearly stated. As the Supreme Court of Canada in the Daigle case stated:

> One can ask why the Quebec legislation if it had intended to accord a foetus the right to life, would have left the protection of this right in such an uncertain state.

One can ask the same question of Parliament.

The other side of the issue, the rights of women to the security of the person, guaranteed under Section 7 of the charter, cannot be ignored either. We as parliamentari-

ans must pay heed to the decision of the Supreme Court of Canada.

The intentions of government which guided this new legislation as stated earlier are: first, balancing the woman's constitutional rights with society's interest in the foetus; second, ensuring that fair and reasonable access to abortion is not denied; and, third, ensuring that all abortions are performed by qualified medical practitioners based on a health ground.

The first of these intentions, balancing the woman's constitutional rights with society's interest in the foetus, is one aspect of the present bill that is lacking.

Some have argued that to amend Bill C–43 in any way renders it unconstitutional. I am of the view that the Supreme Court of Canada would not ask Parliament to legislate for the unborn specifically if only to strike it down as unconstitutional.

Mr. Chief Justice Dickson in the Morgentaler case stated:

> I agree that protection of foetal interests by Parliament is also a valid governmental objective.

He adds later on page 75:

> —state protection of foetal interests may well be deserving of constitutional recognition under section 1.

Madam Justice Wilson also stated:

> I believe that the main objective advanced to justify a restriction on the pregnant woman's section 7 right is the protection of the foetus. I think this is a perfectly valid legislative objective.

Others argue, and it may be true, that the criminal sanction does provide for some protection for the unborn by implication. But, this is not adequate. It is inadequate by virtue of the fact that abortions may be performed for any reason falling under mental, physical or psychological domain. An abortion may be performed by virtue of any of those reasons, which is an exhaustive list, a woman may desire to have an abortion, including as a method of birth control.

• (1900)

It is the latter with which I am not at all in agreement. This has not balanced any societal interest in the foetus, no legal personality has been given to the foetus, nor have any rights been confirmed upon the foetus. But most importantly no specific intention has been made by Parliament to protect the foetus.

Such an intention must be clear and unequivocal in the eyes of the court. To this end, last night I expressed my support for several amendments of this bill which I felt would have accomplished that. If the pro–life amendments had passed, I would have no doubt been able to support the bill at third reading. Only then would we have shown an intention to confer rights on the unborn, a measure which is clearly appropriate for Parliament to take, as stated by the Supreme Court of Canada Justices. In my view it is also the duty of Parliament to protect those who are unable to protect themselves.

The question now becomes, because there have not been any pro–life amendments passed, based on my conscience, am I prepared to support the bill at third reading. Madam Speaker, I do not think one can compromise with life and therefore I will not be supporting Bill C–43.

Mr. Rey Pagtakhan (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, I once again rise to speak during third reading of Bill C–43, an act respecting abortion. I voted for this bill on second reading in the belief and optimism that the government would welcome amendments to clarify and strengthen the intent of the bill.

I must now speak against this bill because, despite the sincere efforts of a good number of my hon. colleagues in proposing amendments to make the bill a viable and meaningful one, to be truly an instrument of protection for the unborn, the government for the most part refused to allow the necessary changes. Therefore, the bill remains unacceptable. It neither promotes, protects, nor preserves fundamental Canadian values such as respect for human life, particularly the lives of unborn children who will be the women and men of the future.

It does not defend the most vulnerable and defenceless. Let us remind ourselves that unborn children can only articulate their aspirations through our own feelings, love, sacrifices and compassion.

Also, the bill does not address the rightful concerns and needs of women. It does not provide for a balance of rights, not even a compromise. Rather it is a capitulation of both the unborn's and the woman's rights.

On January 28, 1988, the Supreme Court of Canada declared Canada's abortion law unconstitutional on procedural grounds and not, I repeat, not on the basis that abortion is a constitutional right. In fact, the

Supreme Court clearly indicated the state has a legitimate interest to protect the foetus, the unborn child.

Also, the Chairman of the Civil Liberties section of the British Columbia branch of the Canadian Bar Association has noted:

> Careful review of the decision reveals that far from vesting an untrammelled right to abortion, the court has left Parliament leeway to change the law in ways that are significantly more favourable to the preservation of foetal life than the law which the court struck down.

Regrettably, the bill now before us is more permissive than the law which was struck down.

Indeed, there is no constitutional right to abortion. The Charter of Rights and Freedoms specifically mentions voting, religion, language and minority rights. It does not contain anything about the right to abortion. I will therefore never fathom, and I am confident all Canadians are with me on this sentiment, that the infliction of death on innocent human lives in the wombs of their mothers would ever be a legitimate exercise of anyone's right unless there is a compelling, serious and substantive medical reason or reasons for that given pregnancy that imminently threatens the life and health of the pregnant mother and for which medical condition no alternative treatment exists.

As Mr. Justice William McIntyre pointed out when the Supreme Court of Canada rendered the old law ineffective, there has always been a clear recognition of a public interest in the protection of the unborn. There has been no evidence of any general acceptance of the concept of abortion at will in our society. In fact, public opinion polls have consistently indicated that roughly 70 per cent of Canadians oppose elective abortion, suggesting that some type of genuine medical threat ought to exist before abortion is allowed.

Admittedly, some of the defeated amendments would probably be violations of security of the person under Section 7 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, but this would not have rendered such amendments unconstitutional. Chief Justice Dickson explained this in the Morgentaler case:

> I wish to reiterate that finding a violation of security of the person does not end the inquiry on Section 7 of the Charter. Parliament could choose to infringe security of the person if it did so in a manner consistent with the principles of fundamental justice.

Indeed, the protection of the foetus is a concern that outweighs the woman's right not to carry the foetus to term, unless genuine medical threats exist.

We must protect the most defenceless of us if we are to maintain a strong foundation to protect the rights of all of us.

During its appearance before the legislative committee that examined this bill, the family and friends of the handicapped made the following observation:

> Bill C–43 represents an attack upon the efforts of the disabled to obtain equality in society and win the dignity and respect to which they are entitled. The Bill would allow for abortion for the widest possible reasons. It would enshrine in law a principle that the lives of some may be destroyed for the convenience of others.

It continued:

> It is true that the Bill does not make any explicit reference to handicapped children. However, it does allow abortion where psychological health is threatened. The Law Reform Commission Report of last year made clear that such a clause can be used to authorize aborting disabled children.

This is a major flaw in the bill. We have to recognize that the unborn are human beings. For centuries the English common law of property has recognized unborn children as autonomous human beings and their property rights have been protected by law. In 1795, an English court interpreted the meaning of "children" in a last will and testament to include a child "in the womb" of their mothers.

Under tort law, learned authorities have maintained "that the unborn child in the path of an automobile is as much a person in the street as the mother". How then can we as Canadians and parliamentarians accept that such an unborn child becomes less a person when instead of an automobile, a physicians's forceps, suction machine, a salt or hormonal solution is used to cause that unborn child's death?

The proclamation by the Supreme Court of Canada that the state has a legislative interest to protect the foetus is a tacit admission that once human life has commenced in the womb of the mother the state not only has the right but the duty of safeguarding that unborn human life, and through this protection, protects and preserves society itself.

What do we have in this bill? Health is defined as including:

> For greater certainty, physical, mental and psychological health.

In common language this in effect is abortion on choice.

• (1910)

Why? When the Canadian Medical Association appeared before the legislative committee, it said:

> It is recognized that 85 per cent to 95 per cent of induced abortions are done for psychiatric reasons, but there are very few absolute psychiatric reasons that are a threat to life—

The Canadian Physicians for Life, also appearing before the committee, confirmed that 96 per cent of abortions are performed for non-medical reasons.

The National Action Committee on the Status of Women also testified before the legislative committee:

> Women have abortions for many reasons. Most of them are social and economic in origin.

Indeed, the loose definition for health would make this bill a legal prescription for abortion on demand.

In introducing this legislation, the Minister of Justice stated:

> This bill has been carefully drafted to achieve a delicate balance between the conflicting views on the abortion issue.

The minister is only partly correct. In defending the government's approach to rejecting all amendments the same minister said:

> Any amendment to the bill could be perceived as unfairly favouring the state's interest in protecting the foetus to the detriment of the woman's constitutional right to security of the person could endanger the legislation's constitutional validity.

Only the Supreme Court of Canada can make a definitive determination of the constitutional validity of any law passed by Parliament. Both the Minister of Justice and the Law Reform Commission agreed to this view during their appearances before the legislative committee. Hence, the government should have allowed amendments to clarify and insist that only genuine medical threats to the life and health of the pregnant woman could constitute valid indication for abortion. That I attempted to do. Unfortunately, my amendments were defeated. This government chose not to make that choice.

Many submissions to the legislative committee supported the necessity for many amendments.

Indeed, this bill, unamended, is tantamount to abortion on demand, which is a perversion of the purposes of both law and medicine. Law in a civilized country is meant to preserve justice and to protect the weak from abuses by the strong. Medicine is meant to protect life. When legislation permits abortion on demand, it violates both.

Modern science and medicine are much too far advanced to permit the fiction that the being which inhabits a pregnant woman's womb is not a human being. From the moment of conception the foetus has all the necessary genetic material which makes it a distinctive individual, coded into its own DNA which is different from anyone else's, and unmistakably human. While still in the womb, the foetus is a doctor's patient, just like its mother, and with science at its present stages, can be operated on and treated while still in the womb. That is why we have departments of obstetrics in schools of medicine and in hospitals. That is why the discipline of perinatology has evolved in medicine. Any argument which does not recognize the human nature of the foetus is becoming every day more patently untenable.

Like any individual living outside the womb, the foetus must be granted the same rights to life and liberty as any other human life. In any society which strives to maintain liberty, limits must be drawn. No liberty is absolute in this world; instead, each person's liberty is limited by the liberty of others. It is largely unquestioned that the law is right to lock up thieves and murderers, to breach the security of their persons, to deprive them of their personal liberty of movement because it has been used to violate the liberty of other individuals in the society.

In the same way, the foetus' right to the most basic liberty, the liberty to live, should not be overruled by the mother's right to choose in the absence of genuine medical threats. Abortion on demand violates this basic principle. It claims the woman's liberty to be limitless *vis-à-vis* the liberty of her unborn child. The liberty of the foetus to live and exercise further liberty must be protected only if the mother so wishes. This in effect is a denial of the individual humanity of the foetus because it is a denial of the rights which belong to human beings by virtue of their humanity. Any denial of the humanity of the foetus is simply untenable.

The problems to which abortion seems to be the solution must be addressed. Although some women use abortion simply as a matter of birth control, a tragedy which must be stopped as soon as possible for we cannot as a compassionate and caring society continue to condone some 70,000 deaths of unborn babies every year, there are many who would appeal to such an answer only in the case of severe problems. A simple prohibition of abortion is not a sufficient or compassionate answer either.

The most clear-cut of these problems occurs when the mother's life is physically threatened by her pregnancy. In such extraordinary circumstances, the same exception which is made for self-defence in other circumstances can be applied. The chances of death of the mother must be weighed against a genuine concern for the foetus as a human being in its own right. Once the medical profession is convinced that the risks to the mother's life are great enough to warrant the use of abortion to save her life, then in such circumstances the mother should be persuaded to agree to the medical procedure.

Such cases, however, occur comparatively rarely in the context of the many abortions which are performed. Other cases involve a wide range of less clear-cut considerations. Among these are societal problems which have both economic and psychological ramifications for a prospective mother.

More provisions to deal with these problems must be made, such as homes for single mothers during pregnancy, financial assistance, child care centres, educational programs, and other services as may be helpful. Governments are duty bound to provide them to solve the causes of why some pregnant women consider abortion.

Most important, perhaps, better counselling must be provided so that individuals are truly able to decide what to do both in order to avoid unplanned pregnancies and in order to deal with them without sacrificing the child. Many women who choose to undergo abortions have not been acquainted with the other options including adoption, nor with the devastating physical and psychological trauma on them of having an abortion. These were startling revelations made before the legislative committee that examined this bill.

A law restricting abortion only to medical indications is not punitive to women. It is in a very real sense a guide or a legal tool to protect their interests during their hours of need. Both child and parents have needs and both must be addressed, neither one being sacrificed to the other. Abortion on demand effectively addresses neither in that it fails to deal with the root problems, making a pregnant woman opt for abortion and may cause further damage to her at the same time as her child is killed.

Some of my colleagues in this House have argued against placing the subject of abortion in the Criminal Code of Canada. In reply, I would like to quote from a legal scholar, Mr. Joseph Maingot of the Law Reform Commission of Canada, who said:

> The criminal law can make a significant contribution by addressing the issue of abortion. Criminal prohibitions on abortions are desirable for both functional and symbolic reasons. Functional, because criminal prohibitions will reduce, although not eliminate, abortions. Since foetal life deserves legal protection, it follows that a reduction in abortions is a net social benefit. The symbolic function of the criminal law is our nation's fundamental statement of public policy. It is the instrument by which the community draws a line between the tolerable and the intolerable. Criminal law defines those whose interests are worthy of respect and protection and in my view, they should include all members of the human family. Ultimately, the criminal law is a mirror of what we are; it reflects our commitment, or lack of commitment, to human dignity and equality.

• (1920)

That is why we have laws directed at degrading pornography, against hate, against child abuse, and laws on affirmative action programs. The state has a key role to play in the development of a collective conscience to sustain social peace and respect for citizens of different viewpoints. Any law shapes and reflects the collective conscience of any society. We should have laws that will continue to preserve, promote, and protect Canadian values.

In conclusion, Bill C-43 could make legitimate, even noble, the performance of abortion outside the tradition of medical practice. I deeply believe that we need to rethink Canadian values as I stated at the beginning of my debate. We must protect the most vulnerable and defenceless in our society, epitomized by the unborn children whose aspirations for life can only be realized when we adults in Parliament, men and women alike, sensitively reflect their aspirations by passage of a law that truly protects the lives of the unborn in the wombs

of their mothers. Let us say yes to life at all times and no to abortion on simple choice.

Mr. Jim Karpoff (Surrey North): Madam Speaker, I want to make it very clear that I totally disagree with the orientation of the previous member. I think that a woman has every right to reproductive choice.

I want to ask him a couple of questions of a little more technical nature, since he takes the stand that a woman has no right to reproductive choice. Would he comment, first of all, on whether he opposes the use of IUDs or the morning-after pill, both of which are a form of medical treatment that allows a woman not to carry through a pregnancy after fertilization takes place?

If he feels that a woman has no choice in reproductive matters, does he support her right to birth control, to use both chemical and mechanical forms of birth control, or does he feel that a woman is in a position where the only time she is permitted to be involved in intercourse is when conception is to take place?

I think that those are the logical extensions of what the member is saying, that a woman has no choice in terms of her reproductive capacity.

Mr. Pagtakhan: Madam Speaker, it is a fundamental principle in cross-examination even in a court of law that you do not answer your own question because you are likely to be wrong in the answers you will give yourself. That is exactly what happened. The hon. member asked a question. He assumed I had answered it, but completely wrong.

As to the question of whether I believe in reproductive choice, I do not even know whether we agree on the definition of reproductive choice and what is reproduction.

Reproduction is when you begin from nowhere, from nothing. Once you have that something, you have reproduced a product, and that is what I call reproduction. If what he believes I am asking, and it is a big if, is that after a product has been produced you can destroy this product, human life, then of course my answer definitely is no. Whether a woman should marry and reproduce, that is her ultimate and paramount right. Whether a woman should have birth control or not, that also is her right.

Once a human life has been created, created by the Supreme Being, that human life must be protected. Let me remind my hon. colleague that even the Charter of Rights and Freedoms of the Canadian Constitution, invokes in its preamble the supremacy of God and the rule of law. Invoking the supremacy of God indicates that no more shall we have a law which violates the principle of God. Incidentally, I once heard the same sentiments from the lips of a justice of the Supreme Court of Canada.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I have heard the hon. member for Surrey North. Somebody else is rising in the House whom I will recognize and then come back to the hon. member. The hon. member for Dartmouth.

Mr. Ron MacDonald (Dartmouth): Madam Speaker, I listened to my hon. colleague from Winnipeg North espouse his convictions and views on this very delicate, contentious and difficult matter. There were a few things said on which I would like clarification.

Quotations were made from submissions to the committee of which he was a member, and I assume that he was there for most or nearly all of the presentations. The statistics quoted by the hon. member for Winnipeg North indicate that the vast majority of abortions that are obtained are for social and economic reasons.

Is it the hon. member's belief that if this bill is passed as is, without the accompanying regulations or companion legislation, it would clearly indicate that the government through its agencies and departments is prepared to address those social and economic reasons that many women have to go and seek abortions?

Is it his belief that this bill will lessen the likelihood of this government, or a subsequent government, revisiting the issue and putting in place those very programs which would be necessary so that women who find themselves pregnant do not have to seek abortions for social and economic reasons? Our social programs would be expanded and targeted so that would no longer be the case.

Mr. Pagtakhan: Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his thoughtful questions. Yes, indeed, I was with the legislative committee for most of the time, and yes indeed the vast majority of the bases for abortion as indicated by the Canadian Medical Association and the Canadian Physicians for Life have been the result of social and economic difficulties. It is my belief, which is shared by many Canadians, that if we allow this bill to pass as is, unamended, the words "psychological health" could be used—and the Minister of Justice has indicated

that—to include social and economic difficulties as a consequence of poverty.

Could a government of the day be complacent and not address real issues of poverty, real need for assistance for the needy? Yes, I believe that that is a real possibility; in fact I would submit a real probability. That is why I am very concerned that the bill, unamended, is unacceptable both to me and my constituents of Winnipeg North.

Jim Karpoff (Surrey North): Madam Speaker, I asked the member whether he agreed that a woman had the right to use two forms of birth control, IUD and the morning-after pill. He neglected or refused to answer them.

I ask him again: Does he believe that the woman has the right to use an IUD and the morning-after pill?

Mr. Pagtakhan: Madam Speaker, my answer is that I do not believe in the morning-after pill. In terms of the IUD, I think there are better forms of birth control than that. That is fraught with dangers.

• (1930)

Ms. Dawn Black (New Westminster—Burnaby): Madam Speaker, I know that by now everyone in this House knows my intense and deeply felt opposition to this legislation, Bill C-43. My party position has been brought to question in this House of Commons. The position of the New Democratic Party seems to be thought of as extremist by some members here, trying to rationalize their illogical support for this bill.

I stand for family planning education. I stand for research into safe and effective contraception. I stand for support for pregnant women and for families. This is a social policy approach to the abortion issue, rather than an ineffective criminal law approach.

Some people then may find family planning to be an extreme position. Some people seem to find support for families extremist. Some people seem to find equality for women, the need to be able to make decisions about our own bodies and our own lives extremist.

No one wants to face an unwanted pregnancy. The solution is to eliminate or at least reduce the number of unwanted pregnancies, not to criminalize abortion.

It is a national tragedy that support and equality for women are considered to be extremist views in this country, and seen in the same light as wishing to give a zygote full legal and social rights as a human being. It is an appalling contradiction.

In British Columbia and in Ontario women entering clinics are harassed and intimidated. The Everywoman's Health Centre in Vancouver was broken into and the medical equipment there worth thousands of thousands of dollars was vandalized and destroyed.

Some of my colleagues and I have received threats of physical violence from an organization. This is what is really extreme, not views that support women, children and the family. Equality for women, the right to decide our own fate, is not extremist.

When members here talk about a balance of rights, they should consider what we are really talking about. The Tories are being pressured by cabinet to vote for this criminal bill, something which was so evident last night.

Pro-choice Tories are told this bill will have absolutely no negative effects on women. Anti-choice Tories are told that it may not be everything they want, but that it does encompass the principles that they stand for—criminalization from conception onwards.

To believe that the bill will have absolutely no negative effect on women is to ignore Canada's top legal experts, Canada's medical authorities and the majority of the women in this nation from coast to coast who know this first-hand. It is to ignore what they are saying.

If this bill is to have no effect and there will be no prosecutions, as the Minister of Justice would have us believe, then it is an improper use of the Criminal Code. If it will have an effect and charges will be laid, as under every other criminal abortion law we have had in Canada, then the effect on the women and the doctors will be profound.

Not only is Bill C-43 a bad law because it is a lie, it is simply a bad piece of legislation according to a majority of respected legal experts in this country. Of 18 constitutional lawyers at the most respected law schools in this

country, 17 of them seriously challenged the validity of the justice minister's legal arguments in support of Bill C–43. They have called it "legal nonsense".

Professor Ryder from Osgoode Hall law school states:

> —it creates no entitlement whatsoever; —Bill C–43 will do nothing to remove the provinces' ability to place restrictions on funding and access to abortion.
>
> The purpose of criminal law is to punish, deter and stigmatize conduct that is inimical to the public interest. Criminal law takes the form of a prohibition coupled with a penalty. Given these characteristics of criminal provisions, it is an oxymoron to speak of a criminal law entitlement. Indeed, recriminalizing abortion will place the procedure once again under a shroud of immorality, and consequently will deter women from seeking access and will deter doctors, hospitals and governments from providing services. This suggests that the true basis of Bill C–43 is the government's accordance of a moral status to the foetus that transcends and is independent of women's priorities and aspirations.

He goes on to state:

> The Justice Minister has claimed that "by occupying the field" of abortion regulation with Bill C–43, the doctrine of federal paramountcy will prevent the provinces from further restricting access. With all due respect, the Justice Minister is relying on a long abandoned conception of federal paramountcy.

Two University of Victoria law professors say that the minister's legal arguments are: "untenable" and "simply wrong". They say the bill does not create entitlement. They say she "does not provide a convincing rationale for the enactment of a federal abortion law".

Two University of Ottawa professors concur that the minister's arguments are "totally without merit from a constitutional point of view". They say it does not create any sort of national standard for abortion.

They wrote:

> It is clear that the federal government has several statutory mechanisms available to regulate abortion standards at a national level. There is therefore no factual basis for the claim that a Criminal Code provision is necessary to create a national standard for entitlement to abortion services.

They go on to state:

> The absence of federal criminal legislation in relation to abortion does not in any way modify or expand the provinces' legislative authority over abortion.

Bill C–43 will have a detrimental effect on access. Doctors and women told the legislative committee this over and over again.

Doctors who came to us from the Province of Quebec said that up to one–third of the doctors in that province who are currently performing abortions will stop if this bill becomes law.

There is only one doctor in all of Newfoundland who performs abortions.

I think it is important that we look at what the situation is like in this country right now, today, with no law.

This doctor is based at the St. John's General Hospital in Newfoundland. The General's policy is to provide only early abortions and to require approval by a gynaecologist, a psychiatrist, a social worker and counselling by a registered nurse. These access barriers are in no way contradicted by Bill C–43.

In fact Bill C–43 encourages these types of referrals because of its health criteria.

Bill C–43 does not provide any kind of national standard. The St. John's General will continue to have these built–in delays and referrals, while the Morgentaler Clinic in Montreal will continue to place no barriers before women to abortion. Thus there is no national standard.

No hospital in Prince Edward Island will perform abortions today. In P.E.I. the province will not pay for an out–of–province abortion unless a five–doctor panel approves the woman's reasons for having one. Few applications are approved and costly travel expenses are never reimbursed.

Bill C–43 will not change things for the women of Prince Edward Island. Criminal law does not change stringent and restrictive provincial health practices.

In Nova Scotia, a law was passed to outlaw health clinics that provide abortion services. C–43 will not outlaw this Nova Scotian law. In fact, doctors who provide the only legal abortions in Nova Scotia at the Victoria General Hospital have said that if this bill passes, they will cease to do so. We have that from the hon. member for Halifax. She released a letter from a doctor there who has said that. This would leave no access in Nova Scotia at all, directly because of Bill C–43.

New Brunswick requires the approval of two doctors before it will pay for an abortion. Bill C–43 does not touch this requirement in any way.

• (1940)

Under Bill C–43, if a province wanted a 25–doctor panel to approve an abortion, it would still be legal and perfectly valid under this bill.

Bill C–43 has no effect on provincial health regulations, other than to make them more stringent in order to comply with the health requirements of Bill C–43.

In my province of British Columbia, the right–wing Social Credit government tried to withdraw funding for abortions. It did withdraw funding for abortions for a time after the Morgentaler decision came down, and then was made to stop that by the courts. That province is spending $20 million to try to discourage abortions.

Bill C–43 will have no effect on this other than to encourage the abuse of the law in provinces where the anti–choice movement or the government in that province is strong and rather bizarre, as in my home province of British Columbia.

Anti–choice zealots have chained themselves to clinics. They have defied injunctions. They have risked jail. They have been in jail. They have been fined. They have risked injury. These are the very people who will be using Bill C–43 against women and against doctors.

I am not making this up. We have press reports which state that the anti–choice people themselves have indicated that when this bill is passed they will use it as another legal tool to harass women and doctors. They have made promises to do that.

I have to say that as a woman I really did feel betrayed last night when my amendment, the only pro–choice amendment proposed to this bill, was defeated by such a wide margin. It was defeated by more votes than the regressive anti–women, anti–choice amendments were defeated.

Some women have believed that simply by voting for women candidates their views will be represented in this House of Commons. The votes last night on the amendments to the abortion bill proved that that theory is sadly mistaken.

I believe that the Tory women on the other side of the House really sold out the women of Canada, along with the government. Not one woman on that side of that House supported the only pro–choice amendment.

I do want to thank the members in this House who did support the amendment for women's rights to decide for ourselves just how many children we will have and when we will have them.

Every member of my caucus, man and woman, who was here voted for the pro–choice amendment. Five Liberals out of a caucus of 84 voted for the pro–choice amendment. Only two Tory members in this House of Commons voted in favour of choice. This government has a huge majority in this House of Commons and yet only two members on that side of the House voted in favour of the only pro–choice amendment. Those two were men. Not one Tory woman stood up for choice.

The commitment of these individual Liberal and Tory women for choice who did support my amendment is strong. Unfortunately, those Liberals are a minority in their caucus and the Tories were facing incredible pressure to vote against choice.

When Canadians are at the ballot box they will know that if they want to vote for choice, if they really want to vote for the fundamental equality issue for women, then they must vote for the New Democratic Party.

This bill does not define entitlement. It is a bill of disentitlement.

It states that women are not entitled to abortions unless they meet criteria unrelated to their own goals and aspirations and unless they meet the criteria set out by the state. This is supposed to be a government that is opposed to state intervention. This is a government which keeps telling us over and over again that it does not believe in state intervention in the marketplace, in rent controls and all those kinds of social programs that my party says the state belongs in. Yet this government wants to be involved in and have state control over the most intimate, personal, and agonizing decision that a woman is ever forced to make. It is absolutely bizarre.

The justice minister said today that "criminalization" is an emotional word and that it was misleading. It is an emotional word and it brings out strong emotions. Unfortunately, it is deadly accurate in this case.

This bill makes abortion a crime. You bet it is an emotional word to those doctors who will now have the possibility of criminal charges hanging over their heads. You bet it is an emotional word to a physician like Dr. Henry Morgentaler who spent time in jail, who was convicted under the last criminal abortion law. It is certainly an emotional word to the millions of Canadian women who thought that, finally, after the Supreme Court threw out the last criminal law on abortion, they would no longer be criminals for deciding the number and spacing of their children, that they were now free to choose what to do and what decisions to make about their own reproductive health and about their own lives.

We have seen demonstrations right across this country because the recriminalization of abortion is an emotional time in our history. It seems as though we are going back to the 19th century.

It is a sad time in our history. It is a time when we are turning our backs on women and children. We are ignoring family planning by cutting down on the social support network that makes it easier for women to bring children into this world. This a time when we have taken the regressive step of putting abortion back into the Criminal Code, instead of the progressive step of making this a society in which women feel that they can bring children into a society in which women have real choices.

Other people have said that this criminal bill is a matter of values. I agree. I think that recriminalizing abortion says a great deal about what we really think about women.

This bill needs to be defeated on principle and because of the real effect it will have. The minister has said many times that society has an interest in protecting the foetus. Instead of criminalizing abortion, which is an ineffective way of protecting the foetus, why is the government not concerned about reproductive health hazards in the workplace? Why is this government not concerned about the environment and poverty? These are the real threats to the foetus.

In poor parts of Montreal the incidence of low birth weight babies is comparable to that of the Third World because their mothers were malnourished during their pregnancy. It is appalling. The minister can best advocate the protection of the foetus and of women's health through social policy measures, not a criminal act that will jail doctors for up to two years and make women liable to aiding and abetting sections of the Criminal Code.

There was a time not long ago that the minister was advocating women's rights rather than foetal rights.

I want to quote from an editorial which appeared in *The Vancouver Sun* of February 11, 1988. This goes back to just after the Morgentaler decision was handed down in the Supreme Court. Before the minister came out against her former leader, Premier Bill Vander Zalm, *The Vancouver Sun* wrote:

> It was quite a sight, a sight I will never forget, to see Cabinet aspirant Kim Campbell do a crab-like scuttle from the television reporter who asked her if her opinion on abortion coincided with the Premier's. Regardless of her views on abortion, Ms. Campbell is too smart to elucidate them. A woman tangibly eager for power, ambition cloaks her like a mantle. Ms. Campbell will keep her trap shut.

The current Minister of Justice read that. It must have had an impact on her because she then called *The Vancouver Sun* columnist Nicole Parton and, with courage, she put her career on the line to stand up for what she believed in.

She told Parton that the Socred caucus was unwilling to break ranks with Vander Zalm because of caucus solidarity and that it was essential to the government, but that she was now willing to break that caucus solidarity.

• (1950)

She is in the same position now, except it seems that her ambitions have been realized. She is now in cabinet. It is ironic that her name is now on the bill that will put abortion back into the Criminal Code. Where is that courage that we all admired a few years ago?

Yesterday, at my constituency office, after I had spoken on the amendments in the House of Commons, a call came in on my answering machine. It was a call from a young woman. She was crying. I want to take a moment just to let you know what she said. It was a very emotional message.

I will read to this House exactly as she said it, because I think this is what we are talking about. This is the kind of situation and the concern that women have:

> Hi Dawn. Thank you very much for speaking out in Parliament in favour of pro-choice. When I was 17, the child my father gave me when he raped me, he forced to have aborted. He drove me to Washington State and I had no say in the matter. I am pro-choice because that decision was mine to make and not his. How I feel about it is my choice, my decision and no one has the right to take that away

from me—certainly not a bunch of parliamentarians who hang around and get paid $65,000 a year to spout their—

I will leave that word blank. She then said:

I am being abusive. I am sorry. Good-bye.

I think those comments from that young woman tell us exactly what we are talking about here today. It is an emotional debate. It is an emotional issue. It is not going to go away. It is not going to go away when this bill passes. There will be challenges.

I urge all members to think carefully again, to re-examine their position and vote against Bill C-43.

Mr. Francis G. LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso): Madam Speaker, the issue of abortion is a matter that has caused great distress and concern among many people, women and men, in my constituency of Highlands—Canso in particular since the restrictions on this practice were removed as a result of the Supreme Court decision in 1988.

There is no question that I have received more mail from my riding on this issue than on any other issue. I want to quote a few letters from some of the constituents who have written to me expressing their views that legislation to restrict this practice and to prevent this tragedy from occurring be re-introduced.

The first letter comes from Sister Theresa LeBlanc of Antigonish who writes:

Surely in a country such as ours, where human rights are respected, the most fundamental right, the right to life, will be guaranteed and protected by Canadian legislation to the most helpless of all, the unborn.

Another woman from my riding also wrote. She is Mrs. Vera Landry of River Bourgeois, and she says:

I am upset and ashamed that as women we would even consider claiming the right to kill another innocent human being in an effort to further our own equality. The quest for justice for women must not be accomplished by denying justice to others.

A third person, Mr. Duncan MacIsaac of Judique, writes:

The divisive issue of abortion is a tremendous test of moral leadership for those who seek truth and desire to uphold life.

The debate we are involved in tonight is about life and about rights, fundamental human rights for all human beings from the moment of conception, from the moment that we can define their possibility as human beings. It is that which must not be forgotten. That is what this debate is all about.

Bill C-43 was an attempt by this government at a law to legislate on abortion. At second reading I said that this bill, as drafted, was deeply flawed. I pointed out areas in which I thought the bill was vague and ambiguous. Yet, because I know that Canadians abhor the current legislative vacuum and want legislation that would express our desire for restrictions and would support Canadians so that abortions would be reduced, I voted for this legislation at second reading. I voted for it so that it could go forward to the committee stage to be clarified, strengthened, and improved.

Unfortunately, despite the testimony of many distinguished interveners , Bill C-43 emerged from committee unchanged. Amendments were proposed which were considered yesterday at the report stage which would have improved this bill, which would have strengthened it in many respects. I voted for many of these amendments. In fact, I even introduced one myself. I voted for these amendments in the hope that we could have legislation on the books which would reflect the views of society that abortion is not a practice which we in this civilized society condone.

I voted for several of these amendments in the hope that we could strengthen this bill, so that it would convey that message to Canadians. Unfortunately, none of those amendments were accepted and it is with regret that I must say tonight that I will be voting against this bill at third reading. I will be voting against this bill because it does not accomplish what the majority of Canadians want, which is legislation that will be a reflection of Canadian society at this point in time.

Bill C-43, as presently drafted, is a divisive bill. It drives an even larger wedge between already vehement opposites in this debate. It encourages the kind of debate which has taken place in Canada recently, a debate which ignores the shared ends of each side and concentrates on the differences. It concentrates on the extreme positions which have been advocated by those who proclaim themselves to be pro-life and those who proclaim themselves to be pro-choice. The pro-choicers accuse the other side of being anti-choice and the

pro-lifers accuse the other side of being pro-death, extreme labels which have polarized Canadians.

Unfortunately, Bill C-43 has contributed to and promoted that kind of negative debate. The tragedy of the debate is that is focused on the means and not on the ends. Nobody likes abortion. What is required is a policy and program of the government to bring down abortions. That program has to include an abortion law which conveys that message, but it has to be broader than an abortion law.

• (2000)

No one is naive enough to believe that by itself legislation on abortion is going to accomplish a reduction in abortion. If there is a commitment toward this, it has to be part of a much broader program of support and policies by this government, a program of policies which affirms life, which affirms values that we share as Canadians, including family values and values that respect life at all stages.

We must reduce the number of unwanted pregnancies through value-based sex and family planning education. We must be open and up front with our children so we may be able to face the overwhelming pressures of adolescence and adulthood. We must use education in our homes, our churches and our schools to instil in our young adults a clear sense of sexual knowledge, morality and responsibility.

We must address socio-economic concerns facing pregnant women today. Child care must be addressed by this government now, not at the time of the next election. Equal pay and opportunity remain huge obstacles. The recently released report of the task force on barriers to women in the Public Service confirms this. Stricter enforcement of support agreements is another urgent requirement. The recently established Family Orders and Agreements Enforcement Assistance Act is a step in the right direction, but it must be strengthened. Affordable housing is desperately required, especially in cities with a high living standard and a low vacancy rate.

Of course we must go beyond legislation and programs of government to work toward changing the social attitudes we express as a society. On this point the Catholic Conference of Bishops, in their testimony before the committee studying Bill C-43, was particularly eloquent. Let me quote a passage from that testimony. The bishops said:

> Government reforms are not sufficient. They must be accompanied by social changes throughout society. Communities must be more responsive to families and women in need. Adoption needs to be promoted as a solution to an unwanted pregnancy but with greater compassion for the agony of giving up a child. Educational, cultural and other institutions, including the Catholic Church, must be more active in promoting the equality of women and respect for them as persons. Some male attitudes and behaviour have to change radically if there is to be an end to violence against women, more co-responsibility in parenting and more respectful inter-personal relationships.

These are challenges for us as a civilized society. They are challenges we will constantly be required to meet, and a legislative framework that includes legislation respecting abortion is part of that support mechanism for fostering the kind of attitudes that we need to foster in a society that protects rights for everyone.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Pronovost): I would like now to ask the hon. member to conclude, please.

Mr. LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso): This debate will continue long after this vote and long after we have been replaced as members in this chamber. Let us be able to say, though, that in our debate we have furthered not our own agendas but the cause of Canadian women and their children.

Ms. Mary Clancy (Halifax): Mr. Speaker, yesterday I rose in this House and spoke on report stage and I said that I was sad about what had happened, about how 25 years after the first go-around on this issue we were back again arguing the same points and discussing the same things. Tonight, however, while I am still sad, I am also angry. I am angry because last night I saw, as the hon. member from New Westminster said in her eloquent comments earlier, the way the votes went and the lack of comprehension by so many in the House about this issue and the all too strong comprehension by too many others.

The root problem here is that true equality for women does not exist in our country, no matter how many women MPs, cabinet ministers, deputy speakers, party leaders, leadership candidates, vice-regals, and onward and upward women in positions of prominence we have. It does not exist, and there is not a woman who sits in the House or in the country who does not know in her secret soul that equality does not exist.

The term "reproductive choice" has become synonymous with the word "abortion". It should not be. It should mean a range of choices which would preclude the necessity for abortion, but that range of choices is not available for women in this country or indeed any country in the western world.

Regarding the kinds of reactions to women that we have heard over the last several days, I compliment the hon. member for Cape Breton Highlands—Canso on his most reasoned remarks and for his support for social programs, despite the fact that we disagree on the most basic issue. Yesterday, when speaking against some of the amendments, I talked about the fact that the problem can be solved only by fostering equality and the kinds of social support networks necessary to make this society friendly for women and children. "Friendly" may be too strong a word. The word I really mean is basically "decent". It is not, and again, every member knows it is not for far too many women and children.

I have a good friend in Halifax at my old university, Mount Saint Vincent, who is an historian and a feminist. I remember her once saying to a class in women's studies that the women's movement is the most cataclysmic movement in social history, certainly since the Industrial Revolution, and possibly even more cataclysmic than the Industrial Revolution. All I can say—I do not say it with humour but with deadly seriousness—is it is amazing that women have managed to achieve this kind of cataclysm given the leg irons that are on them because of this want of equality in our society.

What we see here—I almost hesitate to say this, but I have felt it for a long time—with far too many people in this Chamber who oppose a woman's right to choose is truly a reaction to the women's movement. I do not say that this is the reason for all those who oppose a women's right to choose, but I say it is the reason for a frightening number. Mr. Speaker, if you do not believe me, you should have been at the study of Bill C-43. You would have heard, and I think it would have struck fear into your heart.

We hear, and heard, from men saying: "Women cannot be allowed to do this. Women cannot be allowed to do that." Women are coming to the point where the question of what we are and are not allowed to do will no longer be acceptable.

Over the past two days, I have listened in the House to some things that truly astound me. For example, I have heard that most abortions take place for socio-economic reasons, as if the socio-economic reasons being cited were mere fripperies and women resort to abortion because a pregnancy is merely inconvenient. Do these people live in the real world? Do they live in modern-day Canada where one million children go to food banks? Do they live in real-life Canada where women are subject every day to violence and to death? Do they live in the Canada that less than six months ago saw 14 young women cut down in the prime of their youth and their scholarship because they were women who dared enter a formerly male-dominated profession?

• (2010)

Socio-economic reasons are not fripperies. I suggest to some of my colleagues who sneer at socio-economic reasons that they should perhaps do some visiting in some of the housing projects in this country, in some of the community clinics and in some of the women's centres, those that are able to remain open, to find out the lives of fear, poverty and desperation that so many women live.

Mr. Speaker, I will tell you another thing. Many of the women who suffer this way are not, by any means, living in the physical poverty that we can identify in our cities and towns. Many of them are living in an equal poverty of spirit and poverty of choice in some of the finest addresses this country can provide. The enslavement and the enchaining of women goes on, in many cases, undeterred.

We are going to see this bill pass on Tuesday and we are going to see the criminalization of women. We are going to see the criminalization of abortion, which for the past two years has gone on in this country without any law and without an opening of the floodgates, without the moral fabric of the country falling apart and without, God knows, even women managing to take over the political spectrum. This law is unnecessary and it is a fraud. It is an insult to the intelligence and the morality of the women of this country, and also to the intelligence and the morality of the men of this country. Those of us who advocate a woman's right to choose do not say that men have no right in a family decision. Again, when the situation is optimum, when the question to be decided is between two equal partners who take full responsibility for their actions and for the results of their actions, that is one thing. But too many women in Canada face these

decisions alone because they have been left and deserted physically, emotionally and morally by their partners.

In my one remaining minute I would like to say that I am tired of the threats I have received. I am tired of being called a baby-killer. I want to say that I received a call today from a young woman from Manitoba who told me that doctors there are already beginning to cancel appointments, so that access in Manitoba is going down. I want to say that I sympathize with the people my colleague from Cape Breton Highlands—Canso mentioned. I have had letters from those people too. I want to say that I wish I had the luxury to hold those views, because it would be a luxury to say there is no need for abortion in this country. All of us in the women's movement live for the day when that will be so, but until we root out the causes—poverty, ignorance, violence and fear— the need for abortion will continue. Until we do that, nothing—no law, no government—will stop abortion. It will only drive the practice into the nether world of criminal activity and turn desperate women and sympathetic doctors into fugitives from so-called justice.

Is that what Canadians want, Mr. Speaker? I do not think so.

Mr. John Brewin (Victoria): Mr. Speaker, before I launch into a full discussion of Bill C-43, I will see if I can get away with a minor bending of the rules by making a comment on the other issue that is before the country. I can tie the two together by saying that I think both the issue of the constitutional crisis that this country faces and the issue of Bill C-43 deal with the same underlying principles. That is the question of whether we, as legislators and parliamentarians, can provide the leadership to develop in this country a sense of tolerance, understanding, compassion and a real belief in the rights of others.

On the issue that others are meeting in this city tonight to deal with and try to come to grips with, I want to offer the wisdom of Dennis Lee. A friend of mine, Elicia Scott, sent me this poem which she found in a book of Dennis Lee's called *Garbage Delight*. It is called "A Pair of Pants". It reads:

> Johnny came from England. Jackie came from France. They went to see a wise man about a pair of pants. One said they're too long. One said they're too little. The wise man took the pair of pants and ripped them up the middle. Now each one has got a pant leg, each is freezing, too. And yet it seemed the only thing that anyone could do.

Turning to Bill C-43, I would like to confirm that along with the other members of my party, I intend to vote against Bill C-43 on third reading. I believe this bill offends the rights of Canadians and, in particular, the rights of women. I believe it is a bill which imposes on doctors a responsibility which is not properly theirs to have. It is a bill which makes a criminal act of an act which should not be seen as a criminal act. It is a bill which will not do its stated purpose of protecting the foetus.

As a Christian and one who has held a position in the Anglican Church of Canada as Vice-Chancellor of the diocese in which I live, I want to make it absolutely clear that I do not speak for the church, and I do so from that perspective and from the perspective of understanding, I believe in the sacredness of human life. I believe an understanding of the sacredness of life cannot lead to the conclusion that abortions, in virtually every case, should be made criminal. Those cases, which are to be exceptions, are to be decided by doctors. This is really not a medical decision.

An attempt to squeeze into this law an idea that the decision in individual cases of whether or not to have an abortion is a medical one is a perversion. I believe, as earnestly as I can, that this bill does not provide a principled answer. It denies the principles enunciated by those who believe that the foetus is a matter of human life, and those who believe that until the foetus is born, the predominant right is that of the woman. The extent to which the foetus has rights is a matter to be determined in the final analysis by the conscience of the woman who bears the child.

Let me take my time to focus on the comments of the Minister of Justice. The minister has had the responsibility of introducing this bill and seeing it through the House. She has made a number of speeches and comments on the bill. Let me deal with her comments on report stage because I understand that, and having reviewed her comments this morning, I appreciate the fact that this embodies her rationale for what is a profound change in her position. I believe it is not too strong to say it is a betrayal of the position of the rights of women in this country and, therefore, the rights of all Canadians. In her speech to the House on May 22, she first raised the canard that somehow the Supreme Court of Canada imposed an obligation on this House to act. That is simply wrong. Any careful reading of the Supreme Court decisions confound the proposition that she

makes that the Supreme Court of Canada in the Morgentaler case in effect called on the House of Commons to come up with a law that allegedly balanced the rights of women as guaranteed by the Charter of Rights and as enunciated by the Supreme Court of Canada with the alleged right and the societal interest in the protection of the foetus. The fact is the Supreme Court of Canada said no such thing either in the Morgentaler case, in the Borowski case, or in the Daigle case.

• (2020)

The minister says on page 11666 of *Hansard*:

> It is our role as parliamentarians to bring forward legislation that reasonably reflects the various views and interests of Canadian society in a manner acceptable to that majority of Canadians, and that respects constitutional guarantees.

This bill does not deal and respond to those responsibilities. I suggest on an even higher plane it is critical that the first duty of Parliament in an area of sensitivity such as this, it is our duty to respond to principle and to try to deal with the rights of Canadians irrespective of the majority. As it happens, the majority favours the position of choice. That is an irrelevant argument to the argument of principle which is that surely now as we approach the 21st century the time has come for us as a civilized society to understand that women have the right to choose and make the decision in this most difficult of all decisions.

The Minister of Justice went on to say that the highest court of the land recognized this responsibility by stating in the Morgentaler affair that it was its role to examine the laws and it was the role of Parliament to achieve this balance. Again there is the implication that the court was imposing a duty.

That simply is not consistent with the language of the court's decision. Let me read from the decision of Chief Justice Dickson in the Morgentaler case: "I conclude that the procedures created by section 251 of the Criminal Code for obtaining a therapeutic abortion do not comport with the principles of fundamental justice. Simply put, assuming Parliament can act, it must do so properly." Assuming Parliament can act, and the Chief Justice added emphasis to those words in his decision. There is no direction by the Supreme Court for Parliament to act. It is an entirely proper position for Parliament to take that there must be no criminal law in the area of abortion; that the issue of abortion is a matter of conscience and of right. It is a difficult decision but it is one which must be left to the women.

In her speech the Minister of Justice went on to talk about the legislative committee. She proclaimed the myth that following months of hearings, including testimony from many individuals and groups expressing strong views at either end of the spectrum of opinion on abortion, the committee recognized its duty to attempt to strike a fair balance between the rights and interests of women and society's concern that the foetus be protected. Over 90 per cent of the briefs and evidence received by that committee were against the bill and called on the committee to reject the bill.

From day one the majority on that committee had its mind made up and was determined to endorse the political solution to the political problem that the government and so many members of the Liberal party had, a solution which is not principled, a solution which will divide this country in the longer run and will destroy lives in the long run.

The minister concluded her remarks by saying: "It would be my hope that these members do not condemn this bill for not reflecting their own personal positions, but recognize its ability to respond to the concerns of their fellow Canadians in a matter that is understandable, workable and fair."

Let us look at the bill and see whether it is understandable, workable or fair. Let me remind the House and the country what this bill provides. It sets out new wording to Section 287 of the Criminal Code, which reads as follows:

> 287.(1) Every person who induces an abortion on a female person is guilty of an indictable offence and liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years, unless the abortion is induced by or under the direction of a medical practitioner who is of the opinion that, if the abortion were not induced, the health or life of the female person would be likely to be threatened.

The bill goes on to define "health" to include physical, mental and psychological health.

First, this bill clearly makes the inducement of an abortion a criminal offence, except in certain circumstances. Those circumstances affect the opinion of a human medical practitioner who must exercise an opinion. We already know that medical practitioners are going to have different opinions on individual sets of facts. They are asked to form their opinion on the question of whether the abortion, if it were not induced, would put the health or life of the female person in jeopardy. It is expected that the medical practitioners will pass judgment on whether a failure to induce the abortion would cause a threat to physical, mental or psychological health.

What we have here is a disguised failure of this Parliament to make a decision. Instead, it is turned not back to the person who ought to be making what is a moral decision, but instead to medical practitioners who are asked to make it on the vague test of physical, mental or psychological health.

Those from the anti-choice side of this House, who moved amendments last night, were perfectly correct when they said that the language is not certain and not clear. It is doubly not certain and not clear when it is turned over to a medical practitioner who, after all, is not a lawyer. He is asked to express a medical opinion.

The bill is not understandable. It is not workable in that it imposes an onus on those who seek to escape the effect of the criminal law to demonstrate the onus, and it is far from fair. There is no question that there are going to be different views of medical practitioners. Access to abortion is going to vary across the country. There is no distinction made on the basis of age or condition of women, and it is going to be taken outside the realm that it ought to be in in determination.

One set of legal issues, which have been raised by the minister, have been put to the test of law professors and lawyers across the country. In her attempt to justify this bill, the Minister of Justice offered the propositions that, first, there was at law a requirement for a medical justification for legal abortion and that that would create a national standard of entitlement to abortion for Canadian women. The minister secondly argued that it was necessary for Parliament to use its criminal law power to restrict the ways in which provincial legislatures can restrict access to abortion.

Those were two critical arguments that the minister used to justify this legislation and to attempt to persuade, as she apparently has successfully done, her colleagues in the Conservative and Liberal parties to vote for the bill.

• (2030)

A series of legal opinions were sought and there were 17 opinions returned from professors and other experts across the country. Before I get into the detail of them, I just want to read what the Minister of Justice said about these distinguished constitutional experts.

When it was put to her in the Justice Committee on May 10, 1990, the Minister of Justice said that she first of all had not read any of the opinions. However, she proceeded to pronounce that their arguments were utterly without foundation. She then went on to say that she did not recognize any of the leading luminaries in constitutional law in Canada in the list of people named in *The Globe and Mail* article.

The minister appears not to have either taken the trouble to ask for a comprehensive review of the opinions, but she proceeded to dismiss the opinions as coming from those who were beneath her dignity to know.

Let me tell the House about some of the opinions. First of all, may I offer the opinion from the Faculty of Law at the University of Toronto of seven professors, one of whom I had as a professor and so did other distinguished members of this House, if I can include myself in that category. However, apparently they failed to get through to the Minister of Justice. I am thinking here of Professor Risk. I include Professors Duclos, Macklem, Rogerson, Colker, Grant and Roach, seven professors from perhaps the most distinguished law school. I hesitate to get too comparative in this, but it is my *Alma Mater*.

All of them took apart the minister's arguments limb by limb. At the end of this six-page letter of opinion, there is nothing left of the arguments.

On the question of a national standard of entitlement, these professors, as did others, Professor Bruce Ryder from Osgoode Hall, Professor Andrew Petter from the even more distinguished University of Victoria, Martha Jackman, professor of constitutional law, and Sandra Rodgers, professor of medical legal issues at the University of Ottawa and on and on, all make the point, first of all, that this inept bill, Bill C-43, does not create any national entitlement to abortion. Quite the opposite. It

makes abortion, in most circumstances, a criminal offence.

Mr. Speaker, I see you waving your finger of one minute at me, so I am going to ask my colleagues if they feel so minded to put a question to me. I will give them, when the time comes, an opportunity to learn even more about the opinion of professors at the various universities on the inadequacies of the Minister of Justice's opinion.

Let me just finish by saying that people across this country do not want this bill. They do not want abortion to be a matter of criminal law. They do not wish the matter turned over simply to doctors to decide. Women across Canada do not want this bill. The courts have made it very clear that this bill, by making abortion illegal, intervenes in one of the most difficult decisions that a person can make.

Let me conclude by quoting from Madam Justice Wilson who said: "This decision, that of having an abortion, is one that will have profound psychological, economic, and social consequences for the pregnant woman. The circumstances giving rise to it can be complex and varied. There may be and usually are powerful considerations militating in opposite directions. It is a decision that deeply reflects the way the woman thinks about herself and her relationship to others and to society at large. It is not just a medical decision. It is a profound social and ethical one as well. Her response to it will be the response of the whole person".

This decision about the future of a foetus is one which is a profound social and ethical question. It is not one that Parliament can make, a Parliament, predominantly, as has been noted, of men who will never face this decision. It is not a decision which doctors can make. It is a decision which women make, and I urge the House to vote against the bill.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Pronovost): It seems that at least two members have listened to your suggestion for questions and comments and I recognize the hon. member for Mission—Coquitlam on a question or comment.

Ms. Joy Langan (Mission—Coquitlam): Indeed, I am taking up the suggestion of the hon. member because I am very interested in hearing what is the legal analysis from the 17 law professors. The women in Canada have a right to have spelled out for them what the analysis is. I would ask the hon. member if he could, in the time allotted for questions and comments, provide me and the women of Canada with that information.

Mr. Brewin: I thank my friend for the very perceptive question. I do appreciate it. It does give me a chance to add some remarks which I had hoped to squeeze in in the main part of my speech.

It is perhaps clear on the face of it that the question of national standard of entitlement is not established by this bill. That is a specious argument. Let me go to the second of the two arguments that the minister raised in which he stated: "It is necessary for Parliament to use its criminal law power to restrictive the ways in which provincial legislatures can restrict access to abortion".

There are a number of flaws with that, but the main one is that all of the cases demonstrate clearly that the provincial legislatures operating within their areas of jurisdiction, and in this case probably the area of health, could enact even more restrictive legislation than this Parliament enacts and that such legislation would not be deemed to be in conflict with validly enacted federal legislation.

In the case of car accidents, for example, or car offences, the federal Criminal Code applies one standard. In provincial legislatures which have enacted additional standards, that legislation has been upheld by the courts.

In the justice committee the minister pronounced herself and dismissed all of these arguments as not knowing what they are talking about. She said that they were talking about the paramountcy principle and then proceeded to demonstrate that she did not know anything about the paramountcy principle at all.

The only case that the minister could even refer to was one decided in 1896 on the paramountcy issue, subsequently completely changed and developed in a different direction by courts. The paramountcy issue is the following. If there are conflicting, validly enacted federal and provincial legislation, then the federal law will prevail. But first there must be a finding of valid provincial legislation and then there must be a determination of conflict. It is that point which the minister fails to understand but she demonstrates in her discussion of the

Westindorp case, which she completely misunderstands and misquotes.

This legislation does not so occupy the field in the area of abortion that it would prevent more restrictive legislation be enacted by provinces. This law does not establish national standards. This law is not something that is required by the courts.

As we watched the votes unfold last night, the vote by the Liberal Party brought me great sadness. This is a difficult issue to make partisan. Yet by their votes, both the Conservative and Liberal parties demonstrated that when the crunch really comes the talk about women's rights is just talk. A mere handful of Liberals stood up, 5 Liberals out of a caucus of 83 or 84—some of them are off running for leader right now—and voted for the position that abortion should not be a matter of criminal law at all; a handful.

• (2040)

Women across Canada and men across Canada who are concerned about the profound issue of women's rights are going to have to ask themselves, as they move towards future elections, whether it in fact aids the cause of women's rights to have more Liberals in the House. Last night demonstrated beyond doubt that Liberals, as with Conservatives, cannot be counted on to stand with women when it really matters.

Ms. Dawn Black (New Westminster—Burnaby): I was pleased to hear my colleague from Victoria's comments. It is almost a breath of fresh air to hear from a man in this House articulating the position of choice for women in such a clear and forceful manner. It is also a pleasure to hear him look at the legal ramifications of this bill. That leads me to one of the questions that I have.

One of the rationales that we have heard around this place for bringing in criminal legislation has been the Chantal Daigle case last summer, when Canadians from coast to coast were horrified to see this young woman's life displayed across television sets from coast to coast, to have the most intimate details of her life spoken of in cafés, in barber shops, on street corners, in all the places in Canada. People did not like that spectacle. They wanted to ensure that it would not happen again. One of the rationales we keep hearing is, if Bill C-43 passes that will stop that kind of display.

I would like to ask my colleague, how will Bill C-43 stop civil injunctions? Will it, in fact? Or will we continue to see this kind of display, this kind of action by some of the more reactionary, more forceful, more nasty anti-choice people in our society?

Mr. Brewin: The answer is that the bill will in fact encourage legal action. It will make abortions in most cases illegal. The lines, when they are not illegal are vague. That is an invitation to legal action. It is an invitation to injunctions. The Supreme Court of Canada in the Daigle case made it very clear that it frowned on any law which put women through the court system during pregnancy. I am quite convinced that, in due course, this bill, which we are agonizing through here and which the country is agonizing through, will be ruled unconstitutional by the Supreme Court of Canada.

Ms. Joy Langan (Mission—Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, I was interested to hear the hon. member from New Westminster—Burnaby refer to the legal analysis that we have just heard from the hon. member for Victoria and the thoughtful and articulate way in which he has expressed his concern for the legislation that is before us.

I will find it very difficult under the circumstances to be able to put forward the thoughtful, rational words that are necessary. I am afraid that after listening for hours and hours this week to women being denigrated, I am rapidly getting to the point that it is going to be very difficult to maintain rationality, to maintain dignity, or even to maintain the respect that is necessary to speak in this House.

In an article in *The Vancouver Province*, the Justice Minister stated that the criminal law has two major purposes. First, the preservation of the peace and protection of the public, and secondly, the safeguards of equality, fairness, and a guarantee of the rights and liberties of the individual against the state".

This bill will not preserve peace on the question of abortion. Indeed, the outrage expressed by both sides on this question ensures that the legislation will ensure an ongoing inflamed debate.

With regard to the protection of the public, just what public is the minister suggesting must be protected by this legislation, and from whom?

The second purpose, she said, was the safeguard of equity and fairness and a guarantee of rights and liberties of the individual against the state. How does Bill C–43 safeguard and protect equity and fairness, and how does it guarantee the rights of women in Canada?

This is not a compromise bill. This is a bill that recriminalizes abortion. The Liberals want this bill to pass because they would like to have the issue laid to rest in anticipation of forming the next government. The Liberals anticipate that once the bill is in place they will not have to deal with it if indeed they do become the next government.

To those who watched the votes last night it became very clear to Canadian women where the hearts and support of the Liberals are on issues as they pertain to women. The verbal rhetoric will escalate as we go into an election campaign, but unfortunately the Liberal Party has neither the policy nor the will, as evidenced last night, to ensure that Canadian women's rights and justice for Canadian women will prevail under their governments.

For the Tories, this bill, in my view, is a sacrificial offering to the radical fringe, the fringe that does not like turbans, that opposes pay equity and that in many ways has demonstrated that it very much dislikes women. The government is offering up on the sacrificial altar of expediency the right of women to choose.

The Minister of Justice, the hon. member for Vancouver Centre, parted ways with Bill Vander Zalm and his Socred cronies in Victoria because of his interference on the question of abortion in British Columbia. Women in the riding of Vancouver Centre trusted the Minister of Justice. They believed that she would stand with them on this most basic of rights. They were thrilled, as were many women in this country, when the hon. member was made the first woman justice minister.

The hon. member for Vancouver Centre, the Minister of Justice, has broken ranks with her sisters, the women of Canada, the women who supported her, the women who celebrated her appointment with her, and has turned her back on them. She has stood in this House and offered an arrogant rationale implying balance in a bill that devastates the rights of women in this country.

I have a letter addressed to the Minister of Justice that was sent to me by a constituent of mine and that I would like to put on the record. It reads:

> Dear Minister,
>
> Re: Proposed Recriminalization of Abortion
>
> I would like to be able to congratulate you on your appointment as Justice Minister, since the appointment of a woman to that position is an historical event and should be one that all women wish to celebrate. However, I believe that the Prime Minister's decision to appoint a woman to the Justice portfolio was neither made in a spirit of commitment to women's equality nor in recognition of the potential contribution that a woman incumbent could make to all women in Canada. Rather, I believe that your appointment is a thinly veiled attempt to counter all the bad press that the federal government has received over its recent decision to cut federal funding to women's programs across Canada.
>
> Further, I believe that your appointment was intended to cloud the fact that the proposed abortion bill will recriminalize abortion. I believe the Prime Minister considered your B.C. reputation as a supporter of a woman's right to reproductive choice and decided that he could rely on that reputation to reassure Canadian women that the hon. Minister would be fair in her representation of women on this issue. I believe the Canadian women are not that easily fooled—

• (2050)

and it gives the minister's name.

> Those same women who applauded your position on choice are now wondering why you have turned away from them to endorse proposed legislation to recriminalize abortion. I know why. It is politically expedient for you to abandon the wishes of the majority of Canadian women on this subject at this time. That is nothing for us to celebrate.
>
> The majority of Canadians support a woman's right to choose whether or not to have a child. I demand that you, hon. Minister, act on behalf of the majority of Canadians in opposing the proposed abortion bill. I must advise you that if you do not, I will do everything within my power to ensure that Canadian women know that you favour political expediency over the rights of women, and I will be encouraging them to ensure that you are not re-elected to the House of Commons.
>
> Yours truly,
>
> Linda Tosac

This past year, January to December 1989, provided a long list of rude awakenings for Canadian women, women who thought we had won the right to make our own reproductive decisions. Women in Ontario were shocked when the Supreme Court of Ontario judge granted Barbara Dodd's former boyfriend an injunction preventing her from having an abortion. The decision followed a hearing at which neither Dodd nor her lawyer were present.

Women in Quebec were shocked when Chantal Daigle's former lover persuaded a Superior Court judge

to order the young woman to carry her pregnancy to term. The province's highest court upheld the ruling.

Women in Nova Scotia watched helplessly as Premier John Buchanan's government passed a law to prevent Dr. Henry Morgentaler from operating a Halifax clinic that was to facilitate safe, timely abortions in the underserved Atlantic provinces.

Women throughout the country looked on with amazement and shock as this government introduced a new criminal abortion law that could lead to the imprisonment of both women and their doctors for abortions performed for reasons other than health.

All this in spite of the fact that in 1988 the Supreme Court ruled and came down with a decision that struck down Canada's abortion laws because they forced women seeking abortions to meet a criterion that is unrelated to their own priorities and aspirations.

Now we are in 1990, and now we have listened through this long week to member of parliament after member of parliament get up and, in the most sanctimonious terms, vilify the women of this country.

Part of the argument that was put forward was an argument for women to carry children to term and for the government, I assume, or society as a whole, to provide to those women the kinds of support that are necessary for them either to bear the children and keep them or, as some might suggest, to bear them for another, which is an option I am sure those who have suggested it have not thought about in terms of the person who is doing the bearing.

Having said that, in the last 18 months since this parliament began I have not seen one shred of evidence from the government to show that there is any intention on the part of the same government that brings forward such regressive, cruel legislation—not one shred of evidence that that government in fact plans to provide the support necessary for women to be able to bear these children and raise these children with the support of the community.

In fact, it is important for us to note that the number of working families in this country has steadily increased between 1973 and 1986, and in fact is up by 19 percent. There is a disproportionate number of working-poor families residing in western Canada. Often these include families with two incomes. Roughly 60 percent of working-poor families consists of couples with dependent children.

Has the government provided any kind of assistance to these families? No. The government has put a cap on CAP in western provinces. The government has clawed back child allowance. The government has failed to deliver on the child care that was promised and, to top it all off, the government is throwing in a 7 percent goods and services tax. This lack of support is totally unrealistic.

In 1966, a minimum-wage worker who supports a family could earn 46 percent of the poverty line income. Those are 1986 figures, Mr. Speaker. The minimum wage has not increased in this Parliament since 1986. Even if both spouses were fully employed at the minimum wage, they could only earn 92 percent of the poverty line with both of them working. I do not know if this government expects that they should run out and steal the other 8 percent. I do not know how this government plans that they should find the 7 percent to pay the goods and services tax, but I do know that this kind of policy is not going to help those mothers and fathers face poverty and deal with additional children if in fact their choice were one that is abortion.

There is a failure by this government to set an example for the rest of Canada about how it will provide this wonderful support that it keeps saying we as a community must provide. It is easy to get up in this House and say that we as a community must provide support to the women of Canada.

I will tell you something: if you start looking at the statutes that have come into this House to be debated in this House about supporting women, not one of them will help a woman who is faced with these kinds of choices.

I could go into detail on the legislation, but I do not intend to because I think it has been amply described by my colleagues from the New Democratic Party.

This is a sad week for women in Canada, and it is going to be a sadder week next week when women return to the life of a chattel, being subject to male analysis of the decisions we make and to being threatened with jail if those decisions are the wrong ones in the view of those men. In fact, the minister, as the hon. member for Victoria says, used as her paramountcy a decision from the last century. There are generations of women who have been born since the last century who remember, and who will continue to remember, their sisters, their

neighbours, their mothers, their friends, without the right to have a legal safe abortion, who helped each other in desperation, knowing they were breaking the law, watching some die or suffer horribly, but willing to make that sacrifice because there was no alternative.

• (2100)

Women will continue to have abortions in this country. The ante will go up tremendously if this bill passes. I am finding it very difficult tonight, as I said at the beginning, to make a speech that gives the dignity to this House that it deserves. I am absolutely devastated at the thought that in 1990, 50 years after we women became persons, we are faced with the *fait accompli* of Bill C-43, the recriminalization of abortion.

The hon. member for Victoria drew a parallel between the constitutional crisis Canada faces and this bill. I agree with him totally, not only does this bill parallel the constitutional crisis, this bill is the Meech Lake Accord of women in Canada.

I condemn this bill for its lack of fairness, for its lack of equity, for its lack of justice. I condemn it on behalf of a great number of women in Canada.

Mr. John Brewin (Victoria): Mr. Speaker, I would first like to thank the member for her kind words. I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate the member for New Westminster—Burnaby for her fight on this bill. It has been terrific. I am proud to be sitting next to her in this House and to be associated with her in this battle.

As I was listening to her and to the member for Mission—Coquitlam I noted a sadness, particularly among women, in this debate and in the vote. It is a sadness with which I empathize. It is not a pleasant thing to see the society in which you live a lesser place than you would like it to be. I think that is the perception of what is happening.

I happened, for quite different reasons, to go into the reading room tonight and I found a book called *The Long Distance Runner*, the autobiography of Michael Harrington. Michael Harrington is an American socialist. He told a joke that William Buckley told on him in introducing him. He said: "That is like being a skyscraper in Desmoines".

He tells the story in this book of his life as a democratic socialist in the United States. He describes it as the long distance run. Part of it is the evolution of his thinking as the years went along, part of it is an account of the joy of accomplishment and the despair at the losses and the difficult times. He concludes, as it happened just before he died recently of cancer, to say that he would not have traded his life for any other, that the struggle for social justice is important and worth it. Whatever the short-term loss tonight, it is a fight that must go on.

Ms. Langan: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for Victoria for what he has just put before the House. I think it probably reflects the sentiments of many Canadian women. Many of the women who have spoken in this House believed, I think, that we were part of the last generation of women who would have to face unwanted pregnancy with no alternatives but to break the law. In fact, we find ourselves part of a generation again facing those alternatives. That is the legacy we have to give to our daughters.

I too want to draw a little bit of a comparison. There was a black and white film put out years ago. It is still around in some places. It was put out by the International Ladies Garment Workers and is about the organizing drives in New York at the turn of the century. There is a song which closes the film. The chorus in the song says: "Every generation has to win it again". I guess that is what we are facing here.

[*Translation*]

Hon. André Ouellet (Papineau—Saint-Michel): Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak very briefly at the third reading stage of Bill C-43 and express my reservations about the legislation tabled by this government.

Jesus Christ said something I think is very apt in this case; "Forgive them, for they know not what they do". I think these words are a very good description of this government, which has tabled a bill that does not in any way deal with the problem facing our modern society.

In fact, neither pro-life nor pro-choice supporters can identify with this bill. Both groups are disappointed by this legislation. I fail to see why the government refused to pass legislation similar to that which exists in most of the world's industrialized countries. I am referring to legislation that clearly specifies that in the early stages of pregnancy, it is exclusively up to the woman to decide whether or not she will keep her child. In most modern

countries, the legislation provides that this decision may be made by the mother without any intervention by the State, and in a totally decriminalized context.

In most of these countries—I am thinking of France in particular—there is a provision that in the second quarter, the decision is a matter between the mother and a physician. In other words, the decision must be medically approved if the abortion, if that is what the mother wants, is to take place.

In the last three months of pregnancy, most industrialized countries provide that to have an abortion is a criminal act, except in cases where the life of the mother is in danger.

I think the legislation before the House today might, in the opinion of those who support the pro-life movement, open the door far too wide to abuse. If we read the wording of the bill very carefully, it is indeed a possibility. Conversely, and this is where the situation gets rather confused, we have had both on second reading and at the report stage of this bill and now on third reading, parliamentarians who said that in fact, the bill was far too restrictive and that in the final instance, the whole bill should not be subject to the Criminal Code.

• (2110)

I think the amendment proposed by the hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby (Ms. Black), who suggested repealing sections 287 and 288 of the Criminal Code, had some merit. I did not vote in favour of the amendment because personally, I think the decision, at least in the early stages of pregnancy, should be entirely up to the mother and certainly not subject to the Criminal Code. Personally, I think that in the final stages of pregnancy, abortion would constitute a crime, just as a mother who cuts her child's throat in the days and weeks following its birth would be committing a crime. If we apply criminal sanctions to the mother who commits such an act in the weeks following birth, I don't see how we could not do so when an abortion is done in the weeks preceding birth. There would otherwise be a double standard.

I think it is unfortunate that the bill ignores the various stages of pregnancy. The medical profession has very clearly addressed the whole question of deciding when life really begins. Is it at the time of conception, during the first few weeks, or during the first few months? I suggest that this still has not been resolved at the medical level. But it seems to me that after a number of weeks, there is undoubtedly a living being in its mother's womb and to carry out an abortion at that time could be accepted by society only under very stringent conditions and on the basis of a clear decision of the medical profession.

I can say this with the utmost conviction because my father was a general practictioner who probably delivered a few thousand babies in his lifetime, operating for many years in such rural areas as the Lower St. Lawrence, near Rivière-du-Loup, Kamouraska, Saint-Pascal, but especially in Kamouraska, and later on in Charlesbourg, a suburd of Quebec City. He is no longer here to discuss with me and tell me how I should have voted on this bill. I am quite sure that he did not carry out many abortions. And if he did I am sure it was clearly to save the mother's life.

As several other Parliamentarians, I took it upon myself to seek opinions. This is a bill on which hon. members may vote freely, irrespective of their party affiliation or party line, according their conscience. I have been able to realize to what extent Canadians are divided on this issue, for having sought the opinion of my own children—I have two daughters and two sons—I know what they think, and I can tell you that if one of my sons is pro-life, the other is pro-choice, and that if one of my daughters is pro-life, the other is pro-choice. They are, like the rest of the Canadian people, deeply divided on this issue. Unfortunately, the bill we have before us does not help in any way. I hope that the bill will pass on third reading. I think it will. We just have to refer to the final votes on the report stage and see what happened then to conclude that Bill C-43 will very likely pass on third reading.

I hope that this law will not have as much trouble in the courts as the previous law because in reality, it is no longer possible, I think, to successfully prosecute a doctor who performs an abortion. The experience of the criminal courts in recent years clearly shows that when a physician is taken to court, a trial with judge and jury is automatically requested. In today's modern society, it is impossible to bring together 12 jurors who are unanimous on this question. That is why I find it rather unfortunate that the government decided to maintain this as a criminal matter. I am convinced that when it comes to trial in court, this question, again, will never be settled. I do not see how we can find 12 jurors who will

unanimously convict a physician for performing an abortion.

I also find it regrettable that so much emphasis is put on the physician's responsibility. It seems to me that doctors practise their profession in conditions that are often very difficult in our modern society. It is not the doctor's duty to pass a legal, much less a religious, judgement. Therefore putting so much emphasis in the bill on the physician's responsibility seems to me to be fundamentally wrong. I am quite disappointed to see how determined the government is to pass its bill in its present form.

Personally, I will vote against this bill on third reading because I think that it does not meet the needs of the day.

For sure, the Canadian government cannot legislate in this area without using the Criminal Code, since it is possibly the only law that allows it to legislate.

• (2120)

But it seems to me that this issue, which I think ought to be decriminalized, should be strictly regulated by provincial and medical authorities in each Canadian province. Had we been able to get the agreement of the ten provinces to put the matter of abortion under civil law to allow abortion during the first weeks of pregnancy, as I said earlier, I suggest we might have had a piece of legislation which would have been much fairer and much more serene, but which could have provided stricter sanctions for abortion in the latter phase of pregnancy.

I voted for an amendment introduced by the member from Fraser Valler East (Mr. Belsher). His amendment had to do with the physician who concludes that without abortion the life or health of the mother might be seriously threatened. I thought that adding the word "seriously" would in a way restrict the open-door approach to abortion on demand which seems to be a characteristic of this bill. I am very disappointed that the government did not see fit to accept this amendment from one of its own backbenchers.

I vividly remember the words of Mgr. Lebel, president of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, who expressed strong disappointment when he learned that the parliamentary committee on abortion did not accept any of the amendments to Bill C-43. For that reason, he thought, the bill itself should have been scrapped.

I for one believe that, at the very least, the amendment of the member for Fraser Valley East should have been adopted. I suggest we will end up with a faulty piece of legislation which will fail to meet the requirements of our modern society. And I am afraid—I hope I am wrong—that again the Supreme Court will be called upon to rule on the contents of the legislation, and perhaps a few years down the road we will have to get back to Parliament to re-open the debate on the abortion legislation.

[*English*]

Ms. Dawn Black (New Westminster—Burnaby): Mr. Speaker, I was listening to the member from the Liberal side very carefully and I must say that I ended up somewhat confused about just exactly what his position is on this issue and on the bill.

He kept returning to the issue of late abortions. He said several times that late abortions are a crime. I wonder if he is aware that 89 per cent of the abortions that are performed in this country take place before the twelfth week. Late abortions very seldom happen. When they do happen, it is for catastrophic reasons.

I have a friend who underwent a late abortion last year. She was five months pregnant. She was pregnant with her third child and it was very much a wanted child. She had no option but to go through with this abortion. It was not her choice. It was not what she wanted to do, but to save her own health, and for the sake of the two children she already had, she had to go through this.

When you talk about making late abortions a crime, this is the kind of situation you are talking about. Does the hon. member suggest that this woman, after going through medical consultation, should have gone through some other kind of procedure, some other kind of panel, some other kind of medical decision? The medical decision had been made. I really find it difficult to understand what he would want to see put into place.

The other thing that left me somewhat confused was that he talked about wanting abortion to be decriminalized but said, on the other hand, that society wanted regulations in place. Well, the fact of the matter is there are already regulations in place. Women are self-regulating about this issue, for one thing. It is not an issue that women take lightly. It is an issue that women

struggle with incredibly. There are regulations in place by the Canadian Medical Association as well which deal with all of the issues the member was speaking of.

Just exactly what does he mean about crimes in the later stages? What does he means about regulations when we already have regulations?

[*Translation*]

Hon. André Ouellet (Papineau—Saint-Michel): Mr. Speaker, before answering the hon. member's question, I want to say to him that, up until the third reading stage, this debate on Bill C-43 had been held in a non-partisan way with respect for the personal views and convictions of every member of this House.

I deeply regret that the New Democratic Party, at the third reading stage of this bill, has decided to turn it into a partisan issue by increasing their interventions, questioning speeches made in this House by members of other parties and attempting to ask questions to their own members. They want to turn this debate into the NDP mutual admiration society, which I find totally unacceptable in this context. From the beginning we have seen a non-partisan debate where all members can express their own personal views and convictions dictated by their conscience.

I say to the hon. member that I am quite familiar with the position she has expressed and that I respect her views. I would like the NDP members to limit themselves to their own speeches and let other members, be they Conservatives or Liberals, freely express their opinions in this debate where partisanship has no place.

I explained a while ago—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Pronovost): Order! The hon. member on a point of order.

[*English*]

Ms. Langan: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I am not going to say what I think about the remarks that have just been made. I am going to ask you to clarify something. Under the rules of this House, under questions and comments members have a right to question any other member, regardless of which party they are from. Would you please clarify that, Mr. Speaker?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Pronovost): I do not think that what has been said by the hon. member is a point of order. The hon. member for Papineau—Saint Michel was expressing an opinion, which all other members of the House may not share. However, the member may come back to that topic, if she wants, for the rest of the period of question and comments.

• (2130)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Ouellet: Mr. Speaker, since I have an opportunity to comment further on my position on this bill, I would like to add that I am sorry the government did not accept an amendment that was proposed by the hon. member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, which provided that an abortion should be induced only by a medical practitioner. He suggested removing the words "or under the direction of" to make it clear that an abortion should only be induced in very special circumstances and only by a medical practitioner, not by other persons who do not have the ability to assess properly the consequences that an abortion might have from the health point of view. I think the purpose of this amendment was to ensure that everything is done under the best possible conditions by the persons best qualified to perform a medical act that I feel should only be done in very special circumstances. I think it is also unfortunate that the government did not accept an amendment I thought was entirely appropriate in the circumstances.

[*English*]

Ms. Joy Langan (Mission—Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, since it is not possible to have clarification of the ruling, I would like to express my opinion.

Because a group of people representing a particular political party are attracted to that party because of its clearly articulated policies, I feel we should be able to get up in this House and articulate that position very comfortably. These members feel so strongly about the issues that they are at least prepared to stay and ask questions of other speakers or make comments on those questions. The rules of this House allow any member to question any other member regardless of whether they

are in the same party or what their views are. I understand this to be an entrenched right in this House.

I would like to say that I take very grave exception to the position of the hon. member who spoke just before my intervention. I would very strongly ask him to consider not making this a partisan issue, something he is accusing others of doing.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Ouellet: Mr. Speaker, I am willing to give the hon. member the benefit of the doubt and assume she is not trying to make a partisan gesture. It certainly is not my intention. I think I expressed, as I said from the outset, my own personal position. I hope that all other parliamentarians who will speak in this debate will do the same. I have noticed that during the last few hours of this debate, there has been a certain emphasis, if I may use this term, by certain members in a certain corner of the House of Commons, and if that is not a partisan gesture, so much the better!

In concluding, I wish to say that I do not think Bill C–43 is the kind of bill I would have liked to see tabled by this government, and in the circumstances, when time comes to vote on third reading, I will vote against this bill.

[*English*]

Mr. Dan Heap (Trinity—Spadina): Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak against Bill C–43, the act respecting abortion, on this third reading. There are so many issues in this, and some of them have been very well dealt with, such as the ambiguity of the bill or the question of the legal jeopardy and risk to a doctor as well as to a woman, and so on .I do not intend to go into those aspects. This is something I have been concerned with personally in the sense that I have seen it primarily not as a legal issue but as a moral issue.

My wife and the rest of my family and I have discussed this frequently over the years. My wife and I have seven children and a number of grandchildren, and we are glad of every one of them. My wife and I have never tried to prevent the birth of one of our children. We not only reverence life, but we enjoy and value it. But we came to the conclusion some years ago that we do not have the right as citizens to use the force of the law to prevent a woman from seeking an abortion from a qualified medical practitioner.

Furthermore, most of the mail and comments that I have received from my constituents are not concerned with the confusing aspects of Bill C–43. They are concerned with yes or no; abortion or no abortion. Some of them may qualify it by talking about the first or second or third trimester or about certain circumstances, but basically they are concerned either that abortion should be again made a criminal offence under our law or that it should not be. Therefore, I want to deal with what I consider the underlying moral issue, on which it is possible to take the position that abortion ought not to happen and yet, at the same time and consistently, to take the position that we do not have the moral means to use force or terror against a woman or a doctor who differs with us in that judgment.

I am encouraged by a large part of the brief that the United Church of Canada presented on this subject earlier this year. I may not agree with absolutely every detail of it, but it is one of the best statements I have found of the moral and religious issues at stake in this matter.

In their brief, at the beginning, they make three general points. One is: "We urge the Government of Canada not to use the provisions in the Criminal Code to regulate abortion". That in one sense completely covers the subject of this bill. They go on, and I wish to refer in a minute to their reasons for that.

They also say that they want the Government of Canada "to enact and enforce penalties for people who perform or attempt to perform abortions without the required medical qualifications or who perform or attempt to perform abortions in places other than those approved for that purpose". I am quite perplexed by that recommendation, that urging, because it seems to me that, in part, it is redundant, as we already have a law forbidding a person to do a medical service who is not qualified and the medical profession has its own internal code and disciplinary system to the same effect. So that is taken care of, and even though they seem to place it outside the Criminal Code, I do not understand how the United Church would plan to have the government carry this out. I do not know under what kind of jurisdiction they expect the government to do it. At any rate, it seems to me it is cancelled out by the first of their recommendations.

• (2140)

Their third recommendation, third urging, is that the government use shared funding under the Canada Health Act "to require all provincial governments to provide adequate contraceptive education and services to effectively reduce the incidence of unwanted pregnancies and to provide early access to diagnosis and, if necessary, termination of pregnancy so that any such abortion could be performed as early as possible". With the exception of the middle clause, which I find hard to understand, I think their position is clear and sound.

I want to refer to some of the theological and ethical principles that the General Council of the United Church states in support of that position, because that is the official position by the General Council of the United Church. They go on to say:

> The United Church of Canada affirms: the sanctity of human life, born and unborn. That life is much more than physical existence.

They go on to say that the taking of human life is evil. Then they make a point that I think should be made more often than it is in this debate.

> Our concern must not be limited to a concern for the unborn but it must also include a concern for the quality of life as a whole.

In this debate and in previous debates on this subject, I have said how disgraceful it is sometimes that a body such as a city council or the parliament seems to be concerned with children before they are born and not afterwards. It seems to make a mockery of everything they say.

The United Church goes on:

> Life in this imperfect world often places us in complex circumstances of moral dilemma and ambiguity where values ultimate in themselves seem at times to be in conflict with other values and rights.
>
> We are called as a people of God to take responsibility for our lives and the world in which we live. This may involve making grave decisions relating even to life itself.

Some of us who decided years ago to join the Canadian Armed Forces were certainly deciding to try to take lives, since that is what has to be done in war. We were urged to do that by practically all the religious leaders of Canada. In this point, the United Church is in line with the rest. Whether war is justified or not, they are making the general point that there are times when we have to make very grave decisions relating even to life itself.

They go on to say:

> A child has a right to be wanted, so that it may have some assurance of this essential element in human development. Bringing unwanted children into the world is irresponsible.

Then they come to the point at which so many members of this House seem to divide.

> Family planning, including vasectomy and tubal ligation, is a Christian duty. Our Canadian society has to make every effort to ensure that contraception is the only completely acceptable form of birth control—. The aim of all education, research and social pressure must be always to reduce the incidence of abortion and to promote effective contraception.

During my life, particularly during my married life and my life as an active member of the church, at present the Anglican Church, I have not been able to understand why some people teach that contraception is wrong. Some people seem to place contraception almost on a level with abortion in their scale of evil. I cannot for the life of me understand it because I believe it is true that the restriction or hindrance of contraception or a discouragement of contraception has in fact been responsible in part for many abortions.

The United Church goes on to says:

> To anticipate the use of abortion as a form of birth control and therefore neglect to practise contraception is medically and morally deplorable and socially expensive and such intentional use of abortion by individuals or governments is morally wrong.

The United Church does not say that abortion is good. It does no say that abortion is neutral, neither good nor evil. It says it is wrong, but it does not take an absolutist view of that. It goes on:

> We affirm the inherent value of human life, both as immature in the foetus—

Mr. Speaker, I think that is a broadly acceptable description of something which is disputed back and forth as to when a human person begins. The United Church regards the foetus as immature human life. It goes on to say:

> —and as expressed in the life of the mother and related persons. The foetus is a unique though immature form of human life and, as such, has inherent value. Christians should witness to that value by stressing that abortion is always a moral issue and can only be accepted as the lesser of two evils and should be the most responsible alternative available in each particular situation.

They conclude this paragraph by saying:

> Therefore abortion is acceptable only in certain medical, social and economic situations.

I believe that is a very careful, responsible statement by Christian people of the situation in which we find ourselves in this country regarding abortion. They go on from there to make four more points. They say:

> Based on these fundamental values, the major concerns of the church have been:
>
> (1) To reduce the incidence of abortion through effective contraception. This requires adequate funding for education and services provided by local and provincial health authorities.
>
> (2) To establish responsible choice for women with problematic pregnancies up to the approach of fetal viability with great stress on enabling any elective abortion to be as early as possible.
>
> (3) To ensure equality of access to abortion services for women across Canada, that is, to end the injustice to poorer and rural women and those from particular provinces.
>
> (4) To ensure that counselling is available for those considering abortions.

I am well aware that part of their recommendation is outside the purview of this particular bill we are dealing with, but I want to emphasize a point they are making because it shows that this bill is not only harmful but also unnecessary. If the bill were a little bit harmful but did a lot of good, we might have to accept it. When it does a lot of harm and is quite unnecessary, we should reject it.

What the United Church says is that the Canada Health Act should be used to pressure the provinces to make adequate provision for reproductive education and services according to its standards of comprehensiveness and availability. The federal government should use the threat of withholding health grants if provinces are not ensuring education in contraception and adequate access to early diagnosis and abortion services if necessary. Then they go on to make the point that:

> Re-criminalization violates women's responsible choice.

• (2150)

The United Church criticized the previous abortion law as "unjust in principle and unworkable in practice". I think they made a very powerful point in this matter.

I wish there was time to also go into the very good brief of the Planned Parenthood Federation of Canada. I can touch on only a couple of their points. They deal with the means of preventing unwanted pregnancies. I find it shocking that this government, which has tried twice now to criminalize abortion, has also reduced the funding for Planned Parenthood of Canada.

Planned Parenthood says:

> Meanwhile, unintended pregnancy among women, all pregnancy in adolescent women, the spread of sexually transmitted diseases, and increasing fertility problems continue to affect millions of Canadians and have serious social, health, and economic consequences for us all.

Farther down they say:

> The social, economic, and health consequences of the lack of fertility control have a major impact on the lives of individual women and on the status of women in general.

They are concerned with trying to prevent the problem that this government undertakes quite falsely and incompetently to cure on this law on abortion. The Planned Parenthood Association continues:

> In spite of the serious and costly consequences of unintended pregnancy and the spread of sexually transmitted diseases,—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Pronovost): I would ask the hon. member to conclude, please.

Mr. Heap: Mr. Speaker, I simply want to conclude with the final paragraph of the statement of the United Church of Canada:

> These ways of witnessing and safeguarding the value of developing life are less ambiguous and more effective:

Than this law:

> —for example, responsible and widely available contraception, good prenatal care and adequate family income. As a society, we have a long way to go in terms of improving mother and child welfare, prenatal and postnatal, and all such policies affirm the value of life more powerfully than a criminal law.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Pronovost): Questions or comments. The hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby.

Ms. Dawn Black (New Westminster—Burnaby): Mr. Speaker, I think you will find there is unanimous consent in the House tonight for the following motion, that is, that the order for third reading of Bill C-43 be discharged and the bill be withdrawn.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Pronovost): The hon. member seeks unanimous consent to present this motion. Does the House give unanimous consent?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Plourde: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Pronovost): Since the hon. member does not have the unanimous consent of the House, the motion is rejected.

Motion negatived.

[*English*]

Ms. Langan: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, the only voices we heard were agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Pronovost): I clearly heard someone also who did not agree to that presentation. On debate.

Mr. Len Taylor (The Battlefords—Meadow Lake): Mr. Speaker, quite frankly, the abortion debate is one that I welcome.

I welcome this debate because it is an opportunity to focus attention not just on life, but on our whole attitude toward caring and sharing, attitudes New Democrats and their predecessors hold and have held very dear. It is a matter of understanding life, with all its important parts, and how we as individuals within a diversified society can best serve each other, not just in times of need but in everyday life when positive interaction prevents problems and stimulates development.

I state outright my support for life, life within the womb and later as the child grows to adulthood, aging, I would hope gracefully toward a natural death. In so doing, I express my understanding of our current society where children and adults die in poverty, without friends, without family and often without dignity.

Words are important. Definitions shape perceptions, and we have to be careful in our understanding of these definitions. We are all pro-life, and to suggest otherwise is nonsense. There is no other way to describe someone who bears concern and consideration for another's life, opportunity and future.

Some things enter into all this. The well-known Canadian Laurier Lapierre said it well not long ago, speaking at a convention that I attended in Saskatoon. The former television personality said that there is great support among Canadians for the sanctity of life. Then he added: "until after birth".

The North American society we have created through economic decisions taken by governments is responsible for thousands of deaths every year.

There are suicides. The farmer about to lose the land that he inherited from his father feels that he has failed. The worker laid off for the third time in 10 years feels he can no longer serve his impoverished family. The student whose strife-torn home life is affecting his grades and social interaction with others feels he has no future worth living. This is a society in which crucial individual life and death decisions are based on one's interpretation of one's own future. Desperate decisions to take one's own life or the life of one yet to be born are not taken lightly.

These are decisions reached in reaction to situations often created by others. They are decisions reached from deep within their souls, personal, private and often illogical. They are decisions not easily understood by you or me.

There are more than 60,000 abortions every year. We have to ask: Why? Are these the acts of indecisive women, uncaring women destined for hell? I think not, Mr. Speaker. A decision to take any life is one reached with much suffering, regret and guilt. Very often if there were alternatives, there would not be a decision to have that abortion. Community and local church support in this regard is very important.

As parliamentarians and members of this society, our goal is to reduce the number of abortions in Canada. It is a most admirable goal, one that I believe to be of utmost importance. However, if our society is going to achieve that goal or other goals such as the reduction in the number of suicides, the number of child or wife abuse situations or the number of crimes committed by juveniles, we are going to have to correct the social and economic problems that are the root cause of each. It is an admirable challenge, one we have to adopt as our own.

• (2200)

What all these problems have in common is that no law in and of itself will stop them. Young men and women will continue to commit suicide. Husbands will continue to beat their wives. Children will continue to commit crimes against person and property. People will continue to consider abortion as an alternative for their own futures regardless of well-placed words from well-meaning individuals, speeches from politicians and laws controlling their lives, until such time as society provides

an alternative that they may consider in their personal decision-making process.

A woman who wants an abortion, and we must believe there are people who want abortions for many different reasons, and who has the means to obtain one will find the way to have that abortion regardless of the law. That was proved prior to the passing of Canada's first abortion law in 1967.

The true test of our society and our law-makers is our tolerance of the different needs and acts of individuals who make up our society. Governments and individuals have a responsibility to promote positive decision-making, to create a society which stimulates and encourages the joy of childbirth and child rearing. The protection of the child and the protection of the family is as important to the future of our society as is the protection of the rights of those who are yet to be born.

There is a certain amount of the current debate which refuses to acknowledge the existence of factors beyond the individual control and therefore allows little room for tolerance of any kind. On an issue of this importance, society must accept that there is no specific or definitive answer to the question of what is right and what is wrong.

The answer lies, rather, in a series of programs aimed at improving the conditions of the poor, the unfortunate, and the confused. The aim is to prevent abortions from taking place. We will not stop abortions by creating new criminals. We will, however, stop abortions by creating a society which not only wants children but also offers those children through their families and our communities a future full of hope, optimism, and joy.

Canada, you may know, Mr. Speaker, has no children's policy. No government action has ever been taken on the recommendations of the health and welfare committee of this House in 1981. The committee's recommendations were based on the United Nations Commission during the International Year of the Child and called for the establishment of a children's ministry, a children's bureau. That committee, supported by the New Democratic Party's social issues critic, called for the development and implementation of a comprehensive national family policy. It has never been done.

The purpose of the ministry and the policy would be to ensure that all Canada's children in whatever region they live have equal opportunities to develop as healthy, self-reliant, caring human beings.

The family as a basic human, working unit, has undergone major changes in the past decade. The extended family off the Indian reserves in this country is almost non-existent. Divorces are common. Children are being raised by single parents and teenage pregnancies are on the rise.

Almost every decision of government during this past decade has encouraged the trend toward a smaller and less caring family. It is encouraged by a society driven by the market-oriented economy. A government which cares only for those able to help themselves is a government which encourages abortion, crime, and death.

Inflation, unemployment, rising personal taxes, the increased cost of goods, have all taken their toll on people across this country. There is little hope among young people, a situation which is directly related to a less-motivated work force and a higher incidence of poverty and crime. Unemployment and job insecurity for parents have contributed to increased incidents of child abuse and wife battering.

There is a denial of certain human rights, rights which should be considered inherent in citizenship, a denial which helps to maintain the poor situation, the right to a decent standard of living, the right to free, efficient, and accessible health care, the right to a good education and a right to opportunities which will develop fully one's potential and aspirations. These are rights which only New Democrats have said in this House are a responsibility and priority of a government at the will of the people.

How does this way of thinking jibe with what has been happening in Canada during the past few years? Essentially, it flies in the face of government practice which has been to erode the place of the family and erode family benefits or basic rights of families from coast to coast.

Take, for example, the partial de-indexing of the family allowance and the change in the threshold rate, the rate at which benefits begin to be taxed back, from $26,800 to $23,500, a position taken in 1986. This effec-

tively meant that many families below the official poverty line had their benefits cut. The net loss to the family benefit program by 1991 because of these two cuts will be $1.5 billion per year. These are cuts to programs that essentially aided children.

The NDP sees the family allowance as the most effective way to deliver benefits to families, particularly those at the poverty line. The party is strongly advocating a significant increase in the family allowance and restoration of full indexation with a raised threshold level.

In addition, the party continues to call for a 20 per cent increase in the refundable child tax credit, also to be fully indexed.

New Democrats recognize the right of men and women to continue being an effective parent or worker with equal opportunity and employment. A decline in the support to young families and a desire and need by women with children to pursue work outside the home has steadily increased the need for quality child care. A system of universally accessible, affordable, high-quality, licensed child care and parent support policies are prerequisites. If mothers are unable to find affordable, quality child care, most will be forced to accept only temporary, part-time, poorly-paid work or stay at home or, worst of all, accept inadequate child care.

The tax reform package outlined by the government is another example of current government policies being grossly unfair to families, particularly those in the low and middle-income brackets.

Under the new rules we find that profitable corporations will continue to pay no income tax. Wealthy individuals will continue to see their taxes go down from what they were paying in 1984 when the Conservatives were elected.

Taxes for the average family are increasing faster than their incomes. Since 1984, sales tax hikes have generated almost 60 per cent of all new government revenues. That means an additional $600 per year from the average family.

What is most depressing about that is that a Statistics Canada report indicates that 56 per cent of all low-income Canadians are women, women who are either elderly or are single parents struggling to raise a child on their own.

Families with small children and the elderly are most susceptible to illness. This government at the federal level succeeded in passing legislation providing for lengthy patent protection to American drug companies, the end result being that the cost of prescription drugs in this country has almost tripled.

In the province of Saskatchewan the Conservative government made it more difficult to obtain those drugs because of a ridiculous refund scheme for prescription drug costs. Neither federal nor provincial government has considered the implications of their actions on a young family or the elderly.

We are often told that children are this nation's most precious resource. We often talk in this Chamber about protection afforded to other resources such as forestry, mining and fish stocks. Yet when it comes to that precious resource of children what do we say and what do we do?

Mr. Speaker, let me just give you some statistics for the province of Saskatchewan. One out of every six Saskatchewan families is poor. Newfoundland is the only province in Canada with a higher rate.

In 1986, 42,600 Saskatchewan families were officially living in poverty, up from 36,900 in 1981. That is a 15.3 per cent increase. Add to this nearly 9,000 on-reserve Indian families who are not counted in the official surveys. Indian families in Saskatchewan, and I know across the country, are among the poorest of the poor.

• (2210)

One in every four Saskatchewan families with children under 16 earned less than $20,000 per year in 1986. In Saskatchewan, 64,560 children, or one child in every four, lives in poverty. In all of Canada one child in every six is growing up poor.

Between 1980 and 1986 the number of poor children in Saskatchewan increased by 12.8 per cent, even though the total number of children in the province declined by almost 4 per cent.

Nearly 70 per cent of Saskatchewan poor families live in single parent families headed by women.

Children make up 40 per cent of people receiving social assistance. The number of Saskatchewan children under 16 in families on welfare jumped by more than 50 per cent from 1981 to 1986. Since 1986 the social services

department in Saskatchewan no longer publishes this data. Children receiving benefits from the Indian affairs department are not included.

Public begging and private charity have been the major response of the Saskatchewan government to child hunger and family poverty in the province. Food bank use in Regina, Saskatoon and Prince Albert has jumped by 50 per cent in two years.

However, the number of people receiving government social assistance in those three cities has fallen by almost 10 per cent in that same period of time. Many people are simply being cut off welfare or denied eligibility and forced into the streets.

Obviously, for too many families in our province, their home situation is characterized by poverty, hunger and profound stress. The numbers indicate that Saskatchewan, as I mentioned, has the second highest level of family poverty in Canada, second only to Newfoundland. Across Canada the poverty rate for children has reached an astonishing 17 per cent—an intolerable situation.

I suspect the situation will only get worse. Current government programs and proposals are taking more away from the poor and middle-income Canadians, in turn creating more poverty, more malnourished and less cared for children.

Of course the whole process is doubly difficult on those living in northern and remote areas where this government has just eliminated or is proposing to eliminate existing tax benefits that will increase tax payable from Canadians in northern Canada by almost 100 per cent.

You are motioning that I am almost out of time, Mr. Speaker.

Our goal is to reduce or eliminate the need for abortion, to stop the wanton destruction of life yet to be, but legislative force will not stop abortion.

As a colleague of mine said recently: "You cannot legislate against fear and desperation. Only sanity and common sense will produce the desired results".

When we create a society which protects families, whether it is the extended families that so many of our ancestors preferred, two parent families which many of us enjoy, or the single parent family which is becoming more prevalent throughout our country, then we protect the family from poverty, violence and hunger, then we protect the future of the countless yet unborn children.

Here in Canada we need a government willing to take its leadership role seriously. We need a government which is prepared to take a stand toward creating that caring society that is built on a platform of co-operation and hope. We do not need a government like we have witnessed that has brought in this bill today.

I am voting against this bill as I did at second reading because our responsibility is to the future. It is to the common good of all. If we are to prevent abortions, we have to care for the society we are developing for our children to grow up in.

The bill before us is an easy way out. I am not looking for the easy way out. I have seen what the easy way out does. The pictures that we have seen on our television screens of children in Romania who have been born into families that did not want them and ushered away into institutions and homes where they have been forced to live naked and alone is something that I do not believe we can allow to happen in Canada. Those images on the television screen haunt me daily.

Voting against this bill is step number one. The next step is the difficult step. The next step is the one that we have to take using a government that has the courage to create a society of which we can all be proud.

Ms. Joy Langan (Mission—Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague has referred throughout his speech to the poverty that faces the people of Saskatchewan, particularly women. There has been considerable discussion about poverty in this House around this issue. There has been discussion about federal government policies that in fact deny women the kind of economic and social support they need when it comes to bearing children.

I wonder if my hon. colleague would kindly talk a little about some of the policies that the Government of Saskatchewan has introduced in terms of support for women who are facing poverty and this question covered under Bill C-43. Would he comment on them and, for example, refer to programs such as Saskatchewan's work for welfare program?

Mr. Taylor: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague who, incidentally, I want to note has been doing a tremendous job here in the House on a bill of rights for children. It is tremendous work that I greatly support. I believe that if the government were listening we would have a real start to correct some of the problems that are affecting our children across Canada and, as she mentions, in Saskatchewan.

The Saskatchewan situation is a doubly horrendous one, not just because there is lack of child care in the urban centres where a lot of families—and I use the word families here to mean two-parent families—are looking for child care where both parents need to work but, more important, in the large rural parts of the province where farm families are being forced to secure second incomes in order to stay on the farm. Second incomes have resulted in a number of different situations, situations where one spouse works the farm and also works off the farm. There are other situations in which both spouses are forced to work off the farm, creating a situation which is dangerous for children.

One of the things that I find absolutely incredible when I read the newspapers concerning some of these things concerns children who are killed on the farm by machinery. When one looks at these things one has a tendency to think that there is carelessness on the farm. But when one examines more closely what is happening, it is that parents are attempting to care for their child because they do not have any child care but get the job done on the farm.

As you are aware, Mr. Speaker, many people who work on the farm use both spouses, one to drive the combine and one to drive the truck. The children are left close by to watch carefully what has been going on. The next thing you know when the business at hand gets moving, a child is under the wheel of a combine, a tractor or a truck in the field.

It is a horrendous situation that could be corrected if there was full-time accessible child care in the rural areas of our country.

I want to mention in reaction to my colleague's question one other thing. Until recently the Saskatchewan Ombudsman was Dave Tickell, a person who worked constantly on the needs of Saskatchewan children in foster care homes. The Ombudsman who worked for 10 years in the province of Saskatchewan warned constantly of the abuse and neglect of children who are in the care of the province.

• (2220)

I worked in the newspaper business before I became a member of Parliament and I talked to Saskatchewan Ombudsman, Mr. Tickell on many occasions. He consistently talked about the government's lack of desire to make any changes in the provincial foster care program. He said that the provincial government was ignoring the plight of children in foster homes who were complaining of emotional, physical and sexual abuse. He said that the policy of the provincial government offers foster children less protection from physical harm than that offered to children in day care centres, to young offenders in the care of the province, or even to the adult inmates of the provincial correctional centre.

Obviously, children in the province of Saskatchewan, in the eyes of the provincial government, are not and were not a priority for that government. Obviously, if we are going to take life seriously at at any level, we have to ensure that their care is ensured from day one. The provincial government of Saskatchewan had ignored that throughout its recent term of office.

I do not know if that completely answers my colleague's question, but I thank her for putting it. It allows me to expand a little further on what I had to say earlier. I very much appreciate the question she put.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Pronovost): On questions or comments, the hon. member for Mission—Coquitlam.

Ms. Langan: I would like to thank my colleague for his answers to my questions. From the point of view of some of the comments that were made earlier today about the partisanship of this debate, I would like to ask him if he has thoughts in terms of how this debate has taken place in this House.

Mr. Taylor: Again, I appreciate the question that was put by my hon. colleague. The debate today has been most interesting. Actually, the debate over the course of this entire time has been very interesting. I have found it most unusual in the sense of members rising to talk in a non-partisan way, yet at the same time through their actions being extremely partisan in the way in which all of this comes together.

The people in my constituency have often talked to me about New Democrats. They ask: "Why is it that New Democrats want to kill all these unborn babies?" In the same breath, they talk about the Conservatives and the Liberals wanting to save all the unborn in the country. It seems to me from the debate here that the members of both parties opposite have very clear, defined, distinct positions that are easily read. When we look at the Prime Minister's statements when he opened the debate some time ago, when we look at the statement of the Minister of Justice when she opened the debate earlier today, and when we look at the statements of the former leader of the Liberal party in the debate on second reading, we find very clear statements of opinion from the members of all parties.

I will be able to take the *Hansard* of this debate to my constituency and show throughout the constituency the official positions that have been taken by the members of the opposite parties.

I do not want to have to defend my party's position on every doorstep in my constituency when much of the debate has been along similar lines. I feel very strongly that when the next election rolls around, if this bill is in place, the debate will continue to be as strong and as difficult as it has been through this time.

The people who have been arguing strongly on both sides of this issue are obviously going to continue to speak as loudly and as strongly as they have in the course of this debate. That is something that I believe is not very healthy, not in the interests of Canada as a whole. If we are to get on and build the society that is necessary to achieve equitable goals, fairness for all, decisions that are based on all of the factors and not just a minute few, we have got to have a strong understanding statement from the government.

I do not believe that this bill offers it. I do not believe that this debate here today has provided us with that.

Ms. Langan: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

I look around me and it is with great dismay that I think it is important to say that it would appear that in this House there is not a quorum.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Plourde: Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Pronovost): The hon. member for Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup (Mr. Plourde) on a point of order.

Mr. Plourde: Mr. Speaker, I do not know if my colleague talked with her House leader before making the quorum call, but she must know that there was an agreement among the three leaders of the political parties represented in the House forbidding a quorum call.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Pronovost): The order issued on May 10 nowhere states that an agreement was reached forbidding a quorum call. Therefore, I ask the clerk to count the members.

And the members having been counted:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Pronovost): Since there is no quorum, ring the bells.

[*English*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Pronovost): There is now a quorum.

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, I move:

That the debate do now adjourn.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Pronovost): The motion presented does not apply, following the order made May 10 which is dated May 24, 1990. The order for third reading of the said bill is that it be the first order of the day and that the House continue to sit beyond the ordinary hour of daily adjournment until such time as no member rises on debate. Debate.

An hon. member: There is nobody rising.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Pronovost): I am satisfied that debate is now concluded. Pursuant to the order made Thursday, May 10, 1990, the putting of the question on the motion for third reading of Bill C-43 is deemed deferred until three o'clock p.m. Tuesday, May 29, 1990.

[*Translation*]

Pursuant to the order made on Thursday, May 10, 1990, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

The House adjourned at 10.46 p.m.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, May 25, 1990

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY, S.O. 81—MUNICIPAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. Mac Harb (Ottawa Centre) moved:

That this House call upon the government to recognize that Canada's municipal infrastructure is facing a crisis of national proportions and that, given the serious implications to the nation's environment, economic prosperity and quality of life for Canadians, the government resume its traditional role as a partner with the provincial and municipal governments to address this national crisis.

He said: Madam Speaker, I want to thank our House leader for giving me the opportunity to speak on this very important issue today.

This issue has a tremendous impact on the cities, towns and villages which make up our country. Municipal infrastructure is not very glamorous, but it is absolutely vital to the health and vitality of our national environment and economy.

The motion we have tabled today calls upon the government to recognize this very simple, but extremely important fact. I would like to acknowledge at the very outset the tremendous work being done on this issue by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. We thank them for taking a leadership role and speaking out on behalf of Canadian towns and cities.

Their research and well-documented studies have enabled us to make sense out of a very complex issue.

• (1010)

I cannot think of a segment of our lives not touched on a daily basis by municipal infrastructure. When people ask what is infrastructure, I think that before we even arrive at work in the morning we have probably showered, flushed the toilet, used the water from the kitchen tap to make coffee, and driven on paved roadways to our job that would not exist if it were not for services provided by local infrastructure.

Whether we live in big cities or in small towns, infrastructure provides the basis for our homes, our jobs, our standard of living, and the maintenance of our own environment.

For many years we were able to take these services for granted, and we did. Government at all levels turned away from building bridges and repairing roads and concentrated on what some call soft infrastructure, such as social services which also have become an integral part of the Canadian way of life.

Now we have used up the extra capacity that was built into the infrastructure in the first half of this century. The sewers, roads, bridges and sidewalks can no longer cope with the ever-increasing demands.

Often discussion on this issue turns into debates on who is responsible. Time and energy are wasted as politicians argue back and forth accusing each other. What I would like to say today is that there is no longer any time to debate who is responsible. We must accept the fact that we have a national crisis on our hands, a crisis that requires national recognition and assistance. The municipalities simply cannot do it alone.

As a former alderman I learned a great deal about the challenges facing municipal government, and this past year as co-chairman of the National Liberal Task Force on Municipal Infrastructure I was able to witness first hand just how serious this situation is in our country.

My colleague from Nepean and I visited towns where raw sewage flowed down open ditches. We heard from villages where residents must import fresh water. For

example, on the east coast of this country we witnessed raw sewage being dumped directly into the ocean. A similar scene greeted us on the west coast.

Canadians along the Trans-Canada Highway reported ever-increasing accidents due to a badly deteriorating national road system. We heard from developers who are trying to fill a need for affordable housing but who are frustrated because of the inadequate infrastructure available to them.

In one municipality in New Brunswick we heard about an industrial park that was developed to promote economic development in this region where unemployment levels are reaching serious proportions. Unfortunately, so far the industrial park has no water supply. It is rather discouraging, Madam Speaker, for businesses that are thinking about locating there.

[*Translation*]

Since some of the oldest Canadian municipalities are in Quebec, it is not surprising that their infrastructure requirements are rapidly approaching a critical stage.

The dumping of sewage and untreated water into the St. Lawrence, which has gone on for centuries, has devastated this waterway that plays a vital role. According to the urban communities of Quebec, 500 million litres of untreated water and 50 metric tons of raw sewage are dumped into the river every day. Madam Speaker, that is as much as three times the capacity of the Quebec coliseum or the contents of 15,000 garbage trucks.

Besides this environmental nightmare, many municipalities located along the highways leading to the rural recreation areas of the province in the Laurentians and the Ottawa Valley say that they fear the influx of non-residents will contribute to the deterioration of roads and local services. These municipalities, which do not have the increased revenues of the tourist centres, must still absorb additional costs due to their proximity to these resorts.

[*English*]

Obviously, Madam Speaker, municipal needs are no longer a subject for discussion only at town council meetings. It has come up time and time again at environmental conferences, at the board tables of corporations, in housing reports, and in transportation studies. How does municipal infrastructure affect us on a national level?

Let us look for a moment at the issues before us today at the national level: first, a growing concern about the environment; second, real fears about the economy and our ability to compete in tough international markets; third, a monumental national debt and increases in inflation, interest rates, and unemployment levels; and, fourth, serious regional economic development and serious regional economic disparities which limit employment opportunities and force the migration of Canadians away from their homes and into already crowded urban centres simply to make a living.

It is my firm belief that in the middle of these issues and central both to the cause and their cure is the urgent need to rebuild and upgrade Canada's municipal infrastructure.

I would first like to outline the relationship between the environment and the municipal infrastructure. Canadians have ranked the environment as their top priority for federal action. The growing concern about the mistreatment of our greatest national resource, our environment, has prompted a wide variety of action on the part of all levels of government.

Canadians want us to save our waterways. They want us to stop polluting our land and our air. They want an assurance that their governments at all levels are safeguarding the inheritance of their children by following policies based on sustainable development. However, a quick look at some of the basic facts tell us pretty quickly that this is not what we are doing at all.

For example, Environment Canada figures tell us that only 10 per cent of all raw sewage east of Ontario goes through a treatment process. We also know that more than 8 million Canadians or one-third of our population live in municipalities without sewage treatment.

In Newfoundland, for example, over 48,000 homes do not have adequate water or sewer services, and 80 per cent of the population does not have properly treated drinking water.

In Toronto, as another example, the water quality is so bad that some politicians are calling for a $200 million pipeline from Georgian Bay.

Canadians are spending millions of dollars every year on bottled water, which is not surprising when we stop to consider that in many parts of Canada eating fish caught

in lakes and rivers which are sources of drinking water is actually dangerous to human health.

In my riding of Ottawa Centre and across this country beaches are being closed because of unsafe levels of pollution. We are surrounded by water and yet told that we cannot swim in it or eat the fish. Our children are growing up in a world very different from the one we knew. Unfortunately, the environmental damage caused by municipal infrastructure is not limited to our waterways. The deplorable condition of the Trans-Canada Highway and a vast number of provincial and municipal roads is also hurting our environment.

We know carbon dioxide emissions hurt our air quality and contribute to global warming, and we recognize this as a national and international problem. We have unfortunately failed to make the connection between bad roads and air pollution, but the Canadian Automobile Association has made that connection. It estimates that 10.3 per cent of carbon dioxide emissions come from automobile travel. Travelling roads in poor condition uses more fuel than when roads are properly maintained and results in higher levels of emissions.

In Ontario, for example, vehicle registrations have risen by 85 per cent. Yet, using the province's own standards, as many as 50 per cent of the roads these cars are using will soon be listed in fair to poor condition.

The severe cut-backs to VIA Rail passenger service has also dealt a blow to the environment. By forcing more Canadians into individual cars, which must then travel over poorly maintained roads, we are increasing the environmental damage across the country.

• (1020)

There is also an international dimension to the dilemma. Canada and the United States have signed treaties regarding the maintenance of the water quality of the Great Lakes and other waterways. The deterioration of our infrastructure and our incapacity to treat sewage might affect our ability to meet these international environmental obligations.

Obviously any attention to address and halt the damage being done to our environment on a daily basis must include provisions to upgrade and enhance our infrastructure. If we are to turn to the economic aspect of municipal infrastructure, and if we are to survive in an increasingly challenging market-place of the next decade and the next century—and I must say that we should be trying not only to survive as a nation but to succeed—it is vital that we become more productive and more efficient as well.

I do not have to spend much time telling members in this House what changing markets and increased competition are costing our regions dependent upon the fisheries, the forests, and/or the steel industry.

If we want to ensure that Canadians, no matter where they live in this country, maintain a certain standard of living and opportunity for employment, we will have to adapt and attract an increasingly selective private sector, but we know already this is not happening.

The hearings we held in large and small municipalities across Canada revealed that opportunities are being lost due to inadequate roads, poor industrial infrastructure, and a lack of services for residential areas. If there are no roads to get workers to the factories, it follows that there will be no factories and no jobs for communities that are searching for new economic development.

I give the example of the United States which has been playing a leadership role in the field of infrastructure. The United States has already taken action on the problem, largely as a result of a report prepared by the National Council on Public Works. The report, presented to the U.S. Congress in 1988, indicated that inadequate infrastructure decreases productivity because private industry must then use its resources and labour to compensate for non-existent or inadequate public infrastructure.

Basically this means that firms compensate by using more capital and labour to produce the same output. What we must learn and learn quickly is that money spent on building or renewing infrastructure is money well spent. I am sure the government shares our concern that wasting money is no longer an option at any level of government.

Studies show that infrastructure may be the factor responsible for a community's demise, or it may be the very element that revitalizes that community. Money spent on municipal infrastructure brings with it a multiplier effect. It results in increased economic activity and higher levels of employment and returns revenues to all

levels of government in the form of direct or indirect taxes and fewer claims on income assistance programs.

In fact a study done by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities in January 1988 showed that a $5 billion investment by each of the municipal, provincial and federal governments would go a long way toward resolving the infrastructure crisis and would create 314,000 jobs. The study estimated that the net cost to the federal government at approximately $416 million was a cost largely due to high interest rates.

It makes sense because not only would municipal infrastructure work be done by Canadians, but the bulk of the required materials could be produced in Canada. These are the short-term benefits. In the long-term Canada's infrastructure, now healthy and expanded to meet the needs of a growing diversified economy, would provide the jobs, homes, and standard of living Canadians have come to expect and deserve no matter where they live.

As well, the various levels of government would benefit from the increased economic base and the decreased number of citizens depending upon government assistance and the advantage of having a modern, competitive workforce and business sector.

Let us turn to the other compelling reason the federal government should become a partner at the municipal and provincial levels. The government has repeatedly refused to help in telling the municipalities that they should increase their water rates to cover the costs of repairing infrastructure such as sewers and roads. Unfortunately, while in need of revision water rates alone are not going to resolve the problem.

Transportation experts in the FCM have also called on the federal government to use some of its revenues collected through taxes on gasoline and fuels to upgrade our neglected roads system. Once again, this only makes sense, yet the federal government refuses to accept its fair share of the responsibility for maintaining and expanding municipal infrastructure. The hardest part of it all is that in the mid-1980s the federal government was a major contributor to the enhancement of the Regina drinking water supply system.

Right now, the government is involved in a multimillion dollar project in Halifax to install sewage treatment facilities. As well, the federal government made a major commitment during the 1988 election to take part in the clean-up of the St. Lawrence River, which in my view are commendable initiatives. The federal government has to be committed to those initiatives. We have to carry on and meet the rest of the commitment.

Time might be bad. Perhaps the government thinks that with the serious situation facing Canada the infrastructure problem is a temporary one which it will go away. If we listen to the mayors, the reeves, or the natives across our country we learn quickly that this crisis will require the co-operation of all levels of government: everybody. We are all responsible without exception.

By resuming its traditional role with the provincial and municipal governments, the federal government can ensure that no matter where we live in Canada we will have access to clean water and safe roads.

In summary, if we look at municipal infrastructure as a local, isolated problem which each municipal government must handle alone, we have failed to see the bigger picture.

Hon. Alan Redway (Minister of State (Housing)): Madam Speaker, I was most interested in the hon. member's comments with respect to the concerns he voiced about developers having a difficult time in providing affordable housing because of the lack of municipal infrastructure.

Also, he made comments with respect to the concerns that the road systems for commuting to the factories and the workplaces were not there, were in bad shape, or potentially would be getting into better shape.

Certainly I am well aware of that and everyone in this country is well aware of that. We are also aware, as are the developers and the hon. member, of the financial difficulties facing the country at the moment and the fact that Canadians are not interested in seeing their taxes raised. They are interested in seeing expenditures cut.

In the discussions of the task force, I wonder if the hon. member and other members of the task force investigated the situation of using the existing infrastructure more intensively, which is not all that bad a condition in most cases.

In fact, Madam Speaker, as you and I are aware there used to be a time when every house in this country had at least five people in it. Today, there is more like two or

three people in it. The infrastructure that was built, that is the roads, the sewers, the schools and the public transportation systems, was to accommodate five or more people in a house are now accommodating only two or three people in a house. The infrastructure is there to accommodate a much greater number of people if there was an intensification of the use of the available land resources.

This is something that lies within the control of municipalities. I hope the hon. member pointed it out to the municipalities and developers. The developers are well aware of the fact and are looking forward to the opportunity to use the existing infrastructure more intensively. I hope that the hon. member, in his task force, pointed that out to the municipalities. I would urge him, if he did not, to urge the municipalities, as he has said, to co-operate with other levels of the government, use the tools at their command to be helpful to solve this problem rather than just looking to the taxpayers of Canada for more and more money.

• (1030)

Mr. Harb: That is the most interesting comment I have heard in a long time. We are dealing with areas where they do not have infrastructure. I do not understand how the minister wants me to tell a place like Halifax or like St. John's, Newfoundland to use the existing infrastructure for sewage when the only infrastructure they have to put their sewage in is the ocean. There is no infrastructure. There are no treatment facilities. There is no sewage system in place, period.

We are also talking about towns where roads are almost non-existent. We are not dealing with municipalities or with towns where there are existing infrastructures and we can go to those towns and ask them to use those existing facilities.

Mr. Redway: The FCM report dealt with all those issues.

Mr. Harb: Madam Speaker, he is talking about the FCM. I would suggest that the hon. minister should make a trip to Atlantic Canada. Perhaps he should go to Fredericton, Sydney in Nova Scotia, and St. John's, Newfoundland. He should go to those different parts of Canada and to the Northwest Territories and have a look at the infrastructure and come back to this House and stand up without blushing and tell the members of this House that they do have infrastructure.

What I saw across Canada, in the Atlantic as well as in western Canada is unbelievable. In this day and age in a society like the one we live in, still we do not enjoy the proper quality of water that we should be enjoying. We still do not have access to the kind of facilities we need. We still do not have infrastructure in places where we talk about protecting the environment and taking a leadership role on the environmental aspect. Yet we pollute. We are great polluters in western Canada and also in Atlantic Canada and it is our responsibility as a federal government to step in right now and help them out.

There is raw sewage being dumped into the oceans because there are no facilities.

Mr. Steve Butland (Sault Ste. Marie): Madam Speaker, it is easy to be critical of the government and I am prepared to do that, but one really has to question the credibility of the Liberal Party on this particular issue since in their years in government they were the ones that began the cut-back on this particular program of the federal involvement with the municipalities. In March 1984 they cut it out completely.

Mr. Gauthier: Nonsense. We put it into place.

Mr. Butland: So this task force that the Liberals enacted was an act of hypocrisy, extremely cynical and I would ask the member to defend what he was doing with this task force.

Mr. Harb: I am amazed, but then again when the criticism comes from colleagues to the left, we sort of understand that it is a sunny day outside and I guess that—

Mrs. Gaffney: He is light-headed.

Mr. Harb: The hon. member forgets that the vast majority, if not every program that we have enjoyed up until 1984 was a program that was put in place by a federal Liberal government.

I am amazed that the hon. member would stand up when I already have over 18 pages prepared which specifically outline that it is time for us as federal politicians to stop arguing with one another, face the reality, acknowledge that there is a problem, stop passing

the blame and let us do something constructive for our country and our land.

In this House there are approximately 60 former municipal politicians, whether they were aldermen or mayors. I would ask every one of them to stand up in this House and tell me that while he or she was a mayor or alderman he or she did not promise people to act on issues of that magnitude, did not promise the town or municipality to stand up and defend infrastructure and the needs of the constituency.

We all brag about the environment. We all go back to our constituencies and talk about protecting the environment. Yet we are contributing to the pollution of our beaches and our rivers by not acting now. We are guilty by association. We are guilty by not acknowledging the problem and acting on it.

The hon. member knows, and I have a lot of respect for him, that it is time for action. We have to stop bragging and stop passing on the blame to different people. We have to act now.

[*Translation*]

Madam Deputy Speaker: In recognizing the next speaker for questions and comments, I wish to assure him that I have done my homework and will do my best, as he asked, to pronounce the name of his riding correctly. The hon. member for Carleton—Gloucester (Mr. Bellemare) has the floor.

Mr. Eugène Bellemare (Carleton—Gloucester): You are making great progress, Madam Speaker.

I was horrified to hear what the Minister of State for Housing (Mr. Redway) said.

[*English*]

I would like to congratulate the members for Nepean and Ottawa Centre for organizing this task force on infrastructure across Canada. I also appreciate having been involved in these activities and having been permitted to help organize the Ottawa area task force.

I am really shocked at what the housing minister said, especially since I know that the philosophy of the Conservative government is that of user pay.

As a former member of the Ottawa—Carleton Regional Council, and a former member of the City of Gloucester Council, and a member of the FCM, as the Minister of Public Works knows well, this government is freeloading in the area.

There is a filtration plant being built and local taxpayers, industries and businesses are the ones paying for it. The federal government, which is at least a one-third user, is not paying one cent. There is the Green Creek pollution control centre. Every time the federal building people and parliamentarians use the washroom, they are freeloading. They are not paying their fair share. They are not contributing a penny.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Bellemare: They will tell you that they give grants in lieu of money. Look at them, they are in a panic. They do not contribute a single penny. They talk about grants to municipalities. They give money to the city of Ottawa as an individual, the City of Gloucester, the City of Nepean, but nothing to the regional government. The regional government is the body that pays and taxes for all the infrastructure. You are a bunch of free-loaders on the local taxpayers.

I would suggest to the regional—

Madam Deputy Speaker: The hon. member's time has expired. He may want to let his colleague—

Mr. Bellemare: I am just waiting for the next speaker to stand up.

Madam Deputy Speaker: That is the hon. member's right, of course. The hon. member for Ottawa Centre on a short comment.

Mr. Harb: Madam Speaker, that is the kind of frustration we are seeing right across the land from people who have seen firsthand what is happening in the area of infrastructure.

The hon. member has a facility in his riding which is going to cost the taxpayers approximately $500 million to bring it up to date. There was a discussion about making a commitment on it.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The period for questions and comments has now expired. Resuming debate.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Jean Corbeil (Minister of Labour and Minister of State (Transport)): Madam Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to take part in today's debate on municipal infrastructure, on behalf of the government and on my own behalf. I believe a number of members in the House this morning are familiar with my own involvement in

this question. For 16 years, prior to my election to the House of Commons in November 1988, I was mayor of a municipality in the Montreal area, and I also took a very active part in the proceedings of the Canadian Federation of Municipalities, both as a member of the board and as President of the Federation. The subject is therefore one that has interested me for some time. Like many members in this House, the subject is of particular interest to me because Canadians live in the towns and villages of this country. All members of this House live in urban or rural communities, with or without infrastructures.

• (1040)

I would like to point out for the benefit of all members that it is not enough to observe that a problem exists and then ask the federal government to take the responsibility for that problem, without considering other circumstances that exist as well.

I think we should realize that the first problem we face in this respect, although not the most serious one, is a very real problem: the jurisdiction of municipal matters lies with the provinces. That is something the federal government must bear in mind. In all negotiations that have taken place over the years on the issue of municipal infrastructure, the provincial governments had to be involved. Today, I can say we have never seen provincial governments rushing to get involved in an issue that by its very nature is first of all a matter of local jurisdiction.

Between 1960 and 1980, the government at the time had gotten into the habit of playing Santa Claus right and left in order to be re-elected, something it managed very successfully for a number of years.

[*English*]

Unfortunately for us and our children, during that 20 year period while the Liberal government of the day was trying to play Santa Claus to everybody, this country accumulated a national debt that is now at the $350 billion level.

In 1984 when this government took office, the annual operating deficit of the government of the day was $16 billion. In other words, the government of the day could not meet its operating expenses. It had to borrow $16 billion a year just to pay the grocery bills.

In the current year, this government, through serious administration and by making difficult decisions, unpopular decisions we all agree, had the courage of assuming our responsibility and—

Mr. Bellemare: And doubling the debt.

Mr. Corbeil: We had to double the debt that was left to us by the previous government, because unfortunately we have to pay the interest on the loan that was accumulated at the time, and 80 per cent of the additional deficit between 1984 and now is due to the deficit that was left to us by the previous government.

From an operating deficit of $16 billion in 1984, this government, through very unpopular decisions that had to be taken for the best interests of Canadians, has turned the situation around. In the current year, we have now an operating surplus of $9 billion. This means a turnaround of $25 billion in a short period of six years.

This is very well explained by the fact that while they were in power, the expenses of the previous government increased every year by 13.9 per cent. This may sound incredible to the Canadian population watching us today on television. But yes, that government had the nerve to increase its expenses by 13.9 per cent every year, accumulating a deficit that we have been paying since taking office, again through unpopular measures that had to be taken in the best interests of Canadians, and our children and grandchildren.

This government reduced the rate of additional expenses every year. It is now 3.5 per cent compared to the 13.9 per cent that we experienced during the term of the Liberal Party.

Therefore, having decided that we would attack the deficit which is the number one priority, it is no surprise that we had to determine that we were going to assume the expenses of our jurisdictions.

Mr. Milliken: And do nothing else.

Mr. Corbeil: If we do nothing else than bring back the finances of the country to a profitable level where Canadians will be able to compete with the rest of the world and will attain a competitive level where we can bring back prosperity to the country, I think that the present generation and future generations will be forever thankful to this government.

Mr. Milliken: You are driving us into a recession instead.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Corbeil: Madam Speaker, in 1980, the previous government, which had been accumulating this kind of increases to the tune of 13.9 per cent annually, decided it was time to do something, and it terminated a program it had established in 1960 because, I assume, it realized that this was not the right way to go about it. So it terminated the program that existed at that time. Obviously, four years later when this government took over the reins of power, we were not about to resume spending in an area that clearly did not lie within our jurisdiction.

We acted responsibly, as the federal authority, by cutting spending and introducing measures that were not popular, because we felt responsible to the citizens of this country.

Earlier, Madam Speaker, I was astonished to hear the first speaker introduce an element in this debate that municipalities have not even had on their shopping list for the past few years, and that is responsibility installing new infrastructures. The whole infrastructure dossier prepared by the Canadian Federation of Municipalities has always focussed on repairs and upgrading of municipal infrastuctures. I am surprised the previous speaker decided to break new ground in an area that is even further removed from the federal government's jurisdiction.

Madam Speaker, if our sole concern was to be popular and to get re-elected, we could keep saying yes to all demands, including some very legitimate ones, that are not our jurisdiction, just to please Canadians for a time. However, I do not think this is what a responsible government should do. A responsible government should, especially in times as difficult as these, be concerned about reducing a monstrous deficit that might otherwise put Canada in a situation that would be unacceptable to our children and our great-grandchildren.

The figures I mentioned earlier, Madam Speaker, and there are any number of statistics on the subject, showed that we are past the stage where we could spend, spend, spend, and hang the consequences. The present deficit, our national debt of $350 billion, is costing this country $40 billion annually in interest alone, nearly one-third of the federal budget.

• (1050)

We are now in a period of budgetary restraint which again forces us to make difficult choices to ensure this country's prosperity. We realize that municipalities, provinces, towns, school boards in fact, everyone has problems. The fact is that in this country, each level of government has specific responsibilities, and each level of government is responsible for deciding where it wants to spend its money. When we look at the budgets and financial situations of the provinces in this country, it is clear that financially, each of these governments is in a far more enviable position than this government, and therefore they are in a position to discharge their responsibilities with respect to municipal jurisdictions and to share these with the municipalities which are also in a pretty healthy financial position.

We are not ignoring a dossier that over the years has been built up by the Canadian Federation of Municipalities and which has shown there are specific problems across the country. However, with my experience of this dossier, I can say that there are considerable differences of opinion between the various municipalities on the way a program should be defined. There are wide differences of opinion between the provinces because in some regions of this country, in some cities and some provinces, the strategy used over the years has allowed them—those cities and provinces—to spend more money on renewing their infrastructure, and now, they are not very pleased with the prospect that other cities and provinces that did not apply this strategy will now enjoy the government's largesse.

Madam Speaker, I think everyone in this country realizes that we have a situation that bears looking into, but the bottom line—

[*English*]

The bottom line is that the federal government has to attack its deficit. That is its number one priority. Once the deficit has been taken care of, then the federal government can look at other ways of spending the taxpayers' money.

Mrs. Beryl Gaffney (Nepean): Madam Speaker, I am slightly shocked and very surprised. I know the member across the way well, but I forget the name of his riding in the Montreal area. He and I both sat on the board of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. I recall those days when he was the one who was here meeting with the federal government and trying to dredge more money out of it because of the seriousness of the situation of

infrastructure right across the country. Now, because the member is on the government side of the House, we are hearing a different story. I find that absolutely appalling.

I would like to quote from the remarks of the present President of the FCM at a meeting in Edmonton in February, 1989, where he stated:

> And during the 1988 election campaign, a major commitment was made to clean up the St. Lawrence River, a commitment which can only be met if significant funds are made available for the improvement and installation of sewage treatment facilities throughout the St. Lawrence Valley.
>
> Thus, on the national platform, the government has maintained only opposition to our suggestions while in the context of regional announcements, it has committed to substantial and useful contributions as I have just outlined—A healthy beginning in the infrastructure dialogue would be for the federal government to acknowledge that it is already a financial contributor to Canada's municipal needs, and will undoubtedly continue to be so—

But why does it have to do it on an *ad hoc* basis? I would like the member to respond to that.

Mr. Corbeil: Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for her comments and I would be very glad to answer the question. It demonstrates that the government is open to examining some specific problems—

Mrs. Gaffney: Only under patronage circumstances.

Mr. Corbeil: —when the present government is asked by the provincial authorities and the municipal authorities to look at a specific problem. Under regional economic development programs, worker's information programs, and other programs of this nature, we have invested lots of money over the years and we are prepared to do so.

However, I want to emphasize to the member across the way that surely she must realize that the country is in a very serious financial situation. I do not renege on anything that I have done or said in previous years, but at the present time the first priority of the government and the country has to be to reduce the deficit. If we do not do so, there will not be a Canada at the turn of the century.

Mr. Jim Karpoff (Surrey North): Madam Speaker, I come from an area that is one of the fastest growing areas in Canada and that is Surrey North.

We are in severe trouble because of the lack of municipal infrastructure. We have 9,000 children in portable schools. We do not have money to develop adequate sewers, roads, sidewalks, parks, and recreation facilities. We have had to send out notices to parents to say that they cannot put their children into minor league ball, sports, and athletic activities because we do not have a base to raise the dollars to put in those types of services. There have been discussions that we are $282 million behind our ability to meet the basic infrastructure necessary for a viable community.

Our community has very little industry and commerce. It is a residential community. It does not have the tax base.

Why does the hon. member feel that the federal government has no responsibility to those types of communities and the families in those communities?

Second, if the government is so worried about the deficit, why did it allow the interest rates to go up yesterday to over 14 per cent?

Mr. Corbeil: Madam Speaker, I think the hon. member will certainly agree with me that the responsibility of all elected people at all levels is to manage the local affairs and assume the responsibilities for the decisions that are taken for the local authorities.

I repeat that this government has a national debt of $350 billion. It is costing Canadian taxpayers $40 billion annually in interest payments alone. The priority of the government is to look after that deficit within its own jurisdiction before looking at other problems in other jurisdictions because, if we do not attack the problem of that deficit, there will not be a Canada in a few years and we will not have the money to do anything which is under our direct jurisdiction.

Mr. Eugène Bellemare (Carleton—Gloucester): Madam Speaker, I am really entertained by the minister, entertained by his white complexion and his wiping the sweat from his brow.

I remember the same minister sitting with me at the Federation of Canadian Municipalities at many conventions when we were both representatives of our municipalities. I will take up one of his themes:

[*Translation*]

repairs, infrastructures, local responsibility—

[*English*]

If that is the case, I refer to the Ottawa—Carleton area where there is over $1 billion in repairs going on. The basic theme of your government is "user pay". The taxpayers of this area are paying. The individual taxpayers are paying. The merchant taxpayers are paying. The industrial taxpayers are paying. But there is one freeloader, and you are the one who is freeloading. You are not paying your fair share.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I am sure the hon. member will want to continue after Question Period.

[*Translation*]

It being eleven o'clock, pursuant to Standing Order 30(5), the House will now proceed to Members' Statements pursuant to Standing Order 31.

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S. O. 31

[*English*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Terry Clifford (London—Middlesex): Madam Speaker, I am proud to announce in the House today an environmental initiative launched by a family in my riding of London—Middlesex.

Called "A Human Race Towards A Healthy Planet", the Stephens family has launched a trans-Canada bicycle expedition to raise environmental awareness and to encourage students and families world-wide to adopt positive action and attitude towards a healthy planet.

David and Andrew Stephens are doing the cycling with the rest of the family in support. They started out on May 1 from Victoria, B.C. and this Sunday they will be in my riding of London—Middlesex on their way to St. John's, Newfoundland for Canada's birthday, July 1.

David Stephens is a young Canadian who believes that actions speak louder than words. His actions tell all of us that a healthy planet starts with one person's commitment to make a difference.

The Stephens' human race towards a healthy planet shows how one family, when committed to a cause and working together, can make a difference. Their focus is on working together for a positive cause. Their example to the families of Canada is simple; let's work together to make one healthy, happy country from sea to sea. We should congratulate their efforts.

* * *

LITHUANIA

Mr. Rey Pagtakhan (Winnipeg North): Madam Speaker, "Please extend your hands and hearts toward Lithuania", plead the President of the Lithuanian Medical Association and the Minister of Health as they call for urgent medical assistance.

The economic blockade imposed by Moscow on Lithuania has severed basic medical services and supplies to that republic. Doctors are concentrating on emergency cases only and stocks of essential medications and surgical supplies, such as insulin, antibiotics, gloves, and intravenous sets, are being critically depleted.

The health minister has predicted that the rate of infectious diseases would increase, performance of essential surgical operations would be hindered and deaths otherwise preventable would become an eventuality.

I urge this government to respond to the plea of Lithuanians, to bring their cause to the attention of President Gorbachev when he and our Prime Minister meet next week, and to obtain Mr. Gorbachev's commitment that he will ensure the medical safety of every Lithuanian man, woman and child. We have faith in Mr. Gorbachev and therefore trust in his continuing good will.

* * *

HEALTH

Mr. Iain Angus (Thunder Bay—Atikokan): Madam Speaker, in 1976 I first raised the issue of the impact of industrial pollution on the respiratory systems of Canadians. For a number of years I argued that sulphur dioxide emissions were directly related to the higher

than normal rate of respiratory infections and lung cancers in the residents of Thunder Bay.

Today, 14 years later, a study conducted by 11 Canadian and American Lung Association scientists clearly states that acid air can damage human lungs as badly as acid rain damages forests, lakes and trees. It also states that acid aerosols are increasing bronchitis, asthma and deaths from respiratory failure.

The federal and provincial governments should act immediately on this very serious matter. They should act by establishing monitoring devices and reporting daily to the residents of smokestack communities. They should work harder to eliminate the pollutants themselves, and they should continue to conduct studies to ensure that we have a full understanding of the impact of this chemical on the well-being of Canadians.

* * *

MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester): Madam Speaker, up until a few days ago, the people in my riding could not take the current constitutional question too seriously. However, recent developments have brought this situation to the forefront of every conversation.

Still the question often is, why does Quebec want so much? The answer is simple, they do not.

Since arriving here 18 months ago, I have gotten to know Quebecers for the very first time. The Quebec members that I now know are teachers and business people, mayors and journalists, mechanics, engineers, doctors and pharmacists, just like home. All they really want is to keep their way of life and culture, just as we in Atlantic Canada want to keep our unique culture.

There is a great deal of concern and speculation throughout the country about our future, and it is up to all parliamentarians, legislators and our leaders to bring this country together, because if we do not, none of us will be able to keep our way of life and all of our unique cultures in Canada.

* * *

KASHMIR

Mrs. Beryl Gaffney (Nepean): Madam Speaker, I wish to alert the House to the serious potential danger to international peace and security posed by the current escalation in the dispute between India and Pakistan over the status of Kashmir.

This dispute has existed since India and Pakistan became independent in 1947. The two countries have fought a war over the region twice, in 1948 and again in 1965. Hundreds of people, including many civilians, have been killed in recent clashes that threaten to erupt into a third war.

In 1948 Canada, as a member of the United Nations Security Council, was instrumental in stopping the war between India and Pakistan over Kashmir.

It is time for Canada to act again. We should use our current place in the Security Council to increase international pressure on the two sides to affirm their commitment to the 1965 ceasefire, withdraw military forces from the ceasefire line, desist from indiscriminate violence against civilians and negotiate peaceful solutions to the conflict. Canada should encourage the UN Secretary General to offer his good offices to achieve a just and lasting settlement. The international community should act now before it is too late.

* * *

THE CONSTITUTION

Mr. Arnold Malone (Crowfoot): Madam Speaker, in the fall in 1959 I left my home in Alberta to study at a university in Montana. While attending Montana State University, I became familiar with the frequent discussions about a proposed amendment to the American Constitution.

Today, as I address this House, the American public is again engaged in yet another consideration for a constitutional amendment to their Constitution. Since the Constitution of the United States was ratified in 1787, there has been a total of 26 amendments.

Clearly, what some Canadian premiers must come to understand is that it is not a requirement for Canada to construct a constitution that resolves all issues in all situations for all time at one moment. What is required is the building of an agreement by which the procedures for change are known and agreed upon. Thereafter, the first ministers will be able to meet the challenges of an unforeseen future.

Had the Fathers of Confederation applied the standards of perfection that are being imposed by some

premiers today, the British North America Act of 1867 never could have been written. What is required now—

Madam Deputy Speaker: I apologize. The hon. member's time is now over. The hon. member for Dartmouth.

* * *

TRANSPORT

Mr. Ron MacDonald (Dartmouth): Madam Speaker, I rise today on an extremely serious matter, that is the escalation of tensions in the truckers' blockade.

Contrary to news reports this morning, the truckers have not left their blockade, quite simply because they do not believe this government when it says it will review their concerns. Indeed, I have just received a call from the president of a trucking firm who said that when one of his rigs tried to pull out of the line-up this morning, the driver was threatened by a shotgun-toting individual and told to pull back in the line or else. This incident occurred only a few hours ago at a Quebec border crossing.

The time to address the issues which have caused this blockade is now. This government has procrastinated and failed to acknowledge the inequities between the Canadian and American truckers until there were blockades set up at border crossings throughout eastern Canada.

I implore this government to take action today to resolve these inequities. I would certainly hope that we do not have to wait until there is further escalation, violence and even injury, before this government acts to ensure the competitiveness of the essential Canadian trucking industry.

* * *

THE STANLEY CUP

Mr. Willie Littlechild (Wetaskiwin): Madam Speaker, Mr. Pocklington said last night, "Alberta demands champions". The Wetaskiwin Relics recently won a COHA World Cup tournament in San Diego. Now, for the fifth time in seven years, the Edmonton Oilers have won the Stanley Cup.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Littlechild: I was going to ask the House to join me in congratulating the management, Mr. Sather, Mr. Pocklington and others such as the coaching staff of Messrs. Muckler, Green and Low, and in particular, all the families and players of the Oilers hockey club for their victory. Congratulations as well to Mr. Bill Ranford in winning the Conn Smythe Trophy.

Once again it shows all Canadians across the country that if you set your goals high and believe in yourself, you can accomplish and succeed in anything you do.

* * *

• (1110)

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Lyle Dean MacWilliam (Okanagan—Shuswap): Madam Speaker, Eurasian milfoil, an aquatic weed that has choked many of the lakes and rivers in the B.C. interior has defeated all efforts to control its spread.

Mechanical harvesting, while able to slow the growth of the weed, is unable to eradicate it. The weed is affecting the recreational and tourism potential of B.C.'s interior lakes.

Municipal and provincial governments have called for federal assistance to control this aquatic weed. It is therefore most disappointing to learn that Eurasian milfoil is not being researched for biological control by Agriculture Canada.

The Okanagan Basin Water Board has appealed to the Minister of Agriculture to get directly involved in developing the long-term biological controls necessary to preserve the resource value of the Okanagan Valley. Nothing has been done.

It is absolutely essential that the Minister of Agriculture make a strong commitment to research ways of eradicating Eurasian milfoil before the environmental impact of its uncontrolled growth gets completely out of hand.

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TRANSPORT

Mr. Albert Cooper (Peace River): Madam Speaker, Loran-C is a very reasonably priced, helpful aid for private pilots in Canada. It is an aid to navigation that provides distance measuring equipment, indications of speed, headings and also information on airports in a region where a person is flying.

At the moment, Loran-C is available to the maritime regions of Canada and to parts of Quebec and Ontario, but it is not available with any degree of accuracy on the prairies.

I would encourage the Minister of Transport to take a very close look at Loran-C and provide an option of having this navigation system available to private and general aviation pilots throughout the prairie regions. It provides safety, a large degree of accuracy and would be very much appreciated by the private pilots of Canada.

* * *

MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Mr. Bob Kilger (Stormont—Dundas): Madam Speaker, it is becoming increasingly urgent for the First Ministers of Canada to find an acceptable and equitable solution to the current constitutional impasse. We are witnessing daily reports in the media on this issue which could have very serious consequences for the country.

The Meech Lake debate has caused a number of unfortunate events to occur throughout the country that do not reflect the wishes of a majority of Canadians who desire to have a united Canada.

We live in a great country built on the efforts of two founding peoples, and with the contribution made by people who came to Canada from other lands. Some of these people knew firsthand the terrible face of internal strife, political instability and economic chaos. Together with English and French speaking Canadians, and with the aboriginal peoples of Canada who recognized the beauty and potential of the land, we have built a country which we are all proud to call home.

We are indeed fortunate, and we all have an interest in working towards a better tomorrow for our country and for our children.

* * *

MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Mr. Lee Richardson (Calgary Southeast): Madam Speaker, today Albertans are proud to salute our Premier Don Getty for his leadership in support of the Meech Lake Accord.

Premier Getty's constructive proposal to pass Meech Lake now and adopt a list of principles to be discussed during a set period of time is a constructive proposal.

As the Prime Minister said yesterday: "Don Getty put the signature of the Government of Alberta on a piece of paper which was designed in Alberta's interest, in the interests of western Canada and, most of all, in the interests of a united Canada."

Premier Getty said: "I propose to honour the accord because it is indispensable that we all do so in the interests of Canadian unity."

* * *

CANADA POST

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Madam Speaker, Canada Post is at it again. This time the victim is the Vars post office in my riding.

Last fall, residents of Vars heard a rumour and reacted swiftly by signing a petition against the closure of their post office. Some 374 residents, more than half of the community, signed the petition which I tabled in this House on December 8, 1989.

Vars is a growing community and even Canada Post admits as much. Yet the residents of Vars have just been "consulted" and their post office will be closing this summer.

These closures of post offices against the will of the people are done in the name of expenditure reduction, even if an outlet is profitable.

On behalf of the residents of Vars, I urge the minister to tell us today that he will instruct his officials to keep the Vars post office open.

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HOUSING

Mr. Jim Karpoff (Surrey North): Madam Speaker, the housing crisis in Canada continues to worsen. The Canadian Homebuilders' Association has documented that, because of high interest rates, half the first-time home buyers have been forced out of the market. Residential construction activity in the first four months of 1990 is down. In April, the applications for residential building permits decreased.

What is the government's response to the growing crisis in housing? The Minister of State for Housing has told the mayor of Vancouver that he has no funds available to assist in developing affordable housing. Now

the government has dealt another blow by increasing the bank rate to over 14 per cent. This can only have a devastating effect on an already bleak housing market. It appears that this government wishes not only to bring the housing industry to its knees, but it wishes to knock it flat on its back.

* * *

MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Ms. Mary Clancy (Halifax): Madam Speaker, I rise today on behalf of my constituents of Halifax who are fearful. Haligonians, indeed all Nova Scotians, are fiercely devoted to Canada. From its founding in 1749 through pre-Confederation battles, the birth of our nation in 1867, two World Wars, and up to the present, the Warden of the North and its people have believed steadfastly in this country and its future.

To us a Canada without the francophone fact, without Quebec, is unthinkable. We have so little time but we must ensure that Canada, worth so much, is not allowed to wither.

[*Translation*]

We have 29 days left to resolve the constitutional impasse. We must find solutions for our own benefit but also for our children, who have a right to inherit this beautiful, vast country of ours that is Canada.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[*English*]

TRANSPORT

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Transport.

The blockage of border crossings this week by hundreds of angry Canadian truckers has brought home to Canadians just how important the trucking industry is for our economy. It has also brought home to Canadians just how harmful and ill considered it was for this government to put into effect full deregulation of the trucking industry without first being sure that American truckers have to live by the same rules of this country as Canadians. In fact thousands of jobs have been lost in Ontario in the trucking industry since this deregulation went into effect. I understand that the blockages have eased at certain border points like Windsor but are continuing at other border points.

One of the issues of concern to Canadian truckers is the issue of cabotage, the picking up and unloading of cargoes within Canada by Americans. Has the government begun enforcing our already existing laws against cabotage and, if not, could the minister tell us exactly when the government will begin enforcing these laws to resolve this ongoing issue, which is of great concern to Canadian truckers in terms of their jobs and their industry?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, I appreciate my hon. friend's question.

No one is at issue with the fact that trucking is important to Canada. That is the reason I went to Windsor on Wednesday night-Thursday morning to meet with representatives of the independent truckers in an effort, with the assistance of the Minister of Transport of Ontario, to alleviate the situation.

As far as the issue of cabotage is concerned, we discussed that with the independent truckers. There are methods in place at the present time to make sure that it does not happen. It is a combination of an effort by Minister of Employment and Immigration and by the Minister of National Revenue. We had discussions with the provincial officials, and we have agreed to work together to see if we can improve methods of detecting cabotage, where it is occurring. Those discussions are ongoing.

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, Canadians will find it strange that the minister is unable to tell us that he and the Minister of Employment and Immigration and the Minister of National Revenue are enforcing laws that are already on the books. It would be reassuring if he could tell us that that enforcement by his own colleagues and himself is beginning this weekend.

• (1120)

[*Translation*]

Madam Speaker, my second question is directed to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

It is particularly disturbing to see that some trucking companies in the United States are applying allegedly aggressive and unfair pricing policies that are prejudicial to Canadian truckers.

Has the Bureau of Competition Policy started to investigate these practices, and if not, when will it do so? This is another matter that is important to the trucking industry in this country, an industry that is in turn very important to our economy.

Hon. Pierre Blais (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Minister of State (Agriculture)): Madam Speaker, I think we must realize that the Bureau of Competition Policy has a job to do and that it is in a position to respond to complaints that are filed with the Bureau.

However, it is not particularly easy when the hon. Leader of the Opposition starts accusing everyone by saying there are problems with the Bureau of Competition Policy, without being specific.

My colleague, the Minister of National Revenue, whom I am representing today and I, as Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, are here, and we have legislation and regulations to deal with this. However, any serious complaints must first be identified and individuals and companies named, and only then will we be able to act.

I can assure you that we have all the resources we need to act, but I think the Leader of the Opposition should act responsibly and specify the nature of his charges so that we can do something about them.

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, it is up to the minister to listen to Canadian truckers, and he should not avoid doing so when they have complaints to make. I hope he will listen to those complaints and act on them.

Finally, Madam Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of National Revenue.

[*English*]

I want to know if the Minister of National Revenue has begun collecting the federal excise tax on gasoline to the same extent as the burden of that tax is imposed on Canadian truckers. If not, I would like him to tell us exactly when he will begin doing so.

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, it appears at the present time—and this comes forward from previous administrations, so I have no embarrassment in saying it—that there is no effective measure for collecting federal excise tax on shall we say full tanks of gas coming from the United States, whether it is in a Canadian truck or an American truck.

We discussed the method of the Ontario government of trying to collect its Ontario sales tax on the fuel. We undertook—and are moving on it immediately—to look at some method whereby we in Canada could begin to collect tax on full tanks of fuel in an effort to level out the playing field.

Ontario agreed to work with us on this initiative, and we will report back when we have something that we can deal with. I would hope at that time, if it requires legislation, that my hon. friend, the Leader of the Opposition, would ensure the House on behalf of his party speedy co-operation and no delays in the Senate.

* * *

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the Minister of Finance.

Yesterday the Minister of Finance lectured the House that high interest rates were necessary in order to keep Canadian costs of doing business competitive.

Also, yesterday the finance committee heard from Mr. James Taylor, President of the Canadian Exporters Association, who said: "the government's"—that is the Tory government—"high interest rate and high dollar policies are equal to a self-imposed tariff of 10 per cent on Canadian exports to the U.S. and 15 per cent on Canadian products sold overseas".

When is the government going to abandon this high interest, high dollar rate and allow Canadian exporters to be competitive on world markets and save Canadian jobs which have been going down—71,000 in the first four months of this year?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, I think the hon. member will see, if he reviews the export figures over the last seven, eight or nine months, a gradual increasing trend in our export performance. While I accept the fact that the export sector of our economy is under pressure because of the interest rate policy that we are following, the same sector has been able to demonstrate increasing competitiveness and therefore an ability still to tap into foreign markets in spite of this policy.

I say to my hon. friend and I say to Mr. Taylor of the export association, as I have said to him on a number of occasions: if we do not deal with these underlying threats to our competitive position, the ongoing impact on individual companies in the export sector will be permanent.

It is important that we preserve this competitive position, and that means getting the inflationary pressures down. I remind my hon. friend that in 1989 we started the year with a 4.5 per cent increase in unit labour costs. That is the best measure of our competitive position that I can give. We started at 4.5 per cent and by the end of the year it was 6.9 per cent. That says we are losing business. If we continue that way we will lose business on a permanent basis, and that lost business means lost jobs.

Mrs. Campbell (South West Nova): Because of your policies.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): I have a supplementary question for the same minister, Madam Speaker.

The minister must admit that his policies are not working. Will he finally tell the House that his budget of last February does not help Canadians, does not help Canadian exports and that it is destroying the Canadian economy? Will he give us a new budget as soon as possible to correct the economic situation the country is in?

[*English*]

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, my colleague has just referred to the difficulties with the budget. I would ask him to address his colleagues in the Senate because there are two bills right now that are being held up by the Senate.

Mr. Lapierre: They are being studied.

Mr. Milliken: Have a conference.

Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): The exclusive difference between the House of Commons and the Senate is on these bills. The questions are who decides to raise taxes and where should the spending cuts be?

If the Senate persists in doing this, what it is providing is a loan to the large corporations in this country which is in the hundreds of millions of dollars now. I have heard my colleagues opposite ask: "Why do you not you ensure that the tax system is fair and that large corporations are properly taxed?" Today, large corporations are not paying a large corporations tax simply because the bill has not been passed by the Senate. Until the Senate—

Mrs. Campbell (South West Nova): And they will not after.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Essex—Windsor.

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TRANSPORT

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Madam Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Transport who has himself created much of the problem that has existed in central Canada this week among the truckers. The fact is that the minister was requested at least a month ago—

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): Who made the request?

Mr. Langdon: —to have a meeting with the key parties which have been involved in this protest. There was no response to that request.

Now another telegram has come from some of the same parties: the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway and Transport Workers, the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, the Transportation and Communications International Union. They have asked this minister if he is prepared to have an urgent meeting with them to discuss these problems that exist across the province, problems that persist today.

The minister knows himself that the blockade at Fort Erie is still in place. He knows that truckers across the province—

Madam Deputy Speaker: I am sure the hon. member does have a question.

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): No, no, it is a major speech.

Mr. Beatty: Twenty minutes, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Langdon: My question is the following: In view of the continuing reality of these trucking blockades, is the minister prepared to meet with the groups that told him

by telegram that they need an urgent meeting to discuss the crisis they see for truckers in central Canada?

Mr. Beatty: Questions and comments on the member's speech.

• (1130)

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, that was a great question on Tuesday and Wednesday, but it is a little late on Friday.

I was asked to go down to Windsor. I did go down on Wednesday night after the vote. I met with representatives of the independent truckers, and I guess that is key. There was no association there in terms of an elected representative or president, et cetera. That is part of the difficulty.

I met with representatives from those involved in the blockade on Thursday morning. We discussed their concerns. We agreed that we could satisfy their concerns.

We came out of the meeting and had a public meeting with the media. They were satisfied, the words were: "David's won". Unfortunately, David could not go back to the blockade and deliver all the other Davids. So we do not have the blockade lifted.

I regret that as much as you do. I made copies of my letter available to everybody. We are prepared to do what we can.

We have had the meeting you asked for. It just has not had the results we all want.

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Madam Speaker, I wrote to the minister on April 17 on behalf of these various unions requesting an urgent meeting because of these problems. The minister has not responded to that request. He has attempted to say that there are no problems that existed in the industry.

Is the minister prepared to respond to this telegram that has now reached him, a telegram which comes not from the independent truckers but from the many employees of trucking firms across this province? They are the key people at this stage who are carrying forward this trucking blockade. Is he prepared to meet and take some serious action?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, I am prepared to respond to any request once I get it. To the best of my knowledge, it has not been received by my department. It has been delivered to my hon. friend. That is fair ball.

I understand that he is going to be dealing with his colleagues in the various unions. I do not knock that. If they want to meet and have discussions with me, they would be better off doing it directly rather than delaying it by going through my friend.

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Madam Speaker, I have to say to the minister that this is not a telegram to me. This is a telegram to him, a copy of which I happen to have. If he has not seen it, it is his department's fault, not my fault.

I want to ask my supplementary question of the Minister of Employment and Immigration since the Minister of Employment Immigration has also had a suggestion from the ministry in Ontario to the effect that people be deputized in the Ontario Department of Transport to enforce the immigration laws of this country against U.S. truckers who are taking loads from places that they are not supposed to.

Is the minister prepared to make a commitment at this stage that in fact she will accept this quite legitimate, straightforward and sensible suggestion from the ministry in the province of Ontario that this deputization of the transport ministry officials in Ontario take place? Will she take that advice? Will she act?

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Madam Speaker, like my other colleagues, I am working very closely with the Minister of Transport on what is a very difficult issue, and one that I think the Minister of Transport has developed a strategy for. He has been very accommodating. I will continue to work with him on this.

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THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Catherine Callbeck (Malpeque): Madam Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of the Environment my question is directed to the acting Prime Minister.

Yesterday outside the House the new Minister of the Environment refused to endorse this government's policy to stabilize carbon dioxide emissions by the year 2000.

It is a commitment that was made by his predecessor two weeks ago, and confirmed last week in the House by the Minister of Forestry when he said, as reported at page 11612 of *Hansard*: "These are federal commitments".

Is it government policy to stabilize carbon dioxide emissions by the year 2000?

Hon. Frank Oberle (Minister of Forestry): Madam Speaker, as you know, the Minister of the Environment is in Winnipeg attending consultation sessions that are being held throughout Canada which will result in the development of commitments to the Green Plan that will be taken to the international conference in Geneva this November.

The minister responded to questions yesterday outside the House which confirmed what his predecessor said in Bergen, namely, that Canada aims at stabilizing CO_2 emissions in our country by the year 2000. His leadership was reflected in the Bergen declaration.

The hon. member should know that in order to achieve a target like that it will require sacrifices on the part of every Canadian. In fact it will require changes in our life-styles. This is why we have engaged in such a comprehensive consultation process which will result in the announcement of these commitments that are possible and sustainable later on this year.

Ms. Catherine Callbeck (Malpeque): Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the Acting Prime Minister.

The former Minister of the Environment committed this government unconditionally to stabilize carbon dioxide emissions. The Minister of Forestry confirmed this in the House last week.

I want to ask the acting Prime Minister why this government is back-tracking on this very important issue? How does he expect Canadians to believe anything that this government now says about the environment?

Hon. Frank Oberle (Minister of Forestry): Madam Speaker, there is no back-tracking, as the hon. member would know if she had studied the deliberations of the Bergen commission.

Ms. Callbeck: The Bergen commission did not make any commitments.

Mr. Oberle: There are those who say that it would actually be possible by the year 2000 to attain a 20 per cent reduction of CO_2 emissions, particularly throughout the industrialized world.

The minister has stated on behalf of Canada a Canadian target, a Canadian commitment to stabilize by the year 2000 the greenhouse gases that are emitted in Canada to current 1990 levels. There is no confusion about that.

What we are doing now is consulting with Canadians who would have to accommodate these kinds of commitments. We will be the government by the year 2000. The hon. member will realize then that what we have done and what we have committed to will actually have been achieved.

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FISHERIES

Hon. Roger C. Simmons (Burin—St. George's): Madam Speaker, I have a question for the Secretary of State for External Affairs.

He will know that the recent Atlantic fisheries aid package contained nothing, not a single red cent, for inshore fishermen and the related plant workers who are the victims of massive catch failure.

His colleague, the Minister for International Trade, said last week that the government was waiting until the end of the season. If he is talking about the winter season, it ended seven weeks ago. If he is talking about the summer season, it will not end until October. Surely, he is not suggesting that we wait until then.

Is the government now prepared to recognize the desperate plight in which those people find themselves right now? Is the government prepared to act right now to do something to help them ease their pain?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Madam Speaker, the government recognizes that there are problems in the inshore fishery. Those matters have been considered in companion with other actions taken by the government with regard particularly to problems caused relating to the stocks of northern cod.

I would not want to cause the hon. member to believe that there will be an imminent announcement with regard to the inshore fishery.

• (1140)

Hon. Roger C. Simmons (Burin—St. George's): Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the same minister.

He will know that 100,000 workers in Atlantic Canada make their living either in the fishing boats or in the fish plants. His colleague, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, admitted a week or so ago that the government has a plan to downsize that number.

Is the minister now in a position to tell us how many fishermen are going to be zapped, if you like, and be wiped out by the government's drive to downsize the fishery? Is he prepared to indicate whether there is a hit list of communities, if you like, that will be wiped off the face of the map by the government's mad scheme?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Madam Speaker, the hon. member and I have had an exchange before about policies designed to end fishing communities in Newfoundland.

Mr. Simmons: Your comments went over like a lead balloon last time, too.

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): There were policies of that kind brought in by a former Liberal government of Newfoundland. But they are not part of the plans of this government. Nor is any part of the plan of this government, if I may use his moderate language, to zap fishermen or to take any other actions of that kind.

There is a recognition that there is a serious problem in the fishery and, among other things, that there is a need to help prepare people who are in the fishing industry who will not be able to continue to find full lives in that industry, adapt to other opportunities. That was part of the announcement that was made by my colleague the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans. That is part of the policy that this government is following.

* * *

MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister. It relates to the Meech Lake impasse and the activities that are occurring at this time.

As the Deputy Prime Minister knows, we are very concerned that the constitutional impasse over the Meech Lake Accord be resolved. But there are other Canadians who are concerned as well—northerners, women, aboriginal Canadians—that they not be left out of the process completely. They are concerned that by the nature of the behind-the-scenes negotiations they will again be left out, that their concerns will not be addressed, that they will not be informed of the nature of the discussions.

What assurances can the Deputy Prime Minister and the Prime Minister give that this will not be a done deal between the Prime Minister and the ten Premiers? What assurances can he give those many, many Canadians who are concerned so that the deal can be done, and that there can be an honest resolve to this impasse?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Madam Speaker, the hon. member is aware, I am sure, of the special parliamentary committee that was established to look into this and the recommendations that came forth from a very valuable piece of work that was done by a number of members on all sides of the House.

Those recommendations, along with other proposals that are being advanced by the Premiers and, indeed, the Prime Minister as a result of the discussions that Senator Murray has had with each of the provincial premiers, involve questions that are being dealt with in an attempt to narrow down the differences that exist that prevent the Meech Lake Accord from being ratified.

Clearly, all these things will be taken into consideration. That assurance I think goes without saying.

Clearly, the groups to which the hon. member refers had an opportunity to appear before this committee to have their input. I am sure the committee took those views into account when it drafted its recommendations.

Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill): Madam Speaker, I agree with the Deputy Prime Minister that the concerns of women, aboriginal Canadians, residents of the Northwest Territories and others were taken into account by the committee.

Our concern now is to make sure that those same people are aware of what is happening over the next little while.

As I said earlier, we encourage the process. We encourage the meetings between the Prime Minister and the premiers. However, we want to make sure that the public of Canada is fully informed on a regular basis of what is being discussed and what the parameters of those discussions are.

I ask again that the Deputy Prime Minister give Canadians that assurance.

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Madam Speaker, I can give the hon. member that assurance, just as the Prime Minister has given that assurance.

He indicated in the House yesterday very clearly that he would be meeting with all the Premiers over the weekend to see if there could be a narrowing of the differences which would hopefully form the basis of a first ministers' conference. That task will carry on over the weekend.

I am sure that at an appropriate time the Prime Minister will inform the House precisely as to the results of the meetings he will hold over the weekend with all the provincial premiers. It has been his nature to inform the House as fully as he possibly can. I think the hon. member appreciates that these negotiations are indeed, very sensitive and very important.

I noted that the Premier of Ontario, after the meeting with the Prime Minister, indicated that there are serious questions that must be resolved. He also indicated that he believed that the things that divide us are not insurmountable. As well, he made it very clear that seven provinces support the Meech Lake Accord and have not wavered from that support. He calls upon all provinces, in the national interest, to proceed with the passage of the Meech Lake Accord. I think that is the objective of all members of the House and, I am sure, the objective of all Canadians.

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INTERNATIONAL BANKING

Mr. Arnold Malone (Crowfoot): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Finance.

I understand that representatives from other countries will be gathering in Paris next week to oversee the establishment of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

Given the importance of this new bank for the future of central and east European countries, which is of interest to all of us concerned that reforms taking place in that region be given every chance of success, what exactly is Canada's commitment to this new institution? How will it complement the government's other efforts of support for central and east European nations?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I will be representing Canada at the final signing of the agreements bringing into effect the new European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

We will have a participation in this bank of something like 3.4 per cent, which is the eighth-largest participation of the banks.

The initiative is basically a French initiative, but one to which the Prime Minister responded in a very important way because of our commitment to supporting what is happening in eastern Europe. The bank itself will support the reforms that are being undertaken in eastern Europe, in particular the desires of those countries to move into a market-oriented economy with good involvement of the private sector. The activities of the bank will support the private sector. Its mandate is specifically designed to do that.

In addition to that, we will be taking into account the importance of dealing with environmental problems in eastern European countries.

This new bank does complement the support that we have provided to these countries over the past few months. It is a more cost-effective way of providing that support since it is through a bank and therefore can be levered through borrowings by the bank in the financial markets.

In addition to that, we will help provide stronger support for our private sector companies in accessing that market and participating more aggressively in those markets.

EMPLOYMENT

Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (St. Boniface): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Employment and Immigration.

When will the minister bring forward a full employment act, as recommended by her own advisory council in its report on full employment for all Canadians by the year 2000, released just a few days ago?

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Madam Speaker, as the hon. member knows, many of the things suggested by the CEIAC committee are in Bill C-21, which is now in the other place. Thus, I do not want to repeat my arguments about that.

Clearly, there has been and will continue to be on the part of the government a commitment to growing employment in Canada and to the reduction of unemployment. That can be seen in the creation of 1.6 million new jobs since 1984. The proportion of people in the labour force working today is higher than it has ever been.

We are already well on the road to achieving the kind of employment capacities in Canada that we all want to see.

• (1150)

Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (St. Boniface): Madam Speaker, I shall have to send the minister's answer to the advisory council to see whether or not it feels that this is a full employment act, as it has suggested.

[*Translation*]

My supplementary question is for the Minister of Industry, Science and Technology. Let us talk about jobs, good jobs. What is the minister now doing to increase the number of scientists and engineers—we have about a third as many per capita as the United States—and also, to increase investment in research and development, which is about half that in the United States, in order to create good jobs here in Canada?

[*English*]

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Madam Speaker, as the Economic Council of Canada pointed out, there are very good jobs being created at the high end of the economic spectrum. We are seeing some shift in the kind of jobs as we head into a technological age.

One of the reasons that the training component that is called for in the CEIAC report is important, and which we want to undertake through Bill C-21, is that there is no point in having economic or regional development or investment in science and technology if there are no trained people to fill those jobs.

Already in Canada today we have shortages within some skill areas, regardless of the unemployment rate. I believe that the economy we are building in this decade is exactly the kind of economy we need for the future.

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[*Translation*]

FISHERIES

Mr. Mark Assad (Gatineau—La Lièvre): My question is for the Minister of Fisheries, Madam Speaker. Quebec Fisheries Minister Michel Pagé called the federal agreement on Quebec fisheries "dry bread". Under this fisheries agreement, Quebec will get only 2.7 per cent of the total package. Will the federal fisheries minister try to correct this unfair situation and treat Quebec fishermen fairly and equitably?

[*English*]

Mr. Ross Reid (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Madam Speaker, there is no question that the Government of Canada is aware of the particular problems facing those who depend on the fishery in Quebec as, indeed, the Government of Canada is aware of and acting on the problems that affect the people who depend on all the Atlantic fishery.

It should be pointed out that the Atlantic plan that was announced has direct benefits for the people of Quebec, not only in terms of the advantages through stock growth and increased science, but specifically through the provision of $10 million that will provide for stability in harvesting, processing, and aquaculture.

I want to point out to my hon. friend that the Minister of Fisheries has met with his counterpart in Quebec. He intends to meet with his counterpart in Quebec again because he is interested in concluding a program to help

the fishermen of Quebec, recognizing the problems that they face.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mark Assad (Gatineau—La Lièvre): Madam Speaker, the member who spoke for the minister does not realize that Quebec is in a crisis that has resulted in the loss of 2,000 fisheries jobs.

Will the federal fisheries minister help Quebec fishermen and raise the funding to a reasonable level at the very least, because they have already lost 2,000 jobs?

[*English*]

Mr. Ross Reid (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Madam Speaker, first, I would like to say that, yes, the minister and—if I am allowed in this forum to say it—I, as well, are more than aware of the problems of Quebec.

My three colleagues who have particular interest in this matter have made the point very clear a number of times to the minister. There is a very clear understanding of the problem.

In terms of response to problems that are ongoing, it is recognized that there has been the loss of jobs. It is the same as it has been in the rest of Atlantic Canada.

The hon. member and others should be aware that the government has responded, and responded quickly, in the past through the use of established programs that are designed specifically to provide for emergencies. We are well aware of those programs—

Madam Deputy Speaker: If the hon. member wants to get into debate, it would be better to do so later on.

The hon. member for The Battlefords—Meadow Lake.

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INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. Len Taylor (The Battlefords—Meadow Lake): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister in the absence of the Minister of Justice.

Yesterday's unanimous Supreme Court ruling on the validity of a treaty signed with Quebec Hurons clearly indicates that the treaty rights of Indian people across Canada must be upheld. Every year, particularly during the spring, Indian people are charged by the provinces for hunting in contravention of the Migratory Birds Convention Act.

Will the federal government now review its position and stop insisting on the prosecution of Indians hunting for their domestic use? Just as important, will the federal government recognize its responsibilities and act to prevent provincial governments from legislating away treaty rights?

Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Madam Speaker, before the federal government reviews its position on the general issue that the hon. member has raised, I think it appropriate to review this very significant decision brought down yesterday by the Supreme Court of Canada in the matter of the Attorney General of Quebec v. the Sioui Indians of the Huron tribes of Quebec.

This decision will be reviewed thoroughly by the Department of Justice and by my officials in the Department of Indian Affairs. A further response will be forthcoming in due course.

Mr. Len Taylor (The Battlefords—Meadow Lake): Madam Speaker, the obligation of the federal government is obviously to recognize, enforce, and promote treaty rights, instead of trying to off-load services to the provinces.

Will the government accept its responsibilities, maintain and promote the treaty rights, and ensure that the federal government assumes its responsibilities in all these areas?

Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Madam Speaker, the hon. member knows that the Government of Canada and my ministry, in particular, have always respected and promoted our treaty obligations. We will continue to do so, as witnessed by the very important programs through which we are making great progress in bringing economic and social improvements to the situation of Indians throughout Canada.

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TRANSPORTATION SAFETY

Mr. Stan Keyes (Hamilton West): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport.

I am told that the government is about to announce a reduction in flight inspections, atmospheric tests, a shut-down of some air traffic control centres, and some training for air traffic controllers. How can he even consider such a money grab at the expense of safety?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, my hon. friend's allegations are completely unfounded. We will never compromise on safety.

Mr. Stan Keyes (Hamilton West): Madam Speaker, here we have the classic case of the left hand not knowing what the other left hand is doing.

On the one hand the minister says he knows nothing. Yet, on the other hand, government sources have revealed that a draft of a Transport Canada plan proclaims: "Reducing this high cost item should provide relief and generate immediate long-term savings attainable through implementation of this plan".

How has the minister considered the long-term effects of such a short-sighted plan?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, I would suggest that my hon. friend will find that the long-term effects of unfounded allegations will result in nobody believing him when he does have a good one.

* * *

[*Translation*]

SCOTIA SYNFUELS PROJECT

Mr. Francis G. LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso): Madam Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Industry, Science and Technology, I direct my question to the Government House Leader. It has to do with a matter which he is familiar with, namely the Scotia Synfuels application under the tax credit program for Cape Breton investment.

The Minister of Industry, Science and Technology knows that this project will be off the drawing board soon and underway the minute it is approved. My question is this: Is the minister now ready to give the green light to this project or to assure us that his colleague will do so?

[*English*]

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Madam Speaker, if I might be permitted to respond on behalf of the Minister of Industry who is away on government business, this application is under consideration and, when the decision is ready to be released, it will be released.

• (1200)

Mr. Francis G. LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso): Madam Speaker, the minister knows that it is essential that approval for this tax credit be given very shortly so the project can go forward. He also knows that approval of the tax credit does not permit the government to spend resources on this project until it starts to earn tax revenue. However, it is necessary for the consortium to begin private sector financing so that this project to go forward. He knows the benefits this will have in terms of jobs and finding a clean source for Cape Breton coal. Will he not act now and accelerate the process so this project can go forward?

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Madam Speaker, the hon. member is basically asking that the project be approved right now on the floor of the House of Commons without the proper kind of analysis. He knows full well that were we to do what he is asking, one of his colleagues would undoubtedly, based on an Auditor General's report, ask how could you commit so much taxpayers' money without proper consideration to the application? Surely, he would want us to be prudent, as we always are.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*English*]

PETITIONS

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Mr. Blaine A. Thacker (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Madam Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government responses to five petitions; Nos. 342-5929, 342-6152, 342-6160, 342-6185 and 342-6186.

Point of Order

POINT OF ORDER

CALL FOR QUORUM

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Madam Speaker, I just want to raise a short point of order respecting activities which occurred last night. My point of order concerns a quorum call in the Chamber late last night. Representatives of the parties in this House had worked out, and agreed on, and understood the effect of, the terms of the special order under which debate on the bill was being conducted. These same channels, as we call them, understood that the Chair and its advisers understood and agreed that the terms of the order meant what they said. Debate on the bill would continue until the times set out in the order, or until no further member rose on debate. It would be by vote on the question for third reading, and nothing else, that this stage of the bill would be disposed of.

Much of the understanding by the House seems to have been breached last night when the New Democratic Party proposed a unanimous consent motion right off the wall. There had been no consultation. Then when a quorum count was called, I was surprised that the Chair even entertained, or accepted, either of these proposals. The reason is simply because of the special order, which had been put in place.

Because of that order, members were preparing their remarks for debate or were following debate in places nearby where they could watch the debate through the broadcast system. They were doing this in good faith, based on the all-party special order made by unanimous consent after full consultations.

However, it seems we are faced with a possible new principle given last night's antics. Is it now the case that orders adopted by unanimous consent are binding only on those members who are in the House when the order is made or, even worse, that any member can later change his or her mind and start deviating from or challenging the order?

In conclusion, I think it would best serve the House if the Chair could perhaps, not immediately, report back with a ruling on the weight of a special order in place for this debate. If such orders do not prevent proposals such as made last night, or other proposals from being received by the Chair, then we had all better know about it now so that in future we can take this into account.

Madam Speaker, we operate on the basis of what has been presumed to be practice. We had operated, not in a vacuum, but based on old advice and word given, and so on. Therefore it was with some surprise we saw that the special order—and there were other unwritten things—was tantamount to Standing Orders that supersede the existing ongoing Standing Orders for the duration of that bill, and only that bill. To find out that is not now the case, as I say, was a bit of a surprise.

I hope the Chair might be able to find some means by which we could establish a *modus vivendi* that would allow us to operate on the basis that we tried to operate on yesterday and which I think is in everybody's interest, on the government side of the House, the opposition side of the House and, certainly, the Chair. So it is in that context that I ask the Chair to consider this point of order.

Ms. Black: You are full of nonsense.

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Madam Speaker, having been party to the negotiations that led to the special order that we adopted in this House on May 10, I confirm in part what the government House leader has said. I think it was clearly expected that, as stated in the order, no amendments would be accepted by the Chair during the extended debate on third reading.

The purpose of the extension of the hours on third reading, as stated by the hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier when he was commenting on the motion, was to, and I quote him from page 11291 of *Hansard*:

> —allow all members a chance to put forward their views on this very important issue, and also give them the opportunity to plan according to the day and the votes and the hours at which these things will be held so that there will be no surprises.

I stress those words, the intention was there would be "no surprises". Now the government House leader has complained about the conduct of certain members last evening in trying to sidetrack the debate and prevent the decision from being made at the appropriate time on Tuesday. I think that those attempts came to naught. But I do say, in fairness, that it is the government's responsibility to maintain a quorum in the House when government bills are under discussion. It is the government's

responsibility to keep members in the House for that purpose and—

Mr. Thacker: Is it your responsibility on an opposition day?

Mr. Milliken: On a government bill, it is the government's responsibility.

Mr. Thacker: It is your responsibility.

Mr. Milliken: The hon. member says it is the opposition's responsibility. It is clearly the government's responsibility and, indeed, it is their responsibility to have ministers here during discussions of government bills.

I have raised that point dozens of times in this Parliament when I have pointed out that there is no minister of the Crown present in the House during discussion of government bills. I am glad to see that they are here and participating in the debate today.

The fact is that is the way Parliament operates. It has to be done in that way. While the tricks that were played last night by certain members of the New Democratic Party were, in my view, contrary to the agreements that had been worked out between the parties, I still feel that there was nothing specific in the order that had been adopted about it and the difficulty is that—

Ms. Black: It was the old boys' network.

Mr. Milliken: I said, while they may have been proper and not included in the order, the spirit of the agreement that was worked out, the intention in allowing the extended debate—

Ms. Black: We interrupted your dinner, eh?

Mr. Milliken: I see I have stirred up a hornet's nest on my left. The agreement was worked out and the hon. member for Thunder Bay—Atikokan was party to this arrangement. They were well aware that an arrangement had been made whereby the debate would be extended to permit orderly debate, with fixed times for votes on this very important bill that is before this House.

If hon. members want to use the rules to delay and obstruct what has been arranged among all parties in this House, of course that is their right and I say it is the government's responsibility to maintain the House.

On the other hand, I think it is clear from the ruling that no amendments were to be accepted and that members were to be recognized in debate, and only in debate, and I suggest that in standing to do other than debate, members may not have been participating properly in the proceedings last evening.

Ms. Joy Langan (Mission—Coquitlam): Madam Speaker, I would like to state very clearly, and it is unfortunate that the minister who has just dressed down myself and this party is not here to listen to the response—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Madam Deputy Speaker: The Chair will of course hear at length whatever the hon. member has to say, but she should know by now that making mention of the presence or absence of any member of the House is not the correct way to proceed in this place.

• (1210)

Ms. Langan: Madam Speaker, I withdraw my reference to his absence and will make reference to his manners.

With regard to the content of what the minister said, that no deals were made on the matters beyond the agreement achieved in a motion before the House, we proposed and moved on matters of great seriousness. In fact, in consultation with the Table and in our caucus, we met both the spirit and content of the motion before us and the rules of the House. At one point, I got up on a point of order and asked the Chair to clarify what the rules were in the House.

As opposition members who have very strong feelings and a strong policy behind us on this bill, we have opposed it from its inception. We opposed its introduction, and we were opposed throughout debate. I would suggest that the government—

Madam Deputy Speaker: The hon. member is now getting into debate about the bill itself. She is no longer talking about procedure. Is the hon. member for Churchill seeking the floor? The hon. member for Mission—Coquitlam.

Ms. Langan: Madam Speaker, it is not my intention to go into debate. I am trying to lead to a logical conclusion based on the remarks made by the minister.

The tone of the debate made it very clear that we did not take this motion or legislation lightly and that we would do whatever we could to oppose and defeat the

legislation. We sought advice from the Table. We advised them before we made our intervention on the motion when we sought unanimous consent. I think it is very important to respond to the comment about the spirit of the agreement.

Are we now suggesting that members in this House should somehow by osmosis understand the spirit of an agreement? The only spirit of agreement in the House is that a good number here oppose this bill and will work to defeat it. That is what we were doing. I would appreciate and look forward to the Chair's ruling on what happened last night.

Mr. Blaine A. Thacker (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Madam Speaker, as we know, this place often operates under a consensus.

An hon. member: It is called "the old boys' club."

Mr. Thacker: It might be called "the old boys' club" but my question for the NDP is this. When they have an opposition day, does it mean they have to provide the full quorum all day from start to finish? I can tell you that if you had to do so, you would not have had one opposition day this year.

Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill): Madam Speaker, other than the silly intervention that we just heard, the issue that was raised by the government House leader was whether or not the Chair should have recognized the various motions that were put forward by the members of the New Democratic Party.

Obviously, the Chair should and did recognize the motions that were put forward. One motion was for a quorum call, and that is quite acceptable within the rules of this House. It is quite acceptable within the rules of the Standing Order under which we were operating. If the government members were so busy that they were all preparing speeches in order to take part in the debate later, as the government House leader indicated, then perhaps they would have spoken later in the evening. Not one of them did so.

Obviously the members of the government were not in their offices preparing speeches. They did not speak. That was a point made—

Madam Deputy Speaker: At this time, I have the feeling of what is going on in the House.

I would like to thank the government House leader and other members who participated in this exchange, the member for Kingston and the Islands, the member for Mission—Coquitlam, and the member for Churchill.

There was a question as to whether the Chair should have entertained the motions last night. The special order was silent on the rules relating to quorum. Whatever the understanding was among the different parties earlier, it was not in the written order. The Chair, I would say, certainly did well in putting the question and asking for a quorum.

When a request for unanimous consent is brought to the Chair's attention, the Chair does not have any choice but to ask for unanimous consent. The House itself is the master at all times and with unanimous consent can do whatever it wants to do.

The government House leader has asked the Chair to look at what happened yesterday, to think about the situation, and to come back to the House with some suggestions as to ways to proceed in the future. The Chair will take this under advisement and will report back to the House.

Mr. Benno Friesen (Parliamentary Secretary to Solicitor General of Canada): Madam Speaker, of course I accept your ruling and respect it, but I would like a clarification of what you have said.

The member for Mission—Coquitlam has just said that it is their intention to block this legislation in any way possible because they are so opposed to it. Given their total opposition and the fact that they have now committed themselves to doing anything they can—

Ms. Black: In the House.

Mr. Friesen: —in the House to defeat the legislation, it would appear to me that agreements among parties becomes really quite valueless, unless all members of the parties adhere to that understanding and that agreement.

Madam Speaker, I would respectfully ask, you to take that as a question on how we deal in the future with all-party agreements as to how the House should operate if one of the parties to that agreement feels that it can go beyond the agreement because it opposes a particular piece of legislation.

Mr. Murphy: Madam Speaker, the member has actually extended the debate and you allowed him to do so. I think it is only fair that we be able to respond to that.

We did not break any deals, informal or formal. The House order was quite clear and stipulates that debate be allowed. It does not guarantee that we will not move to have a bill withdrawn because we have that right, and that was accepted by the Chair. It does not mean that we will not call for a quorum. We have that right and we exercise that right.

It does mean that if government members wish to keep a quorum they have to be present or available. That is a requirement. It also means that if one of the government members does not want the bill withdrawn, then perhaps there should be one government member in the House or somewhere near the House so that he or she may get up and do that. That is their responsibility.

The fact that they may have misunderstood the agreement or may have read something else into the agreement is their problem. It is not the problem of the Chair. It is not the problem of the New Democratic Party. Our honour is unblemished by what happened last night.

[*Translation*]

Madam Deputy Speaker: It is obvious to me that we are debating an issue which is altogether different from the matter under consideration a few minutes ago. I can only repeat that, at the request of the Government House Leader, the Chair has examined what happened yesterday. The special order adopted by the House did not preclude the possibility of a quorum call. When unanimous consent is being sought the Chair can only give hon. members an opportunity to do what they can, and that is change their mind at any time if indeed there is unanimous consent.

As to allowing other proceedings when the House is under special order, as requested by the Government House Leader and as I pointed out a moment ago, the Chair will examine the problem and, if necessary, get back to the House at the earliest opportunity.

For the time being I think we ought to put an end to—

Is the hon. member for Mission—Coquitlam (Mrs. Langan) rising on a question of privilege?

• (1220)

[*English*]

Ms. Langan: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The hon. member on the other side of the House and the other side of the river from where I live in fact made a direct statement about what I said. As a matter of privilege I have a right to correct that statement.

The statement was that we would do anything we could, and the inference was within wide-ranging bounds, to stop this bill. I want to clarify for the Chair that I said we would do anything, and it is very clear, within the parameters of the rules of this House, to defeat this bill.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please. This is Friday afternoon. Maybe we should proceed with the business of the House.

* * *

CANADIAN POLAR COMMISSION ACT

MEASURE TO ENACT

Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-72, an act to establish the Canadian Polar Commission and to amend certain acts in consequence thereof.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Shall the hon. minister have leave to introduce the bill?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to, bill read the first time and ordered to be printed.

* * *

PETITIONS

VETERANS AFFAIRS

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition signed by numerous residents of my riding of Kingston and the Islands who are opposed to the cuts the government has made in the budget to the veterans program.

The petitioners object to the cuts in housekeeping services for veterans and the increased charges to veterans who are in long-term care.

These numerous persons who have signed these petitions are generally members of legion branches in my community. They are opposed to the nasty and unfair cuts the government has made which affect these people who have served their country in such a distinguished way and are now in effect being taxed. Their rights are being taken away. Benefits they had been granted by previous Liberal governments are being taken away by this mean-spirited Conservative administration.

These petitioners call upon Parliament to reject these cuts.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. John Brewin (Victoria): Madam Speaker, I have the honour to present to the House, pursuant to Standing Order 36, a number of petitions.

The first set of petitions deals with the GST. Petitions calling upon the government to withdraw this unfair tax continue to pour into my office, and I am pleased to present them to the House.

VIA RAIL

Mr. John Brewin (Victoria): Madam Speaker, the second set of petitions deals with VIA Rail cut-backs which continue to be a particular problem in our area because of the cut-backs to the E&N Railway.

It remains critically important for the signatories to this petition that we have a complete change in national rail policy, that the existing VIA network be maintained, that equipment be upgraded and that service be guaranteed so that we have an adequate national rail service in Canada.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Mr. Eugène Bellemare (Carleton—Gloucester): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition from residents of Carleton—Gloucester regarding a Canadian citizen and taxpayer by the name of Yih-Sheh Leo who was arrested in Taiwan and sentenced to 10 months' imprisonment.

These citizens would like the government to issue a public statement expressing Canada's concern about a Canadian citizen's rights being violated, instruct the Canadian Embassy in Japan or the High Commissioner's Office in Hong Kong to send a representative to Taiwan, to appoint a lawyer to handle the case and, finally, to request Canada's allies which have representatives in Taiwan to assist with the case.

The petition is duly signed and certified by the House and countersigned by myself.

CANADA POST

Mr. Len Taylor (The Battlefords—Meadow Lake): Mr. Speaker, it is my duty, responsibility, and honour to table in the House of Commons petitions signed by residents of the community of Wilkie, Saskatchewan, a community with a population of 1,500. I have signatures on these petitions from 1,300 of those 1,500 residents.

The petitioners point out that the Department of Public Works has declared the Wilkie post office building surplus and offered the structure for sale, recognizing as well that Canada Post Corporation has expressed no interest in maintaining its lease under a new landlord.

The petitioners call on Parliament to support the maintenance of all postal services from the existing full service post office in the town of Wilkie and to reject any proposals that would result in the closing of the existing post office.

I support the petitioners and call on the government to respond favourably to their pleas.

* * *

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, I ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Pronovost): Shall all questions be allowed to stand?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY, S. O. 81—MUNICIPAL INFRASTRUCTURE

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Harb.

Mr. Steve Butland (Sault Ste. Marie): Mr. Speaker, I commend the Liberals for bringing this very important issue to the floor of the House. That is about the only positive thing I can say about the Liberals at this time as pertains to this particular issue.

Although honourable in some ways, I must suggest that Canadians should be somewhat cynical of their task force simply because the Liberals when in government continually cut back on financial assistance for municipalities. Finally, in March 1984 they terminated it.

• (1230)

One really has to wonder why the Liberals would cross this country asking for input from municipalities when they knew full well what the municipalities were going to say to them. In fact, they had initiated or were a part of the crisis. I think that puts it in an appropriate perspective.

Some of my colleagues indicated to me that it is National Fitness Week. I should have been aware of that, but in particular, it is "sneaker day" I understand. I caution Canadians that if you are going to put on your sneakers and get out there running, there is a grave danger that you will hurt yourself while running on the sidewalks of this country.

An hon. member: Or disappear into a pot-hole.

Mr. Butland: Or disappear into a pot-hole. I notice that the ex-mayor of Moncton, now I believe the member, said in 1987 that it would take $3.5 million to bring the sidewalks of Moncton up to par so that people would not get hurt. Not all cities are as fortunate as Ottawa to have running trails.

Last year, I took the opportunity to go out to see Meech Lake. It was a place I had to see, and I am in accord with the agreement. I want to tell you that the roadway that led to Meech Lake was a disaster. Maybe it would be a symbolic gesture if we did something about that roadway on the way to Meech.

As a former municipal politician, I am very pleased to speak because I think the municipal level of government is the most accountable one. It is the one that is the most responsible. It has less bureaucracy for citizens to get involved with. They simply call their alderperson, voice a complaint and I think most of the time these people respond.

I am going to use my community, and not surprisingly so, as an example of the plight in which municipalities find themselves and have found themselves in for a long time. It is suggested in the community of Sault Ste. Marie that it would take $15 million a year to maintain the *status quo* on road, sewer and bridge infrastructure in the community. The community can spend only $5 million. You can see that the rate of deterioration will be catastrophic unless addressed. The community is forced, and I am sure all communities are doing this, to restructure priorities. It will have to look after only arterials and collectors. The residential streets will be untouched.

Talking about bridge safety, there are several bridges in the community that have weight limits, that is on a truck route which is completely ironical at best and paradoxical at worst. They are safety hazards. There are hundreds of grade separations in this country where nothing has been done and nothing will be done unless the municipalities and the provinces decide to do something. It is a financial impossibility.

Until 1984 the federal government was involved. In March 1984 the Liberal government said: "We cannot be involved any more. It is too costly." Now the Liberals are saying: "If we were in power, if we were the government of this country, we would be very much involved with the municipal infrastructure."

What do the two upper levels of government say? The provincial government says: "We are on side. We want to participate but we cannot participate unless the the federal government participates." The federal government says: "Constitutionally we cannot involve ourselves. Municipalities are creatures of the provinces not the federal government." Yet the federal government does involve itself when it is appropriate to do so. If the timing is right and if the expediency is right, the government does get involved with municipal infrastructure.

It gets involved in an *ad hoc* way from here to there across this country but with no national strategy whatsoever. This begs the three levels of government to sit down together and discuss the crisis in this country respecting infrastructure. We cannot say: "It is your problem. It is not my problem."

I think of the people in California saying: "I live in Los Angeles. I know that an earthquake is going to occur, but

I am going to stay anyway and suffer the risk." It is admirable, I suppose courageous, but one really has to wonder. This government is saying it knows there is a crisis, but it cannot address it.

It saddened me to hear the member for Anjou—Rivière-des-Prairies, who was a well respected president of FCM, calling local governments Santa Clauses when they are in power. I tell you that that member was the Kris Kringle of FCM. He was there every year, year after year, saying the federal government must involve itself. Why now, when asked a question, does the minister say absolutely nothing? He talks about deficit. he says to the municipalities: "I am sorry, there is nothing further we can do." He completely avoids that issue.

On June 4, 1988 he said: "I think there is a thaw coming in Ottawa." Well, I think the thaw has stopped and it is a freeze again. The federal government is not about to get involved. I have clippings from 1985, 1986, 1987 and 1988 saying: "We are willing to listen; we want to talk." Many ministers have spoken. The Deputy Prime Minister said: "I have an answer for you; double your water rates." That will go down well, will it not.

Mr. Bellemare: That was the former Minister of the Environment.

Mr. Butland: Was it? Thank you. Whoever said it, it is sheer folly and the government knows that. It is passing the buck in a sense, but in the other sense, it will not pass the buck because it cut transfer payments. On the one hand it passes the buck but on the other hand, it says it cannot pass the buck because it does not have any bucks to pass. It is obvious hypocrisy.

I do not think the government has to say it is going to address the problem immediately and will get involved in this $15 billion or $16 billion big fix as the FCM calls it, and appropriately so because it has to be a big fix or this country is going to deteriorate. The streets, the sidewalks, the bridges, the very structures below them are crumbling. I think everybody understands that. Remediation and rehabilitation of roadways and bridges will cost one-tenth the cost of redoing the whole project, so money spent now will be money spent, yes. It will cost billions, maybe $15 billion to $20 billion, but if we let it go on it will cost 10 times that much. That is obviously a foolhardy way of dealing with the problem.

The federal government does involve itself with housing programs for municipalities, but do you think that the province and the federal government get together on those programs? Certainly not. They do not overlap. They are not dovetailed. They are separate programs. Why would anybody do that? Could they not get together and say: "We will dedicate this much money. Let us put it together. It makes a lot of sense." But no. Politically they say: "We want to take credit for this program" and the provinces say: "We want to take credit for this program". It begs liaison; it begs co-operation.

• (1240)

A department of municipal affairs does not need to have billions of dollars to start off, but I think it behoves the federal government to initiate discussion among the three levels. If the federal government took the lead and the province implemented or at least directed the program, the municipalities would be able to implement it. They are the people who best can implement the program.

The Minister of Finance had the gall to say: "Whenever we get involved with the municipalities we do not think we get our money's worth". What an appalling statement to make to municipal people. I think what he was saying is that we do not get our political money's worth. Whatever funds municipalities get from whichever level of government always have strings attached. In fact, one might say that they have a very heavy rope attached.

"You can have *x* thousands of dollars if you spend it this way. We will tell you how to spend your money, we know better than you do". Funds with strings attached is ridiculous. "We will give you 75 per cent if you spend 25 per cent on this project". It is not a way of handling a problem. Sometimes municipalities are duped or forced to get into a situation where they say: "Well, if we do not take the money, it will go elsewhere". This *ad hoc* treatment is not acceptable to anyone.

Government programs like deregulation which bring larger, longer and heavier trucks into our highway system and without trains only serve to exacerbate the problem. The decimation of VIA Rail puts more heavy buses on the roadway. This only exacerbates the problem. It requires at least a standardized national program among the three levels of government to say: "Here is the problem, how will we address it?"

This government is devoid of any creativity. Not one positive step toward addressing this problem has been mentioned. It would not necessarily take a national program immediately. Let us sit down and discuss it. There must be creative ways, such as taking a cent from the gasoline tax and giving it directly to the municipalities commensurate with the amounts of money that they spend in the local municipality. It would be a proportionate division of funds. I am not saying that is an answer. I do not even know how much money that would give to a municipality, but it is just one creative thought.

I know the minister is very sympathetic and a very creative individual. Given the opportunity with the three levels, I know this positive dialogue would address the situation. Right now we have not isolated the problem well enough. FCM has done a tremendous job, but its lobbying has fallen on deaf ears. Each and every year they say: "We want you to address the problem." Some minister says: "We will listen. We are good listeners", but nothing ever has happened. I do not suspect, judging from what the member for Anjou—Rivière-des-Prairies said today, there is any help forthcoming.

I would strongly encourage the government to initiate a department, not armed with millions of dollars, but one to bring about constructive dialogue. I think all Canadians, 100 per cent of the population of this country, would agree that there is a necessity for discussion about this major problem and how we are to address it. We cannot continually say, "It is not my problem". It is everyone's problem.

I have clippings that point out and isolate difficulties in so many municipalities across this country. It did not take a task force for me to find this out. We in the New Democratic Party do not have the funds to be traipsing across the country, nor do we have the funds that the government has to be everywhere. However, we are very aware of the problem. Some of the situations we read about in this country are appalling, to say the least.

Paradise, Newfoundland, for example, is a town of 4,000 people, 10 minutes from St. John's. Only 20 per cent of Paradise is served with water and sewer. They would require about $8 million from government to provide full service. They are getting $50,000 right now.

Old pipelines avenge their neglect. A good example is Yellowknife where they put in a sewer system in 1940 made of corrugated metal lined with moss for insulation. It is still functioning in the 1990s. That is amazing. That goes to show that old things that were built are still the best. We plan now for obsolescence. Plumbers tell us that they have to make repairs now that never were necessary 20 years ago. The old sewer systems are still working but they are starting to fall apart. What they found was that this system looked not unlike a fish's skeleton. The total bill now to replace this skeleton in Yellowknife is $15 million, and the saga continues.

I want to give my hon. friend from Ottawa credit. He went out to St. John's and he found out some very startling information that all of us certainly do appreciate.

"No big fix, but Clark will talk", this is 1988, Mr. Speaker, so FCM was still optimistic at that time. Everybody again seems to agree that this begs tri-level involvement.

"Municipal services", the Finance Minister says, "are the business of the federal government", pardon me, they are "no business of the federal government". I almost came upon a quotation that even would have surprised me.

An hon. member: Time.

Mr. Butland: Mr. Speaker, I rely upon you for the time. I appreciate the Liberals are getting a little bit edgy. They may want to get on another task force and complete the cities that they did not get to the first time.

"Letter seen as signal Ottawa ready for urban renewal talks." That is a good one. Senator Murray said that. "We are almost ready for urban renewal talks." He said that in January, 1989. "Cities' evident needs cannot be ignored, Ottawa just needs some persuading." With what, I do not know.

It goes on: "Ottawa must commit cash to city repairs. This is a national problem, a question of economics and a quality of life. The ageing of infrastructure is a grave problem. It is illusory to think that Montreal could on its own successfully do the work." What are the problems in Montreal—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Pronovost): Questions and comments. The hon. member for Carleton—Gloucester.

• (1250)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Eugène Bellemare (Carleton—Gloucester): Mr. Speaker, I think the remarks of the hon. member for Sault Ste. Marie (Mr. Butland)— I suppose he pronounces it "Soo". In French, the homonym means something else entirely.

[*English*]

I would have liked to see the member for Sault Ste. Marie stick to the topic which was the motion of the Liberal Party:

> That this House call upon the government to recognize that Canada's municipal infrastructure is facing a crisis of national proportions and that, given the serious implications to the nation's environment, economic prosperity and quality of life for Canadians, the government resume its traditional role as a partner with the provincial and municipal governments—

Then he seems to want to take the Liberals to task for not being serious or honest about that attitude. Apparently, he did not read the Liberal platform in 1987–88 during the election period. He certainly did not bother to read it. I would like to give him a little lesson in history if he would listen and if he would listen *en français*. Coming from Sault Ste. Marie, I would suggest that perhaps he grab the—

Mr. Butland: Question of privilege, Mr. Speaker. I am from "so" Ste. Marie,—I apologize that my French is not up to the standard of my hon. colleague—but I do take exception. I think he is taking undue liberties with my personal privilege as a member. Also, he is taking undue knocks on my community. I apologize for my lack of French facility, but I would ask the hon. member to decline from continuing those kinds of comments.

Mr. Bellemare: Mr. Speaker, during certain debates on Canadian unity, I did not hear the hon member speak. I do not mind at all in what language he speaks, but I am very interested in his attitude. So far, to me, it has been negative. I will continue—

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, if he would listen to me, I would tell him—

[*English*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Pronovost): On a point of order, the hon. member for Mission—Coquitlam.

Ms. Langan: Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member who has been speaking should, first, be addressing his remarks to the Chair and not directly to the member. In addition, to suggest that somebody did or did not speak on something, I think the hon. member should check the record to see just what the position of this hon. member was on a very important issue. He would find that the hon. member took a very principled position.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Pronovost): The hon. member for Carleton—Gloucester (Mr. Bellemare) is trying to make a point, and I suggest we listen very carefully.

Mr. Bellemare: Mr. Speaker, I will continue my short history of Canada, if the hon. member would care to listen.

According to an article that appeared in *Le Devoir* on December 30, 1988, the Trudeau government, in 1980, suddenly terminated all direct assistance to municipalities, mainly because of a conflict with the provinces about the new Department of Urban Affairs. In 1983, a full-scale legal dispute developed between the Lévesque and Trudeau governments. At the time, Quebec even threatened to use Bill 38 to deal with municipalities that accepted assistance directly from Ottawa. At the time, the dispute was only about job creation programs. In 1987 and 1988, the Liberal caucus wanted to bring this issue up again, and it became part of the Liberal platform.

I want to congratulate the hon. member for Ottawa Centre (Mr. Harb) and the hon. member for Nepean (Mrs. Gaffney) for setting up the task force.

The hon. member for Sault Ste. Marie objected that he or his party did not have enough money to set up such a task force. I must tell him that the two members of Parliament and their colleagues spent their own money to travel across Canada, they used their own money to tour Canada. I advise him and suggest that he do the same.

I would like to ask him a question, still in reference to the article published in *Le Devoir* on December 30, 1988. I will first read a short passage to you and then ask you a

brief question. I am sure that the hon. member will fully agree with me. Here is the quote:

> Brian Mulroney proposed to the provinces that municipal infrastructures be on the agenda of the next federal-provincial conference on the economy.

This is still from the *Devoir* article of December 30, 1988:

> A $15-billion reconstruction plan has been waiting for the green light from Ottawa for three years. "I personally think that the maintenance and improvement of municipal infrastructures is very important," said Mr. Mulroney. This conference, which was to take place on November 28 and 29,—

1988,

> —in Calgary was postponed because of the general election.

So my question for the hon. member for Sault Ste. Marie, two years later and still no answer, is: Do you agree with me or not? Do you agree with me? Does the Prime Minister and leader of the Conservative Party keep his word or not?

[*English*]

Mr. Butland: Mr. Speaker, I apologize for my two Liberal colleagues on the task force. Perhaps I took a little liberty about the fact of spending money. I very much appreciate that they had to expend some of their own funds to participate in that task force. I certainly render complete apologies in that area.

As to the historical lesson on the Liberal Party and the legal wrangle, I think the hon. member for Carleton—Gloucester can also accept the fact that the funding from the government, at that time, had been gradually reducing and deteriorating as time progressed. I think history will bear that out.

Let me answer the question that my hon. colleague asks me. I was not aware of the Prime Minister's comments and I am only too glad to hear them. It simply goes along with a whole host of other ministers who have made several similar comments in 1985, 1986, 1987, 1988, and I understand even in early 1990. They are suggesting that they recognize the problem and they will listen. We know there is no action now and there has not been for five years, and we suspect there will not be any action forthcoming.

Hon. Alan Redway (Minister of State (Housing)): Mr. Speaker, I was most interested in the hon. member's comments with respect to co-operation among levels of government and I am one who certainly subscribes to that principle. As has been pointed out by our colleague from the Liberals, it is not always an easy matter to obtain co-operation through all levels of government, even if you have the best of intentions. There was, previously, as the hon. member will recall, a Minister of State for Urban Affairs in the federal government and because of difficulties with the provinces that position disappeared.

Over the last year I have been making some attempts in my own area of housing to create just such a situation where there is co-operation among the three levels of government. In fact, we have had a good deal of success with respect to that, dealing specifically with the issue of affordable housing. We have set up in a number of the major urban centres across the country tri-level committees made up of federal, provincial and municipal representatives to try to find ways to clear away the barriers and create housing that is affordable in this country.

• (1300)

It has not been possible in every one of the provinces and every one of the urban centres across this country, because there are differing points of view with respect to the provinces as to what role the federal government should be playing in respect to municipalities which they view as their creatures, as the hon. member knows this well.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Pronovost): The Chair has been very generous with that question and answer. The time has really over-expired.

I will allow a very short comment from the hon. member for Sault-Ste. Marie in reply.

Mr. Butland: Mr. Speaker, I would be very happy to try to answer the question, if there was a question.

Mr. Redway: I know there will be unanimous consent.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Pronovost): Is there unanimous consent to permit the hon. minister to put his question?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Redway: I thank you, Mr. Speaker, and my colleagues. The hon. member referred to a number of newspaper articles and clippings. I realize he is an avid reader and I would like to draw to his attention an article by Mr. Barry Nelson of the Calgary *Herald* of May 1,

1990, which he may not have read, and then I would like to have a comment from him on that. The article states:

> Every special interest group in the country is always screaming for more—higher wages, expanded services, new legislation, increased government grants and new government support for new worthy causes.
>
> All of this has a price tag, a fact that many opponents of the GST seem able to overlook. We've been living high on the hog for generations and the bill is due.

I wonder if the hon. member would like to comment on that.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Pronovost): A short reply from the hon. member for Sault Ste. Marie.

Mr. Butland: Mr. Speaker, I was anticipating a difficult question.

Mrs. Gaffney: Well, he knew you could not give an answer to it if it was a difficult question.

Mr. Butland: It has been a rough afternoon, Mr. Speaker. I have really roused the Liberals and that is probably very positive. It is time they were roused.

As to the minister's statement, he is right, I am an avid reader and this issue is very near and dear to me. I have tried to keep abreast of all recent articles.

[*Editor's Note: The fire alarm having sounded.*]

Madam Deputy Speaker: The sitting is suspended to the call of the Chair.

SITTING SUSPENDED

The sitting of the House was suspended at 1.04 p.m.

[*Translation*]

SITTING RESUMED

The House resumed at 1.53 p.m.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Proceedings were interrupted when the siren warned us that fire might have broken out in the building. Everything is now under control. Resuming debate. The hon. member for Nepean.

One moment, please. I see the hon. member for Sault Ste. Marie is seeking the floor.

[*English*]

Mr. Butland: I am wondering about House procedure when the alarm rings. I encouraged people to leave—and I can appreciate why perhaps people would not want to follow me—but I am wondering, is it not procedure to immediately disperse and dispense with House proceedings and leave the House?

Madam Deputy Speaker: As soon as I was advised, I suspended the sitting until the call of the Chair. Of course, everyone is expected to leave the building when we hear the siren. I went outside right away. I don't know if you did. If some members did not, they were not following the rules, and certainly not following the rules of safety. The hon. member for Nepean.

* * *

HOUSE OF COMMONS

TIME OF SITTING

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Madam Speaker, I apologize to the hon. member but I did not wish her speech to be interrupted mid-flight.

As you know we must have a motion before the House to deal with Monday's business. I think you will find consent for the following motion:

> That, notwithstanding any Standing Order, on Monday, May 28, 1990, the House meet at 2.00 o'clock p.m. for "Statements by Members", followed by "Oral Questions" and the remaining order of business as provided for Mondays.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Does the parliamentary secretary have leave to introduce the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is there unanimous consent to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to.

* * *

SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY, S. O. 81—MUNICIPAL INFRASTRUCTURE

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Harb.

Mrs. Beryl Gaffney (Nepean): Madam Speaker, I was beginning to wonder if I was ever going to be able to give

this speech. After you work on a speech late at night you begin to wonder if your speech really is a barn-burner.

I am very pleased to be able to speak on Canada's deteriorating infrastructure, and as co-chair of the Liberal task force that travelled across Canada in 1989, the critical state was very clearly brought home to me and my colleagues.

On many occasions since 1984 representations have been made to the federal government for the creation of a program to shore up Canada's deteriorating infrastructure. These proposals to date have been ignored by this government.

The facts remain, however, that without a major infusion of funds for the preservation and expansion of bridges, watermains, roads and sewers in Canada, both the productivity and safety of all Canadians will be jeopardized. A Canada-wide infrastructure program would create more jobs than the trade deal alone. It would help develop every region of the country rather than bail out corporations in select communities as this government has done.

PCBs, global warming, wildlife protection, acid rain, ozone depletion and toxic wastes are just a few of the words and catch phrases with which we Canadians are becoming all too familiar. Every day when I watch or read the news I become more and more concerned about living in a world in which the dangers posed by a deteriorating environment and the attendant economic health and social stresses are becoming very serious.

All Canadians want a bright future on this planet for their children, and in my case my grandchildren. To do this we must make global environmental security a cornerstone of Canada's policy.

Historically all three levels of government; municipal, provincial, and federal, have contributed to the costs of financing urban infrastructure. From 1938 to 1984 the federal government made funds available for infrastructure programs. Some of the programs included, from 1938 to 1949, the Municipal Improvement Assistance Act; 1961 to 1974, the Sewage Treatment Program; 1963 to 1966, Municipal Development and Loan Act; 1973 to 1979, the Neighbourhood Improvement Program; 1975 to 1978, the Municipal Infrastructure Program; and 1979 to 1980, the Community Services Contribution Program.

In those years the governments of Canada had been very committed to the infrastructure of this country. Today's federal government has refused to accept any share of the responsibility for infrastructure, leaving the municipal and provincial governments to struggle with this increasing financial burden.

The government argues that constitutionally they have no responsibility in the areas of infrastructure. It is, however, very important to note that the Constitution does not provide for federal involvement in health care, education or social services, yet they are involved as a major contributor in all these areas. Therefore, how can the federal government deny its responsibility for the environment, clean water, regional and national economic development?

The federal government is not only a badly needed funding partner but it is also in the best position to co-ordinate the establishment of national standards and goals.

The favourite statement coming from the government side of the House these days, and they seem to deliver this statement with great gusto and pleasure, is, "Where is the money going to come from?" Well, I have a few ideas of where it can come from. But in order to provide the minimum national standard of service, intergovernmental funding transfers are required. The federal government is in the best position to co-ordinate the establishment of national standards and goals, and the government often states that cities need only raise their water rates to pay for the rehabilitation of their infrastructure. This is certainly one method and it is certainly done by many municipalities across this country.

However, the water costs of some cities would amount to more than the property taxes in order to generate the revenues required. These are all in areas of the country where they can least afford it. Water rates are only one method. There is another method of user-pay that could be utilized in areas where there are severely neglected roads and bridges. These could be rehabilitated with fees from the users of the transportation system.

• (1400)

The federal government is currently levying heavy taxes on the users of gasoline and diesel fuel but channels none of these revenues into our road systems.

Three, investors will choose particular areas of Canada because of the quality of life and the services the area provides. Investment, in turn, creates jobs and increased assessment for the city, resulting in a flourishing economy.

Four, in depressed regions of Canada an infusion of regional development dollars reduces the UIC and welfare costs and puts people back to work. The old saying of "a dollar spent is a dollar earned" is borne out in this instance.

I would like to comment on a few of the cities or areas of Canada that we visited. In the Vancouver area witnesses stressed that the federal government must stop this ad hocery of repairing Canada's infrastructure. They cited examples of the $200 million spent on the Halifax harbour, which certainly will not clean up the Halifax harbour unless sewage treatment plants are in place. There is the example of the infusion of money along the St. Lawrence River which just happened to be at election time. They said this country is in economic chaos due to crisis mismanagement.

Those were the comments from the city of Vancouver. The pulp mills of British Columbia must be cleaned up and wood preservatives eliminated. Global warming is the number two issue in the world and is closely tied to poor infrastructure due to the regulations.

In Nova Scotia, sewage treatment plants are a rarity. People have to carry their drinking water. Open sewers running into ditches are commonplace.

The lack of services destroy the potential of essential growth. The rural areas of Nova Scotia we visited indicated they are always ignored in favour of big towns and cities such as Dartmouth or Halifax.

The Village of Little Narrows in Nova Scotia has never had potable water. The town of Dominion has a moratorium on development. They cannot meet requests for development due to an inadequate system.

Seven outlets in Cape Breton are pumping raw sewage parallel to one of the finest beaches on Cape Breton Island. Tourism is affected. Listening to witnesses speak about such desolation, one wonders whether we are we really talking about Canada or about a Third World country? But, it is surely Canada.

In Newfoundland they stress four points very strongly. There is a need for access to clean water by all Canadians. There is a need for adequate sewage treatment facilities. There is a need for safe roads and bridges, and there is a need for intergovernmental cost sharing.

As the Mayor of Conception Bay said: "An improved infrastructure would create a cleaner and safer environment, would strengthen the economy of the island of Newfoundland and would expand their standard of living".

We heard from the St. Lawrence Seaway cites of Cornwall and Kingston. Mayor Poirier of Cornwall said the responsibility for infrastructure and its deterioration is accelerating at a rate they can no longer afford.

Mayor Cooper of Kingston said the province of Ontario has ordered them to stop issuing building permits until they upgrade their facilities. Economic survival is the issue.

In northern Ontario, the Mayor of North Bay said it is time the federal government realized that this is not a local issue but a national issue.

All the cities and towns in northern Ontario stress the inadequacy of the Trans-Canada Highway. Truckers cannot compete with their American counterpart, travel time is longer, highway fuel consumption is higher. The young people of the north are moving south. The single-lane highway is alienating the north from the southern portion of Ontario. An adequate four-lane highway with same day delivery to Thunder Bay, Toronto or Detroit will make them far more competitive. In Thunder Bay, the cost of a secondary sewage treatment plant alone will bankrupt the city.

The water system in the nation's capital in the national capital region is a pay as you go system. Over the next 10 years, $10 billion must be spent and raised to cover capital dollars for sewage treatment and water expansion. Maybe people from outside this region will know that there are 10 municipalities that make up the Ottawa-Carleton region and that the city of Ottawa is one of them. In this city alone 18 overflows from the heritage sewers are going directly into the Ottawa River, not to mention the very sensitive nature of the Rideau River and its inherent problems.

I have only mentioned a few of the regions in the country, but everywhere the task force visited and in the regions that wrote, the story was abysmal. Only 10 per cent of all raw sewage east of Ontario is treated. Government members should listen to this: only 10 per cent of all raw sewage east of Ontario is treated. More than 8 million Canadians or one-third of the entire population of this country live in municipalities that do not provide sewage treatment. Water quality in Toronto is causing so much concern that some politicians are calling for a $200 million pipeline from Georgian Bay to serve the city.

The value of a water treatment and delivery system now totals a staggering $100 billion. The bill for the next five years for repairing aging, underground pipes alone has been estimated at $3 billion. No level of government in Canada is budgeting for rehabilitation programs of that magnitude.

Beyond speech making from the government side of this House, we have so far seen little federal commitment to the environment. Our rivers and our harbours are polluted from Halifax to Vancouver. Beaches are closed, summer after summer, because the federal government does not make sewer construction and repair a national priority. It is ironic that under the Great Lakes action plan the federal government has recently announced a $125 million fund for the restoration and preservation of this vital water system; this in addition to the almost $1 billion already spent by the government on the Great Lakes since 1972. Yet we are still pumping raw sewage into the Great Lakes system.

There is a cost of doing business. The transportation of goods and services is one important cost to business. Roads in poor condition increase costs, not only through increased use of fuel but through deterioration of vehicles and lost time. Poor roads and lack of waste disposal facilities also add to the costs of businesses, either through increased dump fees or increased costs to have their own waste hauled away. As governments at all levels start placing stricter environmental controls and ask business to bear the costs of its own pollution, business will be able to operate more efficiently in communities that have the infrastructure to handle and treat waste water.

Now that we know Canadians are the least energy efficient consumers in the world. Every possible method has to be used to improve our record through sustainable development. The cost of cleaning up our damaged rivers and lakes far exceeds the cost of treating sewage before it gets to these rivers and lakes. Polluters to date have remained unpunished, and the federal government has failed to prosecute a single polluter in Ontario during the past year. The failure to go after polluters has occurred, even though Ottawa has the Canadian Environmental Protection Act which carries a maximum penalty of $1 million.

No single action will be enough to ensure the future health and viability of Canada's infrastructure. A broad range of measures is necessary to make a meaningful difference. Specifically, these should include the following: a federal recognition of municipal infrastructure as a crisis of national proportions; a federal commitment to share the responsibility to rebuild infrastructure with its provincial and municipal counterparts; the establishment of minimum national standards for infrastructure to provide that environmental protection and uniform levels of service for all Canadians; a federal commitment to rehabilitate and expand the Trans-Canada Highway; the establishment of a process through which the federal government can clarify the respective roles of federal, provincial and municipal governments; identify and prioritize needs on a national scale; increase incentives for maintenance and reconstruction of existing capital assets and the use of low capital; explore alternative funding sources, including such options as more rational user fees for water services; applying fuel tax revenues to road construction and maintenance and increased private sector involvement; increase support for research and development to accelerate technological innovation; promote more efficient municipal management methods to permit phased programs of rehabilitation, better management of infrastructure systems, and more effective use of funds and to reduce waste and excess costs due to delays.

• (1410)

It has been a great privilege for me to travel across the country and talk to Canadians. I heard the desolate response and comments expressed to us in the Liberal task force on Canada's infrastructure.

I have always maintained that everyone in Canada has a right to a roof over their head, food on their table and the very basic amenities of life. Water is probably the

most important one, and sewage treatment is probably second.

How can we sit here in the Parliament of Canada when only 10 per cent of the people east of Ontario have adequate facilities? It is shameful and it is disgraceful. The member for Sault Ste. Marie criticized me, sitting on this side of the House, for being concerned about my fellow Canadians and am trying to do something about it. I would applaud him if he was doing the same. As Canadians, we have got to be aware of the inequities in our system and we must do something about it.

I have thrown the government several ideas on how this can be financed. It is high time we recognized the difference between expenditure and investment. This is an investment in Canada's people; it is an investment in our future, in our children, and in our grandchildren.

As I mentioned earlier, more jobs then under the free trade agreement will be created through this program. I see my colleague here in the House. What could be better for the town of Canso, Nova Scotia, where there was the closure of fish plants, than creating a regional development program in that area. It could put those same people, who have been laid off due to the closure of the fish plants, to work. The same situation exists in Newfoundland. It is not expending government funds because it will be paid back in spades. It will get paid back in jobs, through economic development and the cancellation of welfare and UIC.

It is high time that the government recognized that there are Canadians that are probably less fortunate than we in the House. We have a responsibility as legislators to ensure that Canadians are not living in a third-world type of environment.

Mr. John A. MacDougall (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Madam Speaker, in listening to the hon. member's comments, one would almost think that all the devastation that she portrays has happened since 1984.

As someone involved in municipal politics for a number of years before being elected to the House—and I know that she has served for a period of time on municipal council as well—I find it regrettable that she does not realize that municipalities have a great responsibility in budgeting their money and in being able to put funds aside for upgrading and for water and sewer projects.

The community I came from made certain each year we had the opportunity to advance that responsibility for better drinking water and sewer projects. But politicians at the municipal level do not like that because it is under the ground. They would sooner be putting tennis courts and arenas in, things above the ground, because that gets them re-elected.

We should be dealing with realities and I wish the hon. member would start to deal with reality. The reality is that we started in 1984 as a government and the programs were discontinued by her government back in 1980. She said that 10 per cent of eastern Canada is without sufficient water and sewage. It is very regrettable when she tries to blame this Party and this government for those problems.

I say to the hon. member that she should get her facts straight and remember history. That party was in power for 20 years under great economic times. If she goes back in history, she will see the number of infrastructures put in place in industrial parks that are sitting today with not a thing in them and where federal dollars were spent.

How can she say to the House in all sincerity that the infrastructure problems are a federal issue when she knows quite clearly it belongs to the provinces and the municipalities? I really want to know why she thinks it should be the federal government's responsibility when the responsibility lies with the provinces and municipalities.

Mrs. Gaffney: Madam Speaker, the member's statement sounds very simplistic, but it is not that simple.

The programs were in place all of the years that I mentioned. Canada was gradually trying to get out of the trap the municipalities were in. They were making headway. The program has been cancelled since 1982. Does that mean to say that because the program was cancelled by a Liberal government in 1982, it is no reason why I, as a Liberal, would not want to reinstate the program? Come on now.

The member probably comes from a municipality, such as I do, where municipal sewers are up to date. We have arenas, we have everything, because my municipality is well off and his is probably well off, too. But there are eastern municipalities that could not even pay the

one-third share. When we said to them, if the federal government pays one-third and the province one-third, can you pay your one-third? They could not pay it.

Travel around the country a little bit and see what is there. Open your eyes. Open your eyes and see what is out there.

An hon. member: Why could they not pay it?

Mrs. Gaffney: They cannot because they do not have job creation, the tax base and the wealth in their municipalities that you and I have.

I find the comment of the member absolutely unconscionable. There is a serious, serious problem in this country. Is the hon. member serious about the environment in this country? For instance, if a city or a town 50 miles down the river is dumping raw sewage into the river, why is that the problem of the municipality 50 miles upriver? It is not, it is a much bigger problem than that. It is a provincial and federal problem.

I fail to understand the insensitivity of the member opposite. I find that regrettable. I am sure the people across the country will find that a very insensitive comment.

Mr. Rob Nicholson (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to participate in this debate. I got quite excited about getting involved with this when I heard what we would be discussing this afternoon.

We are discussing a motion by a member of the Liberal party that asks the federal government to recognize the crisis that exists in municipal infrastructure. The motion indicates that the problem is serious and affects the nation's environment, economic prosperity and quality of life for Canadians.

Everyone is for quality of life and prosperity of Canadians. When it comes to municipal infrastructure, most of us agree with all the different components that go into making a healthy municipal infrastructure; that bridges are a good thing in municipalities, that water mains are a good idea. We all want good sewage treatment facilities and good local transportation. We all want street lights that work on every street in our community. We all agree with these things, and I would not want anyone to misinterpret any of my future comments on the subject. I agree. I want to see good lights on the street where I live, I want to see good sewage treatment, good water mains, garbage pick-up. I want all those things.

• (1420)

What we are really talking about here and what this motion addresses is really the subject of money and who should pay it. It was made very clear by the Liberal party and the New Democratic speakers today that a great chunk of that must come from the federal government, not just the billions of dollars that we transfer now and put into areas that are of benefit to the municipalities, not just what we are doing now, but far more.

One member thundered "the fair share of the federal government." A recent speaker said "the one-third traditional share the federal government pays for areas"—areas which I might add are within municipal and provincial jurisdiction, not federal jurisdiction, exclusively within the jurisdiction of the provinces and the municipalities.

The members of the Liberal party and the NDP thunder "The federal government must pay its fair share, the federal government must pay one-third of these things."

Madam Speaker, I think you and I both know what would happen if a resolution or bill was introduced by the federal government asking the municipalities and the provincial government to pick up a third of federal programs. I think you know the answer to that one. The NDP would scream: "We will bring Parliament to its knees. How dare the federal government suggest that anything in the federal area would be paid for by the provincial and municipal governments." I can see them nodding their heads in agreement. They would fight that to the very end. That would be a terrible thing.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Victoria.

Mr. Brewin: Madam Speaker, I think it is not fair ball for the member to describe actions on this side of the House which in fact are not happening and that are entirely misleading to the people in this country. It is not fair ball to do that and I ask you to call the member to order and to make it clear that is not happening.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I am sure the hon. member for Niagara Falls will want to make some changes to what he said. I am sure the hon. member for Victoria did not mean that the hon. member was deliberately misleading the House. Let us go on with debate, taking this for granted.

Mr. Nicholson: Thank you, Madam Speaker. To be fair to the hon. member, I would be very pleased to know how they would feel about the sharing of all services across the country, and particularly my hypothetical suggestion as to what the reaction of the New Democratic Party would be if we suggested that to the municipalities and provinces. If I am mistaken and they might welcome something like that, I would be very pleased to hear it. I know that the debate will go on for a little bit longer and I would be very pleased if they would address that question.

One of the things in the speeches of the Liberals and the NDP is that there is no mention of the national debt. There is unanimity that the federal government should be spending more money in the areas of municipal jurisdiction. That is unanimous on the other side, but there is no suggestion about the problems of debt. Particularly silent on this of course are the members of the Liberal party because they were the ones who engineered, orchestrated and made up the debt that we are experiencing today.

The hon. member from Hamilton knows that. He knows that when we came to office in 1984 the debt was over $200 billion. He knows that the interest on that puts it well over $300 billion. There is no discussion from the Liberal party as to the national debt in this or in any other forum. The one thing they are very sure of is that they want to spend more money. Well, that is certainly in order from their past performances in this area.

At the same time you do not hear that there is any problem with the national debt, they are unanimous on the subject of tax increases.

On many occasions I heard members of the NDP talk to Parliament about 31 increases in taxes since the Tories came to power. The Liberals have said the same thing. Presumably, they are against those tax increases. They talk about them all the time. They disagree with the number of tax increases.

I always point out that five of those are in the area of increases in the tax on tobacco. Surely that has something to do with the quality of life, but I take the NDP at their word. If they are against all tax changes that the Tories have made in the last six years, I accept that. I disagree with it, because again, it is not coming to reality. It is not coming to grips with the problems that this country is suffering.

What we are talking about here is a question of philosophy. In all these areas, the members of the opposition are not satisfied that anybody else is doing anything or that anybody can be responsible for anything else except the federal government. If it is municipal services, the federal government should pay more. If it is within provincial jurisdiction, the federal government should pay more.

On many occasions, I and other members have pointed out that these are areas within exclusive provincial jurisdiction. They say: "Show leadership. Set national standards. You get in. You take over the area." If it is in the private sector, they say the same thing. It is not good enough to have the private sector ever look after anything, because the federal government should be laying down the law, setting the standards. Above all and most important, it should pay.

As an example, yesterday, I was very pleased during the debate to hear a fine expression of NDP philosophy when it comes to paying. The subject was pre-marital counselling. I challenge an hon member of the NDP to look it up on page 11815 of *Hansard*. Here is what he asked Parliament. You may remember this, Madam Speaker.

> Do we do any pre-marital counselling in the country? Not a whit.

No, there is no chance. On the next page he goes on to say that the state at least can make, among other things, pre-marital counselling available. That is the problem. The state is not paying for it.

It was pointed out to the hon. member that there are many voluntary agencies involved with pre-marital counselling. When it is pointed out to the hon. member or the members of the NDP that the churches and other groups in this country are very involved with pre-marital counselling, it does not count at all. The hon. member says: "Not a whit." It does not exist if the federal government, the state, is not paying for it.

That is the philosophy of the members of the New Democratic Party when it comes to anything in the private sector. It is the same as we see in the debate today when it comes to areas within exclusive federal and provincial jurisdiction.

One good example of this is the subject of day care, an area within exclusive provincial jurisdiction and one into which the federal government, quite rightly, pours hundreds of billions of dollars through the Canada Assistance Program. We provide tax benefits through the Income Tax Act to help middle income Canadians afford day care. But it is not enough for the members of the New Democratic Party.

I was sitting with the hon. member for Erie on a child care task force a couple of years ago, and he started listening to all the different ideas that the NDP had in the area of provincial jurisdiction. He said to me: "I think what the NDP is proposing is going to cost about $20 billion." He said: "The NDP must have a real big bank account to pay for all of this." Except for the part that I know they do not like banks, I knew the point he was trying to make, that it is not good enough that the federal government contribute as it is doing. It is never enough if it is in an area of provincial jurisdiction.

I challenged a group of students on one of the things in this area. I had the pleasure to be at Governor Simcoe High School in St. Catharines a couple of weeks ago discussing the subject of the GST. There were the usual groups who are against the GST. They are fighting the GST. Of course, they were very weak I thought in the areas as to what we would come up with for alternatives, or how we would balance the budget.

I threw out a challenge to the students of that school. I said: "I have sat in Parliament for six years." I challenged the members of that high school and I challenge the members of this House: Pick up *Hansard* from any day within the last six years and come up with one day that the NDP has not been suggesting that we spend more money that we do not have in some other area. What day did they not want to spend more of the government's money? That is the challenge I issued to them.

• (1430)

I ask the hon. member to find me a *Hansard* of the last six years where the NDP was not advocating that we spend more money on top of the national debt that exists. The NDP and Liberal philosophy is just more, more and more.

The NDP, quite apart from their enthusiastic support of this Liberal motion for increased municipal infrastructure costs, has asked in the last few months for more money for the Post Office to abolish supermailboxes. They want a youth initiative program for $1.5 billion. They want the federal government to start spending more money on UIC. They want to increase foreign aid, increase the child tax credits, increase the spousal allowances, more money to CBC, and more money on social housing.

I was just talking with the Minister of State for Housing. We put $1.8 billion into housing. Of course, if you sit in the opposition, money is no problem. It is never enough. It should be doubled and quadrupled. Ten billion dollars is not enough for day care, it should be $20 billion for day care.

Our friends in the Liberal party are not far behind. They want more for all the things the NDP want, plus agriculture, post-secondary education, housing, spousal allowances, research and development, and on and on in a country that has a $350 billion debt, and at a time when the government is honestly, with the taxpayers' money, trying to come to grips with this problem.

You heard what was described as a lover's quarrel here recently, Madam Speaker, as to whether the Liberals used to pay for municipal infrastructure. On this debate on that particular quarrel, I want to tell you that I side with the Liberals.

Madam Deputy Speaker: A point of order, the hon. member for Okanagan—Shuswap.

Mr. MacWilliam: Madam Speaker, the motion in front of us states: "That this House call upon the government to recognize that Canada's municipal infrastructure is facing a crisis of national proportions—"

I am afraid it is an over-extension of the imagination to even conceive that the member opposite is making any rational sense with respect to the motion before us. I think, clearly—

Madam Deputy Speaker: I am sure there will be a full moon tonight, even if it is not the right time of the month. We should not be that strict about the rule of relevancy. I am sure the hon. member for Niagara Falls

was just about to come back and bring it closer to the motion at hand. The hon. member.

Mr. Nicholson: The Minister of State for Housing says my remarks were right on. If it is $1.9 billion we spent on housing, then I stand corrected.

This motion is talking about spending the federal government's money and that is what I have addressed all my comments to.

I want to specifically make comments on the lover's quarrel that took place before lunch between the Liberals and the NDP. The NDP made accusations to the Liberals that they were cutting back spending money on municipal infrastructure when they were in power and the members of the Liberal party took exception to that.

I was just about to say, before I was interrupted, that that is one area where I actually agree with the Liberals. I know of no area in Canadian society where the Liberals did not spend all kinds of money—not money we had, mind you, but all kinds of money. I do not think there is any area the NDP could mention that there were not federal Liberal dollars going into before 1984.

There is one point I want to make about that spending and it is on the subject of municipal infrastructure. In my riding of Niagara Falls, I am very pleased to have a secondary water pollution control plant. The announcement for that and the commitment of the federal government was made by the previous government prior to 1984. Out of $12 million, I believe that the federal commitment was $4 million. The government changed in 1984 and the commitment, of course, remained. I was very pleased to go to the opening of this plant.

One municipal politician said to me that it was the Liberals who promised us the money for this. I said that that was true, but that it would be the Conservative Minister of Finance who will figure out where the money is coming from. What do you get more credit for? The Liberals were using the national credit card for all those years, and it was smoking in those months before 1984. A lot of credit has to go the the Minister of Finance. It is his job to pay for those municipal infrastructures that were promised by the previous government. He is the one who is going to have to figure it out. He is doing a marvellous job. All Canadians should applaud that.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Nicholson: Madam Speaker, I see that my time is just about over.

Some hon. members: More, more.

Mr. Nicholson: Thank you. If I have the unanimous consent of the House to continue, I would certainly be pleased to do so.

The government took office in 1984, as you will remember, Madam Speaker. The Minister of Labour indicated to the House this morning that at that time there was a $16 billion operating deficit left over. Of course that is as a result of those spending practices I made mention of a minute ago.

The great thing about the finances of this country, and this was mentioned in the *The Economic Prosperity of Canada*, obviously a pretty important component of that is the government's ability to turn that operating deficit around into an operating surplus. If it had not been for that deficit that we inherited in 1984, we would have more money for all those wonderful projects that we have heard about every single day for the last six years coming from the opposition. We would have had more money for them, if we had not overspent in the 1970s and the early 1980s.

Mr. Milliken: You've doubled it since with your incompetence.

Mr. Nicholson: All of us want all the good things in life. We all want everything from better pensions, more social services to better street lights. It is always just a question, in my opinion, of who should pay for them.

Madam Speaker, you have heard the member who introduced the motion. He is from Ontario, as I am. The situation in Ontario is that Queen's Park runs at a surplus. For the last two budgets it has run at a surplus. They make money down at Queen's Parks. All municipalities in Ontario, in his province, are required not to operate at a deficit.

There is a situation of areas within exclusive municipal and provincial jurisdiction where the decision has been made. Members of the NDP know that municipalities have to operate on a break-even basis. The member who introduced the motion knows that his own province is running at a surplus now. He has decided: "No. The best one to pay for municipal and provincial services is, of

course, the federal government". It is $350 billion in debt".

The member for Carleton—Gloucester had a rallying cry. He said: "There are 60 former municipal politicians in this House. They should all get behind this thing". I can tell the members opposite that when you come to the House of Commons you are not here to be lobbying on behalf of municipal councils. You are here for the best interests of all Canadians.

Members of the opposition say: "Do not raise taxes. Do not make cuts. Spend a lot more. The deficit is your problem". That is not a recipe that I think Canadians are going to buy. I do not think it is ultimately going to sell. I think, ultimately, that is why the Progressive Conservatives are on this side of the House and they have for many years now been on that side of the House.

Madam Deputy Speaker: On question or comments, the hon. member for Victoria.

Mr. John Brewin (Victoria): Madam Speaker, while the member was going on we had a vote among members on this side of the House. We decided we would award the member the prize for the best high school debater in this debate so far.

He has waxed enthusiastic, but he has missed the fundamental point, which is that there has been a long tradition in this country of federal government leadership when national programs are necessary.

Even his own government has provided funds for sewage treatment in Halifax and Quebec City, for example. It has provided funds for municipal infrastructure, but on an *ad hoc* basis so that it can dole it out at the time of election campaigns.

What is important about the proposal of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities is that there be a planned national campaign in partnership with all levels of government which recognizes the responsibilities of all levels of government, not just for municipal services, but for the rivers, lakes and oceans into which sewage is flowing because of the antiquated system we have in this country.

This debate and the speech of the hon. member gives me an opportunity to bring to the attention of the House the situation in my own area in greater Victoria. Over 100 years of growth in the area has been accompanied by a failure to keep up with the disposal of waste that grows in industrial areas.

• (1440)

In this sense we are in common in keeping with so many other municipalities. We have sewage disposal facilities, but they were developed 20 and 30 years ago, and in some cases much longer ago than that. It was an age when we were far less conscious of the requirements to keep a clean environment and not to make the environment any worse for what we have taken from it.

Clearly, what has been identified now in our community is a requirement that we stop pumping raw sewage into the ocean. It is an ocean which, I may say, comes under federal jurisdiction. The federal government clearly has a responsibility in this area, as it recognized in the case of Halifax where it put up $100 million to clean up Halifax harbour. If it can do that for Halifax and Quebec City, then it can do it for Victoria and for other communities across the country.

I am surprised in fact now to hear the government speaking against it. When the Prime Minister came into our area during the last election campaign he was not against it. Conservatives in our area who ran—unfortunately for them a losing cause, but they still ran and put up a good fight—committed the Conservative Party and for those who vote for it to a federal-provincial-municipal infrastructure campaign.

I fail to understand how those who are close to the government are here speaking against this motion.

The capital regional district did a study recently.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member was recognized on a question or a comment, not on debate.

Mr. Brewin: I will conclude my comments then, Madam Speaker, very quickly.

We have this important report which outlines the problem in our area. I would call on the government to pay attention to it and to see it as a good example of why a federal contribution in this area is so essential.

Mr. Nicholson: Madam Speaker, the hon. member mentioned the Halifax harbour clean-up, as well as that of the St. Lawrence. I can mention to him as well money going into the Niagara area and the Great Lakes area as well—in fact into all areas of pollution.

I agree with the hon. member on this. The problems of pollution are not within any particular level of government's exclusive jurisdiction. It is all our responsibility.

One member of the Liberal party even commended the government for spending money in Halifax and some other of these areas. I guess that is the point.

The federal government is involved. We transfer billions of dollars to the provincial governments. We have many joint projects, everything from the environment to agriculture. I mentioned the Minister of State for Housing, who is to my right, who committed $1.8 billion a year to housing, these are substantial sums of money.

One of the things that the members of the New Democratic Party never seem to realize is that all of them are great ideas—all of them. It is always just a question of how much money and how quickly we can put money into these worth-while projects.

As I say, I am quite sure that for members of the NDP $1.8 billion is not enough for housing. I am sure $3.6 billion, $7.4 and $14 billion is not half enough for the members of the NDP. But the responsibility of the Minister of Finance is to balance the very legitimate concerns of all Canadians and all areas, and at the same time try to ensure that the Government of Canada does not end up bankrupt trying to do it.

Mr. Lyle Dean MacWilliam (Okanagan—Shuswap): Madam Speaker, the member has discussed the role of federal involvement in what may be interpreted as being both municipal and provincial matters. He has reflected upon the fact that in many cases, as it may be perceived, the federal government may in fact be overstepping its jurisdiction. That might actually be the case, if it were a matter that the federal government came in against the wishes of the provinces or the municipalities. The member knows full well that both municipalities and provinces throughout Canada had been requesting strong federal initiatives in terms of the assistance required in developing municipal infrastructure, particularly in the areas of waste management and water management. I want to point out to the member that his own government has, in fact, recognized the need for this type of initiative.

I remind him of the federal government's water policy which was tabled in 1987. It states that "the federal government intends to work with the provinces and territories to encourage the provision of safe and sufficient water supplies for Canadians". That is a quote right out of the federal water policy. It goes on to state that the over-all goal of the federal water policy is to "encourage the use of freshwater in an efficient and equitable manner, consistent with social, cultural and environmental needs". It then identifies two major objectives to achieve that goal: To protect and enhance the quality of the water resource, both in supply and disposal; and, to promote the wise and efficient use of water.

This is a stated initiative in the federal water policy of the government to get involved at the regional and provincial levels with assistance for such programs as water supply and waste management.

It is beyond me to sit and listen to the arguments presented by the member on the government side that this is not a federal responsibility when in fact this very same government has made those initiatives and committed itself, I might add, to do such.

I will extend the argument one more step. Although that has been stated in the federal water policy document, I might provide further evidence for the benefit of the member that that document continues to be a vacuous philosophical tool. It can be used by this government but has no legislation to back it up.

We on this side of the House say that it is time the government put its money where its mouth is. It has made that commitment to the provinces and to the regions within those provinces to get involved in the problems of water management, water supply and waste disposal. It is right there in the document. The member must recognize that.

The government has to recognize that, if it wants to maintain the quality of life that Canadians are used to throughout the country, it has to take the bull by the horns. It has to get involved in these kinds of initiatives that will maintain the environmental quality, not only of our oceans, but of our lakes and inland waters which are also being affected by waste and untreated sewage.

Madam Deputy Speaker: On a short comment, the hon. member for Niagara Falls.

Mr. Rob Nicholson (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Madam Speaker, the member was quoting from some document. He must have forgotten about the part where the

Government of Canada has and is spending hundreds of millions of dollars specifically in this area.

I told you, Madam Speaker, that the $4 million that went into the secondary water pollution control plant in Niagara Falls was for clean water. This is to help in the area. The millions of dollars that we are spending in the Great Lakes is for clean water. The money that is being spent in Halifax is for clean water. We are doing those things. We have done them in the past.

We are even trying to pay for the ones that were done before 1984, the ones that were all on the credit card. We will pay for those and we will pay for the ones that we are doing at the present time, as well as those we will do in the future.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I must interrupt the hon. member. The time for questions and comments has now expired.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Marc Assad (Gatineau—La Lièvre): Madam Speaker, the opposition motion now under consideration reads as follows:

> That this House call upon the government to recognize that Canada's municipal infrastructure is facing a crisis of national proportions and that, given the serious implications to the nation's environment, economic prosperity and quality of life for Canadians, the government resume its traditional role as a partner with the provincial and municipal governments to address this national crisis.

I would suggest that any Canadian familiar with the municipal infrastructure issue will agree with this motion.

First, Madam Speaker, I want to congratulate two of my colleagues who created and worked with this task force, the hon. member for Nepean (Mrs. Gaffney) and the hon. member for Ottawa Centre (Mr. Harb).

• (1450)

Naturally each of us in his or her respective region was glad to co-operate and work with municipal councils to examine infrastructures, budgets, and improvements to be undertaken. The mayors and municipal councillors in my riding of Gatineau—La Lièvre were invited to attend and, much to my surprise, the most pressing issue was the funding required to make improvements or, at the very least, upgrade of the municipal infrastructure to acceptable levels. This makes you think, of course. But when we consider the amounts required for one Canadian region alone it soon becomes patently clear that there has been a lot of negligence over the years, no matter which government was in office at the time. It is so obvious that I had to reflect upon the matter.

Four or five years ago, as I was reading letters to the editor in the well-known *New York Times*, I spotted an article by a professor of the highly respected Columbia University who had made an exhaustive study throughout the United States—their situation can be compared to ours, I would think—and concluded that the American municipal infrastructure situation was alarming. Not worrisome, alarming! Roadways, bridges and municipal infrastructures generally were in an unbelieveble state of disrepair, and this was four or five years ago. They say the bill to upgrade infrastructures would amount to something like $500 billion, if you can imagine! This gives you an idea of what needs to be done to bring municipal infrastructures up to more satisfactory levels. Nor can we ignore the fact that there has been negligence.

I remember that spokesmen for the Union des municipalités du Québec came to Ottawa to meet members of the various caucuses. The former mayor of Quebec City was there, as were representatives of the City of Montreal, Sherbrooke and other localities. They gave us a rundown on the situation in their respective municipalities, and indeed there is cause for great concern. From all this we can only conclude that the municipal infrastructure upgrading process is a major undertaking.

[*English*]

I just want to bring out one point. This should be an ongoing operation. Programs should not arrive on the eve of an election. It should be an ongoing process.

I am convinced, when the whole infrastructure deteriorates to the point it is getting to now, that it even has adverse effects on the fabric of our society. I do not think that is an exaggeration. It is a fact.

It is remarkable to think that a country such as Canada has 25 per cent of all the fresh water in the world and the Province of Quebec has 15 per cent of all the fresh water in the world. Yet we are beginning to see problems concerning the supply of fresh water. Can one imagine what is going on in the rest of the world? How did we get to this point?

We must say that the way in which we have handled waste management and sewage treatment has compounded our problems. Therefore, when it comes to municipal infrastructure, regardless of the government, the federal government, which obviously has the resources, along with the provincial and municipal governments, should form a team. We should not say that the provincial government will have precedence over the federal government or vice versa. It is a joint effort, and it is extremely important. I am sure that Canadians from coast to coast are concerned about it.

I do not think it is a surprise to say that the environment and the infrastructure go hand in hand.

We have seen this neglect over the years. We are coming to the point where we are going to have to reconsider how we have handled the whole situation of municipal infrastructure.

It can be said that, if it gets to this point of deterioration, then it practically comes under peace, order, and good government. It is such an essential element for all our municipalities and towns that we cannot let it become the whim of political parties. They cannot say, on the eve of elections, that they are going to invest *x* number of billions of dollars.

[*Translation*]

Madam Speaker, I remember the early 1970s when I had the pleasure to represent the riding of Papineau in the National Assembly. It was a time of great prosperity. We had funds at our disposal. I remember that they were good years in that regard and we ended each year without a deficit, even for current expenditures. At that time, we invested in municipal infrastructure, but maybe not enough. I remember the sewers, viaducts, aqueducts and so on. If a good part of this country's deficit had been for our municipal infrastructure, it would be much easier for us to take.

There has been neglect and we have come to a point where it is essential for all levels of government to join together. We must look into this issue because, as I said, it affects the very structure of our society. It is extremely important for it to be an ongoing process of making sure that municipal infrastructure throughout Canada will never again be neglected. Every municipality must have a continuing stock of municipal infrastructure not only for the security of our fellow citizens but for a healthy environment, which definitely affects our human behaviour.

There is nothing magic about that, except that it is always a matter of having the necessary political will. People expect us to take such initiatives. It will obviously be very expensive but there are choices to be made and this one is a priority in a modern society like ours which needs the technology.

In closing, Madam Speaker, I hope this motion will encourage every political party in this House to develop a policy on the municipal infrastructure issue, not to buy votes but to assess with objectivity the situation across the country and make a commitment not to let it deteriorate as it has done in the past 20 years.

[*English*]

Mr. Lyle Dean MacWilliam (Okanagan—Shuswap): Madam Speaker, I listened to my Liberal colleague and I think that a lot of his arguments are most pertinent.

I think he would agree with my comments that, in large measure, the government has been preoccupied with the big ticket items that have been facing the country: free trade; the GST; and, now, trying to put spit and polish on its Constitution, wringing its hands over the situation with the Meech Lake Accord. Meanwhile, while we are looking at these big ticket items, it is the nuts and bolts that have continued to rust, the very problems that face our many municipalities in Canada. I think the member would also agree that the government has been pleading poverty, faced with a terrible, burdensome debt.

Yet, the member knows as well as any member in the House that during the last election this same government promised the taxpayers of Canada some $20 billion in election goodies. That is what the price-tag was, $20 billion. Read my lips.

After the election, we are suddenly faced with a terrible debt. But during the election, the Minister of Finance never even recognized that there was a debt problem.

I want to ask the member—

Madam Deputy Speaker: Unfortunately, the hon. member will not have time to ask his question and the hon. member will not have time to answer the question.

[*Translation*]

It being three o'clock, it is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 81(17), to inform the House that proceedings on the motion have now expired.

This House stands adjourned until Monday at 2 p.m., pursuant to the order made earlier today.

The House adjourned at 3 p.m.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, May 28, 1990

The House met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

[*English*]

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S. O. 31

KASHMIR

Mr. Derek Lee (Scarborough—Rouge River): Mr. Speaker, recent days have seen a significant build-up in the number of troops and military equipment installed along the India-Pakistan border. There have been two wars in this region since 1947. Neither war has solved the political conflicts there, and fear is growing that the current situation may deteriorate into a new arms conflict.

We call upon the Government of Canada through External Affairs to communicate in forceful terms to New Delhi and Islamabad its view that assertions of political interest by national and state authorities be made only by peaceful and non-violent means.

Government initiatives to maintain order in and near Jammu and Kashmir must also be undertaken in a manner that ensures respect for human rights, international law and the goals of the UN Charter.

Mr. Speaker, all the world has an interest in a continued peace in this region.

* * *

CRIPPLED CHILDREN

Mr. John E. Cole (York—Simcoe): Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this time to relate a good-time story in this House. Fourteen years ago the Persechini run-walkathon started in Newmarket with about a dozen participants to raise funds for crippled children.

With Joe Persechini as the driving force, and Whipper Watson as the chairman, they have over the years raised more than $500,000.

Yesterday's event, dedicated to the Whipper, required more than 200 volunteers to organize, involved more than 2,200 participants completing the 10 kilometre run, and raised an additional $80,000 for crippled children.

Today, everyone involved, families with children in strollers, teens and seniors, may be a little tired and a little sore but they all deserve a special thanks for their dedication and effort.

Congratulations to Joe, Dave, Pam and everyone involved for a job well done on behalf of crippled children.

* * *

ARMENIA

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona): Mr. Speaker, today is the day when all people of good will should join with Armenians around the world in marking the tragic circumstances which have beset Armenian history, from the time of the genocide, to Azeri persecution, to the earthquake, right down to the events of the recent days where Armenians have been victimized by Soviet troops. On this anniversary of the establishment of the Independent Republic of Armenia, I call on President Gorbachev to find a way to respect and enhance the Armenian peoples of the Soviet Union, including those of Nagorno-Karabakh, who are separated from their community and should be able to rejoin it if they wish.

As difficult as it might be, *glasnost* and *perestroika*, whenever possible, should include the righting of old wrongs and historical injustices. The people of Armenia are justly aggrieved by the fate history has handed out to them so far. All necessary measures should be taken to lift the current blockage of Nagorno-Karabakh, Soviet troops now inside Nagorno-Karabakh should be stationed on its borders, all imprisoned leaders of the community should be freed, and the legislative and executive bodies of the region should be reinstated.

S. O. 31

[*Translation*]

TRANSPORT

Mr. Guy Saint-Julien (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, Thursday evening and all day Saturday I was in Louvicourt where I met representatives of the independent truckers of Abitibi—Témiscamingue: Rémi Veillette, from Amos; Michel Roy, from Val d'Or; Raymond Landry, from Taschereau; and the truckers themselves.

I was told about their demands, which mainly concern illegal cabotage; increasing cost per mile; the attitude of the sawmills who should consider local truckers first before hiring foreign truckers; excessively high logbook fines; and better monitoring of trucks at the border and on highways.

They also want the provincial government to set up a task force immediately to ensure their demands are taken seriously.

Saturday morning, after talks with the representatives and for the sake of the people and workers of Abitibi, the truckers decided to lift the Louvicourt roadblock.

Mr. Speaker, I think everyone should realize what an important role the trucking industry plays in our economy.

* * *

• (1410)

[*English*]

RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Mrs. Christine Stewart (Northumberland): Mr. Speaker, it is with pleasure we acknowledge the presence in Canada of UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar and of our government taking this opportunity to sign the Convention on the Rights of the Child. However, despite the fact that Canada signed the convention today, we have yet to ratify this important document.

In September, Canada will be co-hosting the World Summit for Children, the first summit ever to focus exclusively on children. The need is urgent. In the decade ahead, more than one 100 million children will die from common illnesses which can be inexpensively treated or prevented. As well, here at home, we have over 1 million children living in poverty, the second highest rate of child poverty in the western world. With this record, ratification of the convention must occur quickly.

The World Summit for Children will highlight the Convention on the Rights of the Child, a standard by which all civilized nations will be judged. Canada must set the example at the summit. But how will Canada convince other nations to ratify a document that we are not prepared to ratify ourselves? Our children and the children around the world cannot wait. Our future depends on how we provide for our children today.

* * *

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Ken James (Sarnia—Lambton): Mr. Speaker, we have made noticeable progress in restraining government spending. In fact, expenditure restraint has accounted for some 70 per cent of our deficit reduction efforts.

However, in tough economic times, we cannot afford to become complacent. We must continue our commitment to fiscal responsibility and good management.

I believe that the list of management initiatives announced December 15 by the President of the Treasury Board were steps in the right direction.

For example, one initiative called for an immediate 20 per cent reduction in the number of international trips made by the public sector.

Yet, I wonder whether we might go a little further and take an extra step. Might the government now consider extending a restriction to international travel expenses, not simply to the frequency of these trips?

It is my feeling that a proposal of this nature would demonstrate to all Canadians that good management and spending restraint continue to be top priorities of this government.

* * *

ROMANIA

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, last week, I returned from a visit to Romania as a member of a parliamentary delegation observing the first real election in that country in over 40 years

following the December revolution overthrowing the brutal dictator, Nicolai Ceausescu.

While there, my colleague from Winnipeg North Centre and I visited the Cernavoda nuclear reactor site where AECL has, since the early 1980s, been overseeing construction of two Candu reactors. It is clear that this project has involved the use of forced labour in appalling living conditions and a dangerous neglect of basic construction standards, including wells and concrete quality.

Neither AECL nor the Department of External Affairs took any effective steps to address these critical concerns. Now, the Romanian government is asking for more EDC funding. No funds should be advanced until there has been a full, independent assessment of the project which gives it a clean bill of health from the perspective of working conditions, as well as safety.

There must be a thorough parliamentary inquiry to determine what role AECL and the Department of External Affairs have played in turning a blind eye to this disastrous project as long as Ceausescu paid the bills each and every month.

* * *

[*Translation*]

MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Mr. Maurice Tremblay (Lotbinière): Mr. Speaker, as usual, this weekend I met a number of constituents in my riding, the riding of Lotbinière. They said they were concerned about the failure of some provincial Premiers to understand that Quebecers already negotiated the Accord and made all possible concessions to reach an agreement in 1987.

My constituents also praised the wonderful job being done by our Prime Minister and wished him every success in his meetings with his provincial counterparts so that the Constitutional Accord can be ratified by June 23.

However, Mr. Speaker, we want to appeal to the premiers who have yet to give their support to honour the signatures of their predecessors and thus accept Quebec as part of the Canadian constitutional family.

[*English*]

MYANMAR

Mr. Jesse Flis (Parkdale—High Park): Mr. Speaker, over the weekend, we were witness to a truly astonishing event, a seemingly democratic outcome to elections in a country whose government has been called Asia's most repressive regime.

Myanmar, formerly known as Burma, held its first multi-party elections in over 30 years. A country rich in resources and enterprise under a socialist regime, Myanmar became one of the world's least developed countries.

In September 1988 a military government seized power after a brutal crushing of a country-wide pro-democracy movement. In the 20 months since then the government has imprisoned and intimidated political opponents and has in general gained a reputation as one of the world's worse human rights violators.

We urge the Myanmaran government to respect the will of the people and hand over power to the new civilian government as soon as possible, so that for the first time in a very long time, the Myanmarans can get on with the business of salvaging what is left of a rich and beautiful country.

* * *

[*Translation*]

ARMENIA

Mr. Marcel Prud'homme (Saint-Denis): Mr. Speaker, today, the seventy-second anniversary of Armenia's independence is being celebrated throughout the world.

We are greatly honoured today in Ottawa by the presence of His Holiness Karekim II, Catholicos of the Armenian Apostolic Church of the Holy See of Cilicia. We wish him a cordial welcome and want to assure him of our prayers.

This people whose history has been one of tragedy and disruption has remained faithful to its culture, language and religion.

This evening, there will be a reception in the Railway Room from 5 to 7 p.m, during which His Holiness Catholicos Karekim II and the executive of the National

Armenian Committee of Canada will receive all members of the House of Commons and the Senate who would like to meet His Holiness.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[*English*]

MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Prime Minister, I have a question for whoever is acting as Prime Minister today.

The Prime Minister concluded this morning a series of meetings with all the provincial premiers on the matter of our present constitutional impasse. I would like to ask the acting Prime Minister whether the Prime Minister has found the basis in these discussions for a solution to this constitutional impasse and whether, in particular, as a result of these discussions he will now be calling an early First Ministers' Conference.

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister had the opportunity over the weekend and this morning to meet with each of the premiers of Canada in an individual meeting. The discussions were productive and useful.

There still remains more discussion to occur. More needs to be done before we think it would be productive to convene the first ministers here. Those discussions are continuing.

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Secretary of State for External Affairs who is acting as Prime Minister today.

The Prime Minister is certainly aware, I am sure, of the requirement in Manitoba for public hearings in order to make a decision on any solution to the constitutional impasse, and Newfoundland has a requirement with respect to holding a referendum for that purpose.

I would like to ask whether the Prime Minister believes that there is enough time to put into effect any solution that will be reached to the constitutional impasse, bearing in mind the requirements of Manitoba and Newfoundland and the fast approaching date of June 23.

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the answer to that question is yes.

Obviously there is not a lot of time. The hon. Leader of the Opposition asked the question whether the Prime Minister believes there is enough time. Assuming that there is the will to agree and assuming that that will to agree exists, we believe that an agreement can be achieved within the timeframe that is known to the House.

I repeat that while the discussions over the weekend were useful, there remains more to discuss and there are conversations that are continuing.

• (1420)

[*Translation*]

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my third question is still directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. As we know, this morning the Prime Minister concluded a series of meetings with the provincial premiers. I wish the minister would tell us what the Prime Minister specifically intends to do now with the provincial premiers, to seek a solution to the Constitutional impasse by June 23. What is the next step? And why not have a First Ministers Conference, now?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the conversations that took place on the weekend were useful. We must continue the conversations that were initiated with the premiers of certain provinces, and try to find the basis for agreement. The federal government and the Prime Minister intend to pursue these discussions. For the time being, we do not think there is sufficient consensus among the First Ministers, among the eleven governments, to call a First Ministers Conference. However, we hope we will continue to make progress.

[*English*]

TRADE

Mr. Francis G. LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister for International Trade, I will pose my question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs.

The final report of the trade panel on Canadian lobster exports to the U.S. has confirmed what fishermen and industry feared: Canada lost again. The Mitchell bill raising the minimum size of live lobster Canada can export to the U.S., a bill which the Minister for International Trade himself has said was a trade distorting measure, will be allowed to stand as a result of this ruling.

Will the minister not now admit that the dispute settlement mechanism of the FTA has once again failed Canada?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): No, of course not, Mr. Speaker. I would not admit that because it would be false; it would be wrong.

The matter that went before the panel was a matter which in Canada's view was a trade distorting mechanism. That was judged by the panel and, as in every case, one side is upheld and another is not upheld. Our view of that particular measure was not upheld.

As the hon. member knows, there is now a 90-day period within which it is is possible for the parties to work out agreements dealing with areas that were raised by the panel decision. That process is being pursued.

Mr. Francis G. LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question which is to the same minister concerns those 90-day negotiations.

Will the government be insisting that the Mitchell amendment is still a trade-distorting measure and must be withdrawn? Failing that, will the minister commit today that his government will make no more concessions to the U.S. on the backs of Atlantic lobster fishermen?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the government has not been making concessions of the kind described by the hon. member.

The discussions that will proceed now, following the decision by the panel, will have to do with negotiations between the parties relative to matters that were identified in the panel report.

Questions that are settled by the panel will be settled. Questions that are left open for negotiation will be negotiated.

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MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Acting Prime Minister.

In response to earlier questions by the Leader of the Opposition, I would like to pursue the topic further in that the Charest committee made all-party recommendations which were unanimous and were endorsed in this House. It is becoming clear, at least by the news accounts since we do not have any other information, that those recommendations do not seem to be a major part in the kinds of meetings the Prime Minister has recently held.

I would like to ask the Acting Prime Minister today which parts of the Charest report are being discussed. Which elements of the Charest report are seen as being most important to address? Could he tell us, for example, whether the issues concerning aboriginal people and the north are on the agenda? What can the Acting Prime Minister tell us about what has happened to the recommendations of the Charest report in these discussions?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I think all members of the House would agree that the work done by the Charest committee was extremely valuable work, both in terms of the agreements reached and of its place in the process of discussion.

We are now in a situation in which the Prime Minister of Canada met over the weekend with heads of the other governments who were party to the signature of the Meech Lake Accord. We are looking for areas in which we can find enough agreement for the 11 first ministers

to agree again to sign the accord that was signed originally by the heads of government of the 10 provinces and the Government of Canada.

Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary questions.

The Charest report was intended to find some ground for a companion resolution, not to undermine the five principles that Quebec put forward but to find a common ground for a companion resolution that could go with Meech Lake to address some of the outstanding concerns in the rest of Canada.

Can the Acting Prime Minister tell us if a companion resolution is still on the table for discussion and exactly what elements would be in a companion resolution?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, not only is the House aware of the process that is under way now. The country is very much aware of that process.

The country knows that what has to be achieved now is the agreement of 11 first ministers to the Meech Lake Accord. That is what is being sought.

The discussions over the weekend were constructive. They did not narrow the area of disagreement sufficiently to allow us to proceed immediately with a First Ministers' Conference, but progress is being made, and progress is being made with respect to an approach that if we are successful will result once again in all 11 governments of Canada signing and approving the Meech Lake Accord.

Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, the public is aware that there have been meetings behind closed doors with the premiers of the provinces. After these meetings the Prime Minister and the premiers came out and made a short statement. Members of the House and the public have some idea of what the positions are of the premiers of the province, but we do not have a clear idea of the position of the Prime Minister.

I ask the Acting Prime Minister to tell this House and to tell Canadians what is the negotiating position of the Prime Minister as one of the 11 first ministers?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the negotiating position of the Prime Minister is to secure the approval of the Meech Lake Accord. That was his position when he chaired the meeting that negotiated that accord. He has not changed his position. He will continue to seek agreement to persuade three governments that have departed from the agreement signed in the name of their provinces to affix their own signatures to that accord.

There are other activities that have to occur during the days immediately ahead. Senator Murray, for example, will be visiting Newfoundland for discussions with Premier Wells of that province, and other discussions as might be necessary will occur. As the Prime Minister has indicated, when there is information that would be helpful to the process of negotiation to express to the House, it will certainly be expressed to the House.

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TRADE

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, I would like to put a question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs.

Is it not time that Canadians were told what this government is up to in relation to talks among Canada, the United States, and Mexico on a North American trade agreement?

We have reports about the cabinet considering a paper, reports about the Prime Minister holding discussions with the Mexican President, and reports from Mexican diplomats that invitations will be offered on June 9.

Is this government going to involve this country once again in major trade talks without any mandate at all from this Parliament or from the Canadian people? Is it not time this government came clean and told Canadians what is going on?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, what is going on is that there has been an interest expressed by the Government of Mexico in discussions of some kind of trading arrangement with the Government of the United States. That matter is being discussed between those two governments.

• (1430)

The Prime Minister of Canada has expressed some several weeks ago in this House when the matter was first publicised his admiration of the economic perform-

ance of the Government of Mexico, and of their willingness—

Mr. Barrett: Nonsense! That's not what the minister was saying.

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): Perhaps if the former premier of British Columbia has a question that he would like to raise he could stand in his place and raise it, or he could perhaps arrange for a microphone that he could affix to his chest—

Mr. Barrett: That's not what the minister was saying.

Mr. Speaker: Perhaps the right hon. minister could answer the question.

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): To return to the very reasonable question that was put by my colleague for Winnipeg South Centre, that is what is going on between—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): Mr. Speaker, it is not every day that you get to be acting prime minister.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): As has been indicated in the House before, we will be watching discussions that might or might not evolve between the United States and Mexico to see if Canadian interests are affected. If it appears that Canadian interests might be affected, then we will consider what action it would be appropriate for the Government of Canada to take.

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, I will just say to the right hon. minister that this is the second time he has had an opportunity to be an acting prime minister.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, I want to get a very specific commitment from this minister on behalf of the government.

We want to have the assurance that this government will not commit Canada to any involvement in these discussions or negotiations until Parliament has had an opportunity to hold public hearings, have a public debate in this House and a mandate from this Parliament, if they so desire. Can we get that commitment today?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, for some the opportunity to be an acting prime minister never comes.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): We will certainly keep the House of Commons advised of any decisions that we think would be in the interests of the country to pursue with regard to any trade negotiations.

The hon. member will know better than most that when a Liberal government was in office and Canada entered into the GATT, that arrangement was carried out in absolute secrecy. The House was never told. There were not public hearings, there was not debate.

We followed a very different arrangement with regard to the free trade agreement.

If—and I underline "if"—a time arrives when we think that it might be useful to look at other kinds of trading arrangements, naturally there will be the fullest consultation with the House.

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[*Translation*]

MULTICULTURALISM

Mrs. Shirley Maheu (Saint-Laurent—Cartierville): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of State for Multiculturalism and Citizenship, my question is for the Acting Prime Minister. Following the cuts for cultural groups and the elimination of subsidies for heritage language schools, the minister ordered a study to analyse the possibility of creating a new national race relations network.

Can the minister explain the need for a new network to us? Is he afraid to hear criticisms from democratically elected community groups?

[*English*]

Mrs. Pauline Browes (Parliamentary Secretary to Secretary of State of Canada and Minister of State (Multiculturalism and Citizenship)): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased today that we have been entertaining the ethnocultural lobby day and an opportunity to speak firsthand with some of the leaders of the community.

The minister has been travelling the length and breadth of this country seeking information. One of the priorities of the department is race relations.

He has learned from his travels and the people he has met that there are people who wish to contribute in a very meaningful way to this discussion. Because of that, a network has formed from the grassroots, from the community. A report has been issued to the department, for which the minister if very grateful.

Mrs. Shirley Maheu (Saint-Laurent—Cartierville): Mr. Speaker, "entertaining"! What an interesting word. The minister travels a lot but does not hear very much.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Maheu: The name of a former assistant to the minister, Ben Teitelbaum, was associated with a new task force on race relations that the minister established in Montreal. Is the minister trying to replace ethno-cultural groups with old friends and political employees?

[*English*]

Mrs. Pauline Browes (Parliamentary Secretary to Secretary of State of Canada and Minister of State (Multiculturalism and Citizenship)): Mr. Speaker, the issue of race relations and racial discrimination in Canada is one of serious concern to each of us. When we have individuals reaching out to be partners with this issue, we welcome that. Not only is this loose network of grassroots individuals and organizations coming forth to assist in this issue, we are also reaching out to the chiefs of police on this issue. We are also in a contract with the Canadian Labour Congress in order that we can do everything we possibly can to eradicate racism in Canada.

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EMPLOYMENT EQUITY

Ms. Margaret Mitchell (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Justice.

The record of this government in employing only 2.9 per cent visible minorities, compared to 6 per cent in the general workforce, is abysmal. The worst offenders are the Department of Justice, Correctional Services of Canada, and the Department of External Affairs.

In the absence of the Minister of of State for Multiculturalism and Citizenship, I want to ask the Minister of Justice what action she intends to take to substantially increase the proportion of visible minority persons in the justice department?

Hon. Kim Campbell (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, the Department of Justice has an ongoing program to increase the representation of visible minorities among our workforce and it appears to be working very well. We think we can do better and we will do better.

Ms. Margaret Mitchell (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, I do not know how the minister can praise that record when she has less than 2 per cent of visible minority people in her own department.

One of the worst examples of legislated racism in Canadian history was the Chinese head tax and the Chinese Exclusion Act. When will the government fulfil its promises to acknowledge these past injustices, while giving a very strong signal and a public message that racism in any form will not be tolerated in today's Canada?

Mrs. Pauline Browes (Parliamentary Secretary to Secretary of State of Canada and Minister of State (Multiculturalism and Citizenship)): Mr. Speaker, we welcome the comments of the member and her work in terms of assisting in stamping out racism.

We are doing everything we possibly can in terms of establishing the partnership within Canada in order that we can eradicate racism and we welcome the comments from the hon. member.

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ROMANIA

Mr. David Walker (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources.

On May 14, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources told this House that since the fall of Romanian dictator, Nicholae Ceausescu, there have been no military conscripts working at the Candu reactor site.

I have just returned from Romania where I had the opportunity to speak to several of these military conscripts. I can tell the House that, in fact, they are still working at the Candu site.

Given the fact that the minister seems to be totally uninformed about what is happening with AECL there, how could he possibly approve a $500 million loan extension for continuing this project?

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, the government has not made a decision on a request made by the Romanian government with respect to EDC or any financing for the completion of work at Cernavoda. I have explained that in the House previously.

I recognize that the hon. member and his colleague have just returned from Romania. I believe they were in Romania to observe the elections on May 20. My colleague, the Secretary of State for External Affairs and I have referred to that and both of us would be pleased, if our colleagues are willing, to sit down with them and to hear their views firsthand as to the conditions at Cernavoda.

• (1440)

Mr. David Walker (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr Speaker, my supplementary is for the same minister. I thank him for his response because I believe that this requires the attention of the whole House.

If an agreement is reached with Romania, will the minister assure the House that conditions related to safety, to the workforce, and questions of human rights that have been raised here previously and not answered properly by the government, will be answered in any agreement, and that this agreement will be tabled in the House for discussion by all parties?

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that the member is willing to accept the offer made by my colleague and myself and I hope that the member for Burnaby—Kingsway will also will be able to join us in that meeting.

I want to make very clear to the hon. member that in any response there should not be any conclusions made on the EDC application.

Second, with respect to safety, this is the reason why I and others have been insisting that if there is any work resumption at Cernavoda we need control of it and that the safety aspects relative to AECL requirements, our signatories with the non-proliferation treaty, as well as our membership with the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna are met.

With respect to conditions in the workplace, we will obviously raise that as well and take a look at the changes that are necessary and the changes that are taking place within the Romanian society. I think he recognizes and I recognize that in those societies some issues relative to human rights are obviously different than the ones that he and I expect in Canada, but we are willing to discuss those as well.

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TRANSPORT

Mr. Joe Comuzzi (Thunder Bay—Nipigon): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Transport advised the House on March 22 that security in our airports is working and is working safely.

On May 25 the minister reaffirmed and said that "we would never compromise on safety".

In spite of these two assurances, on April 1 manned security guard stations at Montreal and Vancouver air control centres, the very nerve centres of our airports in Canada, were removed.

How can the minister reconcile the statements given on those two occasions with what is actually happening, and put into effect as of April 1 of this year?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I can assure my friend that the security arrangements at all airports are subject to ongoing review.

While I have no knowledge of the actual condition that my hon. friend speaks of, I will certainly undertake to review it. As a matter of fact, I have a briefing on airport security tomorrow morning and I will raise subject.

Mr. Joe Comuzzi (Thunder Bay—Nipigon): Mr. Speaker, on a supplementary question, let me just read from the memo I have from the Acting Director General who states: "I am aware of my security responsibilities and have directed that immediate action be initiated to ensure continuation of an adequate but reduced level of security in these air control centres".

I will send a copy of this memo to the minister. How can we do this to the safety and security of our airports for the sake of saving just a few bucks in this area?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I can assure my hon. friend that when I visited the units that my hon. friend talks about, it certainly was not a matter of simply walking in. There were the security precautions that the airport personnel and the director of security felt were necessary.

As I said, I will certainly take this up with him and be prepared to report back to my friend.

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PRESENCE IN GALLERY

Mr. Speaker: I wish to draw to the members' attention the presence in the gallery of Dr. The Honourable David Carter, Speaker of the Alberta Legislative Assembly and Chairman of the Second Commonwealth Parliamentary Seminar.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

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THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Right Hon. Acting Prime Minister. I am sure he is aware that the world's leading scientists have concluded that global warming has begun and that immediate cuts of more than 60 per cent are required for carbon dioxide, nitrous oxide and CFCs. All of those cuts are required to halt this dangerous process.

The call of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change is that we should not wait but we should make those cuts immediately and the ministers in Bergen, including Canada's representative, agreed to take action following the Fridays' release of the IPCC. Will the Acting Prime Minister today commit Canada to at least what was adopted in Toronto, a 20 per cent reduction from 1988 levels of carbon dioxide going into the atmosphere from Canada by the year 2005?

Mr. Lee Clark (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to confirm to the House that the government and the majority of nations participating together at the Bergen conference agreed, as a first step, that greenhouse gases should be stabilized from present levels by the year 2000.

I can also advise the member, as he and others know, that Canada has been a very important member of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Our scientists have been playing a very leading role. We are looking forward to participating in the Geneva conference in November, at which time we will make known our commitment, our schedules, and our targets.

In the meantime, the Hon. Minister of the Environment today is in Halifax for the second of *The Green Plan* consultation meetings. The Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources and I were in Winnipeg for the first meetings on Thursday and Friday of last week. We look forward to working in co–operation with citizens from across the country and provincial governments in ensuring that the targets and schedules, when in place, will have the support of Canadians. It will be a very significant step forward in leading to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary is directed to the Right Hon. Acting Prime Minister. I assume that Cabinet and the government have had a chance to think about the seriousness of global warming and the fact that conferences, one after another, have been calling for targets and timetables.

The Acting Prime Minister's government asked for time of the House and of the country until the IPCC reported. It reported on Friday and called for immediate cuts, not cuts in the year 2000, or 2005, but immediate cuts of 60 per cent of CO2, NO2, and CFCs.

Could the Acting Prime Minister tell us, is there going to be an announcement on targets, timetables, and schedules for these reductions, or does the government not take this global crisis seriously?

Mr. Lee Clark (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, yes, indeed there will be targets and schedules. They will be announced in the House well in advance of the meeting in November in Geneva, at which this country together with many other countries, will put in place firm schedules and targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

[*Translation*]

TRANSPORT

Mr. Guy Saint-Julien (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport.

Last week, the independent truckers of Abitibi-Témiscamingue paralysed traffic on Highway 117 in Louvicourt, in order to let the governments and companies know their demands and to make the public aware of their problems.

I went to meet the truckers twice on the weekend. Our discussions were positive and constructive and they decided to lift the road blockade on Saturday afternoon.

My question is: can the minister tell us the latest developments in connection with these demonstrations in Quebec and whether he promises that the Government of Canada will take part in negotiations with the independent truckers of Abitibi-Témiscamingue and Quebec, and with the Government of Quebec, so that all together, they can go over the contentious points as soon as possible and assess what can be done?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I was asked to provide a representative to the provincial committee established by my provincial colleague, Mr. Elkas, and I shall do so.

The commitments I made to the owner-operators in Windsor will apply to all truckers throughout Canada. I shall meet Mr. Elkas in late June.

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[*English*]

TRANSPORTATION SAFETY

Mr. Stan Keyes (Hamilton West): Mr. Speaker, last Friday I asked the Minister of Transport whether the government was considering a reduction in flight inspections, training for air traffic controllers, and other questions. He said that my allegations were completely unfounded.

Well, here it is, Mr. Speaker, the document itself. It is a Transport Canada plan, as the document itself proclaims, to determine areas of savings required to meet budget restraints.

Now that the minister can no longer deny the existence of the report, will he stand in his place and reject its recommendations?

• (1450)

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Government of Canada and Transport Canada, I make no apologies for making an effort to save taxpayers' money.

If my hon. member would read the entire transcript of Friday's exchange, he would see that I said that we would not compromise safety. It does not mean that one cannot find savings in expenditures and at the same time not compromise safety.

Mr. Stan Keyes (Hamilton West): Mr. Speaker, I find it interesting that just on Friday the minister admitted that he had no knowledge of the report, and today he is interested in saving Canadian taxpayers' money.

An official at Transport Canada's air navigation system tells me that the minister will be making a decision on the report by the end of this week.

Will the minister come clean and tell us that he has seen the recommendations in the report and that he will not slash costs at the expense of safety, as this report suggests he do?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I will have continual briefings all week. I certainly would not want to miss the briefing with this particular individual. If the hon. member could give me his name, I would be glad to take it up with him.

* * *

TRADE

Mr. Russell MacLellan (Cape Breton—The Sydneys): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. The minister stated that there is a 90-day period for discussion on the lobster fishing question. The minister also knows that during that 90-day period, one of the things that will not be changed is the Mitchell bill. That is firm for that 90-day period.

The lobster fishing season is now well under way. The lobster fishermen, who have had to suffer through abnormally low prices, are now faced with this restricted market.

What is the government going to do to help these fishermen? What is the government going to do to give these fishermen some confidence that their government is concerned about them? Will the government please do something soon, such as a price stabilization plan? This group of people is waiting for the Government of Canada to act on their behalf.

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, as I think the hon. member knows, my colleague, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans has already announced a program that, among other things, is designed to try to assist the marketing of Canadian lobsters overseas even more than has been done in the past.

We have encouraged the formation of the Canadian Atlantic Lobster Promotion Association for generic image and quality promotion. We intend to act in other ways that will help Canadian lobster fishermen find new and durable markets for their catch.

Mr. Russell MacLellan (Cape Breton—The Sydneys): Mr. Speaker, the lobster fishermen are into the season now. They are faced with this restricted market.

Also, this marketing program that the minister mentions applies to New Brunswick and P.E.I. It does not apply to Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. These two provinces are having a particularly difficult time right now.

At a time when the fishery in general is in difficulty, when the markets have been cut back, and when the prices have been low, why is the Government of Canada refusing to help these lobster fishermen?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, as my previous answer indicated, we are not doing that; quite the contrary. We are faced with a situation in which we disagreed with the provisions that were being followed by the United States. We followed the options that were open to us. It happens that the panel that was established to hear this kind of matter ruled against us. There is a 90-day negotiating period that is now being followed.

In the meantime, my colleague, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, has announced a program that we think will be helpful to find new markets for Canadian lobster fishermen. We are pursuing actively actions that will help ensure new and durable markets for the Canadian lobster fishermen in consultation with representatives of that industry.

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CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

Ms. Joy Langan (Mission—Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, in Canada there are 1.6 million children living below the poverty line. In Nova Scotia, not one child living on social assistance receives adequate food allowances to meet nutritional needs. In March, the government rejected a children's bill of rights.

Since the Prime Minister today signed the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, could the Acting Prime Minister tell Canadians just what his government's commitment is to adequate food, clothing, and shelter for children in Canada?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the hon. member finding an occasion to draw to the attention of the House of Commons the very important action taken today by the Prime Minister in signing the convention today on Canada's behalf.

The hon. member will know that, internationally and at home, the government has attached a very high priority, not only to the care of children, but also to the rights of children, as was indicated in this document.

She will know that among the actions that have been carried out internationally within the direct jurisdiction of the government have been a number of actions, for example, to contribute to the immunization of children against diseases. Prior to that program, those diseases had ravaged the lives of thousands of children in the world.

We are following similarly active programs at home to help Canadian children in need.

Ms. Joy Langan (Mission—Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, I think that the clawback on family allowances, the lack of a child care program from the government, the EPF transfer payments, and the cap on CAP—to name just a few—indicate just what a high priority the government puts on children's rights in Canada.

Will the Acting Prime Minister acknowledge that, in fact, signing conventions does not necessarily mean real action when it comes to the needs of Canadian children and would he tell us what he plans to do?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, let me speak for this party and this government. When we sign international conventions, we intend to follow up on them, and we do.

I can understand that question coming from a member of the New Democratic Party, because the New Democratic Party often talks about the importance of signing international agreements, for example, relating to trade. Yet, when those international agreements are honoured and a finding is made against Canada, the New Democratic Party asks us to ignore our international commitments.

Ms Langan: Answer the question about children, Joe.

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): If the House of Commons allowed me to use the word "hypocrisy" that is what I would apply to that kind of behaviour.

Mr. Speaker: It does not. The hon. member for Ottawa West.

* * *

PUBLIC SERVICE

Mrs. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the President of the Treasury Board, my question is directed to the Acting Prime Minister.

Numerous reports and the government's own statistics show that if you are not white, male, and able-bodied, you do not have an equal chance to be hired, promoted, and fairly paid in the Public Service of Canada.

Now, with Public Service 2000, the government is planning a complete revamping of the Public Service in everything from staffing to front-line service and it is not paying attention to the issue of unemployment equity.

Why is the government going ahead with this major overhaul of the Public Service and not even listening to organizations, such as the Canadian Ethnocultural Council and others, who know what the problems are and how to fix them?

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, the record of the government in improving representations within the Public Service of women and minorities is there and it is something all Canadians can be proud of. It is not as good as it should be. It is not as good as it is going to be. It is better than it was and we are making good progress.

As for Public Service 2000, I do not understand why the hon. member would be critical of this initiative which will help ensure that Canada has the kind of quality Public Service the country will need at the year 2000.

Mrs. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West): Mr. Speaker, if the minister honestly believes what he just said, it is appalling that he does not know the facts.

If you happen to be of a coloured skin, your chances of being hired in the Public Service of Canada are only 1 in 4, compared to an applicant whose skin is white. That is appalling. The government can turn a blind eye if it wants, but that would not be a wise approach.

Will the minister commit that the task forces of Public Service 2000 will not close out these people but immediately invite them in for their advice on how to fix the problems?

• (1500)

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, I hope the hon. member was not implying that there is a built-in prejudice in the hiring process.

The Public Service that this government inherited had a very low percentage of minorities represented in it. We initiated a program and action to turn that around, and things are better than they were.

They are not as good as they should be, but it is improper—and I hope it is a mistaken tone on the member's part—to insinuate that somehow there is prejudice built in, a kind of prejudice that this government has put in deliberately. It is not there. There is certainly no deliberate action. We are taking all the action we can to overcome inertia and to ensure that the Public Service reflects the reality of this country.

* * *

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. John Harvard (Winnipeg St. James): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Acting Prime Minister.

The Minister of Finance has said to this House many times that the GST will not be an administrative nightmare for small business. That is certainly not the view of the Federation of Independent Business, which is the voice of small business in this country.

Consider the plight of Petland, a Winnipeg company with seven stores. The president of the company tells me that there is no way the firm can meet the January 1 deadline because of the difficulties in buying equipment necessary for the GST. He also says that the cost of the changeover to the GST is prohibitive.

If this government will not listen to Canadians and scrap the tax, how can it go on ignoring the pleas of small business?

Hon. John McDermid (Minister of State (Privatization and Regulatory Affairs)): Mr. Speaker, I can tell the hon. member that the Canadian Federation of Independent Business was widely consulted during the years preceding the introduction of the goods and services tax.

As a matter of fact, many of the changes that were made to facilitate small business was at its suggestion. The President of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, John Bulloch, has not disagreed with the tax. He wants a national sales tax. He would support the GST if it was a national sales tax. He supports the principle of the tax. He has made that very clear.

We have been trying to negotiate an agreement with the provinces to get them to participate in a national sales tax system. I believe that will come about in the years to come.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Kingston and the Islands is rising on a question of privilege.

* * *

PRIVILEGE

DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL REVENUE MEMORANDUM

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege more in sorrow than in anger. The situation was brought to my attention by my friend and colleague, the hon. member for Kenora—Rainy River.

He has given me a memorandum that was sent by an official in the Department of National Revenue. The form is headed "Revenue Canada". I have sent Your Honour a copy of it. I have also delivered one to the government House leader in order to assist him. I assume he will be responding to this question of privilege.

The memorandum reads as follows, and I quote from the first paragraph:

> On January 1, 1991, the Government of Canada will replace the existing Federal Sales Tax with a new tax—the Goods and Services Tax (GST)—levied on the vast majority of goods and services consumed in Canada.

The memorandum is signed by one R. Lalonde, Chief, Registration. I presume he is one of the many tax police that the government has retained in order to enforce this tax.

In Your Honour's ruling of October 10, 1989, on a similar question of privilege raised by the right hon. member for Vancouver Quadra, who was then the Leader of the Opposition, Your Honour referred to the notice that had been published at that time. The notice read, and I quote from page 4457 of *Hansard*:

> On January 1, 1991, Canada's Federal Sales Tax System will change. Please save this notice.

I need not read the rest of it.

Very briefly, Your Honour then said, as reported at page 4460 of *Hansard*:

> In the present case, does the advertisement of the Department of Finance amount to a contempt of the House of Commons? The right hon. Leader of the Opposition argues that the advertisement in question is misleading in that it gives the general public the impression that this proposed change to the taxation system is a *fait accompli* and that Parliament has no role to play in examining and approving the changes. The effect of this may tend to diminish the authority of the House in the eyes of the public.

The words in the advertisement that was complained of last September and the words of this memorandum are one and the same. In other words, to quote Your Honour:

> The effect of this may tend to diminish the authority of the House in the eyes of the public.

The ruling continues, as reported at page 4461 of *Hansard*, where Your Honour said:

> However, I want the House to understand very clearly that if your Speaker ever has to consider a situation like this again, the Chair will not be as generous. This is a case which, in my opinion, should never

recur. I expect the Department of Finance and other departments to study this ruling carefully and remind everyone within the Public Service that we are a parliamentary democracy, not a so-called executive democracy, nor a so-called administrative democracy.

Here we have a situation in which obviously the advice that Your Honour tendered to the Department of Finance has been ignored by the Department of National Revenue. This memorandum is clearly in contravention of the ruling that Your Honour handed down on this matter on October 10 last year.

It seems to me that officials in the department ought not to have said that this tax will be replaced. They ought to have said that it is proposed that it be replaced.

I submit that by using the words "will replace" these officials are in contempt of Parliament. The minister who is responsible to this House is in contempt of Parliament.

This matter ought to be referred to the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections. If Your Honour finds that you agree with me on this point, I will be pleased to move the appropriate motion.

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, my friend, the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands, neglected to mention that between your first ruling on an advertisement respecting the GST and today's question of privilege respecting this letter from National Revenue to the Township of Red Lake, an important event occurred—this House passed the legislation.

Mr. Boudria: Parliament hasn't.

Mr. Andre: I hear from the other side that Parliament has not—Parliament consisting of the Governor General, the Senate and the House of Commons.

I would remind hon. members of another point of order, when we asked the Chair in respect of some business *vis-à-vis* the Senate, the Chair quite accurately, quite properly and with no surprise, indicated that the Speaker of the House of Commons has no authority over the Senate, and presumably no authority over the Governor General.

What the Speaker has is authority over this House. How one can ask the Speaker to say the government is in contempt of this House when this House has passed the legislation is something upon which I think the hon. member should reflect.

More significantly—and I do appreciate the hon. member having sent over this notice to me during Question Period—I would ask you, Mr. Speaker, to reflect on your own experience and recognize that in fact it is standard practice, and has been for decades, for budgets to be presented, for the House to pass them generally by way of approval of a confidence motion, to have specific legislation flowing therefrom preceded by a Ways and Means Motion and then have it proceed through the system. The Department of National Revenue commences very frequently collecting the tax that very evening or the next day. That is what our system is based on.

The hon. member seems to have our system confused with the American system where in fact they do not commence collecting taxes until the bill has passed all the way through the system.

The hon. member was not here, but one of the first pieces of legislation the new government elected in 1984 was required to pass was legislation concerning income tax amendments from a budget brought in by the previous Liberal administration.

Such is the nature of our practices in this country that for the hon. member to now stand up and say that this is a question of privilege is, I am sure, as he recognizes it, stretching things quite a bit. There is no privilege here. It is simply prudent public servants gathering the necessary information so that they will be in a position to implement the tax when it comes into effect, as is being planned, on January 1, 1991.

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, I have listened to the comments of the government House leader. I am sure that Mr. Speaker has noticed by now that his comments have little, if anything, to do with the argument put very well by my colleague from Kingston and the Islands.

• (1510)

First, I do not accept the explanation offered by the minister in his reply, that in fact this House has now dealt with the matter and that justifies the government going ahead with this kind of information.

Nevertheless, I want to draw to the Speaker's attention that this memo is dated April 23, 1990. The bill was passed in this House on May 4, 1990, which is after April

23. Even if we were to accept the minister's argument, which I totally refute anyhow, it does not even make sense using his own criteria.

Notwithstanding any of that, this bill, if it has not passed both Houses of Parliament and been proclaimed, is not yet an act. If it is not act of Parliament, no one has any right to pretend that it is. You, Mr. Speaker, have indicated that to all of us before.

I am sorry to say that this government has not understood in the past the very worthwhile advice that Mr. Speaker gave. Not only that, the government still fails to do that even today.

Mr. Speaker: I have looked carefully at the document complained of. I have listened to the argument. I will consider the matter and report back to the House very quickly.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*English*]

PETITIONS

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present a petition signed by numerous residents of various cities in British Columbia who are opposed to the goods and services tax.

This petition was sent to the right hon. member for Vancouver Quadra. I am pleased to table it on his behalf and on behalf of the numerous Canadians who have signed it.

They indicate that having had the present manufacturers' sales tax increased from 9 per cent to 13.5 per cent under the Draconian tax policies of this government, they feel it is unfair that Canadians be saddled with the additional burden of a tax on services, as proposed in the goods and services tax. They call upon Parliament to reject this unfair and discriminatory tax.

Mr. Jack Whittaker (Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise, pursuant to Standing Order 36, to present another petition containing some 86 names, which I add to the thousands of names that I have brought before the House against this goods and services tax.

These people are from Hope, British Columbia, and from various places in the riding of Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt. They call on the government to bring in a fair tax and do away with this particular tax that the government is now proposing.

They not have given up hope that this government will see the sense of ending this tax and bring in fair tax.

* * *

QUESTION ON THE ORDER PAPER

—Questions answered orally are indicated by an asterisk—

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, Question No. 287 will be answered today.

[*Text*]

ADVERTISING MAIL

Question No. 287—**Mr. Caccia:**

For each of the last ten years for which figures are available (a) were pieces of (i) unaddressed (ii) addressed advertising mail delivered by Canada Post and, if so, what number (b) were there revenues from each type of mail and, if so (i) what were they (ii) what percentage of total corporate revenue did each constitute (c) what was the cost of (i) a stamp for a piece of advertising mail (ii) a first-class stamp?

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Please see attached.

	80/81	81/82	82/83	83/84	84/85	85/86	86/87	87/88	88/89	89/90 (4)
VOLUME (MILLION PCES) (1)										
UNADDRESSED	1172	1217	1312	1614	2007	2097	2079	1809	2048	
ADDRESSED	842	729	661	643	629	655	741	889	1017	
REVENUE ($ MILLION) (1)										
UNADDRESSED	59	67	88	110	134	145	151	139	165	

	80/81	81/82	82/83	83/84	84/85	85/86	86/87	87/88	88/89	89/90 (4)
ADDRESSED	156	164	131	139	104	123	129	183	218	
% OF TOTAL REVENUE										
UNADDRESSED	3.9	4	3.9	4.6	5.4	5.3	5.1	4.4	4.8	
ADDRESSED	10.2	9.8	5.8	5.8	4.2	4.5	4.3	5.8	6.4	
COST OF A STAMP/PRICE (CENTS)										
UNADDRESSED (2)	4	6	6	6.4	6.4	7.1	7.1	7.6	7.8	7.8
ADDRESSED (3)	9	13	13	13	13	15	15	17.5	20	21
FIRST CLASS STAMP	17	30	30	32	32	34	34	36	37	38

(1) BASED ON PUBLISHED ANNUAL REPORT.

(2) THE RATE REPRESENTS THE BASIC RATE AT A MINIMUM OF 50G AND WAS EFFECTIVE FOR MOST PART OF A FISCAL YEAR.

(3) THE RATE REPRESENTS THE NDG PRESORT RATE (MIN. WEIGHT OF 50G) AND WAS EFFECTIVE FOR MOST PART OF A FISCAL YEAR.

(4) ACTUAL VOLUME AND REVENUE FIGURES ARE NOT YET AVAILABLE.

* * *

[*English*]

STARRED QUESTION

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, would you be so kind as to call Starred Question No. 275?

Because of the length of the response, I ask that this question be made an Order for Return. If that were the case, the return would be tabled immediately.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House that Question No. 275 be made an Order for Return?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[*Text*]

PUBLIC SERVICE

*Question No. 275—**Mr. Fulton:**

1. Do any public servants earn (a) up to $10,000 (b) $10,000 to $20,000 (c) $20,000 to $30,000 (d)$30,000 to $40,000 (e) $40,000 to $50,000 (f) more than $50,000 in excess of the basic salary paid to MPs and, if so (i) what number (ii) what is the total number for each department?

2. What is the (a) total number of staff in each minister's office, including the Prime Minister's (b) salary range in each individual case?

Return tabled.

[*English*]

Mr. Cooper: Mr. Speaker, I ask that all the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

Mr. Speaker: Shall the remaining questions be allowed to stand?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES RESTRAINT ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill C-69, an act to amend certain statutes to enable restraint of government expenditures, as reported (without amendment) from the Standing Committee on Finance.

SPEAKER'S RULING

Mr. Speaker: There are eight report stage motions set down on the Notice Paper in amendment to Bill C-69, an act to amend certain statutes to enable restraint of government expenditures.

Motions Nos. 1 and 2, standing in the name of the hon. member for Mission—Coquitlam, will not be selected as Motion No. 1 goes beyond the scope of the bill and Motion No. 2 imposes a charge upon the Crown. It attempts to increase the contributions payable.

I refer the hon. member to Beauchesne's Fifth Edition, Citation 773, paragraphs (1), (7) and (8).

[*Translation*]

Motion No. 3 is also set down by the Hon. Member from Mission–Coquitlam. It is beyond the scope of the clause and of the bill. The amendment also tries to impose a new condition on all federal–provincial agreements.

[*English*]

Motions Nos. 4 and 8 are acceptable. These motions, both to be moved by the hon. member for Mission—Coquitlam, will be grouped for debate as they both affect the coming into force of the bill. They will be voted on separately.

Motions Nos. 5 and 7 standing in the name of the hon. member for Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing cannot be selected. They are out of order as they attempt to amend sections of or add to the original or parent act.

In this connection I would like to refer hon. members to Beauchesne's Fifth Edition, Citation 773, paragraph (8) which states as follows:

> (8)(a) An amendment may not amend a statute which is not before the committee.
>
> (b) An amendment may not amend sections from the original Act unless they are specifically being amended in a clause of the bill before the committee.

[*Translation*]

Motion No. 6 will not be selected as in the Chair's view it will impose a charge on the treasury beyond that contemplated by the Crown in the Royal Recommendation that accompanied this bill on its introduction. Hon. members will find the practice set out in Beauchesne's Fifth Edition, Citation 773, paragraph 7.

[*English*]

To recapitulate, Motions Nos. 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, and 7 will not be selected.

[*Translation*]

Motions Nos. 4 and 8 will be grouped for debate but voted on separately.

[*English*]

I just want to add that I am very much aware as the Speaker that there was some considerable discussion with respect to some of these motions. They were very carefully looked into, not only by the table, but also by the Chair again this morning. While it may be a disappointment to the hon. member, I hope the hon. member will accept that the matter has been looked at very carefully. I know the hon. member will accept the ruling.

I will now propose Motions Nos. 4 and 8 to the House.

MEASURE TO AMEND

Ms. Joy Langan (Mission—Coquitlam) moved:

Motion No. 4

> That Bill C-69 be amended in Clause 2 by adding immediately after line 17 at page 2, the following:
>
> "(3)(a) Notwithstanding anything in this Act, this section shall not come into force or effect until such time as the provinces as defined in subsections (1) and (2) are provided with one year's notice of the intent of the federal government with respect to payments to be made under the Canada Assistance Plan Act.
>
> (b) For further clarity, the passage of this Act shall not be considered notice for the purposes of paragraph (a)."

Motion No. 8

> That Bill C-69 be amended by adding immediately after line 15 at page 6 the following new clause:
>
> "8. This Act shall come into force and effect on February 20, 1992."

She said: Madam Speaker, as much as we wanted to see our amendments go through, we do accept the ruling of the Chair and the spirit in which it is given. We are very pleased that the Chair was able to rule in favour and allow debate on Motions Nos. 4 and 8.

• (1520)

According to Section 8 of the Canada Assistance Plan Act, one year's notice must be given prior to the changing of the terms of the agreement between the province and the federal government.

The federal government, by introducing Bill C-69, is attempting to unilaterally change the terms of the agreement without prior notice or consultation with the affected provinces.

The act in fact is very clear and specific. It states:

> —where notice of intention to terminate an agreement is given in accordance with paragraphs (c) or (d), the agreement shall cease to be effective for any period after the day fixed in the notice or for any period after the expiration of one year from the day on which the notice is given, whichever is later.

Section 5 of the act states that the federal government will pay to the province 50 per cent of the cost to the

province, or through the province to the municipality where the latter administers social assistance programs, of social assistance programs as defined by the act.

This is a demand driven system in that expenditures are not discretionary. Expenditures must be made by the province to individuals deemed to be in need or likely to be in need. By limiting its participation to an increase of 5 per cent in British Columbia, Alberta and Ontario the government is in fact not abiding by the terms of the agreement.

The federal government constitutionally is obliged to consult with the provinces prior to changing the terms of the agreement. Constitutional convention demands as much, and the act has made this requirement absolutely clear.

The provinces should in their planning have every right to expect that the federal government will continue to pay its share of costs under the Canada Assistance Plan unless they have agreed to change the terms of the agreement.

The federal government by acting unilaterally is in fact threatening the welfare of the poor. Single parents, children, the disabled and those needing special care will suffer and will do so because the federal government has removed support for their welfare.

These amendments make clear the responsibility of the federal government to consult with the provinces before changing the terms of the agreement that it has signed with the provinces of Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia.

The government by making this unilateral move is threatening the whole concept of co-operative federalism which has driven the fiscal relations between the provinces and the federal government for much of this century. One must ask why at a time of national turmoil the federal government is intent on driving the wedge of division on this issue even further.

As more than half of the poor in Canada live in the three provinces affected by Bill C-69, this measure cannot be seen simply as a restraint measure but as a fundamental change in the responsibility of the federal government for the welfare of Canadians, particularly our children, and for the redistribution of income in Canada. Therefore consultation is not only morally necessary but is in fact required by law.

We have all noted that the Government of the province of British Columbia has indeed taken this matter to the courts, and we are awaiting a decision.

We have also noted that the department is in fact doing its own study on the effectiveness of the Canada Assistance Plan, on its costs and projections. We find it passing strange that the government is rushing through this piece of legislation before that report is finished. We suspect, and the proof will be in the pudding when the report is tabled, that in fact the government does not want to be told prior to it passing this legislation that the Canada Assistance Plan and the impact on provinces is so important to Canadians that it should not be amended in the way the government is planning.

In British Columbia we find that we have a government that in fact is not providing social assistance payments at a level that would bring families above the poverty line. We find in British Columbia that we have increasingly dramatically fast growing food-in-the-schools programs put together not by the provincial government, but by teachers and parents who are concerned when they see children coming to school hungry, when they see them falling asleep at their desks at 10 o'clock, when they see them increasingly having behaviour problems because they are hungry. What we find is a government that is not even meeting poverty level standards of social assistance in this country.

Now we have the federal government buying into that heavy-handed attitude toward the poor. The federal government has bought into it by saying: "It's okay. We will put a cap on it and then you will only have to increase it by 5 per cent and you can get off the hook".

That is not good enough for the poor in British Columbia. That is not good enough for the poor in Alberta. It is not good enough for the poor in Ontario.

Every group in this country that works for and looks after the needs of children will tell you that children who are hungry, children who are malnourished are children who will not have the opportunity to be full participants in this society. They will not have the opportunity to continue on in school. They will not function well and are, indeed, far more likely to be ill.

The Acting Prime Minister less than an hour ago stated in this House that children and their welfare are a priority of the government. In view of the fact that the Prime Minister today signed a document ratifying the UN Declaration for the Rights of the Child, and that if it is the policy of this government that the education, clothing, housing and feeding of the children of Canada is a priority, then I urge that the government very seriously re-think the passage of this legislation. It should pass this amendment, which would give an extra

year to think about it, and withdraw this bill. This bill is the kind of legislation that flies in the face of the sanctimonious statements that have been made over and over again both in this House and out there in the real world by this government about how much it cares for children in Canada.

This legislation ensures that children in Canada are in fact not adequately funded. This legislation ensures that children in three provinces in particular do not enjoy the support of the federal government for programs pertaining to them. They do not enjoy the same support as children from the remaining seven provinces and the two territories.

What does that mean, Madam Speaker? Does that mean that the federal government cares less for the children of Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia? Or does that mean that the federal government cares more for the children in the other provinces? Or does it mean that yet again we have legislation that has nothing to do with the care or welfare of children and nothing to do with caring about the poor in this country but has a whole lot to do with a neo-conservative program that is an intricate network of neo-conservative amendments and adjustments in the world of this government?

I suggest that this government plans very carefully this kind of legislation. I urge hon. members to support the motions and defeat Bill C-69, or have the government withdraw it because it does not meet the government's stated commitment to the children of Canada.

• (1530)

[*Translation*]

Hon. Pierre Blais (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Minister of State (Agriculture)): Madam Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to speak this afternoon to Bill C-69. I would like to start by telling the hon. member who just spoke that I agree all members in this House should deplore the fact that there are still people in this country who live in poverty. I myself come from a rural part of this country, and I have seen the situation evolve in recent years. I believe, Madam Speaker, that situations that have gone on for years and years cannot be changed overnight. As in every situation, I think we must look at how these things develop and then deal with the cause of the problems we are facing.

When we talk about poverty in Canada, poverty may be caused by a number of problems, but more often it is the result of loss or lack of employment. One subject—and the Prime Minister has repeated this many times here in the House—that has come up time and time again in this House is the state of family income in this country. However, the best social measure this government has taken in the past years was to provide Canadians with millions of jobs. Since we came to power, I believe 1,600,000 jobs were created. A government's top social priority, its first strategy to fight poverty in a country should be to provide employment, because employment will restore a person's ability to earn a living wage.

I wish my NDP colleague would listen to me as carefully as I did to her. Perhaps she and her party would then be able to go beyond their hollow rhetoric and look at what has been done in recent years and where this government wants to take Canada, Madam Speaker. What we have done since 1984, since the Minister of Finance gave his economic message in November 1984, has been to give this country a sense of direction. We realized that despite constant efforts, our debt levels had reached gigantic proportions, Madam Speaker. And we all found this very, very disturbing and we still do. We are afraid of a public debt growing at such an unbridled rate because it makes it more difficult to maintain and pay for existing programs and makes us apprehensive about the future for our children and grandchildren. When taxpayers' money, whether from taxes or individual and corporate income tax, is used more and more just to pay the interest, anyone can understand that. Canadians understand it very well.

However, we face a situation that has often rightly been called the "nimby syndrome", not in my back yard, because people never want any cuts whatever made in areas that affect them. We have noticed that and, as a government, over the years, especially in the last budget, we have had to make cuts that we too find difficult. Do not think that it is much easier for a government to raise spending by 20 per cent as the government that preceded us did for years, to increase spending by over 10 per cent, with frightful inflation rates of up to 10 or 12 per cent, which is absolutely intolerable for a country. So obviously, Madam Speaker, it was difficult—If I had been here in government in 1980, I would have found it hard to

blame and criticize the provinces or Canadians for not controlling their spending when the government itself was unable to control its spending.

What we did, Madam Speaker, is simple. We began by cleaning our own house and, as we say back home, we began in front of the house and swept the porch. That is what we did.

We have kept the increase in our expenditures to a rate of 3.5 per cent over the past five years, and that is less than the inflation rate. By doing this we sent a very clear message to all Canadians, a message which read: "Reduce the rate of increase in your expenditures."

So, Madam Speaker, we find it difficult to accept or understand that some provinces get federal government transfers ranging from 20 to 46 per cent. When I say 20 per cent these are transfer payments which are included in provincial revenues, like 20 per cent in Ontario, 46 per cent in Newfoundland, and about 30 per cent in Quebec, if I am not mistaken.

So when the Quebec government unlocks the door on January 1, if I may put it that way, it knows for sure that close to one-third of its revenues will come through a federal cheque.

When Mr. Wells unlocks the door in St. John's on January 1, he knows exactly where nearly half of his budget will come from. He will get that income via a federal government cheque. Not bad at all.

I am not blaming anybody when I say that, Madam Speaker. Put simply, I am saying that not only the provinces but all other sectors as well, public and private alike, must take this as a signal from us. To a certain extent, Madam Speaker, we have just signaled the end of the school recess. It means we have capped our expenses at 3.5 per cent, so the provinces must reduce theirs, and the same thing goes for school boards, municipalities and Canadians generally. It is a clear signal to all Canadians, Madam Speaker.

Of course, we could analyse in detail the measures taken in the budget. Of course, we had to compromise on certain points. For example, it would probably have been unfair to penalize some provinces getting more from equalization and if we had done so, we could have been criticized for not maintaining a fair balance.

Madam Speaker, I think that the measures taken must be seen globally, as a whole. We wanted to ensure that the provinces which are the main beneficiaries of the equalization program continue to receive as much and we imposed on them an increase limit that is inferior to the one we imposed on richer provinces. This process has been accepted in the Canadian federation for many years and we maintained it in this budget.

Obviously, Madam Speaker, I think that the opposition amendments should be rejected because they all would just weaken or cancel the effect of this change.

The purpose of this change is to put the Canadian economy back on track, Madam Speaker. That is not easy, faced with a higher deficit, if we want to help Canadians maintain, as I said earlier, a standard of living and social and economic measures so that they can continue to prosper. Despite the fears raised by the crises we are going through in Canada, I continue to believe that Canada is still a relatively prosperous country by world standards, notwithstanding some well-known difficulties.

In conclusion, Madam Speaker, since I think I have already gone a little beyond my allotted time, I would say that it is important for both the opposition and Canadians to support the measures we have taken. These measures simply ask Canadians to restrain their spending so that we can maintain the rate of prosperity we had over the past six years. The worst that could happen would be to find ourselves again in the spending-inflation spiral we had in the early 1980s. No one in this House would want to relive that period—as many, I would even say most, opposition members admit. The only thing is that they do not want to take action, difficult though it may be, to help the government get there.

• (1540)

So, Madam Speaker, I urge this House to support the bill as it was presented because I believe that it is good for Canadians.

Madam Deputy Speaker: It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 38, to inform the House that the questions to be raised at the time of adjournment are as folows: the hon. member for Gatineau—La Lièvre—the Environment; the hon. member for Cape Breton—East Richmond—the Scotia Synfuels projet; the hon. member for Moose Jaw—Lake Centre—Agriculture.

Resuming debate. The hon. member for Gloucester (Mr. Young).

Mr. Douglas Young (Gloucester): Madam Speaker, first of all, with reference to the two amendments proposed by the hon. member, I must say that we in the Liberal party are astonished that the New Democratic Party would even consider passing a bill that has the effect of freezing federal transfers to the provinces under established programs financing for the next two years and that would also put a 5 per cent ceiling, during the next two years, on federal transfers under the Canada Assistance Plan to Ontario, British Columbia and Alberta, and that it would consider passing amendments like the one proposed in Motion No. 4, and I quote:

> That Bill C-69 be amended in Clause 2 by adding immediately after line 17 at page 2 the following:
>
> "(3) (*a*) Notwithstanding anything in this Act, this section shall not come into force or effect until such time as the provinces as defined in subsections (1) and (2) are provided with one year's notice of the intent of the federal government with respect to payments to be made under the *Canada Assistance Plan Act*.

Madam Speaker, I think it is deplorable that the New Democratic party should agree to let this bill come into force provided notice is given. We in the Liberal Party want to make it quite clear that we cannot support this amendment, because it would have the effect of telling Canadians that a year from now, after notice has been given, all of a sudden it would be acceptable to impose a freeze and reduce funding directed to Canadians, to the provinces, for medical care and post-secondary education.

Motion No. 8 says the following:

> That Bill C-69 be amended by adding immediately after line 15 at page 6 the following new clause:
>
> "8. This Act shall come into force and effect on February 20, 1992."

Madam Speaker, we wish to inform our colleagues in the House that we do not accept this amendment and that we intend to vote against the bill, because we do not want it to come into force, not this year and not in January 1992. We must not fall into the government's trap and play a game that is disastrous today, that is unacceptable to Canadians today, and that in any event will be unacceptable a year or two from now because it would mean telling the provinces: "We are giving you notice, but there is no consultation, no consensus, and if the provinces don't agree, but the government will go ahead just the same." In this respect, Madam Speaker, I can assure you that the Liberal opposition will vote against these two motions which we feel are really deplorable, considering the fact that Canadians appeared before committees of this House, before the Finance Committee, to tell us that it was totally unacceptable. These people included the poor, people involved in health care delivery services, academics, students, CEGEPs, community colleges, all these people told us it was unacceptable and we agree.

Madam Speaker, to stress the fact that we will vote not only against the two amendments proposed by our colleagues from the New Democratic party but also against this bill, I would like to quote the current Minister of Finance.

In 1982, the current Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) thought that the federal government should not reduce the deficit at the provinces' expense. Obviously, he was speaking as a member of parliament and probably also as a Canadian citizen. He said at the time that cutting back on EPF transfers:

> —could have disastrous effects on the universities and on the colleges, on the hospital funding and on the operations of the hospitals. Let us not make hospitals, universities and colleges a battleground between the federal government and the provincial governments. Let us solve those problems outside of the arena. [—[

This is what the hon. Minister of Finance said on March 24, 1982, when he was a private member of this House.

All these arguments against cut-backs such as those proposed in Bill C-69 were also raised by the hon. Prime Minister. To put things into context, we are talking about high education. The Prime Minister went back once again on his word since he had personally promised, as almost every Canadian knows, a high quality education for young people.

This is what he said to the Conservative general council on August 25, 1989. Madam Speaker, not too long ago the Prime Minister said this, and I quote:

> Our government will support its share of the burden to provide Canadians with a high quality education that will enable them to meet international challenges.

Madam Speaker, enough is enough. When the Minister of Finance says one thing and proposes another, and when the Prime Minister of Canada promises a high quality education and puts forward measures that will have precisely the opposite effect, I think Canadians

realize we cannot approve this bill today or tomorrow for this year, 1991, or 1992.

Here is what the Minister of State for Finance was saying about this bill at the beginning of the month and I quote:

> The deficit is a national problem requiring a national solution. In order to restore the finances of the country to good health, the provinces have to do their share, so that they will benefit from reduced inflation, lower interest rates and sustained economic growth.

I was listening to my hon. colleague the minister telling us today about the progress that has been made in this country. He mentioned job creation. Everyone agrees, Madam Speaker, that Canada's growth in the services sector has been quite phenomenal in the past few years. However, Canadian men and women working in that sector also know that wages, job security, working conditions and everything else are far from satisfactory. Those jobs generally pay less and are not very steady.

I would like to tell my friend the minister that this year the government's record regarding job creation is not as great as he would like us to believe. In the manufacturing sector, which was supposed to benefit from the Free Trade Agreement with the United States, 71,000 jobs were lost since January 1, 1990. That is to say that there are 71,000 fewer jobs in a sector of the Canadian economy where jobs have traditionally been steady and among the best paid.

It is very easy to understand, Madam Speaker. The Minister told us he was supporting this bill because the deficit was a serious issue. The national debt, as we know, has more than doubled since this government came to power in 1984. Our friends opposite often blame the previous Liberal government, Madam Speaker, for having left the country in shambles five or six years ago. But how does the minister explain the current high interest rate situation? Some 17 months ago, in January 1988, the interest rate in this country, as set by the Bank of Canada, was 8.63 per cent. That was three and half years after this Tory government came to power. Madam Speaker, these people claimed that they knew how to manage the economy, how to govern Canada and put it to work. The interest rate today has reached 14.05 per cent. Now, let us leave out the 1979–80 period and the Liberal blunders which resulted in well-publicized bankruptcies and job losses. Everybody can understand that. All the other industrialized nations were faced with the same phenomenon as Canada, and nobody can approve of that period because of the problems inflicted on all Canadians.

Madam Speaker, let us deal with the facts as they exist under this Tory government. On January 1, 1988, the interest rate was 8.63 per cent. After 17 months of good monetary and financial management, of job creation and all that, we faced, a few weeks ago an interest rate of 14.05 per cent, as set by the Bank of Canada. Who is responsible for this problem?

Madam Speaker, the amendments proposed by my NDP colleagues clearly reveal the government's irresponsibility in introducing such an unacceptable bill. We intend to vote against the amendments, and then against Bill C–69 when it comes up in the House for third reading.

• (1550)

[*English*]

Madam Deputy Speaker: On a point of order, the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands.

Mr. Milliken: Madam Speaker, I am glad to see that a minister has finally come into the House.

This is a major government bill. Bill C–69 deals with a major budget item—

Madam Deputy Speaker: The hon. member knows very well this is not a point of order.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing.

Mr. Chris Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing): Madam Speaker, I am happy to rise and discuss these amendments.

As we have heard, this is one of the most severe and deepest cuts to social programs that this government has made. It is a tax on funding for health care, post-secondary education and the Canada Assistance Plan in Ontario, British Columbia and Alberta.

We are faced with a bill that attacks the sick, students, and the poorest in our society. The government is attempting to reduce the deficit on the backs of the least advantaged in our society. Fully 70 per cent of the budget cuts in 1990 are to health and education programs and the Canada Assistance Plan. That is a record for which the government should be ashamed, and for which it will

pay the price the next time Canadians have an opportunity to mete out justice at the polls.

We are faced with a bill which not only makes these severe cuts about which I will talk a little later, but does so in a way which is contrary to previous arrangements made between the provinces and the federal government and contrary to the federal government's own legislation.

We have seen the province of British Columbia attack the bill from two points of view; one, because the federal government is breaking its agreements with the provinces, and second, through the cap on CAP to the provinces such as Alberta, British Columbia and Ontario which do not receive extra funding from the federal government, it attacks some Canadians but not all and, therefore, offends the equality provisions.

We have concerns voiced against this legislation because of its constitutionality and its unfairness, and because the federal government is not keeping its promises to the provinces.

The provinces have organized their affairs in accordance with the agreements, and with the federal government cutting back and ignoring those promises we see the end of an attempt to deal with federal-provincial relations in a co-operative way. We see the end of co-operative federalism. Instead, at a moment's notice, the federal government tells the provinces what its commitments will be rather than allow the provinces to plan ahead and prepare their social, health and post-secondary programs for the coming years.

We need to plan our commitments to the poorest in our society, to students, and to post-secondary education. We need to plan our ways of dealing with health problems. This unilateral action by the federal government prevents the provinces from planning into the future and making use of available dollars effectively and efficiently.

The Conservative members showed very little interest in the committee hearings. At best they tolerated witnesses and at most they asked one or two questions in which they showed very little interest. There was not one witness at the finance committee hearings on Bill C-69 who was supportive of the legislation. Every witness criticised the legislation, pointing out the defects and problems to which it will give rise.

In the context of the cap on the Canada Assistance Plan, all the groups that work with the poorest in our society and do the best they can to support the poorest Canadians through their times of difficulty indicated that by placing a cap on CAP it will effectively put an end to reform of our social welfare system, and stop innovation and experimentation. In other words, it will put an end to efforts to spend social service funding more effectively and plan for the future. We are already seeing this in Ontario.

We heard from every witness who came to support effective funding for the health care system, for the post-secondary education system, and for effective funding for the Canada Assistance Plan, that this legislation in the name of restraint was short-sighted and would give rise to not only long-term economic and social costs, but to short term economic and social costs also. It would not serve the government's short-term or long-term purposes to save money but would add to the burden on our health care system. It would add to the burden on unemployment by not generating the sorts of skills and qualities needed for people to become effective participants in our economy.

We heard a great deal during and after the free trade debate about how we were scaring the Canadian public by pointing out there would be major cuts to health and social programs should the free trade agreement pass.

• (1600)

While it is not very comforting, it is clearly possible, and indeed proper, to say: "We told you so." The activities since the passage of the free trade agreement more than illustrate that we were right in pointing out its dangers to the agenda of the government on social programs.

This bill represents the largest single cut to social programs ever made. As I have indicated, the government's deficit-cutting measures here are almost exclusively based on cuts to social programs. That is in direct contravention of solemn promises made in 1988 prior to the election and, of course, in direct contravention to statements made by the government when we raised questions of attacks on social programs.

The fears that were expressed during the last election about the impact of the free trade agreement are coming to fruition and are being meted out on the poorest Canadians.

As my colleague for Mission—Coquitlam pointed out, this is not an economic measure. As the witnesses made quite clear at the hearings on Bill C-69, these are not economic measures. This is a philosophical commitment to cut back funding for post-secondary education and for services to the poorest in our society.

Before leaving this issue, I would be remiss not to point out that, while this is the third attempt by the Conservative government to cut funding to the provinces for health care and post-secondary education, the Liberals, when in power, also made cuts to those areas and, indeed, began most of the measures which the Conservative government is now pursuing. Both parties, of course, have a responsibility for the impact of those cuts in terms of over-burdened and inadequate health care facilities, and universities bursting at the seams and unable to provide the education that is needed. The witnesses from the university system—students, faculty, and university presidents—pointed out the enormous danger that that will result in to Canada's ability to compete in a world economy in the future.

In closing, I certainly do not support the amendments because neither I, nor my party, would want this legislation to pass. As I pointed out, it clearly is extremely dangerous and damaging legislation to both the social and economic fabric of the country. Rather, I do so because the commitment of the federal government under the Canada Assistance Plan is to negotiate with the provinces and to give the provinces one year's notice. Surely, it should be bound by its own rules and legislation, and should not blithely ignore commitments that it has made to the provinces which it has placed in legislation.

Mr. Ross Reid (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to speak this afternoon on this very important piece of legislation which has been much discussed in the House and other places.

I would like to be a little bit parochial this afternoon and speak about how this legislation affects my province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

It would be helpful to put a couple of things on the record at the very beginning just so that members in the House and the people who follow this debate, either on television or by reading *Hansard*, know exactly what the context is here.

In Newfoundland and Labrador the three major sources of transfer payments are the Canada Assistance Plan, EPF, and equalization. Through those programs, in 1989 and 1990, the Government of Canada transferred to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador about $1.36 billion. As my hon. friend said earlier, that is about 46 per cent of the provincial budget. So, almost $1 of every $2 spent by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador comes from the taxpayers who pay their money to the Government of Canada. It is money that is not spent in other areas in federal programming but is given to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, absolutely as it should be.

It is important to look at that number. It is about $1.36 billion for 1989-90 and for next year it will be $1.4 billion. That is an increase. The year after that, it will be $1.47 billion, another increase in funding that the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador can spend on programs. That is a growth of about 4 per cent which is about inflation and which, by the way, will be higher than the growth in federal government program spending.

Despite all the gloom and doom we hear about cuts to this and cuts to that, we in fact have growth higher than that in federal government spending programs.

I mentioned that in Newfoundland and Labrador it was about 46 per cent. In provinces such as Ontario it accounts for about 20 per cent of total revenues. The people in Newfoundland and Labrador, on a per capita basis, receive in transfer payments almost $2,500 and next year it will $2,570 per person. In Ontario it is about $960. That is the context of what we are talking about and that is the difference I am referring to.

Let us talk about some of the programs individually. I would like to touch quickly on CAP. The Canada Assistance program, for my province and the province of my hon. friend opposite is unaffected. Fifty per cent of the eligible costs incurred by the provinces will be covered by the Government of Canada next year and the year after, as they were this year and last year. It is untouched. Yes, there is no question, three of the more able provinces, with the greatest resources and those best able to help, are being asked to make a contribution

so that their increases in the Canada Assistance Plan payments will not exceed 5 per cent.

That represents what some of us have been wanting to see for years, a moving away from blanket application of programs and from imposing one program on the country that does not suit the whole country. It is a recognition that some provinces have a greater capability to contribute than others and that some provinces continue to have greater needs than others.

When my colleagues from the Atlantic provinces saw the budget, they recognized that the government saw an opportunity not to demand universal solutions but to tailor the solution to the reality of the country, to reflect the ongoing generosity of the provinces that are able to pay—Alberta, British Columbia, and Ontario. That is something of which we are very appreciative, something which we respect, and we are glad to see it continue. They must continue because our needs continue.

However, in trying to come grips with this huge debt that the people of Canada are carrying on their backs and in recognition that there has to be some restraint, those of us in the Atlantic provinces were not asked to contribute under the Canada Assistance Plan.

Established Programs Financing increased 6.3 per cent this year. Twenty billion dollars supposedly goes to health care and post-secondary education. EPF funding has not gone to post-secondary education and health care exclusively since 1977. The program was established to fund that, but the government of the day, in its wisdom, decided that that funding need not be tied to those special programs. Maybe that was the right decision.

In recognition of the deficit and the contribution to be made we have said that the per capita rates in EPF will be held at the 1989-90 level. They will continue to increase as the economy increases. They will continue to increase as the population increases. It is expected that those funds will increase 1 per cent next year. That should be recognized as the contribution that we in Atlantic Canada make.

• (1610)

I would like to talk about post-secondary education. The contributions of the Government of Canada and the taxpayers from across the country to Newfoundland and Labrador, are not limited to EPF. It is a little known fact that 25 per cent of what ACOA is spending in Newfoundland and Labrador is being spent through post-secondary educational institutions. Not only are we helping the economy and supporting our youth and those who are in the education system, we are also supporting the system itself.

The Canadian Jobs Strategy has a myriad of programs. One of the great beneficiaries of these programs, over and above the people it is targeted to help, are the post-secondary education institutions. They do the training.

In my riding of St. John's East, we have been able to help keep the vocational school on Bell Island vibrant through supporting a new program in that school. Across the province of Newfoundland and Labrador, we use those institutions to provide the training and the education in the job development program, but most particularly in job entry. We have seen tremendous programs developed under job entry and innovations. That money goes straight to those institutions. It keeps their programming going. It keeps people in work. It keeps faculty hired. It keeps buildings occupied and rooms busy. It provides the training in skill development that we so badly need to help develop our economy and to help develop the people who depend so much on that economy.

I want to talk briefly about equalization. Newfoundland and Labrador and, indeed, all of Atlantic Canada receive much more through equalization than we do through EPF, almost twice as much. That is expected to grow and obviously it will grow with the economy, again at about 4 per cent or a little more. That is more than the rate of growth in government programming. In that program, in the case of Newfoundland and Labrador, we see a little over $900 million each year, untouched by the budget. It continues to grow. When we hear about cutbacks, let us remember that we are not talking about cutbacks. We may be talking about less growth, but we are not talking about cutbacks.

These three programs provide 46 per cent of the Newfoundland and Labrador budget. That is not to mention transfer payments to individuals—pensions, salaries, unemployment insurance, family allowance and things such as that—which are so vital, so right, and so important.

Remember that this year the Newfoundland and Labrador government came in with a surplus in current account. It has money sitting in the bank. The governments of other Atlantic provinces have balanced their budgets. That is good. That is a great credit to them, but they parade around the country talking about the federal government stealing money from them.

This is an important piece of legislation. These amendments add absolutely nothing to it and I encourage all of my colleagues to move quickly to support this legislation so that we can continue to build a strong country and be able to respond to the needs of Newfoundland and Labrador, and all of Atlantic Canada.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Phillip Edmonston (Chambly): Madam Speaker, I should like to speak mainly to the proposed amendments to Bill C–69. I support my colleague's motion because I can see that this legislative measure is dangerous and unacceptable. As a member from Quebec who realizes that this is going to take away some $4 billion and that on a number of occasions even our premier denounced this action on the part of another government that keeps saying it is favourable to Quebec, which is completely false, I believe Bill C–69 sets an unacceptable precedent. The fact is that this move on the part of the government has been referred to the courts, therefore the government measure is *sub judice*, yet they have the nerve to ask the House to adopt the bill. Decency alone commands that the House should at least wait for a court ruling. What will the court decide? That is very important because that is why I believe this bill is very dangerous.

We try to tell Canadians that federalism is profitable and we seek to sell federalism, yet we are about to reduce the responsibilities of the federal government by giving less money to provinces such as Alberta, Ontario, British Columbia, and Quebec as well.

I will tell you something about a concept, and I am sure my colleague also understands the meaning of what is called a social contract. We have agreements with the federal government to the effect that it will provide us with some kind of security, but quite the opposite is happening in this case. People in Quebec—I see you understand French. I am glad my colleagues understand French. The social contract means that we should get some kind of protection from the federal government. But we did not get that protection. The Conservative government members think this is funny. I can understand why they feel like laughing today, but I believe they are laughing at Quebecers because they think that the way to defend the interests of Quebec is to cut $4 billion off the payments to the province. I do not see it that way.

I am sorry, Madam Speaker, but this bill is unacceptable to Quebecers. Why? When I talk about the $4 billion we will lose in the first year, where will that loss be felt? Very simple, the loss will be felt in health services, particularly health services for the elderly.

In my riding a lot of that money for health services is spent on seniors. I know. I have lived in the riding of Saint–Hyacinthe, and the same thing happens in other ridings. As far as we Quebecers are concerned, the government is showing that federalism doesn't pay. It's obvious and it's too bad. It's too bad because—

[*English*]

Let me say this in English to make sure that my hon. colleagues on the other side, both French and English, understand.

I know why the Conservative party is becoming an endangered species across Canada. It is because Canadians believe that the bill before us, Bill C–69, is unjust and unfair. They believe that our government is the architect of our misery in the sense of high interest rates, in the sense of free trade which, as we say in French—

[*Translation*]

—never deliver the goods. Excuse me, Madam Speaker, I heard some noises on the other side, among the Tories. I am sure hon. members will agree that even the media will tell them that free trade has not delivered the goods and that today, according to this government, $4 billion is to be cut from funding earmarked for Quebecers because the government needs this money to pay off the deficit.

Madam Speaker, I say that if we need this money because of the deficit, we should ask ourselves: "Are there other ways to get this money?"

Mr. Blenkarn: Raise taxes.

Mr. Edmonston: I hear some more noises from the other side that we should raise taxes. I don't think so. I think we should cut government spending. We have to. The federal government's expenditures can be cut in several places.

However, Madam Speaker, in concluding, I want to say that this is a bill the NDP, at this stage, wants to put on hold by proposing amendments. We want to wait one year. Otherwise we want to kill the bill outright because it is against the interests of Canadians and especially against the interests of Quebecers.

• (1620)

[*English*]

Mr. Brian L. Gardiner (Prince George—Bulkley Valley): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to have the chance to speak in the House today on Bill C-69, an act to amend certain statutes to enable restraint of government expenditures. It may be more reasonable to say that it is an act to implement regressive measures against the people of Canada by the Progressive Conservative government. Let us take a look at what Bill C-69 is and does.

We talk about how legislation and various programs in this country impact on people. It is sometimes good but, with the Conservative government, it is usually bad. What is Bill C-69 and how does it work?

Bill C-69 attempts to change the framework of sharing between the federal government and the provinces on post-secondary education, health and the Canada Assistance Plan, which provides general assistance to people in need. We are talking today about legislation to change the framework of what we have developed in this country to try to ensure that Canadians can enjoy the kind of services that we have come to expect.

As many of these programs have developed the federal government, with its often considerable taxing powers, has stated, in co-operation with the provinces, the objectives it wants to achieve. It has asked the provinces to join with it once it has passed the legislation to implement those changes.

Bill C-69 is bad news for Canada. It is bad news for Canadians from coast to coast to coast. Let us look at the themes of Bill C-69, the themes of the Progressive Conservative government. This bill attacks the poorest of the poor. It sentences those on social assistance to two years and more of increasing poverty. It threatens the already over-taxed child care system. It means no new subsidized spaces for child care.

It clearly sends conflicting messages to the people of Canada about this government's interest in working with the provinces to try to improve our health care, a system which is already one of the best in the world, and about maintaining post-secondary education so that Canada can compete in that global market about which my friends across the way always talk. This bill abandons poor people and makes a mockery of the words of the Prime Minister when he talked about making education his number one priority.

The member for St. John's East talks about what the impact of this legislation will be in his province, and others talk about Saskatchewan, British Columbia, Ontario, or other provinces, or the Territories. People come into our offices saying that they are having trouble meeting their bills at the end of the month and asking what government can do to help, or what form of help they are getting now from government. It is legislation like this that changes the framework and impacts upon the people with whom we have come to work so closely in our riding offices who need the help so dearly. This government is avoiding the mandate that it has been given to help those people.

Let us take a look at what the accumulated impact of the cuts in this legislation will be in my province alone. Make no mistake, we are talking about cuts to post-secondary education and health care in Canada.

British Columbia is unique because we have a premier in British Columbia who has called for this kind of legislation. Yet, on the other hand, he has joined with two other provinces to challenge the unilateral movement by this government to cancel their agreements. At best, the premier of British Columbia is schizophrenic and really does not quite understand what is involved. Does he, as he said, want the federal government to cut back its spending and reduce its deficit? On the other hand, a minister of his own government is challenging this legislation.

You cannot have it both ways, Madam Speaker. The premier of British Columbia cannot have it both ways and he does not know which way he is going to have it. His actions are going to mean more damage to health care and post-secondary education in British Columbia than we have ever had before.

He has tried every party so far. He has been a Liberal.

Mr. Skelly (Comox—Alberni): He is a Liberal.

Mr. Gardiner: He is a Liberal. He has been a Socred. He is now. I do not know how he votes federally. He is suing his friends in the federal government.

Mr. Skelly (Comox—Alberni): He didn't vote in the last election.

Mr. Gardiner: My friend says he did not even vote in the last federal election and who knows what further we can expect. What will the impact be? The impact of this legislation is going to be over $3 billion worth of cuts to British Columbians. It makes a mockery of the attempts to develop the kind of post-secondary education system we need. We are hoping that legislation will be tabled this week in the provincial legislature to establish a university in Prince George to serve northern British Columbia. What kind of future does that university or other universities have when this government is cutting $3 billion from post-secondary education and health in this country?

I asked the Secretary of State questions about the block funding formulas that we have, which of course the Liberals support. I asked him to lay to rest the fears that we have had that funds from this government for education and health are spent paving highways in British Columbia. I asked whether he has done any studies on this and whether he can tell me that I am wrong. He did not answer the question. He said we had to trust him.

Canadians have found out what has happened when they place their trust in this government at the ballot box. We have seen an attack on the very programs that we have had to fight to develop in this country. They are being whittled away by the Conservatives, usually with the support of the Liberal party. I think we should make any effort that we can make with regard to Bill C-69 to see that those changes do not come about. All they ask for in the legislation is that the provinces be given notice about implementing changes. That was one particular part of the the previous legislation. It is incredible that we have the same kind of government. The Liberals brought in that measure in the first place. They are encouraged by this legislation. We have got to change it, stop it and ensure that we develop the kind of education and health programs across this country that the legislation that we have brought in and supported will guarantee.

• (1630)

Mr. Lee Richardson (Calgary Southeast): Madam Speaker, we are going to come back to reality for a minute after that speech.

I would like to point out what Bill C-69 is. It was introduced in the House of Commons on March 15, 1990. Its purpose is to implement key aspects of the expenditure control program affecting statutory programs proposed in the February 20, 1990, budget by finance minister Wilson. Combined with the restraint initiatives announced in December, 1989, this plan will reduce government spending by an estimated $3 billion in 1990-91 and by $3.8 billion in 1991-92. The federal deficit is projected to decline—

Mr. Milliken: Madam Speaker, I know the hon. member is about to make a scintillating contribution to the debate; I just wish some of his cabinet colleagues were here to listen to him. This is—

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order. The hon. member raised the same subject as a point of order earlier and was told that this is not a point of order. I would appreciate that we would continue with debate.

Mr. Richardson: Madam Speaker, before I was so rudely interrupted by the lone Liberal in the House—the only one who sits here in the entire House, and he wants to rudely interrupt.

Mr. Milliken: I was very polite.

Mr. Richardson: As I was saying, the federal deficit is projected to decline from $30.5 billion in 1990 to $28.5 billion in 1990-91 and down to $26.8 billion in 1991-92.

This bill affects four programs: the Canada Assistance Plan, the Canadian Exploration Incentive Program, the Established Programs Financing Arrangement and the Public Utilities Income Tax Transfer. First is a summary of the restraint initiatives.

One, the Canada Assistance Plan: The federal government pays provinces half the cost of eligible social assistance expenditures under the Canada Assistance

Plan. These transfers have grown from $4 billion in 1984–85 to $5.5 billion in 1990, an average increase of 6.7 per cent. The amendments do not affect provinces which receive federal equalization transfers, as my hon. friend from St. John's was saying earlier. The federal government will therefore continue to share half of all the eligible expenditures incurred in these provinces. For provinces not receiving equalization, the bill provides for a maximum 5 per cent annual growth of Canada Assistance Plan contributions for 1991 and 1992. These provinces, Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia, are in a better fiscal position than the federal government to finance expenditures beyond the 5 per cent rate. Implementation of this measure will provide for resumption of the present regime on April 1, 1992.

The second program affected is the Canadian Exploration Incentive Program, CEIP. The CEIP provides a contribution of 30 per cent of the cost of mineral, oil and gas exploration financed with flow-through share arrangements. It was introduced in 1988 following the sharp decline in the stock markets and the subsequent difficulty of raising capital. It was the only remaining subsidy to business that is demand driven and, hence, open-ended. The government costs in 1989-90 are expected to exceed $160 million. The program was cancelled effective February 19, 1990, but with grant filing provisions in respect of written agreements entered into prior to February 20, 1990.

A third, and perhaps least understood, is the Established Programs Financing. Established Programs Financing is the single largest transfer program to provinces and has grown from $14.5 billion in 1984–85 to almost $20 billion in 1989–90, an average annual increase of 6.3 per cent. Under Established Programs Financing, the federal government provides equal per capita financial assistance to all provinces, through the transfer of tax points and cash payments. Historically, these transfers were undertaken to assist provinces to carry out their responsibilities in respect of health care and post-secondary education. However, since 1977, provinces have been able to use these transfers according to their particular priorities, rather than in the more restrictive fashion required by previous cost-sharing arrangements. The bill will hold the per capita EPF transfer in 1991 and 1992 to its 1989–90 level. However, total EPF transfers will continue to grow with the population increase of each province, or about 1 per cent nationally.

The bill provides for a resumption of EPF growth in 1992–93 at the rate of growth of GNP less three percentage points, which is consistent with the announcement in the April 1989 budget. The growth of the total Established Programs Financing transfer, beginning in 1992–93, will not fall below the rate of inflation. This change to EPF will have exactly the same per capita impact on all provinces and represents less than 1 per cent of provincial revenues in 1990–91. Low-income provinces will continue to benefit from the large and growing equalization transfers which have been exempted from the expenditure control plan.

The final program affected by these restraint measures is the Public Utilities Income Tax Transfer Act. This act provides for the transfer to provinces of 95 per cent of the eligible federal corporate income tax paid by investor-owned electric and gas utilities. Total payments to provinces under the program during 1990–91 and 1991–92 will not exceed the amount paid in 1989–90, that is, in each year. The provinces will share in the control level of the transfer in 1991 and 1992, in proportion to their eligible claims, as determined by the existing rules of the program.

For further clarity, I would like to explain in more detail the Canada Assistance Plan. The Canada Assistance Plan was introduced in 1966, over 24 years ago, to help provinces with the cost of providing social assistance and welfare services to people in need. At the same time, it was recognized that the provinces have jurisdiction in this area. The Canada Assistance Plan cost shares 50 per cent of eligible social assistance and welfare service costs. Under the terms of cost sharing, the provinces make the day-to-day decisions about the design and delivery of their individual programs.

For example, they set benefit levels, they decide who is eligible, all within the legislative and regulatory framework for eligible support and services under the Canada Assistance Plan. About two-thirds of the $5.5 billion that the federal government now transfers to the provinces under the Canada Assistance Plan is for general cash assistance; that is the monthly cash support for basic needs like food, shelter and clothing and other items of assistance. The other third goes to welfare services of various types, including day care, counselling, assessment, rehabilitation and other services such as homes

for special care or child welfare. While the federal government specifies the conditions for cost sharing, it is the provincial governments which are responsible for the design and delivery of programs to the public.

The budget measure continues to respect the provincial role in delivering and designing assistance and services to people in need. It also continues to assist provinces with the costs of providing that assistance. The budget measure protects the poor, equalization-receiving provinces from any change in the federal contributions. The budget measure applies only to three non-equalization receiving provinces. These three provinces, Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia, are fiscally strong and can therefore cope with a two-year restriction in the federal contribution under the Canada Assistance Plan. In those provinces, the federal government will continue to cost share Canada Assistance Program expenditures within a 5 per cent annual growth rate for each of the next two years, 1990-91 and 1991-92. We are not talking about cut-backs or, as the NDP says, "threatening the welfare of the poor". If a province does not increase expenditures by more than 5 per cent in each of the next two years, the ceiling will have no effect. For increases in expenditure above 5 per cent, the fiscally stronger provinces like Alberta are in a better position at this time to pay such costs.

• (1640)

The federal government's priority is to bring program expenditures in line with our capacity to afford them and to bring our deficit and debt down.

Some provinces are well placed to assist in this goal by absorbing a temporary limit on the growth in the federal contribution to them under the major federal transfers. The Canada Assistance Plan measure does this while still protecting the lower-income provinces.

I would like to conclude with a brief consideration of the effect on my province of Alberta of the proposed changes in Established Programs Financing.

The Established Programs Financing transfer to Alberta will be limited to the same per-person levels as 1989-90 for the next two fiscal years. Growth of transfers to Alberta under the Canada Assistance Plan will be limited by the 5 per cent cap on growth of these payments to non-equalization provinces. Alberta will only be affected by this lid on CAP if the province chooses to increase spending under CAP by more than 5 per cent. If it does so, then it should bear the extra costs as it is obviously more able to afford them than the federal government.

Despite these limitations on transfer growth, transfers to Alberta under Established Programs Financing and the Canada Assistance Plan are expected to rise from $2.3 billion in 1989-90 to $2.4 billion and $2.45 billion in 1990-91 and 1991-92 respectively.

Federal support to Alberta is going to continue playing a strong role in the provincial fiscal picture. Major federal transfer programs make up 22 per cent of total Alberta revenues. In summary, on a per capita basis the federal transfers are expected to amount to $972 for each Alberta resident in 1990-91 and $979 for the subsequent fiscal year.

Ms. Lynn Hunter (Saanich—Gulf Islands): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to add my voice in opposition to the introduction of Bill C-69 and to support the amendments put forth by my hon. colleagues on the committee.

Bill C-69 reduces the Established Programs Financing. It puts a cap on the Canada Assistance Plan. It is a bad deal for Canada and a particularly bad deal for those so-called have provinces, British Columbia, Alberta, and Ontario.

There is an interesting little twist in all of this because the premier of my province, Bill Vander Zalm, invited this very action. In an address to the Union of B.C. Municipalities meeting last September he stated: "If the federal government will cut back on its expenditures then we, similarly, will have to give, not only on equalization payments, but on transfer payments as well".

This is where B.C. is doubly punished, not only by the federal government but also by its own provincial government. Another little quirk in all this, Madam Speaker, is that now the attorney general of that same provincial government has moved to sue the Canadian federal government in the B.C. Court of Appeal. It is challenging this cut on a constitutional basis, reminding the Canadian government of its constitutional responsibilities to transfer on a fifty-fifty basis to provinces the cost of such programs for social policies.

The same provincial government that invited these cuts is now attempting to sue the government for doing what it asked it to do. One wonders why people laugh derisively at the Government of British Columbia. Well, here is an example of why. The only people who are not laughing are the people of British Columbia, because they are being doubly punished by the initiatives of these two governments.

Nineteen billion dollars is transferred annually to the provinces under these plans. Under Bill C–69 that will be cut by $7.3 billion between now and 1994–95. That is a sizeable reduction.

What has happened and is happening is that the government's deficit reduction measures are almost exclusively based on the cuts to social programs. I know the ears will perk up across the way, but it all fits in.

It talks about the plan under the free trade agreement, the same free trade agreement that the government promised to the people of Canada would not cut social programs. The free trade agreement is behind all of this. The effect of Bill C–69 will be to cut that $7.3 billion. The free trade agreement, in keeping with this, is the whole backdrop.

The government says that it is cutting to reduce the deficit. I think everyone is in favour of reducing the deficit. We have our own suggestions on how that should happen. It has to do with a reduction in interest rates. What is really happening is that the cloak behind the cuts to social programs is deficit reduction, but the justification is really to get the government off the backs of business so they can compete with American companies. That is the link to the free trade agreement.

The government promised that the poor, the sick, and the elderly would not be affected by the trade deal. We see just the opposite. What the government promised in the election of 1988 is not what is occurring now.

This government, in keeping with that, is also on a privatization kick. This is once again where British Columbia is being doubly punished, because the same dynamic is occurring in British Columbia.

The free trade agreement provides for the U.S. to have equal access for private health care management services. We have in my province right now a deplorable lack of health care services, where people are forced to go the United States to receive emergency open heart surgery. This is the same government that invited these cuts to Established Programs Financing.

This reminds me of a quote from Oscar Wilde. I will paraphrase it. The government both in Ottawa and Victoria knows the cost of everything and the value of nothing.

Under the Canada Assistance Plan the federal government is required to provide funds on a fifty–fifty cost–shared basis. We in my party believe that the tax system should be a redistributive mechanism. We are committed to that. That is one of the reasons we are who we are. We believe in national programs. We believe in them being equitably distributed across Canada.

In this current constitutional crisis we are experiencing, we are the party that is most upset at what is going on, because it is the national programs and the financing of those programs that are in jeopardy if our country should fall apart.

The member of the legislature for my riding is also the finance minister for British Columbia. He is the guy who is implementing the cuts. He is readjusting his budget because of cuts to the Established Programs Financing and the cap on CAP. It is interesting because of what his premier, his boss, had invited. It is now causing him no end of torment because he is seeing the effects of the invitation. That is British Columbia politics for you, Madam Speaker.

• (1650)

I have a button that I sometimes wear given to me by the hon. member for Mission—Coquitlam. It says: "Has the world gone mad, or is this B.C.?" It is the whole mindset of the premier saying: "You must do this in the interest of deficit reduction". Then when the government does it, they say: "Wait a minute, we didn't really mean that", and when it is followed through, the provincial government sues the federal government. It is like a Monty Python show.

As I said, the only people who are not seeing the joke of it all are the people of British Columbia. I hope they have the courage to junk the Socred government along with its idea of deficit reduction and elect the New Democratic Party in the next provincial election. That would go a long way to serving the interests of British Columbians because we have a plan. We know how to operate an economy in a much more responsible manner than the Social Credit government. The New Democratic Party also knows how not to invite disaster on our

province, much like the premier of British Columbia has done.

Mr. Kempling: Kick them out.

Ms. Hunter: Believe me, we are working very hard to do that very thing.

My hon. colleagues who have worked on the committee studying Bill C–69 have put forth some very worthwhile amendments based on our belief that the Government of Canada has to live up to its contractual and constitutional responsibilities by consulting with the provinces prior to any changes to the Canada Assistance Plan. I think it only makes sense when we are talking about the whole constitutional crisis we have now. A little consultation could have averted a lot of this.

We are not talking just about the Constitution. We are talking about the way the government should be structured and the way its members should be talking to one another.

In conclusion, British Columbia is being doubly punished both by the federal government and by the provincial government. I hope that at the provincial level they will turf the Socreds out in the next provincial election and I hope that at the federal level I hope they will do the same thing to this government.

Mr. Pat Sobeski (Cambridge): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to stand here today and speak about Bill C–69, which was introduced in the House of Commons on March 15, 1990. The purpose of the bill is to implement key aspects of the expenditure control program affecting the statutory programs proposed in the February 20 budget by the finance minister.

The first thing I would like to talk about is the seriousness of the federal debt situation in relation to the provinces. One illustration of the seriousness of the federal deficit is the size of the federal debt charges in relation to those of the provinces.

For the fiscal year 1989–90, 35 cents of every revenue dollar collected by the federal government went to cover the cost of servicing the public debt. That left 65 cents for program spending before we got into adding to the deficit.

As a point of reference, back in 1968, the cost for servicing the debt was 12 cents of every tax dollar, which left the then Trudeau government 88 cents to use on program spending.

By comparison, debt charges last year in Ontario were 11 cents for every dollar of revenue collected. In British Columbia it was about 4 cents. In Alberta it was 8 cents. In Quebec it was 18 cents. In Atlantic Canada, 15 cents out of every revenue dollar, about one–half the rate of the federal government, went to debt servicing.

Despite our very difficult fiscal situation, the federal government continues to provide significant and growing assistance to provinces in the amount of over $35 billion. These make up a significant part of the revenues to provincial governments, ranging from a high of 46 per cent in Newfoundland to a low of just over 20 per cent in Ontario.

To give an overview, total federal transfers to the provinces, territories and municipalities again will exceed $35 billion in 1990–91. This includes cash transfers of $24 billion and tax transfers of some $11 billion. About 90 per cent of the over $35 billion in federal transfers involves three large programs: Established Programs Financing, $20 billion; equalization payments of some $8 billion; and the Canada Assistance Plan, over $5 billion.

Controlling the debt through deficit reduction is necessary to maintain social programs and a high standard of living for Canadians. If transfers to provinces were exempted from our government's efforts to reduce the deficit and control public debt, other federal programs would have to bear more restraint.

The size of the transfers to the provinces make them difficult to ignore. Again, $35 billion represents almost one–quarter of federal program spending. From the provincial point of view, federal transfers make up anywhere from 30 per cent to 45 per cent of the revenue to the less wealthy provinces and 20 per cent to the richer provinces.

These transfers have grown at an average rate of 5.8 per cent over the last five years, much more than the average annual growth in program spending of 3.6 per cent. Therefore, transfer payments cannot be ignored if further progress is to be made to reduce the deficit and get the public debt under control.

I would like to say a few words now about the Established Programs Financing. Historically these transfers were undertaken to assist the provinces to carry out their responsibilities in respect to health care and post-secondary education. Since 1977 provinces have been able to use these transfers according to their particular priorities rather than in the more restricted fashion required by the previous cost-sharing arrangements.

As a contribution to deficit reduction and debt control for this year and next year, per capita EPF transfers to the provinces will be held constant. This is one feature of Bill C-69. Under Bill C-69 total EPF transfers will continue to grow with provincial population, or about 1 per cent nationally. This measure will reduce federal cash transfers by $870 million in 1990-91 and by $1.5 billion in 1991-92.

Equalization payments represent the second largest transfer program. It totals about $8 billion a year. The equalization program provides provincial governments with sufficient revenues to enable them to provide reasonably comparable levels of public services at reasonably comparable levels of taxation. This year seven provinces are receiving equalization: the four Atlantic provinces, Quebec, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan.

Strong growth in over-all provincial revenues, together with strong economic growth in Ontario, has substantially increased these payments from $5.5 billion in 1984-85 to over $8 billion in the current year.

That brings us to the effect of Bill C-69 on the province of Ontario where the riding of Cambridge is located. The Established Programs Financing to Ontario will be limited to the same per person levels as in 1989-90 for the next two fiscal years.

In addition, however, the growth of social assistance transfers to Ontario under the Canada Assistance Plan will be limited by a 5 per cent cap on the growth of these payments. Ontario will only be affected by the lid on CAP if it chooses to increase spending on social assistance by more than 5 per cent. If it does so, it should bear the extra cost, as it is more able than the federal government to afford them.

• (1700)

Despite these limitations on the transfer growth, transfers to Ontario under the EPF and CAP are expected to rise from $9.1 billion in 1989-90 to $9.3 billion and $9.5 billion in 1990-91 and 1991-92 respectively. While these increases are less than they were projected to be prior to the budget, they still represent annual growth of more than 2 per cent in each year.

Federal support for Ontario is going to continue playing a strong role in the provincial fiscal picture. In the next two years, the major federal transfer programs will make up more than 20 per cent of the total Ontario revenue. On a per capita basis, the federal transfers are expected to amount to $956 for each Ontario resident in 1990-91 and $963 in the subsequent fiscal year.

One could characterize this as very generous treatment on the part of a jurisdiction, the federal government, that is paying 35 cents on every revenue dollar toward covering the debt charges toward another, the province of Ontario, that pays only 11 cents per dollar toward its debts.

In conclusion, every time the Tories talk about cutting spending, we are criticized. Every group in every region and every opposition member pleads for exemptions. But as long as the country remains largely indifferent to the fiscal bind, which is a legacy of the 1968 through 1984 period, the political risks of attacking the problems remain great.

However, this current government is following, a consistent, comprehensive and far-reaching economic plan that started when this government took office in November, 1984. This plan is directed at creating productive jobs and a higher standard of living through sustained non-inflationary ways.

We hope to accomplish this first by continuing action to eliminate the deficit and reverse the growth of public debt, and second, by putting in place fundamental changes to the economy in order to free private initiative and eliminate the inefficiencies caused by government intervention.

Mr. Stan J. Hovdebo (Saskatoon—Humboldt): Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to speak on this bill. This is the kind of bill that gives us an indication of what are, or perhaps I should say what are not, the priorities of this government.

This bill indicates whom the government thinks should bear the burden for its deficit reductions. You, Madam Speaker, are a compassionate person. If you were the person responsible for this bill, you would have those

most able to afford it pay for any change in the funding structure.

This bill shows us that the government thinks the easiest place to get the money is from the powerless, from those who are unable to protect themselves. According to the government, British Columbia, Ontario and Alberta are provinces that are doing a little better economically than the rest of Canada. However, poor people in Ontario are the same as the poor in Saskatchewan. If you are poor in British Columbia, you feel it just as much as if you are poor in Alberta. This bill attacks the poor. It attacks the poorest of the poor because they are the people who depend upon the provincial government for the funding to make care available to them.

It also shows that the priority of this government is not to take care of the poor. Furthermore, this bill sentences the people who are already poor, who are already having problems, to at least two years of increasing poverty because the amount of money that the provincial government will have available to take care of them is going to be less each year.

We have had a child care system of a sort in Canada. This government promised that we would have a child care system that would take care of everybody. In fact, the government got as far as bringing legislation before the House. While it was not a particularly good bill, it showed that the government had some concern about this, at least before the election. That concern for child care disappeared some time during the election, and by the end of the election it was not there. This bill makes it possible, I suppose, for the government to say that now there is no money and we cannot expect it to have a further developed child care structure.

This bill does all of these things in a way which suggests that because Alberta, British Columbia and Ontario are a little better off, they can afford to dig deeper some place else and find money for this kind of care. That is not actually what happens. Since the problems of child care and poverty are not a priority for those governments either, consequently they are going to be affected by this change in the financing structure.

The Established Programs Financing originally did exactly that. It established financing for particular programs: health care, post-secondary education and so on across the board. Originally, that financing was on a dollar-for-dollar basis. For each amount the provincial government spent, it collected a matching grant.

The Liberal government of a few years ago decided that this was getting a little expensive and that it did not have the kind of control over it that it wanted, so it was changed to block funding for secondary education, health and other welfare structures of the provincial governments.

The impact was exactly what we in the New Democratic Party had predicted in those days, that if you take the responsibility for expenditures for the poor and give it to a Conservative or Liberal government, they will not make that a priority. If they are allowed to spend this money any they want, health care or education will not be a priority of a Conservative or a Liberal government, and it was not.

For instance, statistics today show that the province of British Columbia spends less than 1 per cent, in fact less on post-secondary education beyond what it should have or would have received from the federal government. Therefore, we cannot always trust the provincial governments to establish the kind of priorities which we think are important in the New Democratic Party, such as good health care, such as child care, such as care of those people who are unable to feed themselves and clothe themselves.

In 1986, this government further affected the Established Programs Financing by starting a reduction program which would reduce the amount of money that the provinces would have for health care, post-secondary education, and care of people who are poor.

• (1710)

Bill C-69 cuts still further into the kind of financing which we have been talking about here. Consequently, it undermines further the program's ability to improve the standard of living or the quality of life for the people across the country, which is what this established program was intended to do originally. It was already undermined to a certain extent by the Liberal government when it went from established program funding to block funding. The Conservative government further undermined it by reducing it in 1986, and here we have the final blow to this particular program which suggests

that from now on $7.3 billion will be cut between 1990–91 and 1994–95.

The total amount in cuts from 1986 to 1995 is $29 billion. That is a considerable amount of money for the governments of the provinces to find. It is going to be particularly difficult for those governments of the three provinces that have been named in this particular bill, because they will find that instead of an increase in relation to the Gross National Product, they are going to have a less amount in relation to the Gross National Product.

The government's main defence of this bill has been that the Established Programs Financing will increase each year. While that is true, so will everything else. Consequently, the gap between what the provinces are able to spend on these programs and the money they will have available for these programs is going to increase. That is going to have a direct impact on health, post-secondary education, child care and poor people.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Resuming debate. The hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby.

Ms. Dawn Black (New Westminster—Burnaby): Madam Speaker, I rise to support the amendments put forward by my colleague, the hon. member for Mission—Coquitlam.

What the amendments would do is require the Conservative government to live up to its constitutional responsibilities by consulting with the provinces prior to any changes to the Canada Assistance Plan.

Motion No. 4 requires the federal government to serve notice on the three affected provinces that it wants to change the level of federal contributions under the act. It also notes that the passage of this bill cannot be considered as notice as required by Section 8 of the Canada Assistance Plan Act.

Motion No. 8 simply delays the implementation of the bill until 1992. The provisions of Bill C-69 are such that the 5 per cent ceiling on CAP expenditures is for two years only and expires after the fiscal year 1991-92. The effect of this amendment would be to nullify the ceiling on the Canada Assistance Plan.

Whether or not the federal government can move unilaterally and change the Canada Assistance Plan is being considered by the British Columbia Court of Appeal. No action should take place before the court decides, and all appeals are dealt with.

This government often says that it does not want to comment on any issues that are before the courts. That is often what we hear on this side of the House when we question the government on various matters that are of importance to us. It will often say that it will not comment on anything that is before the courts. New Democrats feel that the government should not move on this bill until the court case has been dealt with.

The amendments would simply delay when this bill would come into effect. The amendments would give the provinces a year's notice and a chance for some consultation over the federal government's intention to slap on spending limits.

Bill C-69 is a devastating piece of legislation. It will put a freeze on the transfer payments to the provinces for health care and for post-secondary education.

In my province of British Columbia, day after day, we already see people on long, long waiting lists for hospital care, particularly for open-heart surgery. It is tragic to read stories in the paper about these people awaiting open-heart surgery and their families, and the stress they go through knowing how critically ill a member of their family is and who cannot get into the hospital in British Columbia to get the needed health care.

As a matter of fact, we are now in the incredible situation of Canadians in British Columbia and in other provinces attempting to get the needed health care, such as heart surgery, in the United States. Canadians have prided themselves for a long time on the level of health care in this country and on the fact that Canadians, no matter what their economic status, are able to receive the health care they need. That is changing and it is changing because of the attitudes of this Conservative Government and the Social Credit Government in British Columbia of Premier Bill Vander Zalm.

We also know that the freeze on transfer payments to post-secondary education is imposing undue hardship on the students of B.C. More and more young students are finishing their degrees at university with debt loads of $25,000 and $30,000. Students have come and told me that they are going to have to stop attending university because of the debt load and because they are not guaranteed a well-paying job when they finish their education. They are concerned about the amount of debt

they are carrying to go through university. That is horrendous.

This legislation is only going to make far worse for those students and far worse for people who have lost their jobs because of cutbacks in the forest industry and other industries in British Columbia who are now attempting to get back in to the education system so they can be retrained and get another job. They cannot take the chance. They cannot carry that debt load. It is a disgraceful situation for those young people and for the older people who are trying to get back into the education system in British Columbia.

There are a number of devastating effects of Bill C–69 for the people of British Columbia, Ontario and Alberta, that are totally unfair. The poor in B.C. are just as poor as the poor in any other part of the country. I have been to the food banks in my community. I have been to the school lunch programs in my area. I have seen the people. No one in our society wants the humiliation of lining up, week after week, for a bag of free groceries, and even that bag is shrinking.

Some members on that side of the House seem to think that people are looking for free gifts. Those line–ups are long and the people in those line–ups to get those paltry bags of groceries are humiliated by those walking by and seeing them. They do not want to be there. If they had any other options, they would not be standing in a food bank line–up. I know that. There are now food banks in the Vancouver area simply for single moms and their children. It is shameful that this is happening our country, a wealthy country, a country that prides itself on equal opportunities for all its citizens.

The cap on the Canada Assistance Plan will affect a number of areas in our society. One of the things I hear over and over again when I question the government on its programs or, I should say, its lack of programs and lack of support for women who find themselves living in violent situations in their homes, is some kind of condescending pap from members on the government side. They tell me that they have appointed women to other positions in the government, that they have appointed women to other boards, or about the other appointments for women.

• (1720)

This cap on the Canada Assistance Plan will affect shelters for battered women. That is the federal–provincial funding mechanism for building shelters for battered women. This legislation will prevent more shelters being built and all the soft words and rhetoric of the government about caring for women who find themselves in battered situations, in violent situations, ring very hollow when looking at the real actions.

Another area that will be affected by the cap on the Canada Assistance Plan is child care, and other members have mentioned it here today. Child care is sorely lacking all across Canada, in particular in British Columbia. There are thousands of children who are not in child care situations that we know are safe and that we know have certain standards applied to them. The Canada Assistance Plan again is the mechanism for federal–provincial funding for child care and again we are seeing a limit put on that spending.

I said earlier that the poor of British Columbia are just as poor as those anywhere else in Canada. To put a ceiling on the Canada Assistance Plan is to deal a real blow to those folks. They are already living under the poverty line, already lined up at food banks, and already in a very devastating situation in their home lives.

Bill C–69 clearly shows all Canadians what the Tory agenda is. It is an agenda that we have seen over the past several years where the government has deindexed family allowances. For all its nice words about children, it has deindexed family allowances. Now it has put a clawback on family allowances and on old age pensions. Every single social program in the country has been under attack by the government. The Tory agenda is a very clear agenda. It is one that does not care about the average folks in Canada, the poor, the children, the battered and abused women and Bill C–69 points that out very clearly.

I urge all members in the House to vote against Bill C–69 and stand up for Canadians, stand up for the social safety–net that Canadians have prided themselves on for generations.

Mr. Ron Fisher (Saskatoon—Dundurn): Madam Speaker, it seems every time one stands up in the House, one has to apologize to the Canadian people, on behalf of this Parliament, for legislation which this government has brought in and Bill C–69 is no exception to that. On

that basis, I am only too pleased to be able to stand here and oppose it.

If we go back to the promises, promises, promises and the sacred trust—if anyone can remember them anymore—what we have here is the application of the law of the jungle to the sacred trust concept. What we have here is the tooth and the claw. The previous speaker and others have referred to the clawback. That appellation, I would remind the House, was put there by the government itself and it is certainly no accident that that was the case.

Bill C-69 is a way of circumventing something which the Finance Minister said was not going to occur when he brought down the budget. That is bringing the budget down, making all these changes to it and all the slashing of programs, on the premise of supposedly reducing the deficit and the national debt.

In bringing down the budget, the minister said that there were not going to be any cuts. Actually the quote is almost directly that the cuts are going to be exempted in major transfers to persons. What he failed to say, or maybe very conveniently forgot, was that there were major cuts already in the works from the previous budget, which had not even been implemented yet. I speak primarily of the changes to the Unemployment Insurance Act and the clawbacks to which I have already referred.

These are going to add to the misery of people before Bill C-69 was even introduced. It is absolutely fatuous for the minister to have made those references that people are going to exempted from major cut-backs when he brought in the budget.

One of the best quotes—although I have heard it before—is certainly is something that we ought to be reminded of. My colleague, the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands, said that the government really does know the cost of everything and the value of nothing.

We talk about the cuts in transfer payments to the provinces. Cuts? Well, they are frozen, are they not, for two years? One can just imagine the talks that must have gone on in deciding how to word the government's excuses for what it had done. "Freezing, of course, is not a cut." Of course, freezing is a cut because there is the matter of inflation and the increase in the cost of living.

Lately, many people are having tremendous difficulty getting into university. The previous speaker talked about the cost of financing a university education, but the cuts in the transfer payments have other devastating effects as well, not the least of which is the ability to even get into the university.

In the beautiful university city of Saskatoon, the university has the reputation of being one of the major educational institutions in the country. There have now been approximately 1,500 students unable to go to university in the last two or three years because there have not been the facilities or the finances in the university to accommodate them, either through the lack of physical facilities or the university's inability to finance enough professors to handle the teaching.

As a result, these people have been excluded by an increase in the academic standards which they have to attain in order to get in. I would suggest to you, Madam Speaker, that a good portion of the people who sit across the aisle who are responsible for the debt and the deficit, for the problems these people are having in Saskatoon and elsewhere in the country, would not be able to attain the academic requirements that these young people will have to attain in order to get into university. Here they are, responsible for the very problems that these people are facing. It is just an absolute disgrace that we have to raise academic standards and exclude people from university. Able people are being excluded because of the financial shenanigans of the government opposite.

It is not any kind of an amelioration to the problems of the people of British Columbia, Ontario and Alberta—to change the subject a bit and talk about the Canada Assistance Plan—to say that they are the richer provinces and it is only Alberta, B.C. and Ontario and not every province. Half of Canada's poor live in those three provinces. As was pointed out previously, whether one happens to live in Prince Edward Island or in Toronto, if one is poor, the effects of it are just as devastating. We certainly have a food bank in Saskatoon, something we did not have before 1984 when the present government came to power. It just boggles everyone's mind how this government can speak about the prosperity that this country is supposed to be experiencing while every day we see that the results are exactly the opposite. We see

the results of the failed programs which this government has brought in to help the people of Canada. The problem is that at least 50 per cent of the Canadian population is feeling no positive benefits of the government's programs at all.

• (1730)

If one is unemployed, then the effects of the unemployment insurance changes which may or may or not come about—let us all hope that they do not—will be devastating to the provinces of Alberta, British Columbia and Ontario. They will be just as severe on the other provinces. The number of people who will be in the poorer categories of our society will increase, even on the basis of the government's own predictions. Last year we had an unemployment rate on average of 7.5 per cent. This year the government's own predictions are that it will be 8.2 per cent, while next year it will be 8.5 per cent.

We can see that it is absolutely senseless to say it is only three provinces out of the total. If you are poor, you are poor. If you are going to be suffering from the lack of income or the inability to purchase food, it does not really matter what province you are in.

I am certainly pleased to see that at least one province, with the co-operation of another, is taking the government to court on that matter. I can only wish them good luck because it is an abomination.

Similar comparisons could be made between the educational system and health care. The question of health care has a lot to do with free trade where we get the so-called level playing field with the United States, where those who can afford medical attention get it, and those who cannot pay when they enter the door, do not get it. That is precisely the kind of a situation we are getting into in Canada. There is no way that this government is going to be able to deny it. It is going to be a fact.

Madam Deputy Speaker: On a point of order the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands.

Mr. Milliken: Madam Speaker, in light of the attention the hon. member's speech was attracting, I wonder if there might not be unanimous consent to allow him to continue.

Some hon. members: No.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Resuming debate with the hon. member for Comox—Alberni.

Mr. Robert E. Skelly (Comox—Alberni): Madam Speaker, I was interested in the comments made on this amendment over the last few hours in the House, particularly some of the comments coming from the Liberal side. I am under the impression that the Liberals intend to vote against this motion. I think it should be stated again exactly what this motion is designed to do.

It is designed to require the national government to give legal notice to the provinces before it imposes this bill. As the member for New Westminster pointed out, that will require well over a year, at which point this bill will cease to have any impact. In other words this motion nullifies the effect of the bill.

The Liberals intend to do it this way. They know that 100 per cent of the Tories are going to vote in support of this bill. Thus they are saying that they want it implemented immediately, which is stupid.

Mr. Milliken: We are voting against this bill.

Mr. Skelly (Comox—Alberni): You are voting against it. They are voting for it. The bill is getting passed. What you are saying by not voting for this motion is that you are asking for it to be implemented immediately. I cannot figure out the logic in what the Liberals are doing except if you know a bit of the background, especially in British Columbia.

As was pointed out by some members, it has been the likes of Bill Vander Zalm, the Premier of British Columbia, and Mel Couvelier, the illustrious Minister of Finance of British Columbia, who have advocated a cutback in federal transfer payments to the provinces.

Let us look at the political history of these two individuals. Mel Couvelier is a former leader of the Liberal party in British Columbia, elected by all of those Liberals in B.C. He is the person advocating a cutback in federal transfer payments to provinces such as British Columbia.

Then there is Bill Vander Zalm. Bill Vander Zalm ran for the leadership of the Liberals in the province of British Columbia. I do have to give credit to the Liberals because when Bill Vander Zalm came out in favour of public floggings and hangings he could not get a bare majority to support him to be leader of the party. He had some strong support, but he could not get the majority needed to become leader of the party in British Columbia.

In British Columbia the Liberals have jumped into bed with the Tories, the Reformers, the Flat Earth Society and a bunch of other right wing crazies, basically on a negative program to keep the New Democratic Party, the largest party in British Columbia, out of power.

Mr. Milliken: They have succeeded abundantly.

Mr. Skelly (Comox—Alberni): That is all this member is concerned about. This is Liberal type legislation. It is being demanded by two of the paramount Liberals in British Columbia, one a former leader and one an aspiring leader of the Liberal party.

I do not want to say that it is entirely Liberal legislation, because it is being presented by the Tories in the House today. In British Columbia the Liberals go to bed with the Tories in order to keep the NDP out of office. That is a bit of a problem, but here we are involved in a bit of a public dispute between the two parties.

The simple fact is that the Liberals and the Tories believe in precisely the same kind of attack on social programs and that is why they are going to vote against the motion that has been presented by my colleague from Saskatoon. They know that the huge Tory majority in the House is going to pass this legislation, and by voting against this motion, they are saying that once it is passed, it is going to be implemented right away.

That is exactly what members are doing by voting against this motion and they know it. I think they have received phone calls from Bill Vander Zalm and Mel Couvelier instructing them on this motion.

Mr. Milliken: How can you say that with a straight face? This is silly nonsense.

Mr. Skelly (Comox—Alberni): This is dangerous legislation. We have always been told by the government opposite that we have to cut the deficit in order to protect social programs. The government says if we do not cut the deficit, if we do not cut the debt, we are going to constantly be paying out from the public treasury to the bankers, the bond holders and the people who hold the debt of this country and we are not going to be able to sustain the social programs at the levels and quality we want in this country.

The Prime Minister has called social programs a sacred trust. He says he wants to cut the deficit and the debt in order to maintain these social programs. He does not mean a word he is saying. The Tory program in this country has all along been absolutely identical to the Tory program of Margaret Thatcher. It has been identical to the mean-spirited Tory program of Ronald Reagan. There is absolutely no difference between this and the attack on social programs that has taken place in the United States under Reagan and in Great Britain under Margaret Thatcher. The real ideological movement behind Bill C-69 is that the Tories do not like social programs and that is all there is to it.

There are other methods of cutting the deficit and we have proposed some of them. Just the other weekend the Secretary of State for External Affairs suggested that maybe we should cut back some of the troops in Europe or cut back some of the armaments, those obsolete nuclear arms that are only designed to hit Poland and Czechoslovakia, countries who now suddenly find themselves on our side.

• (1740)

We could cut back on those things and save billions of dollars. Then we can maintain the social programs that we have to their present quality and extent and possibly even expand those programs so that they actually do the job they are designed to do.

My daughter is graduating from high school now in British Columbia. She is going to be going to university. Because British Columbia is not a major contributor to the cost of post-secondary education, the cost of going to university is going to be more than my daughter can afford. If she was going to school in Quebec she would be paying one-third of the tuition fees that she would be paying in British Columbia.

Now the government is freezing EPF funding so that there can be absolutely no increase in the amount of money going into post-secondary education in that province. More and more money will have to come from the students themselves and more and more students will fall below the cut-off line and will not be able to afford to go to university.

That is the kind of mean-spirited Tory policy that we see in this legislation. By passing this motion we will be able to delay this legislation long enough, especially if the odd sensible Tory member on the opposite side supports it, that it will be null and void and have no effect.

I come from the province of British Columbia which is having difficulties these days with its health care system. It is an absolute shame what the Vander Zalm government has done to health care in British Columbia. There are hospitals throughout the province that have all the equipment, all the facilities, and all the operating rooms they need. What they do not have is staff because the B.C. government, under Bill Vander Zalm, is against hiring people to work in hospitals or paying them decent wages. That is because he does not understand one thing in his Liberal-Tory mind. He forgets the fact that it is not buildings that care for people, it is not equipment that cares for people, it is people who care for people and he should be hiring people in those hospitals so that they can deliver the services.

It is necessary to send sick British Columbians across the border to Seattle and Bellingham in Washington and to Portland, Oregon, to get surgery when we have the facilities and the equipment. We just do not have a government with the right kind of priorities.

This is the kind of legislation that backs up the insane social policy of people like Bill Vander Zalm. I would encourage my Liberal friends to vote for this motion and against this legislation and to let us get on with developing quality social programs in this country.

Mr. Rod Laporte (Moose Jaw—Lake Centre): Madam Speaker, I too rise with respect to this motion. This is an issue that is fundamental to this country. It has always been my impression, and I think it is the impression of many Canadians, that health and education are two of the most fundamental issues in our society today. When a government ignores those issues it does so at the peril of the future of this nation. What is a nation if we do not have a strong recognition and a strong desire to educate people to their best capability, to encourage the society to move ahead? In order to move ahead it needs a commitment by governments, both federal and provincial, to education.

Health as well is a fundamental issue to society. With the advances in technology and with the prospects for help in the future, it is necessary for a government to have a major commitment to health. Unfortunately, this government has fallen short on both counts.

Approximately $19 billion is transferred to the provinces each year, with roughly 70 per cent or $13.3 billion of that amount going for hospital insurance and medicare. The effect of this bill is to freeze at current levels funding for federal transfers for the next two fiscal years, 1990–91 and 1991–92. After that, the transfers will grow at the rate of the GNP, minus 3 per cent.

This is not the first time that this government has affected health and education in this way. Back in 1986 this particular government cut 2 per cent from the rate of growth in health and education spending. In fact, the government began declining its support in relation to the Gross National Product.

The effect of this bill will be to cut $7.3 billion from federal transfers between 1991 and 1994–95. When the effect of the 1986 cuts is included, the total amount cut between 1986 and 1995, as calculated by the Library of Parliament, will be something in the order of $29 billion.

What effect is that having? It is having some tremendous effects. I have been personally affected by a family in the riding, the Attfields who live in Lanigan, Saskatchewan. Mrs. Attfield has written a number of times and made comments publicly. In an article in the Lanigan paper not so very long ago she indicated that Princess Margaret Hospital in Toronto—one place in which life-saving bone marrow transplants are taking place—received enough cuts to force it to cancel 10 transplants in one year. Her husband, Kevin, had bone cancer and needed a transplant. Her husband, who was supposed to have a transplant in February, waited until July to have his transplant. During this period his condition went into an advanced stage and the bone marrow transplant did not work.

She wrote that oncology specialists in Saskatoon and Toronto told them that had his transplant taken place when it was scheduled, the success rate would have been much higher and the transplant probably would have worked. She wrote: "Because it was postponed, the leukaemia that Kevin is afflicted with will probably cost him his life".

This morning I phoned Mrs. Attfield to discuss this matter with her. I was advised that Kevin died this morning. It is a tragedy when something like that happens. You feel helpless as an elected member standing and talking to this Chamber. The need for a commitment to health care has to be there. The reality is there.

This is one situation of thousands throughout the country.

What this government has done by implementing and taking the action it has means that there will be a whole lot of other Kevin Attfields in this country in the future. It is not right or proper.

It is time that we as a legislative body think about the Kevin Attfields in this country. It is time we made a real commitment to health and education.

That is why this bill is wrong. I know, and we all know, that there are deficit problems. This is not the proper way to cut the deficit.

Surely members on the other side know that in their hearts themselves. To have something like this happen is simply tragic. It leaves a person speechless.

I want to close by saying that I hope that the government will change its attitude and start to commit itself to areas that really count in this country such as health and education so that similar problems will be alleviated in the future.

• (1750)

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The first question is on Motion No. 4 standing in the name of Ms. Langan.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

Madam Deputy Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

Madam Deputy Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

Madam Deputy Speaker: In my opinion the nays have it.

And more than five members having risen:

Madam Deputy Speaker: Pursuant to Standing Order 76(8), the recorded division on the motion stands deferred.

The second question is on Motion No. 8 standing in the name of Ms. Langan. .

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

Madam Deputy Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

Madam Deputy Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

Madam Deputy Speaker: In my opinion the nays have it.

And more than five members having risen

Madam Deputy Speaker: Pursuant to Standing Order 76(8), the recorded division on the motion stands deferred.

The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred divisions on the report stage of the bill now before the House. Call in the members.

And the division bells having rung:

Pursuant to Standing Order 45(5)(a), I have been requested by the Deputy Government Whip to defer the division until a later time.

[*Translation*]

Accordingly, pursuant to Standing Order 45(5)(*a*) the recorded division on the question now before the House stands deferred until tomorrow at 3 p.m, at which time the bells to call in the members will be sounded for not more than fifteen minutes.

[*English*]

Is there unanimous consent of the House to call it seven o'clock?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[*Translation*]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Mark Assad (Gatineau—La Lièvre): Madam Speaker, I raised the matter of tire recycling in this House last week, referring, of course, to the fire in Saint-Amable and to the one in Hagersville a few weeks ago. They have been environmental disasters.

The problem is, Madam Speaker, that we know the danger they represent, but we do not know what to do with used tires. The technology exists however to recycle them or to burn them.

I had suggested that option in my supplementary to the Minister responsible. I have since been able to obtain more information.

On February 16, 1990, the Minister of the Environment told the House that Environment Canada had developped a program to establish and develop a recycling and energy conservation process that was going to be funded at the cost of $2 million.

According to figures I obtained from a departmental official, from $500,000 to $800,000 has been spent to date. But we must tell hon. members and Canadians that this program came into being 10 years ago, in 1980, under a previous government. It decided there was to be a program to investigate the possibility of recycling or burning used tires which, as we know, are piling up in many places across the country. The best known, of course, are Saint-Amable and Hagersville.

Madam Speaker, the purpose of this program established by the previous government was to help stimulate research into tire recycling. It was for projects to use tires in manufacturing and not to burn them right away to produce energy. The provinces have never licensed a company to burn tires. In 1983, the province of Ontario refused Canada Cement Lafarge a licence to burn tires, on the grounds that it was hazardous for the environment. But at the present time, with the little research I have done, we have a company in California.

[*English*]

It is the world's largest tire fired power station. It has been running successfully for the past two years, next to the world's biggest used tire dump in Modesto, California.

The plant burns 4.5 million tires a year and generates 15 megawatts of electricity, enough to meet the needs of 14,000 homes. Useful steel, zinc and gypsum are extracted from the ash.

Oxford Energy, the plant owner and operator, is building a second tire burning power station in Sterling, Connecticut with an input of 10 million tires a year and an electrical output of 30 megawatts. The company plans to build six to eight similar plants in the United States by 1995.

We have in Canada in the last years spent amounts of money and have one of the greatest research facilities at our disposal, the National Research Council. The technology exists to the south of us. That is the question I was aiming at last week. After the disaster at Hagersville how come we have not simply gone to see this technology that exists? Why do we not look it over, see what the environmental problems are, if any, and apply it here? We would save ourselves a lot of grief like we had in St-Amable and Hagersville.

I would like to know from the Department of the Environment what we are waiting for. Why not purchase this technology if we have to? God knows we could have saved ourselves a lot of money when we consider the disasters of St-Amable and Hagersville.

[*Translation*]

Madam Speaker, that is basically all there is to it. What will Environment Canada do in the wake of these two disasters? Did it check out this new technology? If not, what is it waiting for? Did it call on the internationally famous National Research Centre, which has succeeded in solving a lot of problems? If they have found other solutions, we would like to hear them.

• (1800)

[*English*]

Mr. Lee Clark (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of the Environment): Madam Speaker, I apologize to my hon. friend for my late arrival. I was anticipating this debate to commence at seven o'clock, so he caught me slightly off guard.

There are two or three points I would like to make in response to my hon. friend's questions and comments. First of all, I would certainly like to express my appreciation to the government of Quebec for the manner in

which it responded to the fire and, particularly, for the very co-operative way in which it was willing to work with the Government of Canada and other jurisdictions.

As you may know, Madam Speaker, the federal government was involved from the very first instance on the day on which the fire broke out. We were able to be present and to monitor water, soil and air emissions throughout. We are continuing to do so. Certainly the good news is that the results to this point in time have been very encouraging.

I would also like to pay tribute to the skill of the fire-fighters who demonstrated that they brought to their task a great deal of expertise. Perhaps to some degree they learned from previous fires which have occurred throughout the country and in the United States. I was encouraged by the results as well.

As I think all members of this House know, the disposal of waste such as the tires in question falls within the provincial government's jurisdiction. Nevertheless, the federal government is very anxious to assist wherever possible, as we did in this particular case.

In addition, we are working with the Council of Environment Ministers, involving all jurisdictions across the country, in putting together an action plan which we hope will ensure that these types of fires are less likely to occur in the future and, when they do occur, that they will be less of a threat to those who live in the vicinity.

Part of the good news relating to the fire in Quebec which has just occurred was the fact that the tires were located in a less flammable manner than that which occurred in a previous fire in Ontario. While I listened with interest to what the hon. member has said in respect of new technology, I think more vigilance on the part of provincial governments and closer adherence to the existing regulations by the proprietors will ensure that storage facilities in the future will be safer than they have been in the past.

The federal government is very actively involved in the search for financially feasible recycling technologies. At the moment we have the capacity only to recycle a small percentage of tires available in Canada. When we look to the future we are going to have to see much more strict regulations in respect of the disposal of automobiles, tires, and parts thereof.

At the moment we are working to try to make such recycling efforts as profitable as possible and to encourage therefore less storage and more use. There is certainly some expense involved in that, but I think the manner in which the federal government and the provinces are working together in co-operation with the private sector will, if not ensure, at least alleviate the problem in the future. We may not be able to guarantee we will not have such fires, but I think we can guarantee that we will be in a better position to deal with them and there will be less danger of such fires because greater numbers of tires will be recycled in the future.

SCOTIA SYNFUELS PROJECT

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond): Madam Speaker, on May 16, 1990 I put a question to the then Minister of Public Works with regard to the possible support of the Scotia Synfuels project to be located in Cape Breton Island.

At that time the minister responded to my question by giving the same sort of flippant answer that we have been receiving for quite some time: that the matter would be given due consideration and a decision reached at an appropriate time.

I wish to point out for members of the House that this particular project has been in the making for quite some time. In point of fact, there are 10 specific reasons as to why Nova Scotians and indeed Canadians would want to see this particular project proceed and proceed without delay.

The first point is that this would be a major job creator for the province for Nova Scotia. Over 2,000 permanent jobs, direct and indirect, would result if this project would go ahead. Approximately 500 jobs in the construction industry would result for the next three years alone.

It should be noted that unemployment in Cape Breton Island at the present time is exceedingly high. You may be aware, Madam Speaker, that the unadjusted rate in Canada today for unemployment is 7.7 per cent, while in the province of Nova Scotia it is 11 per cent. In the province of Ontario, the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate is 5.3 per cent, whereas in the Island of Cape Breton the official unemployment rate as of April 21, 1990, was 19.1 per cent.

• (1805)

We believe that to be an incorrect figure. We believe it to be substantially higher because hundreds of individuals have given up and thereafter do not report any longer to the local CEIC offices to register for employment in that they have lost all hope. The need is there, and these jobs would certainly be welcomed in that area of Canada.

The second reason for supporting this project is that there would be a new market for 400,000 tonnes of coal from the Cape Breton Development Corporation. That corporation produces a high sulphur coal. This would be a plus for this particular project and not a negative.

Third, it would be a generator of new business for suppliers of goods and services in the province of Nova Scotia. The capital cost of the project would be $450 million. There would be new tax revenues from municipal, provincial and federal governments.

Fourth, this is a proven technology. It is the same basic technology chosen by Husky Oil for its $1.5 billion upgrader in Lloydminster.

Fifth, it is environmentally the most advanced commercial technology for removing acid rain pollutants from coal and oil.

Sixth, more permanent employment would accrue as a result of this particular project than Hibernia, at a fraction of the cost of Hibernia.

Seventh, this project would produce 4 billion barrels a year of high value refinery feedstock for gasoline and diesel and also clean power utility fuels and by-products for pure sulphur.

Eighth, this could be integrated with the Nova Scotia power plant at Point Tupper to provide 150 megawatts of additional power at a rock bottom price.

Ninth, over $5 million has been invested to date in coal testing and feasibility studies, of which $2 million has been provided by the Government of Canada and the Government of Nova Scotia.

Tenth, the favourable economics of this particular project would be that capital costs have been reduced by 65 per cent, better economics than the federal government's supported megaprojects in western Canada, where commercial viability is dependent upon existing federal government incentives.

It is essential that if these 10 points are to be realized by providing employment in an area which has high unemployment and by providing a new technology which is environmentally healthy and safe for the residents who live there and elsewhere, it would deplete acid rain in a demonstrable way. If those goals are to be realized, the Government of Canada will have to come forward and support this project fully as it has supported other projects across the country. If it provides the tax credit that this consortium is looking for, most if not all the money will then be able to come from the private sector.

We have the state on the one hand being actively involved in pursuing economic activities for an area of this country which so desperately needs it, coupled with the private sector that will make financial contributions in order to realize this particular goal.

In terms of what is good public policy, this is certainly an example of what is good public policy. I would only hope that government members opposite, and indeed the spokesperson for the government today, would stand in their places and give unequivocal support to the Scotia Synfuels project. It enjoys the support of local municipal governments all across Cape Breton.

Something very unusual has occurred in the province of Nova Scotia as well. On April 18, in the Nova Scotia House of Assembly there was on all-party resolution. It was supported by the New Democratic party finally. It was supported by the Conservative party. The official opposition, the Liberal party also supported it. They all agreed to lend their support to the Scotia Synfuels project. They as provincial legislators realize the value this project could bring to Cape Breton Island in terms of new coal production, and environmentally safe permanent construction jobs. It would assist us in terms of our fight with regard to acid rain.

• (1810)

In conclusion, I ask that government members give serious and active consideration to a positive decision which must be reached and communicated to the consortium prior to the end of May of this year, or this consortium will walk away from the project it has been working at for upwards of six or seven years. I would hope that members opposite will understand the impor-

tance and value of this project to the economic opportunities which there could be in Cape Breton.

Mr. Bill Kempling (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Employment and Immigration): Madam Speaker, the Scotia Synfuels proposal in Cape Breton has considerable potential to benefit economically the eastern Nova Scotia region.

I wish to reiterate some of the points which the minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency made last week in this Chamber.

The Government of Canada has been trying to enhance economic opportunities in the Atlantic region by considering every alternate employment opportunity that will help to diversify the economy. The creation of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency is a manifestation of this government's commitment in that regard.

It should be pointed out that while the hon. member has pressed for the approval of an investment tax credit for the synfuels project, it is Industry, Science and Technology Canada rather than ACOA which has the lead role for the federal government in this project. The Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, as the development agency for small and medium size businesses, can play an advocacy role.

That being said, I wish to point out that federal officials have devoted a great deal of time to looking at the long-term economic viability of this project and its potential to create long-term employment. I also wish to point out that under the Canada-Nova Scotia-Straits of Canso area development subagreement ACOA and the provincial government together funded $650,000 or 50 per cent of the cost of the technical feasibility study completed in November 1989.

As has too often been the case prior to 1984—and my colleagues opposite just have to look at the track record of their party when in power to confirm this—governments have often been eager to invest in projects in the Cape Breton area simply as a quick fix. This government wants to be certain that an investment of public funds results in durable and viable jobs for the long term.

With respect to Scotia Synfuels, ACOA and Industry, Science and Technology Canada officials want to be sure that this project, valued at well over $400 million, is sufficiently viable to justify the substantial expenditure of public funds which would be required for an investment tax credit.

While the number of jobs this facility promises to create is certainly impressive, there is still more study required before any decision can be made.

AGRICULTURE

Mr. Rod Laporte (Moose Jaw—Lake Centre): Madam Speaker, I rise on a question which I raised in the House on May 2, respecting the future of agriculture in this country. At the time I raised it there was a lot of concern in this country with respect to agriculture and the future of agriculture, particularly in western Canada.

I would like to highlight some of the areas where there are concerns. Farmers are concerned because of FCC rates. The so-called farmers' bank has increased rates a number of times this year, which is causing problems. High interest rates are a killer for producers as they are a major problem for businesses throughout this country. The Economic Council of Canada has predicted this year that incomes will be down by some 87 per cent. That is an increase from earlier predictions but a drop in income of 87 per cent, which is astounding.

The future of the Canadian Wheat Board is in question with respect to the movement of oats because of the free trade agreement and the fact that next year certainly grain and possibly wheat and barley will come cross the Canadian border unrestricted. We have the government failing to use Article 701.4 of the free trade agreement. Article 701.4 indicates that whenever either Canada or the United States is entering into agreements with third parties, that it is a violation if the agreement affects the ability of the country to trade.

• (1815)

Certainly, that has happened with respect to the U.S.S.R. and the announcement that the United States is going to sell some 12 million tonnes of grain to that country, subsidizing a third of that. This will have a direct impact on our sales to the U.S.S.R. Although the government has admitted it is a problem, it has not taken an extra step to put some muscle to the statement. It exists under the free trade agreement.

The U.S. farm bill continues to have a problem going through. The new farm bill will be virtually the same as the last farm bill. At the same time, we have a government that is cutting support for our producers. The at and east bill, dealing with export grain through the ports

of Halifax and Saint John, has meant that Saint John has closed its elevator. Quite likely, Halifax will close as well.

As the Canadian Wheat Board indicated very recently, if this happens it will affect the sale of grain from western Canada to world markets. Lord knows, we need all the help we can get these days with the subsidization of grain through the United States and Europe. At the same time, there are all sorts of rumours, I believe well founded, that there will be an announcement in the fall that the crow benefit for farmers that exists now will quite likely be gone.

We have a situation in which western Canada is in dire straits. Agriculture across the country is having problems. In Saskatchewan, 70 per cent of the communities have lost population in the last five years. When a farmer goes onto the land to plant his crop, these are the items that he is concerned with. Farmers do not see the government addressing these problems seriously.

When I asked the question, the $500 million program had been announced but was still in limbo. Now that it has been announced that it will be going to the farmers, there is no indication what sort of detail there will be or what sort of form it will take.

There is a problem in western Canada with agriculture. There is a lack of confidence there in the direction that this government is taking. The last time I asked the question, unfortunately the Minister of State for Grains and Oilseeds answered with simple rhetoric. I hope the hon. parliamentary secretary will not resort to that.

Again, I would ask the question: Given this situation, the atmosphere that exists throughout the country and particularly in western Canada, and given some of the problems that I outlined a moment ago, what is this government doing to encourage a viable rural and farming sector? What is it doing to encourage farmers to look forward to planting a crop this season? What is this government doing that will make a farmer and the rural communities have some confidence in the government and that we will have a viable and healthy rural economy down the road?

Mr. Murray Cardiff (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Madam Speaker, the hon. member has touched on many items, more than on just the initial pricing of wheat. I want to address the issue and indicate why the initial price of wheat had to be set where it was.

The hon. member knows that the Canadian Wheat Board's initial payments are set each spring in relation to anticipated conditions in the world grain market in the coming crop year.

In 1990–91, world production of wheat and coarse grains is expected to increase. Production of these grains might be able to exceed world consumption. That means there is a good chance that world grain supplies will be higher than they were in 1989. Therefore, grain prices are expected to be low.

Another result of the expected higher production is anticipated larger grain supplies available for export in the European Community and the United States. Both are expected to have more wheat to export. The EC is expected to produce more barley and it will be looking for export opportunities.

With more grain to export, both these major grain traders could be expected to increase their export subsidy levels. Again, this would keep world grain prices low.

We have seen over the last few years how the export subsidies used by the EC and the United States have driven down world grain prices and shifted world trading patterns. Ten years ago the EC exported just over 10 million tonnes of wheat. This year, it is expected to export more than 19 million tonnes. In 1988–89 the EC had 20 per cent of the world wheat market, compared with just 6 per cent 10 years earlier.

However, even with the high production and price-lowering subsidy practices of the EC and the U.S., low grain prices in 1990–1991 are not an absolute certainty. Conditions could improve and prices could rise accordingly.

World grain supplies at the end of the present crop year are expected to be at their lowest level, compared to world consumption, since the mid-1970s. With this low-supply situation, world grain prices will be extremely sensitive to weather conditions over the course of the next crop year. A drought or other weather problem which resulted in crop failure in any of the major grain-producing areas of the world would cause prices to increase.

The government will monitor world grain markets closely throughout the crop year. Initial payment levels will be increased if market conditions warrant an increase. This is not uncommon. In the current crop year, initial payments for spring wheat and barley were increased once to reflect changes in the world market. Initial payments for designated barley were increased twice in this crop year. Initial payments for designated barley were set last April at $115 a tonne. The current level, after the two adjustments, is $170 a tonne.

When initial payments are adjusted, this increase is paid to farmers on their grain deliveries since the beginning of the crop year in the form of an adjustment payment.

The setting of the initial payments has to be done cautiously. When the government sets these payments, it is trying to forecast developments in the world market for the next 18 months. The initial payments are guaranteed by the federal government. They cannot be set higher than what is realistic without risking a deficit in the wheat board pool accounts. Initial payments cannot be lowered once they are set for any particular crop year. Any loss must be covered by the federal government. Rather than risk such a loss the government will watch grain markets closely and adjust payments if conditions improve.

In the meantime the hon. member is very aware of the programs this government has brought forward, with the $500 million assistance program for this year and the provinces coming up with programs to help match that. We hope that will assist and give the farmers the confidence required to plant the crops that are so necessary this year and in anticipation that the prices will improve.

[*Translation*]

Madam Deputy Speaker: The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 11 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

The House adjourned at 6.23 p.m.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, May 29, 1990

The House met at 11 a.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*English*]

PETITIONS

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the Government's response to several petitions.

[*Editor's Note: See today's Votes and Proceedings.*]

* * *

[*Translation*]

CANADA–EUROPE PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION

TABLING OF REPORT ON EIGHTEENTH ANNUAL MEETING

Mr. Terry Clifford (London—Middlesex): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1), I have the honour to table in the House, in both official languages, the Canada–Europe Parliamentary Association's report on the eighteenth annual meeting of delegations of the Canadian and European Parliaments held in Brussels and The Hague from April 23 to 26, 1990.

[*English*]

The main conclusion we came to, and I think it is very important to say it in the House, is that increased parliamentarian involvement is being requested by both this Parliament and the European Parliament which is having increasing significance as Europe forges ahead to 1992.

Clearly, we recommend that the Canada–Europe Parliamentary Association be more involved in developing with this government how to strengthen the agreement to find effective new ways to reach out to the new Europe.

Canada has a framework agreement with Europe, but as Europe changes toward 1992, members in this House should be involved in developing and making sure that Canada becomes part of the new Europe.

We can do this in several ways, and specific recommendations have been made in this report both for the Secretary of State for External Affairs as well as for the Minister for International Trade. I trust that these recommendations will be well received by both ministers, as well as the Minister of Industry, Science and Technology, because Canada must come to an agreement in science and technology with the new Europe.

Indeed, the Secretary of State for Canada, who is in the House today, as well as the Minister of State for Small Businesses and Tourism, will be pleased to know that the European Parliament wants to work with them as the new Europe for 1992 is developed. It brings 12 countries together. It wants Europe–Canada relations to increase in both cultural and educational training areas as well as in small business opportunities through the Business Community Network.

I urge the ministers and this government to work with parliamentarians in this House from all parties to enhance the relationship between Canada and the new Europe.

We have a great opportunity here, Mr. Speaker. I urge all of us to get involved and be involved in making this happen.

• (1110)

PETITIONS

FREEDOM OF CHOICE

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to present a petition pursuant to Standing Order 36 from a number of petitioners in central British Columbia from a variety of communities.

They point out that the choice to bear or not to bear children is a matter of personal choice and not of criminal law. They feel that criminal sanctions do nothing to address the reasons why women seek abortions or to reduce the number of unwanted pregnancies. Therefore, they are calling upon Parliament to refrain from imposing any criminal sanctions against abortion.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, I have another petition signed by a number of people from a variety of communities in central British Columbia who are opposed to the 7 per cent goods and services tax.

They are calling on the Liberals in the Senate to do the honourable thing, listen to the people of Canada and vote against the legislation as opposed simply to holding more public hearings.

VIA RAIL

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, I have another petition from Kamloops and other parts of central British Columbia.

The petitioners are concerned about the future of passenger rail service and recognize that the government has cut back severely in terms of VIA Rail. They feel that this was exactly the opposite to what ought to have occurred, and are asking the government to invest in a decent passenger rail service for Canada because of its environmentally friendly nature.

CHILDREN'S BILL OF RIGHTS

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): On another topic, Mr. Speaker, I have a petition from petitioners in Kamloops who are asking that the government consider introducing a bill of rights for children. They point out a whole variety of areas in which children are living in poverty by increasing numbers. They feel a comprehensive bill of rights for children would be the appropriate course of action to take.

[*Translation*]

FREEDOM OF CHOICE

Mr. Phillip Edmonston (Chambly): Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today, pursuant to Standing Order 36, to present a petition on behalf of residents of Quebec, and more specifically, of Montreal, Quebec City, the riding of Chambly and several other communities.

Your petitioners call upon this House to consider that the choice whether or not to bring a pregnancy to term is a personal choice and not a matter for the Criminal Code. Furthermore, your petitioners state that criminal sanctions fail to address the reasons why a woman wants an abortion and do not in any way reduce the number of unwanted pregnancies.

[*English*]

Ms. Dawn Black (New Westminster—Burnaby): Mr. Speaker, I also rise under Standing Order 36 to present petitions to this House from British Columbia and from virtually every province in the country.

The petition states that the choice to bear children or not to bear children is a matter of personal choice and not one of criminal law.

It goes on to state that the Canadian Medical Association already has guidelines and regulations in place concerning abortion. Criminal sanctions do nothing to address the reasons why women seek abortion and do nothing to reduce the numbers of unwanted pregnancies.

These petitioners call on the government to refrain from imposing any criminal sanctions against abortion.

The total number of these petitions is 30. There are some 3,600 signatures altogether on them. The petitioners come from my riding of New Westminster—Burnaby and Surrey, B.C. There are 406 signatures from Kingston and the Islands. The other petitioners are from Toronto, Ottawa, Regina, Saskatchewan, Alberta, Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island and from Nova Scotia.

Women and men across Canada who believe in women's integrity are all asking this government to refrain from bringing in criminal sanctions against women.

Mr. Ron Fisher (Saskatoon—Dundurn): Mr. Speaker, I too have some petitions to present, which are duly authorized under Standing Order 36, from voters in Saskatoon who point out that the choice to bear children is a medical and personal matter and not a matter of criminal law.

They point out that the Canadian Medical Association already has sufficient guidelines concerning abortion. Criminal sanctions, they point out, have no reasonable effect on why women seek abortions and do nothing to reduce them.

They call upon the government to refrain from imposing any criminal sanctions against abortion.

Ms. Joy Langan (Mission—Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, I rise under Standing Order 36 to present a petition, which includes the ancient and undoubted right to present a grievance common to the petitioners.

What is said next in this petition is very important: "in certain assurance that your honourable House will therefore provide a remedy".

This petition speaks on the question of the right of a woman to choice in the matter of abortion. It reiterates that it is a matter of personal choice and not of criminal law.

It also indicates that the Canadian Medical Association has guidelines. In fact it states that there is nothing in the criminalization of abortion that reduces the numbers of unwanted pregnancies.

This petition comes predominantly from Saskatchewan and Alberta, from communities such as Moose Jaw, Saskatoon, and Calgary.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Alex Kindy (Calgary Northeast): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36 I have the honour to present a petition signed by 251 people in my riding who would like the government to withdraw the goods and services tax.

They feel that it is inflationary, that it is on the back of the consumer, and that it will diminish our capacity to be competitive on the world market. They also feel that it will hurt tourism in Alberta.

ABORTION

Mr. Brian L. Gardiner (Prince George—Bulkley Valley): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present two petitions to the House today, both of which have been certified correct under Standing Order 36.

The first is a petition signed by residents primarily of Dawson Creek and Delta, British Columbia. They pray that Parliament refrain from imposing any criminal sanctions against abortions such as the legislation this House will be voting on later today.

VIA RAIL

Mr. Brian L. Gardiner (Prince George—Bulkley Valley): Mr. Speaker, the second petition is signed by Canadians from all across the country on the route of *The Canadian*. It was the route of *The Canadian* since it is no longer there.

These petitioners call upon Parliament to legislate and bring in programs and measures so that we can have an effective VIA Rail passenger rail system in Canada.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Joe Comuzzi (Thunder Bay—Nipigon): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour and duty under Standing Order 36 to present a petition on behalf of the people of Newfoundland who strongly oppose the goods and services tax which is an unprecedented tax grab from the pockets of Canadians. It will hit them not only with higher taxes but higher inflation, higher interest rates, and higher unemployment than already exists in Newfoundland.

They humbly pray that Parliament reject the proposed goods and services tax.

[*Translation*]

MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Mr. Gaby Larrivée (Joliette): Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to table in the House, pursuant to Standing Order 36, a petition signed by about 2,000 young Quebecers. The petition supports the Meech Lake Accord, the Accord that meets Quebec's five minimum conditions and recognizes Quebec as a distinct society and one of the founding peoples of Canada.

These young people ask the government to do everything in its power to ensure that the Accord is ratified and, in the event the Accord is defeated, to undertake a

complete review of the present political system since it will then be clear it is impossible to agree on improvements to the existing system.

TAX BENEFITS FOR NORTHERN AND ISOLATED AREAS

Mr. Guy Saint-Julien (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I am tabling today a petition from Chibougamau in the riding of Roberval, concerning the recommendations of the Task Force on Tax Benefits for Northern and Isolated Areas.

Your petitioners reject the conclusions of the Task Force on Tax Benefits for Northern and Isolated Areas and ask that Chibougamau be recognized as an isolated area under the present tax benefits system.

• (1120)

[*English*]

VETERANS AFFAIRS

Mr. Joe McGuire (Egmont): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, it is my honour and duty to present petitions from the Royal Canadian Legions of Tignish, Bloomfield, Ellerslie, Wellington, Miscouche and O'Leary which are upset that the veterans of Canada have fallen victim to the government budget cuts.

Royal Canadian Legionnaires believe that our veterans have already given service to this country and should not be targeted. They believe that these budget measures should be dropped.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Ms. Margaret Mitchell (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, I am honoured today to rise under the provisions of Standing Order 36 to present some 200 petitions which I think you will agree are very important and somewhat unique. I hope they will be treated very seriously by this government.

They are petitions that were signed in the Chinatown community of Vancouver by thousands of citizens representing many business people, shoppers, and concerned citizens of Chinese origin, as well as others who characterize our multicultural Canada.

The petition is in Chinese and English. We regret that there was some procedural difficulty as a result of this. Many signatures are written in Chinese characters, evidence of how very strongly these people oppose and are worried about the GST.

The petition states that the undersigned residents of Canada avail themselves of their ancient and undoubted right.

It goes on to state that the 7 per cent goods and services tax will hurt small businesses, costs will go up, incomes will go down, and it will be an accounting nightmare. The tax will also hurt consumers as prices of thousands of items and services go up.

Therefore the undersigned petitioners call on Parliament and the Government of Canada to withdraw the goods and services tax.

I present these petitions with great concern from Vancouver East.

Mr. Joe Fontana (London East): Mr. Speaker, it is my duty pursuant to Standing Order 36 to submit to this House petitions with over 1,000 names which are over and above the 25,000 names that have been submitted on behalf of the people of London, Ontario.

These people call upon this government to withdraw its grief and suffering tax and essentially restore a fair taxation system.

Mrs. Shirley Maheu (Saint-Laurent—Cartierville): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour and privilege pursuant to Standing Order 36 to present a petition on behalf of constituents in Newfoundland and Labrador. There are many hundreds of signatures on this petition.

These people are asking and begging this government to cancel the goods and services tax because it will cause serious and unfair hardship to low and middle income Canadians.

VIA RAIL

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition signed by numerous Canadians from the London area of Ontario.

These petitioners are concerned about cuts to Canada's rail service. In their petition they indicate the importance of rail service for the tourist industry in Canada, as well as how important it is for rural communities in Canada. They also point out that it is the safest and most environmentally friendly mode of transportation.

They urge the government not to cancel in whole or in part rail passenger service in Canada.

Although the petition is an older one, and although the government has ignored the petitioners' request already, I am sure they would be delighted if the government would live up to its obligations and reinstate rail service in this country.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Tom Wappel (Scarborough West): Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to rise today under Standing Order 36 to present three petitions from some of the good citizens of Newfoundland and Labrador.

It will come as no surprise to the government that they are petitioning the government with respect to its goods and services tax. It will also be no surprise to the government that they are asking it to rescind the goods and services tax since it will be completely unfair and regressive. They ask the government to go back to the drawing-board and come up with something fairer for the Canadian people.

Mr. Jack Whittaker (Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise under Standing Order 36 once again to offer to this House a petition against the goods and services tax from people in various communities throughout British Columbia.

They are simply asking that the goods and services tax be rejected. They state that if reform is to be brought in, the taxation system should include an effective minimum tax on wealthy individuals and corporations. They ask the government to cease with this present proposal.

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present several petitions today with several hundred names on them from communities such as Espanola, Massey, Tehkummah, Webbwood, and other communities throughout the Algoma—Manitoulin area, in which the petitioners call on the government to reject the goods and services tax.

They point out that it will cause an onerous burden on small business, that it will be an unfair hardship to lower and middle income Canadians, and that it will have an adverse effect on inflation, higher interest rates, and higher unemployment.

Routine Proceedings

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

[Questions answered orally are indicated by an asterisk.]

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, the following questions will be answered today: Nos. 263, 272, 276, 277, 281, and 283.

[*Text*]

SEARCH AND RESCUE INCIDENTS

Question No. 263—**Mr. McGuire:**

From January 1, 1986 to January 1, 1989, were there any search and rescue incidents in the Halifax Search and Rescue Region to which aircraft from C.F.B. Summerside were tasked to respond and, if so (a) what number were there (b) were any of the incidents located closer to C.F.B. Summerside than to C.F.B. Greenwood and, if so, what number?

Hon. William Hunter McKnight (Minister of National Defence): 1. Yes.

(a) 202.

(b) From January 1, 1986 to January 1, 1989, 152 search and rescue incidents, to which aircraft from CFB Summerside were tasked, were located closer to CFB Summerside than to CFB Greenwood. However, from 1981 to 1986, the reverse was true. The majority of search and rescue incidents were located closer to CFB Greenwood than to CFB Summerside. It should be noted that the average incident occurs over two hundred miles or approximately one hour flying time from either location. In addition, although CFB Summerside may have been closer to more incidents than CFB Greenwood, the average difference in distance between the two locations and these incidents is only 35 miles. This translates into approximately ten minutes flying time.

RACE RELATIONS NETWORK

Question No. 272—**Mrs. Maheu:**

Has a grant been awarded for a feasibility study on setting up the "Race Relations Network" and, if so (a) to whom has the grant been awarded (b) in what amount (c) will the study report be tabled in the House of Commons?

Hon. Gerry Weiner (Secretary of State of Canada and Minister of State (Multiculturalism and Citizenship)): No.

a) b) and c) not applicable.

CHEQUES RECEIVED BY PRODUCERS FOR DROUGHT ASSISTANCE UNDER THE CANADIAN DROUGHT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Question No. 276—**Mr. Ferguson:**

Have any producers received cheques for drought assistance under the Canadian Drought Assistance Program administered by the Department of Agriculture and, if so (a) what number (b) what number have received or will receive letters requiring them to reimburse some or all of those monies because of (i) a correction in the determination of eligibility due to changes in the so-called "trigger yields" (ii) a failure of the Department to correctly cross-reference the application and certification (iii) any other errors made by the Department and, if so, which ones (iv) other factors and, if so, what factors and, for each factor, what is the explanation?

Hon. Charles James Mayer (Minister of Western Economic Diversification and Minister of State (Grains and Oilseeds)): Please see attached.

a) and b) On March 30, 1990 out of about 120,000 payments made there were 1,608 producers whose payment exceeded the amount which they were actually eligible for under the program. The following is a break-down of that number by reason for overpayment:

i) 1,320 due to a change in yield data supplied by the provincial Crop Insurance Agencies between the time of the interim and the final payment;

ii) 17 due to a failure to correctly cross-reference application and certification forms;

iii) 44 due to processing errors within the program administration;

iv) 55 due to errors made by producers on their application forms;

172 due to the fact that producer payments were less than what had been received under the greenfeed program (50 percent of payments made under the greenfeed program were deducted from CCDAP payments).

REMUNERATION RECEIVED BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE BANK OF CANADA

Question No. 277—**Mrs. Sparrow:**

Is the government prepared to disclose the details of the remuneration received by the Governor of the Bank of Canada and, if so (a) what is his basic salary (b) does he receive any tax-free benefits and, if so, what are they (c) does he receive any salary supplements and, if so, what are they (d) does he have a pension plan and, if so, is it indexed to the rate of inflation (e) does he receive an annual salary increase and, if so, at what rate?

Hon. Michael Holcombe Wilson (Minister of Finance): 1a. It is Government policy to release the salary ranges but not the specific salary of an individual.

1b. No.

1c. No. See also attached Sec. 6(3)(c) of the Bank of Canada Act.

1d. Yes. As an employee of the Bank of Canada, the Governor is a contributing member of the Bank of Canada Pension Plan. The Governor is treated according to the same rules as other members.

Any pension payments under the Bank plan are adjusted annually on January 1, by the average of the Consumer Price Index for Canada for each month in the twelve-month period ending on the thirtieth day of September in the immediately preceeding year.

1e. There is no statutory provision for automatic increases in the Governor's salary on an annual, or any other basis. (See attached Sec. 6(3)(c) of the Bank of Canada Act).

Article 6.3(c) of the Bank of Canada Act

6.(3)(c) The Governor and Deputy Governor subject to the approval of the Governor in Council, shall be paid such salaries as the directors determine, but no such remuneration shall be in the form of a commission or be computed by reference to the income or profits of the Bank.

RACE RELATIONS NETWORK

Question No. 281—**Mrs. Maheu:**

Was Ralph Agard of Toronto commissioned in recent months by the Minister of State (Multiculturalism and Citizenship) or his office to do a feasibility study on establishing a new race relations network and, if so (a) what were the terms of reference provided to him (b) who was responsible for setting the terms of reference (c) who did Mr. Agard consult (d) did the Minister, his office or the Secretary of State Department have any input into who would be consulted (e) what amount was Mr. Agard paid (f) were other costs incurred by Mr. Agard or any other persons on this project and, if so, what costs (g) since April 1, 1985, has he received any other contracts directly or indirectly from the Minister's office or the Department (h) will the Minister table the study report in the House of Commons?

Hon. Gerry Weiner (Secretary of State of Canada and Minister of State (Multiculturalism and Citizenship)): Yes.

a) According to the terms of reference of the contract, the mandate was to give advice on issues relevant to both Departments (Secretary of State / Multiculturalism and

Citizenship Canada) to ensure that the Minister is kept fully aware of all issues facing client groups of the Departments.

b) The Office of the Secretary of State and Minister of State, Multiculturalism and Citizenship.

c) See Annex A.

d) No.

e) $6,075.00

f) Yes. Travel cost of $790.

g) No.

h) This report does not constitute a document that is normally tabled in the House. However, subject to the *Access to Information Act* and the *Privacy Act*, it could be made available by placing a notice of motion for the production of papers on the Order Paper or pursuant to a written request addressed to the Department.

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INDIVIDUALS APPOINTED TO ANY REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCILS OF THE FBDB BETWEEN SEPTEMBER 4, 1984 AND JUNE 1, 1989

Question No. 283—**Mr. Boudria:**

Between September 4, 1984 and June 1, 1989, were any individuals appointed to any of the Regional Advisory Councils of the Federal Business Development Bank and, if so (a) what are their names (b) (i) on what date (ii) to which Council was each one appointed (c) has any of them ceased to be a member and, if so, in each case, on what date?

Hon. Thomas Hockin (Minister of State (Small Businesses and Tourism)): Insofar as the Federal Business Development Bank is concerned, the response is as follows:

Provinces of Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island

Name	Appointment (d/m/y)	Cessation (d/m/y)
Frank Abram Moores	01-06-87	
Frank William Nichols	01-06-87	
Anna Albert Guimond	01-06-87	
Michael N. Burge	01-06-87	
Donna Marie Thompson	01-06-87	
W.R. MacKinnon	01-06-87	
Lloyd A. Diamond	30-10-87	
Douglas Moores	01-06-87	22-03-88

Province of Quebec

Name	Appointment	Cessation
Claude Gérin	17-12-86	31-12-88*
Jacques Dumas	17-12-86	31-12-88*
Blair Touchie	17-12-86	31-12-88*
Raymond Mercier	17-12-86	31-12-88*
Luc Vaillancourt	17-12-86	31-12-88*
Michel Perron	17-12-86	31-12-88*
C. Dino Vondjidis	17-12-86	31-12-88*
Anne Dixon-Grossman	17-12-86	31-12-88*
André Létourneau	27-01-87	31-12-88*

* = Date of mandate expiry

Province of Ontario

Name	Appointment	Cessation
Daniela Anna Clara	01-06-87	
John A. Elliott	01-06-87	
Yavar Ali Khan	01-06-87	
Bob Bohdan Leshchyshen	01-06-87	
Aline Lévesque	01-06-87	
Glenn Grice	01-06-87	
Alex Christie	01-06-87	
Barbara Molot Sugarman	01-06-87	
Robin Jeffrey	01-06-87	12-09-89

Province of Manitoba and Saskatchewan

Name	Appointment	Cessation
Garth Walls	01-06-87	
James F. Fairman	01-06-87	
Penny Paget	01-06-87	
Wilfried K. Eckl	01-06-87	
John Gregory O'Hanlon	01-06-87	
Gerald L. Dorge	01-06-87	
Ralph C. Yapp	01-06-87	
Donna-Marie Gurr	01-06-87	
George H. Dram	01-06-87	05-09-89

Province of Alberta and the Northwest Territories

Name	Appointment	Cessation
Gabrielle Decorby	01-06-87	
Chuck W. Newton	01-06-87	
James Fredrick Kalmacoff	01-06-87	
Richard C. Fraser	01-06-87	
Rita Pasiciel	01-06-87	
E.M. (Al) Davison	01-06-87	
William R. Bauman	01-06-87	
Richard Hobbs	01-06-87	
Nels Nelson	01-06-87	29-01-89

Province of British Columbia and the Yukon

Name	Appointment	Cessation
Robert B. Leeson	01-06-87	
Patrick James Lett	01-06-87	
Dirk A. Yzenbrandt	01-06-87	
Victor E. Kurceba	01-06-87	
Olga Ilich	01-06-87	
Milton H. Cook	01-06-87	
Fred C. Garnett	01-06-87	02-02-90
James Frederick Butchart	01-06-87	
Bill Tsakumis	01-06-88	08-09-88**

** = Appointed to Board of Directors

[*English*]

Mr. Cooper: Mr. Speaker, I ask that the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

Mr. Speaker: The questions as enumerated by the parliamentary secretary have been answered. Shall the remaining questions be allowed to stand?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

MOTION TO ADJOURN UNDER S. O. 52

MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Miss Deborah Grey (Beaver River): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 52, I ask leave to move a motion that the House adjourn to discuss a matter of utmost urgency and importance, namely the constitutional crisis which is building and facing Canada.

There is less than one month remaining for expiration or ratification of the Meech Lake Accord. With a great many threats and predictions of dire consequences that may face Canada on June 24, 1990, I believe that there is need for this House to debate this constitutional dilemma rather than to remain silent.

SPEAKER'S RULING

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Beaver River has applied under Standing Order 52 for an emergency debate on a matter which I am sure all members of this House agree is a very important one.

However I must point out that the matter is being raised on a daily basis. The hon. member has another course to follow by which she could debate the matter.

As a consequence, today I am not inclined to grant her application. It has nothing to do with whether or not the matter is serious. We all know it is serious. At this time, and I say at this time, I think it would be inappropriate.

I thank the hon. member for giving me notice, and I thank her for her intervention.

Mr. Kindy: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I find your ruling on the application somewhat strange because the question has not been debated in the House recently—

Mr. Speaker: Order. I must interrupt the hon. member for Calgary Northeast. It is not appropriate to argue with the Speaker's ruling.

At the time the reform committee considered the whole question of applications for emergency debate, it was recommended that the Speaker give no reasons at all.

All that the Speaker did in this case is remind hon. members that the matter has been raised continually, which of course it has been, and that there is for the hon. member another approach to the matter.

I have great respect for the hon. member, but he is not in order in arguing with the Speaker on an application for an emergency debate.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

CANADIAN RACE RELATIONS FOUNDATION

MEASURE TO ENACT

Hon. Gerry Weiner (Secretary of State of Canada and Minister of State (Multiculturalism and Citizenship)): moved that Bill C-63, an act to establish the Canadian Race Relations Foundation, be read the second time and referred to a legislative committee. He said: Madam Speaker, two years ago this House unanimously adopted Bill C-93, the Canadian Multiculturalism Act. Since the passing of this landmark legislation, this government has shown again and again that it is committed to creating a society whose citizens will be judged not by the colour of their skin, but by the content of their character.

• (1130)

Two weeks ago this House sent forward the legislation to establish a department of multiculturalism and citizenship which is an administrative instrument to execute policies that will aid in nation building. Not too long ago, Bill C-37, an act to establish the Canadian Heritage Languages Institute received second reading and is now being considered by a legislative committee.

Today, it is with great pride that I stand to initiate a debate on the second reading of Bill C-63, an act to establish the Canadian Race Relations Foundation.

Before I go further, I would like to inform the House that before the end of the year I plan to introduce a new citizenship bill. Together, these pieces of legislation will demonstrate the continuing commitment of this government to ideals of multiculturalism and equality.

This legislation reaches the very heart of our identity as Canadians. The Canadian Race Relations Foundation is an initiative based on an unmistakably Canadian approach to the building of our nation. As a people we believe in the limitless potential of Canada and we acknowledge the vast richness our diversity brings. But we know the cultural diversity which we hold so dear is problematic, for the very elements of that diversity are used by racists to denigrate our peoples. That is why this government has given such a high profile to fighting racism and racial discrimination.

In any society plagued by racism and racial discrimination, the struggle against these evils is important. However, in a society such as ours, which has declared itself multicultural, the struggle becomes a moral imperative. Our history is filled with ideas and individuals who have striven to move us closer to realizing the multicultural vision of our country.

[*Translation*]

The origins of Canadian multiculturalism predate Confederation, with the aboriginal peoples. Subsequently, generations of people from all over the world chose Canadian citizenship over all others. These people, Canada's past and present, have worked hard to build this country.

[*English*]

Canada's democratic system of government has responded to the character of our diverse people by recognizing the primal importance of human rights. We have witnessed the evolution of citizenship rights in this country from the opening of our first Houses of Parliament, to Canada's first Bill of Rights in 1960 and, more recently, with the signing of our Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and our Constitution.

Today, and every day, we must never forget that we are all citizens of the first nation in the world to enshrine the multicultural character of our country in its laws. As both a philosophy and a program, multiculturalism is recognized as a positive and progressive force in our nation building.

Within this multicultural framework, political unity and cultural diversity are both seen as priorities. Thus, through decades of legislative tradition and active Canadian citizenship, our dream for Canada has taken shape. Our dream is of a Canada where differences are respected, where all Canadians enjoy the same opportunities and are judged on their individual merits, where people of all origins can live together with dignity and hope. Yet, in spite of these laws, in spite of our good intentions, this vision has not yet been fully realized in our pursuit of a better society. Sadly, daily examples of these shortcomings are all around us. Racism and racial discrimination have been and continue to be a burden on the soul of this nation. It is a disturbing reality, entire cultures discriminated against, denigrated and exploited, Canadian men and women treated as second-class citizens, living lives filled with bitterness, frustrated hopes and sorrow or, worse still, accepting that they are somehow deserving of the dehumanizing wrath of racism.

Ask Donald Marshall and he will tell you of his years of pain.

[*Translation*]

Today, we are more conscious of the manifestations of racism around us. I am proud to say that this government leads the way in this new awareness.

We listened to Canadians of all origins and all walks of life, and we have taken their legitimate concerns to heart. In response to their appeals, we developed our multicultural policy, and we have struck out on a new path with new hopes for a more egalitarian Canada.

However, most important is that today we must realize that eliminating discrimination is one of the most effective ways to build a more tolerant society.

[*English*]

Implicit in our efforts is a faith in the power of the human intellect, in the ability of Canadians to seek and find the truth. In our desire to put the dead ideas of the past to rest and advance as a society, this is the process through which we will move forward into the next decade and shape our history.

We are entering a new era. More than ever before, Canadians will provide the most valuable kind of leadership, and all our leadership will be through the power of ideas. Our Canadian creed will be recognized as one of knowledge and understanding. It will reject the doctrine of racism with all its false assumptions. It will reject the pseudo-scientific concept of race.

Madam Speaker, this is not a minor or purely academic consideration. It is fundamental to our understanding of the truth. The idea of race is based on the long-held but discredited notion that cultural or physical differences are more than external, that they are biological, that a black person is inherently different than a white person, or an East Asian.

Of course, there are profound consequences to accepting that there is more than one race in the human species. When we accept this notion we tend to reinforce claims of biological superiority or inferiority. We make discrimination intellectually feasible. We make it seem rational.

There was never an Aryan race, only a German people living alongside a Jewish people, both members of the human race. Yet we know where this erroneous belief in two separate races eventually led.

Forty years later, in the nation known as South Africa, there is no white race living in the same territory inhabited by members of the black race—only black and white South Africans, equally members of the human family.

Geneticists and anthropologists have discarded the concept of race because they have found it a useless construct for meaningful analysis of differences between groups, yet racist myth-making abounds.

There are countless myths that feed on the same false premise of race. Our task then is two fold: first, to destroy the fraudulent foundation of "race" on which racism rests; second, to address the actual practice of racism—what we call racial discrimination. We must fight discrimination and prejudice everywhere it happens; in our places of work, our schools, our neighbourhoods and in our relations with each other. Without question, this is one of the principal challenges in Canada today. It is a challenge that cannot be met with old ideas, empty rhetoric or simplistic solutions. This is the weakest kind of approach, devoid of any sense of conviction.

• (1140)

Instead, our challenge must be met with measures to promote institutional change, public awareness and education. It calls for political will at all levels of govern-

ment and, above all, the support of ordinary Canadian women and men.

The Canadian Race Relations Foundation is an essential element in this process of change. It will be an energy centre for our national efforts and I believe it will open the door to a better life for all of us.

[*Translation*]

The foundation will respond directly to the two areas of concern I described earlier, which are the concept of racism and its practice. Some of the most brillant minds in this country will be involved in studies that will shed light on the actual extent of these problems and help wipe out, once and for all, the false premises and myths used by racists to propound their theories. When we reach this goal, racists will be isolated and clearly perceived as frauds and shameless liars.

The foundation's research will not be of the "ivory tower" kind. In fact, it will generate concrete guidelines that will be useful to all groups concerned about racism.

[*English*]

These ideas will be circulated and shared and, as a result, the Canadian public will know more about this widespread problem. Yet, we also recognize that the practice of discrimination will persist. Racism will continue to claim its victims. For this reason, the foundation will have a distinctly pro-active mandate. It will help to develop concrete strategies to confront discrimination and conquer it.

Of course, the foundation cannot do it all alone. It will seek to forge partnerships with all segments of society. Programs and training approaches will be developed to assist business, labour and public institutions to free themselves from the web of systemic discrimination.

Madam Speaker, I have great hope for the Canadian Race Relations Foundation. Members of the House know that this foundation will not be a magical solution to bigotry, to prejudice and injustice, even if we would like it to be; but it will contribute to the solution. The foundation will complement the work this government is undertaking with all our partners dedicated to eradicating racism. It will strengthen our efforts to promote our most significant public awareness campaign, commemorated on March 21, the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. As well, the foundation will be a resource for community organizations working in support of equality.

[*Translation*]

Madam Speaker, we Canadians have never been content to stand aside and let inequality, polarized situations, and unhealthy divisiveness take over our communities. We know that the social cost attached to any social injustice that segregates minority groups is very high.

With courage and confidence, we have opted for a common-sense approach to correct past injustice and advance our cause. The Canadian Race Relations Foundation will be a major milestone in our march towards the future.

As part of this continuum, the foundation is also concerned about the present. We could have chosen a better time to affirm ourselves as a diverse nation, to reject arbitrary divisions that separate us from our neighbours and to focus on the fundamental truth that all people on this earth are one.

[*English*]

I am proud to remind all members of the House of the commitment made by the Prime Minister in this Chamber on September 22, 1988. In the context of the Japanese Canadian Redress Agreement, the Prime Minister said, with the unanimous support of the House:

> We cannot change the past. But we must, as a nation, have the courage to face up to these historical facts—in commemoration of all who suffered these injustices, we will establish a Canadian Race Relations Foundation to foster racial harmony and cross-cultural understanding in Canada.

Madam Speaker, together we will embrace a new age of Canadian wisdom: a diverse Canadian people united as one nation.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Shirley Maheu (Saint-Laurent—Cartierville): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to speak on a subject I care about, namely Bill C-63 on the Race Relations Foundation.

I believe it is important that this foundation be established in the immediate future as a way to control rising racism. In a country that is looking more and more

for scapegoats, ways must be found to increase tolerance among diverse groups.

Before continuing, Madam Speaker, I would like to clarify some points: first, the myth that racial discrimination does not exist in Canada. Unfortunately, that is totally false.

Increasingly, the media report conflicts in all areas of life, from the schools to the legal system and the working world.

Second, the myth that all Canadians are treated the same and that they all have equal opportunity. In principle, that is quite true—it is in the law. In practice, it is a different story.

Just try to rent an apartment if you have a different accent or are a different colour! Although not everyone is racist, there are still far too many racists.

[*English*]

We, in this society, have a lot to do and the government must show the way and promote inter-racial harmony. It must hire people in senior positions who know and understand what is happening. It must hire people from the milieu who can suggest means by which to create a climate of tolerance and harmony, not by noting the differences, but by accentuating the common grounds. It is only together that we can build a country. Individuals cannot make it on their own.

The aboriginal people of Canada face racial prejudice and discrimination on a daily basis. They are often denied their ancient right of self-determination. They represent but one group living discrimination on a daily basis. What is the present government concretely doing to correct the situation?

[*Translation*]

Madam Speaker, our society is increasingly uncertain about the future. Free trade, the GST, the Meech Lake Accord all get Canadians' adrenaline levels up. Many causes of tension and hostility are often taken out on the latest arrival, the person perceived as different, even if he or she was born here. Surely someone must be to blame for all our troubles?

No group is safe. Therefore it is important that the Race Relations Foundation not waste years studying the Canadian situation—I think that we all know what it is. From the first year of its mandate, it must be proactive, both by setting an example and by advertising in the media.

• (1150)

[*English*]

"Barriers between blacks and police must be understood before they can be removed," appeared in *The Toronto Star* on May 21; "Hate wave," *The Ottawa Sun* on May 22; "The spectre of racism," *The Ottawa Citizen* on May 17; "Canadian racism angers Apache," *Time Colonist* on March 16; "Racism by any other name," the Vancouver *Sun* on February 26; and, "Rally condemns silence on racial bias," *The Edmonton Journal* on March 25.

These are a few of the headlines we are reading in our newspapers throughout Canada. Racism is on the rise. It has been slowly building up in the last few years and is ready to explode as soon as a crisis occurs. Crisis situations are now part of our daily lives. The country has never been so divided, so lost, and so insecure. We can thank the Conservative government for that.

When children are showing contempt for other children because of a difference in race or culture, we have a lot of questions to ask ourselves.

[*Translation*]

Often without even knowing what they are really saying, Madam Speaker, children make statements which reflect the prejudice of the adults around them. I am not saying that all adults teach their children to be intolerant, although too many certainly do, but through their comments and jokes, they sometimes project a degrading image of all the men and women they feel are different. Their children are the adults of tomorrow and it is on the basis of the values they have received when they were tots that they will pass judgment on others later on.

Madam Speaker, there are already too many stereotypes and clichés we must seek to destroy and it is a task for pioneers. It is essential that the Canadian Racial Relations Foundation should act without delay. It should not follow in the footsteps of this government which, by failing to make a quick decision in connection with the Sikh turban issue, only succeeded in aggravating the situation. If the Foundation wants to justify its existence, it should go ahead and take preventive measures. It

should not only react, because then it would already be too late.

Madam Speaker, I want now to read to you the mandate of the foundation, for it is very wide in scope and we should watch very closely to make sure that things are really happening, and that the Foundation is not satisfied only with drafting expert reports which will end up on shelves and represent its greatest expenditure.

The purpose of the Canadian Race Relations Foundation is to undertake research to further understanding of the nature, causes and effects of racism; to assist the public and private sectors in eliminating racial discrimination; to act as an information centre about race relations resources and establishing links with a great many educational institutions including libraries; to facilitate the exchange of information relating to race relation policies and programs; to assist in the development of professional standards; to increase public awareness of the importance of eliminating racial discrimination; to support the development of effective policies and programs for the elimination of racism and racial discrimination.

When we look closely, we see how easy it is to make a lot of nice speeches without actually doing anything. We must practice what we preach—first within the government, then within the Foundation—by putting into key positions members of every minority who know the problem and can suggest short-, medium- and long-term solutions. It is too easy to say we understand a situation when we have not experienced it. The Minister would probably reply that it is not necessary to be sick to understand the disease, but it is then easier to understand what is happening and to propose solutions to day-to-day problems.

It is those who have experienced prejudice and discrimination who can best come up with corrective and preventive measures.

[*English*]

Intolerance is on the rise. I would like to cite an article from *The Toronto Star* of February 23 that states the following:

> Many Canadians pay lip service to the ideals of tolerance to ethnic minorities while harbouring racist or discriminatory sentiment, a new poll suggests.
>
> "Reading between the lines, there seems to be a lot of bigots out there; it may be that up to one-third of Canadians are bigots" pollster Angus Reid says of the survey of 1,505 adults conducted in February 7-15.
>
> The Angus Reid-Southam News polls found that a majority of Canadians (54 per cent) believe intolerance toward ethnic minorities is on the rise and that recent incidents of discrimination are indicative of a darkening mood in race relations across the country.
>
> Generally, 60 per cent of Canadians accept the proposition that "treating minority groups with generosity" is a special and desirable aspect of the country's character.
>
> But when it comes to specifics an equal number, (59 per cent) say ethnic minorities should abandon their customs and language and become "more like most Canadians".

Up to now, the government has not done much to prove its commitment to racial harmony. It seems to regularly add fuel to the fire. The refugee backlog clearance program is but an example of their lack of commitment to those who wish to become part of our Canadian society.

[*Translation*]

Madam Speaker, we are seriously wondering for whom the government wants to create the Canadian Race Relations Foundation. Does it want to award research contracts to certain people by taking budget funds previously given to support groups? Unless they have other funds available we have not heard about—

In this era of budget cuts, it is important that the money be allocated fairly and effectively, and not only to support researchers whose reports will be read then set aside for an indefinite period of time or will be used for speeches and conferences. The government must act now. It must bring the fire under control before it is too late.

The main purpose of this bill, Madam Speaker, is to establish the Canadian Race Relations Foundation with a view to facilitate the exchange, sharing and application of knowledge and expertise in order to contribute to the elimination of racism and all forms of racial discrimination in Canada.

I can only support such a bill while, at the same time, wondering when the government will take concrete action. When indeed will it prove to us that harmony within this country is a priority? When will the government consider important to invest in what is working well instead of making cutbacks? When will it understand that it is essential to work with the people in the field who are the real experts? It is certainly not through

cutbacks that this government will show us its commitment to social peace. Or was that just more idle talk?

• (1200)

Madam Speaker, this government has not been sensitive to the problems of pay equity and discrimination in the workplace. A study published on March 21 by the Canadian Ethnocultural Council shows that only 2.9 per cent of the public service officers are from visible minorities. Such percentage is far from being representative of their place in the workforce, of which they make up 6.4 per cent.

Is that the example the government is setting? More to the point, how can a government preach something it does not want to practice? It seems to me that this is another case of double standards.

[*English*]

In its 1989 annual report the Canadian Human Rights Commission stated that visible minorities were underrepresented in occupations throughout the country and that hiring and promotion practices reinforced their present concentrations in less well-paying jobs.

What is the Conservative government doing to change the situation? Keeping people at a lower financial level of society does not enable them to feel pride in their work and in themselves. Ignoring this fact will not cause it to correct itself. I agree that there is a lot to be done, but saying it is not enough. It is high time the government makes a move to correct the situation, not in a year or so, but now.

What is the good of having a race relations foundation if we do not start doing what we can to cut off useless tensions? If the Conservative government cares about Canada, it will start by reconstructing the Canadian society by investing rather than cutting funds. It is not normal for a government that wants to be taken seriously when it talks about racial harmony to start by cutting funds to the Heritage Languages Program of Secretary of State.

This program was designed to promote racial harmony and national unity by providing an opportunity for the preservation and understanding of ethnic languages and cultures. Such actions promoted the positive values associated with cultural preservation and promotion and, moreover, heritage language training provides Canadians with a competitive edge in the global economy. The net result of a prosperous economy and high standard of living is greater unity and harmony.

In a time of hardship and social tension it is even more important to promote understanding and tolerance. It is not the time to cut and have people suddenly feel like second class citizens.

[*Translation*]

Madam Speaker, we must change people's attitudes, and we cannot do this with words and reports. We must act. It is high time that all the media—radio, television and the newspapers—started reflecting Canada's cultural diversity and included more members of ethnic and racial minorities within their ranks.

The Conservative Government should start paying close attention to what is going on if it really wants a united Canada. It must show leadership. It must have more employees—in decision-making positions—representing these minorities. How can it ask others to do what it does not do itself? It must get an example.

Madam Speaker, if we want Canada to remain a nation, we must learn to live together. It is important that we learn to accept each others' differences and that we unite to create a positive force on whose diversity will make this country a better place to live. We must stop wanting to change everyone to correspond to our own image. We must be willing to discover, to assimilate and to share. A country can only survive when people live in harmony. Discord only breeds destruction.

Madam Speaker, the Conservative Government must invest in the human potential that exists in this country. The Race Relations Foundation is a first step, but from the very beginning it must be in touch with the support groups that are most familiar with the problems.

The foundation will only be useful if it is truly aware of the problems and provides short—and long-term solutions. It must be willing to look at the real problems and make a genuine commitment to implement solutions. Policies must be followed by concrete action. Otherwise, the foundation will be just one more agency receiving funds to write papers that will not be taken seriously by anyone.

In concluding, I want to say that while I accept the concept of the Canadian Race Relations Foundation, I think it is important to see what kind of concrete policies will come out of the foundation. Let us hope that this time, the Conservative government will make a real contribution to the unity of this country.

[*English*]

Ms. Margaret Mitchell (Vancouver East): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to stand today to speak on Bill C-63, an act to establish the Canadian Race Relations Foundation. We support this proposal to establish a race relations foundation in Canada, which was a part of the Japanese Canadian redress settlement. We must remember, as we debate this bill, the terrible injustices that were perpetrated against Canadians of Japanese origin during World War II. I want to take just a moment to quote from one of the summaries of the Council of Japanese Canadians.

> Between 1941 and 1949 the Canadian government forced 21,000 Canadian residents of Japanese ethic origin from their homes, confined most in detention camps, sold off all their real and personal property, and forced them to scatter across Canada or to be shipped to war-torn Japan. Over 17,000 of those victimized by the Canadian government were Canadian citizens. The government claimed that this denial of the civil and human rights of these Canadians was necessary to ensure Canada's security.
>
> Today, government documents show this claim to be completely false. They show that the treatment of Japanese Canadians during and after the Second World War was motivated by racism and political opportunism.
>
> They show ministers of the Crown used their emergency powers to achieve a political objective: the destruction of the Japanese Canadian community in British Columbia.

This is to the shame of all Canadians. For 42 years, victims who were scattered across Canada, families that were broken up and scattered because of these atrocities, tended to internalize their feelings of hurt and humiliation, while many Canadians added shame and stigma to these wounds. Their community in British Columbia, and in my riding of Vancouver East which was the heartland of the Japanese Canadian community, was never re-established.

In the early 1940s, CCF members of Parliament, particularly Angus MacInnis from British Columbia, spoke out against these injustices. They in turn received much abuse. The NDP continued to call for an end to the War Measures Act and continued to press for the need for an official apology and redress for these great injustices.

Prior to the last election and following the earlier United States settlement, the Government of Canada finally took action, and we supported it. Along with an official statement from the Prime Minister acknowledging the injustices, modest individual settlements were made to survivors. There was a commitment to fund community activities and $24 million for a new Canadian Race Relations Foundation was approved.

I was present at a number of gatherings of Japanese Canadians. They celebrated the redress and commemorated the events of the 1940s in such a way as to ensure that these injustices would never be forgotten or repeated. I was very moved by the feelings that showed in the faces of elders. I remember so many of the older women, who were undoubtedly widows by this time, sitting quietly around the walls of a large room. It showed in their faces that their pride was restored. The misplaced guilt, which we as a country imposed on them, was assuaged.

• (1210)

Their children and grandchildren, who are leaders in our communities today, had fought hard for justice and for redress. They established a very strong organization, the National Council of Japanese Canadians.

We must continue to recall this and other acts of racism and discrimination in our past, as well as in our recent history. It is important to do this in order to prevent such acts from ever recurring and to make people think more about the racist attitudes that are all too prevalent today.

On March 21 I said:

> History shows that racism has been a sickness in Canadian society and is a cancer that is growing. In 1914 East Indians on the *Komagata Maru*, who were British subjects seeking refuge, were turned away at the Port of Vancouver.
>
> Jews were refused sanctuary on our eastern shores in 1939 and many died in concentration camps. In 1885 racist legislation imposed a head tax on Chinese immigrants, followed in 1923 by an Immigration Act to exclude Chinese immigration altogether, and men who had built our railroads were isolated and deprived of rights.

They were deprived of having their families in Canada.

> Blacks who settled in Nova Scotia—

—who were among our earliest settlers were ghettoized and continue to be ghettoized. They suffer discrimination to this day.

> Redress for Japanese Canadians who suffered during World War II will not erase the hurt. But the greatest tragedy in Canada has been the treatment of aboriginal people who shared their land with us. They continue to suffer from institutionalized racism in every facet of their lives.
>
> Over the past year we have witnessed racial discrimination in our justice system in the case of Donald Marshall and Helen Betty Osborne. We heard Philippe Rushton's racist theories. There were frequent complaints about stereotyping in the media. There were ongoing protests against turbans in the RCMP and racist pins circulated from Alberta. And skinheads continued to recruit young people to facism.

Only this month we were deeply saddened and sickened at the desecration of Jewish graves and all that this symbolizes.

Fortunately, most Canadians abhor such racist acts that are, of course, perpetuated by a very small minority. We may abhor inside ourselves and within our circles of friends and family, but not enough Canadians express this abhorrence publicly.

I would like to come back to Bill C–63, which is to establish the Canadian Race Relations Foundation. As I said earlier, part of the funding, the $24 million endowment which is to be given to establish this foundation, was as a result of the Japanese Canadian community. I understand now that it is $12 million on behalf of the Japanese Canadian community and $12 million additional.

In his press release some time ago the minister stated that one of the purposes of tabling this legislation is that it underlines and strengthens the commitment to equality for all Canadians expressed in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Canadian Multiculturalism Act.

I would like to comment particularly on that point. I think it is very important, and I am sure representatives of many ethnocultural organizations across the country will agree, that this foundation, in conjunction with the government and all of us, must really work to strengthen our Charter of Rights and Freedoms to adequately protect minority rights. There is increasing concern about this across Canada. The Canadian Ethnocultural Council has presented this, as has a group called Coalition 33 which is working specifically on this. It is located in Vancouver.

There are concerns that minority rights are not adequately protected under the Charter. Some wanted Section 15, the equality section of our Charter, to be entrenched in Section 16 of the McKenna accord, which would reaffirm equality.

The Canadian Ethnocultural Council asked for entrenchment of multiculturalism in the body of the Constitution in the same way that the languages of the original two founding nations and the aboriginal peoples should be entrenched. They also call for reaffirmation of the Charter to be added to the McKenna accord and removal of Section 33, the notwithstanding clause.

Coalition 33 has said that Section 33 of our constitutional Charter permits the federal or provincial governments to ignore our basic rights and freedoms by using the notwithstanding clause. This is a very serious situation and I think they are doing an excellent job of beginning to document why they feel this way and why it is important to have some changes to protect minority rights. We cannot take this for granted.

I hope the foundation will research these questions and will recommend solutions, if we have not found solutions by the time the foundation is established, and that the federal government and First Ministers will ensure the protection of minority rights.

The minister also mentioned the Canadian Multiculturalism Act. I, quite frankly, do not see that this is a primary responsibility of the new foundation. As we have said repeatedly in this House, in committee and elsewhere, it is the responsibility of this government to adequately monitor and implement the Canadian Multiculturalism Act. It is particularly the responsibility of the Minister of Multiculturalism, who should be the lead minister in this regard.

I will not belabour the point, but that is why we felt it was so important to have this spelled out in amendments to Bill C–18, in the new Department of Multiculturalism and Citizenship, particularly in the role of the minister. Unfortunately, this was refused. As I say, I will not dwell on that again, but this kind of abrogation of responsibility really creates cynicism in people. I hope very much that none of the disappointment will be repeated in this foundation as we move toward its implementation.

The minister stated in a press release of January 31 that the foundation "will play a vital role in the national effort to rid our society of the scourges of racism and racial discrimination by undertaking research, raising public awareness, and assisting business, labour and government and public and private institutions in their efforts in this area".

This is very, very important. First, let us look at research. One of the major areas in which the foundation could start is in analyzing the stereotypes and myths which exist in society today and are being perpetuated, often by the media I am sorry to say. They must document and present accurate facts.

It is important, for example, that we look at public attitudes to immigration where there is frequently an undercurrent of racism. We need to determine what these attitudes are, dispel the myths, provide accurate data about the positive effects of immigration in Canada and make positive recommendations in this area to the government.

I think of one other example of the kind of myths that are perpetuated. This often happens when there is stress in the community, as we have had in Vancouver with increasing immigration. It is grossly unfair that Hong Kong immigrants have been blamed for this.

• (1220)

When this issue was researched more carefully, we found that it was speculators who were escalating the price of housing; that sellers of homes, who wanted to get the most for their houses, certainly contributed to it; and that a lack of adequate planning, particularly on the part of the city, led to the so-called "monster houses" which were built, not by immigrants, but by developers. This shows how common myths need to be dealt with and facts presented in the process of increasing understanding and, hopefully, warm acceptance of immigrants. This is certainly a major role for the new foundation.

It would be extremely important that a foundation on race relations also work with aboriginal groups who have experienced the greatest degree of racism in all facets of their lives. There are many, many skilled persons and organizations available to assist in this process and to document facts. There are many skilled people from the aboriginal communities who have public relations skills and art skills who could help with public programs which would promote greater understanding.

Media watch programs are very important. It is very important that a new foundation would monitor and sensitize the media when there are incidents of stereotyping or discrimination. I could mention a number of them. I was involved in one myself when I was speaking in Saskatoon to the Chinese cultural society there. The headline in the paper the next day read: "Chinese say" so and so. Of course the people at that meeting were very offended because this was implying that they were not Canadians, not Canadians of Chinese origin, but that they were Chinese. It was very misleading. So the changing of media attitudes is very important, not only of reporters, who are often not at fault, but of the people who develop headlines as well.

Another function of the new foundation would be to raise public awareness. It is extremely important this new foundation work through existing networks, and organizations and the media directly. It is very important that this not be an isolated academic kind of foundation. I assume they will be contracting out projects as well. They need to consult with persons who are directly affected and people who are working with race relations.

I would like to mention two people whom I know. Sadie Kuehn in Vancouver and Olivia Chow in Toronto are both people who have worked, not only to document racism in their communities—the black community and the Chinese community—but have run as school trustees and worked to change the school system to have positive race relations. Those are the kind of people we need to have involved.

We need to encourage more action in the public as a whole and raise public awareness. I was reminded at a meeting on Sunday that it is not good enough just to be concerned, that it is not good enough for us just to speak out here in Ottawa. Individuals must write to the editors of our papers locally to counteract the racist attitudes that are often expressed. We need people phoning in to hotline shows where perhaps there is the worst kind of bigotry expressed.

Another objective of the foundation is to counteract discrimination in justice. I think we would all agree that it is very important to concentrate on early education. Teacher training and retraining must focus not just on facts, although any foundation could help to provide facts, but on cultural sensitization as well. It is very important that people be tuned in to the cultural sensitivities. To do that requires more than the help of a foundation, of course, but I am sure that could be part of

training programs that they might stimulate. We need changes to the curriculum to ensure that accurate racial and ethnic history is taught, which is very important. And, of course, there should be many kinds of multicultural–multiracial events in schools.

Will the foundation that is being proposed be able to provide resources for schools and for this kind of pubic education? I hope it will. I hope there will be funds also to commission films and documentaries, particularly for TV, which will present positive images as well as accurate facts.

The foundation should also be able to contract out work to ethnic groups to produce accurate ethnic history with positive images. I am thinking particularly of the kind of thing that the black community does during Black History Month. This has been a very effective way, not only of bringing together the many diverse elements in their own community—and it certainly helps some of us to be more aware of the diversity within that community as well—but of making people proud of the contribution of black people in the early history of Canada and angry at the intolerance and racism that people have experienced.

I wonder if the foundation will also research past injustices such as the Chinese head tax, discrimination against Ukrainian, Italian and German Canadians and the Komagata Maru incident. There has been a lot of work done on this already and we do not want to delay government action in acknowledging particularly the Chinese head tax and the Inclusion Act, and its meeting with the Chinese Canadian National Council regarding its very modest redress proposals. However, while we do not want to delay government action, certainly a foundation would be concerned with such documentation.

The foundation will be a national resource located in Toronto. I would like to point out to the minister that some westerners, with our usual paranoia, usually paranoia based on facts and experience, may feel some concern that the foundation should be very much sensitive to racism as it is expressed in all areas of Canada and should not be just central Canada oriented. It is very important to have links to the different regions. In British Columbia, my province, racism has largely been related, although not exclusively, to Asian people. In Nova Scotia I am sure the concerns of the black community will be uppermost. Of course, concerns of aboriginal communities is a top priority.

The foundation, the minister says, will work with business and labour. I hope that this means they will look at job ghettos and the exploitation of visible minority people who work as domestics, as farm workers and in the garment industries. I hope it means that employers will be pressed again, although this is a government responsibility as well, into implementing mandatory meaningful employment equity.

I also hope that affirmative action will be encouraged in a different way within union leadership and membership. I have been at conferences where union leaders have asked how they can reach out more to minority people, both as members and in the community. The promotion of languages classes related to the workplace might be another thing that would be of concern to the foundation.

It is interesting that the government mentions government and public institutions as being another area of concern, but mentions it last. I would say that it should be first. We cannot continue to condone systemic discrimination in our public and government services. This is a job which, of course, is the responsibility of government and of the Human Rights Commission, which is grossly underfunded, but I am sure the foundation will also be concerned with this and, hopefully, will shame the government into some action since it does not seem to be able to take it on its own.

• (1230)

This bill will be going to committee. I hope that we will be able to ask more specific questions and have open discussions. I also hope that the minister will be much more open to the opinions of witnesses and the opinions of all of us on committee, all party members, and their suggestions. This has not been the case in the past unfortunately.

The answers to many of these questions will depend largely on the selection of the board members for the

new Race Relations Foundation. It will depend on how they are selected, how they are appointed, and their links with the larger community.

If there are more political appointees by the Secretary of State and the Minister of State for Multiculturalism and Citizenship, this will destroy confidence in a new foundation. It is unfortunate that this is the way this government acts. The minister himself has done some political recruiting of his own race relations network which develops cynicism in the race relations community generally.

They are quite capable of developing their own networks. They do not need the minister to recruit his friends to recognize and fund a network and take funds from legitimate existing organizations. I think it is an insult to autonomous organizations. We do not want this to happen in a new foundation.

It is very important that there be wide consultation, as the minister has mentioned, but it needs to go further than that. There need to be nominations of board members by groups that are concerned with racism and groups that have knowledge in this field, so that this becomes an objective group, not a group of political appointees.

Board members will include academics but should not be only academics. It should include on the board persons in the front lines who know the hurt of racism and whose anger demands action. It should include representatives of labour, business, ethnic communities, ethnocultural organizations, and human rights activists. These must not be partisan appointees.

If a race relations foundation is to fulfil its mandate, there must be a commitment to develop practical strategies for changing the racist attitudes in individuals, in communities, and in institutions. This is what would be useful to communities, not only academic studies.

The committee must look at all these questions. In particular, we must hear from Dr. Lloyd Stanford who, I understand, prepared an excellent report that went to the Department of Secretary of State, then was hidden. We have tried every means that we can think of to have access to that report, which I have been told by objective people is a very important report. We do not know why the government has repressed this information. Even the Library of Parliament has not been able to get access to it. It is very important that we hear directly from Dr. Stanford in committee.

In closing, I would like to quote an activist woman of colour, whom I mentioned earlier, Sadie Kuehn, who made the following statement. I think she was doing this in relation to art projects that might be developed in the school community. The title of the article is *Racism Hurts* and reads:

> Racism hurts the individuals who are subject to personal humiliation and pain, to insults and rejection, to stereotyping and name calling, the racist jokes and denial of opportunity, and sometimes even to physical violence—all because of the colour of their skin or their ethnic origin.
>
> It especially hurts children—young people seeking their way in the world, only to discover that many of the dreams open to their classmates are closed to them. During these formative years, such experiences can have a long-term impact, creating an acceptance of others having a right to treat them in unjust and degrading ways.
>
> But the hurt goes beyond individual victims. Racism poisons the entire community where it is allowed to live. A community riddled with hatred and fear can never achieve its potential in success and richness. Its culture will be inevitably distorted— either explicitly, or by omission of the contributions of those who would have a great deal to offer if circumstances allowed.
>
> If racism is a product as well as a producer of fear, how can it be challenged? What can be done?

I am sure that a foundation on race relations is not the complete answer. It is only people speaking out who can really make changes, each of us in our own hearts, in our attitudes, and in our communities. But certainly we support the proposal to establish a Race Relations Foundation. We hope there will be broad hearings that will allow people in different regions of Canada to be heard. It would be an excellent opportunity for a committee to go to different communities. I offer the support of our party in that respect.

Mr. Joseph Volpe (Eglinton—Lawrence): Madam Speaker, I rise in support of this initiative on the Race Relations Foundation. I say this with a little regret, because one of the reasons we support such a foundation is its obvious need, a need that is unfortunate simply by its identification.

As the member who spoke a few minutes ago indicated, in Canada there is in a different climate, an atmosphere that we as Canadians cannot take great pride in noting. In fact, as a writer in one of the local papers indicated the other day, there seems to be a resurfacing of xenophobia, a hatred, a fear of foreigners, "a state of mind that has been spreading with increasing speed in the so-called civilized west whose people are beginning to vent their anxieties in a variety of ways, and

in the process an old historical verity is repeated that those who suffer first are the ones who are widely perceived to be as 'other'".

If this foundation is to address anything, it is to address that particular notice or identification of a state of mind developing in Canada, most unfortunate in its occurrence. I say that it is unfortunate because we have come slowly to a realization that the character of this country is in a state of evolution, a state of development, and a state of change.

Canada is first and foremost a multicultural country, a country that identifies itself as one, wherein all races and cultures of origin have an equality of position that suggests to each and everyone that there be dignity and a sense of pride expressed by each of the individual participants in those communities with a reciprocal respect by all other individuals from similar communities.

When I said I would support this foundation with some regret, it is because that need underscores the fact that there has not yet been an acceptance throughout all our country that the nature or fabric of our society is fundamentally, unequivocally, irrefutably multicultural.

We need instruments, symbols, and institutions that drive home the point that each and every one of us lives as individuals in collectives, all on our own in support of one another but always as Canadians whose rights are never in question because of our racial origin, our country of origin, our culture of origin, or our language.

I wanted to take a second look at this legislation and how and in what context we were establishing this type of a foundation. I went to the Statistics Canada figures for Ontario and Quebec, being from central Canada, and noted that in Ontario in 1986 the percentage of the population that identified itself as something other than French or English in origin was 62 per cent, and 34 per cent indicated multiple ethnic origin. There is already an evolving society wherein members are intermarrying and producing children who are no longer as attached to the past tradition or culture of their parents but one that is evolving and shaping a new Canadian dynamic.

• (1240)

In Toronto, the city where I come from, those figures are at least as startling. I am sure it would surprise many members in this House to know that in the population of Toronto, which is somewhat over three million, 70 per cent identifies itself as being neither French nor English and 28 per cent indicated a multiple ethnic origin.

Those figures are important for those of us who indicate, as did the previous speaker, that we have to consider this not only in the context of a multicultural act but also in the context of all constitutional debates, wherein we are seeing a debate centred upon two poles: anglophone and francophone, English Canada and French Canada.

We have an image of a monolithic society that is homogeneous in the extreme, but those statistics would suggest the complete opposite. In fact an entity like Ontario with a population of nine million plus is no longer so easily identifiable as a bastion of anglophone–English Canada but really a paragon of multicultural, multiracial society that should be viewed in the context of evolution toward a higher goal.

If I was able to quote those kinds of figures for Ontario, we can also take a look at Quebec. In Quebec, according to Canada Statistics figures, 17 per cent of the population identifies itself as being neither French nor English in origin, and 7 per cent of that population identifies itself as having more than one ethnic origin other than English or French. In Montreal, 36 per cent of the population is neither English nor French in origin.

That draws to mind that what we need to do in our country is to come to firm grips with the realities that the demographics now present us. We have not had that opportunity. Unfortunately much of the debate has centred around rights provincially and transferred on to race, culture, and language. In a truly multicultural society there should be no such threat. All cultures and languages deserve and indeed have a right to have the security of being able to generate the dynamics that are required for that culture or that language to continue to grow, to continue to develop in the context of a Canada in evolution, an evolution that takes into consideration the very valid, valuable construction and participation that have taken place in the past and continue to take place today.

As we look toward this foundation I recall what has happened over the course of the last several days in my own city of Toronto. I look again with regret that we need such a foundation in order to break down the walls of fear, the walls of ignorance, the walls of suspicion, and the walls of insecurity.

It is unfortunate that when we speak of multiculturalism the focus turns out to be one of racism. I say that knowing full well that the recent incident in Toronto that appeared to be racially motivated has now generated a series of very hostile reactions and very counterproductive comments by the press, officials and spokespersons from the various communities.

As my colleague from Montreal who spoke before me has indicated, what we need is a new direction that is positive in its promotion, in its engendering of those new symbols that hold Canada up as a land of tolerance, as a land of equality where we no longer simply pay lip service to these ideals but we live them out. We can only live them out if those symbols have the substance which many of us hold dearly and promote. If this bill is a small first step in that direction, it should be lauded.

I have some concerns that I hope the minister and his government will address. I am very concerned that this foundation not displace the rest of the advances that we are beginning to make in the whole concept of establishing multiculturalism as the ethos of this nation. In that light, I was disappointed some weeks ago when the federal government established a Heritage Languages Institute with a budget of a mere $6 million, but at the same time having a Department of Communications continue with a budget of approximately $300 million for the promotion of two official languages in areas outside of provincial jurisdiction. In the context of the figures that I gave a few moments ago, if we are to give substance to the principles which we espouse in bills such as this one, then what we need to do is put our money as well behind those symbols, behind those institutions.

It is very valid for this government or for any government of Canada to promote the two official languages. It is even more valid for that government to expend funds so that its citizens develop a sense of pride, a sense of belonging to a country that is of their making and theirs to hand to their descendants.

Last week we saw the establishment of a multicultural department mandated to promote "all" ethnic communities and yet retaining a minimal budget, just as it had when it was another department of the Secretary of State.

If we are going to give substance to those principles which we say identify Canada and its values, then surely we must put behind that the substance of dollars to indicate that we are serious.

Do not get me wrong, Madam Speaker, there is no one in the ethnocultural communities who is out there on bended knee, cap in hand, begging for money from the federal trough. That is not the case. My colleague, the critic for multiculturalism, has spoken eloquently on that. Rather, they are looking for substantive indications that there is an element of seriousness about where the government is going its policies, its programs and in the debates that affect the nation.

• (1250)

Today we are talking about establishing a foundation. Half the budget is going to redress the wrongs that the government on behalf of Canada has recognized were committed in World War II against its Canadians of Japanese origin. It is perhaps a first step, a very small first step to recognizing that, as a country, we have a great way to go to redress some of the errors that we as a society have perpetrated upon ourselves and people of other origins. I noticed that the previous speaker mentioned those of Ukrainian, Germanic, Chinese and Italian origins. Those are black marks on our history. We cannot rewrite history, but certainly we can make an admission of the errors that we no longer want to repeat.

In the whole context of establishing this new error free Canada, if you will, establishing a paragon of social organization, the one thing that is forgotten is the vision of Canada that people from ethnocultural communities present. Perhaps, as an aside, this debate gives us an opportunity to reflect on the fact that while the country is being torn by petty rivalries among the provinces and egos of politicians with respect to the Constitution, 40 per cent of the population in Canada have no part in rendering those kinds of decisions, those kinds of games and gamesmanship that is part and parcel of the Constitutional debate. Almost regrettably, a true vision of a united Canada, where all provinces and all peoples are treated with the kind of equality and deference that we

would accord to ourselves, is coming from the ethnocultural and multicultural community.

I said that we need the symbols, we need the institutions that allow us to permeate these principles and these concepts throughout the whole gamut of society. Yet in a two hour program aired a week ago by CBC, a Crown corporation, discussing the question "Is Canada dividing itself?", a bare seven minutes made some reference to what the program identified as 40 per cent of Canadians being of origins non-Anglo, non-French. Not one representative from that 40 per cent of Canadians, who have a different view and a different vision, I dare say a very dynamic and energetic vision of Canada, was deemed worthy to be present in the debates. This in a two hour program by a Crown corporation that receives the bulk of its funds from the Canadian government.

Those are not complaints by the ethnocultural community. They are complaints of Canadians who want to see this country together, where people can live in harmony and in dignity, where no one suffers the humiliation of being scorned, being put aside or, even worse, discriminated against.

This foundation can take those first steps to help redress some of that. The onus is on the minister through his department and through the instruments of the Multiculturalism Act and the Department of Multiculturalism to be able to promote and initiate programs that are needed to have a change in the mindset that is tearing all Canadians apart. Never again should we be able to stand in this House and listen to errors and sins of commission and omission that the previous speaker indicated Canadians are guilty of having committed.

We have to generate a spirit of positiveness and security. Without that, we lapse into unease and unease translates into a heightened sense of nationalism and ethnicity, both of which breed xenophobia and bring with them racism and discrimination.

In Canada, we have the opportunity to meet a challenge and to forge a new direction that requires a change of policies, not only on multiculturalism, official languages, immigration and refugees, but we need instruments and leadership to convince all Canadians that multiculturalism is something to be proud of rather than to be feared.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Questions or comments? The hon. member for Vancouver East.

Ms. Margaret Mitchell (Vancouver East): Madam Speaker, I would like to ask the hon. member if he thinks there is a connection between the increasing racism in society, particularly in Canada in the last few years, and the economic policies and the economic situation that we have all been very concerned about.

If we look at what is happening in Canada, particularly in the last three or four years, we find a society that is increasingly insecure. For example, people were very worried about free trade. People are becoming increasingly concerned as various social programs are cut: family allowances, pensions, the Canada Assistance Plan, unemployment insurance, the type of safety net that people have expected.

There has been a tremendous housing problem in some of the largest urban communities, certainly in his community and mine, Toronto and Vancouver respectively. The jobs of people who are living close to immigrants in some of the downtown areas, the inner city areas, are not very secure. Their parents are worried about the future for their kids and being able to get them into education, and education costs are going up and assistance is going down.

Does the hon. member think, as I do, that the economic situation creates insecurity in people and is responsible, to quite a large degree, for the fear of immigration which in turn translates into increasing fear of coloured immigration perhaps and other acts of racism?

Mr. Volpe: Madam Speaker, it appears that the hon. member is in sync with the realities that we promote on this side of the House. In a very brief answer to her question, the word is yes.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Would the House be in agreement if we were to call it one o'clock and allow the hon. member to be recognized after Question Period, instead of having him start over again?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[*Translation*]

Madam Deputy Speaker: It being one o'clock, I do now leave the Chair until two o'clock this afternoon.

At 1 p.m. the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House met at 2 p.m.

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S. O. 31

[*English*]

RAOUL WALLENBERG

Mrs. Sheila Finestone (Mount Royal): Mr. Speaker, the distinguished International Commission of Inquiry on the Fate and Whereabouts of Raoul Wallenberg has concluded, and I quote chairman Irwin Cotler: "the evidence is incontrovertible that he did not die in 1947 as the Soviets claim" and "we have a responsibility to humanity to determine the fate and whereabouts of Wallenberg who is credited with saving more lives during the Second World War than any single government".

The commission reviewed thousands of pages of evidence, documents Wallenberg's years of imprisonment, releases new information including eyewitness reports of his fate, and includes discussion with the late Andrei Sakharov who worked closely with the committee.

The report concludes: first, Wallenberg did not die in 1947; it is compelling that he was alive in the 1950s and 1960s and credible that he was alive in the 1970s and 1980s; second, the burden of proof is on the Soviets to rebut this evidence which they have not done; and, third, without contrary evidence, the committee must assume he may still be alive and should be released.

In welcoming President Gorbachev today, I ask the Prime Minister, in the interest of Canada's only honourary citizen, Wallenberg, to appeal to President Gorbachev for Wallenberg's release if he is still alive and, at least, to fully disclose the fate and whereabouts of this lost hero of the holocaust.

* * *

SOVIET JEWRY

Mr. Bill Attewell (Markham—Whitchurch—Stouffville): Mr. Speaker, I rise to salute and congratulate one of the true leaders of the world, President Mikhail

Gorbachev. As a result of his introduction of *glasnost* and *perestroika* into the Soviet Union, breathtaking changes have occurred in the U.S.S.R. and, indeed, in all of eastern Europe.

As chairman of the Canadian Parliamentary Group for Soviet Jewry, I particularly want to thank Mr. Gorbachev who is visiting our country today for permitting thousands of Jews to leave the Soviet Union. In 1986, only 914 Jews were given exit visas. This year it is expected that 150,000 Jews will be allowed to leave the country.

I would, however, ask Mr. Gorbachev to do his utmost to condemn and eradicate the ugly anti-Semitic actions which are occurring in the U.S.S.R. While *glasnost* has meant a more open society where freedom of speech is more prevalent, it is most regrettable that it has given rise to increased anti-Semitic actions. We urge him to curb these insidious actions.

In closing, I salute Mr. Gorbachev for writing and orchestrating a new chapter of hope and good will for the peoples of the U.S.S.R. and many east bloc countries. The struggle has just begun and there will be many problems, but are on the right path.

* * *

[*Translation*]

COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Ian Waddell (Port Moody—Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Communications was given a petition with over 150,000 names yesterday asking the government to ban children's television programs that suggest violence as a normal way to solve conflicts. Almost all such programming comes from the United States. In that country, the average number of violent acts in cartoon shows was 41 per hour. The minister's answer was to refer the problem to the CRTC.

[*English*]

The Minister of Communications is all talk and no action. Here is what we propose to deal with this serious matter.

The Broadcast Act is at the report stage in the House. We are not going to deal with it until the fall. Therefore, let us amend it and give the CRTC the power and direction to Canadianize children's programs, that is, to make them less violent than the American programs.

S. O. 31

ENVIRONMENT

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport): Mr. Speaker, one of the final statements by the former Minister of the Environment was to commit Canada to stabilizing carbon dioxide emissions by the year 2000.

On Friday, May 18, 1990, the Minister of Forestry reassured us all that the minister's commitment is a government commitment. However, last Wednesday, the Prime Minister waffled on the stabilization of carbon dioxide emissions. On Thursday, the new part-time Minister of the Environment repudiated the commitment, while on Friday, the Minister of Forestry recommitted the government to stabilizing carbon dioxide emissions. And the government wonders why Canadians are confused.

We urge the part-time Minister of the Environment to make a clear statement in the House and inform Canadians as to exactly where his government stands on carbon dioxide emissions.

* * *

BILL C-21

Mr. Ken James (Sarnia—Lambton): Mr. Speaker, on November 6, 1989, the House of Commons passed Bill C-21 which incorporates the much needed amendments to the Unemployment Insurance Act.

In particular, the changes include a 45 per cent increase in funding for labour force development. The strategy is to increase the quantity of training and skills development in Canada, as well as to increase the quality and relevancy of this training.

Yet, for seven months, the passage of this legislation has been the victim of a misguided political power play. Do those responsible realize that this delay is already having regional consequences?

In my riding of Sarnia—Lambton alone, assistance under the UI job creation program is in limbo, and the applicants under the self-employment incentive program are anxiously awaiting the passage of Bill C-21.

I say to members opposite and those in the other place: "Let's get on with it. Let's look at the big picture. There's much more at stake here than simple political gamesmanship."

[*Translation*]

GREAT BED RACE PUT ON BY THE CHRIST-ROI HOSPITAL FOUNDATION

Mr. Marcel R. Tremblay (Québec-Est): Mr. Speaker, on May 16, I had the pleasure to inform this House of an activity put on by the Christ-Roi Hospital Foundation, namely a bed race to raise money to upgrade the hospital's medical equipment.

Well, Mr. Speaker, it has been done!

Having participated in this bed race with 700 others, I realized how enthusiastic and eager people are when it comes to such a laudable objective.

Mr. Speaker, thanks to the hard work of 1,000 volunteers and the continual encouragement of 5,000 people all along the course, this event was a tremendous success.

As proof, the goal of $100,000 was reached.

Thanks go to foundation president Louise Roy and, on behalf of all users of the Christ-Roi Hospital, to everyone who made this project a reality.

Congratulations and be back next year!

* * *

[*English*]

IMMIGRATION

Mr. Joseph Volpe (Eglinton—Lawrence): Mr. Speaker, last week, the Economic Council of Canada came before the Standing Committee on Labour, Employment and Immigration to tell members that, although the data was not complete, the "economic benefits of immigration are really very small".

The subtle suggestion was that immigrants are not worth the perceived problems attributed to immigration: strain on the social infrastructure, depressed wages, competition for jobs, social tensions, increased education costs, and any other ills that a lethargic government looking for a scapegoat might wish to attribute to newer Canadians.

The data is there and it tells a different story. Total immigration in 1988-89 represented a mere 0.61 per cent of the Canadian population. For the previous four years, it was 0.59 per cent, 0.39 per cent, 0.33 per cent and 0.35 per cent respectively. When we factor out emigration from Canada, we see that net immigration for the last

four years totalled only 350,000, less than 90,000 per year or a mere 0.35 per cent of the population.

The minister might well counsel the government to adopt a pro-active, energetic immigration policy rather than allow the dissemination of the view that immigration is a cause of problems facing Canada when an intelligent analysis sees them as a solution.

* * *

THE SENATE

Mr. Larry Schneider (Regina—Wascana): Mr. Speaker, recent events have clearly shown that Canadians reject the Senate's continuing battle to frustrate the will of the elected Parliament. Canadians reject the Senate's continued use of that place for repeated partisan purposes. I am sure that the people of Canada will also reject the battle being waged by a number of senators to maintain and enhance their privileges.

The resignation of the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod has highlighted the desperate need either to reform or abolish the other place. At a time when all Canadians are being asked to accept restraint in government spending, it is shocking that the other place continues to guard jealously ancient privileges and spurn the introduction of modern management practices.

* * *

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Jack Whittaker (Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt): Mr. Speaker, seniors across Canada have received an innocent looking leaflet entitled: *The GST: Information for Seniors*.

The leaflet states that 84 per cent of Canadian seniors will receive a tax credit of $190, paid by cheque four times a year, by filling out the GST credit form. It also reminds seniors that they will be protected by social programs fully indexed to the cost of living.

As a result of this leaflet, many seniors now believe that they will be receiving four cheques of $190 each year, and that the GST credit, like other social programs, will be automatically and fully indexed. This simply is not the case.

• (1410)

The GST credit will not offset the increased cost of the GST and $190 is not enough to compensate seniors for the GST they will pay. Because the GST credit is not fully indexed to inflation, fewer and fewer seniors will be eligible, even though they remain at the same fixed income. It is time that seniors learned the truth about the GST.

* * *

LITERACY

Mr. Willie Littlechild (Wetaskiwin): Mr. Speaker, the United Nations has declared 1990 to be International Literacy Year. The House of Commons Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs is committed to the objectives as set forth by UNESCO.

Canada has strong linguistic traditions, not only in French and English, but in the richness and diversity of the many languages spoken by native peoples. Unfortunately, it has been estimated that as many as 30 per cent of aboriginal youth, ages 16 to 24, do not possess reading and writing skills of a grade nine level.

Widespread illiteracy has profound implications for society as economic costs to Canadians run into the billions of dollars as a result of unemployment and the other consequences of illiteracy. The well-being of the family and an individual's feeling of positive self-worth are adversely affected by the poverty and social alienation associated with the inability to read and write.

The Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs will travel this week to four regions in Canada to meet with native leaders and educators. It is our hope that, by receiving information firsthand, the committee will be better able to make realistic and productive recommendations to Parliament regarding the most effective means of tackling this significant issue.

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ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Ms. Ethel Blondin (Western Arctic): Mr. Speaker, this past weekend in Kanata I attended a powwow with hundreds of aboriginal people and other citizens sponsored by the Odawa Friendship Centre. I wish all members could have experienced the sensation of watch-

watching these people, with their traditional dress, demonstrating their spiritual and cultural heritage, using their aboriginal languages. Both the young and the old were well represented. I experienced a sad realization that some governments and some of our political leaders fail to appreciate and to honour the distinct societies of the aboriginal peoples of Canada.

If there is a First Ministers' Conference to deal with the Meech Lake Accord, governments of the First Nations cannot be excluded and territorial leaders, who represent northerners, must be at the table.

I encourage all Canadians to honour our true heritage by welcoming aboriginal peoples to participate equally in completing the circle of confederation.

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[*Translation*]

QUEBEC VILLAGE OF YESTERYEAR

Mr. Jean-Guy Guilbault (Drummond): Mr. Speaker, the Quebec Village of Yesteryear, a historic site in Drummondville, will open again this year on Friday to receive many visitors throughout the summer season.

This educational and cultural tourist centre is the recreation of a village according to the customs of people who lived in Quebec between 1840 and 1910.

Dressed in period costumes and equipped with old-fashioned tools, the craftspeople perform all the trades a rural community needed to live in the last century. You can also enjoy the finest Quebec cuisine.

This year, nineteenth-century farming techniques will be highlighted.

Many Canadian, American and foreign producers regularly make films there.

Mr. Speaker, last year, more than 185,000 people visited the Quebec Village of Yesteryear. I therefore invite hon. members and all Canadians to come and visit this heritage village.

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[*English*]

FOREST RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENTS

Mr. Brian L. Gardiner (Prince George—Bulkley Valley): Mr. Speaker, in Halifax the part-time Minister of the Environment said that the government was going to make Canada green. We all know that the best way to make Canada green is to plant trees, and that is exactly what this government is not doing.

Tree planting agreements worth over $1 billion have expired and, despite the Prime Minister's commitment on February 2 that they would be renewed, the Minister of Forestry has failed to deliver.

If we are going to develop environmental programs and have our forests protected, agreements in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, and Quebec should be renewed now.

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THE LIBERAL PARTY

Mr. Harry Chadwick (Brampton—Malton): Mr. Speaker, Premier Peterson, the Liberal Premier of Ontario, should probably sue his own party's federal masters.

In their current long race to the federal leadership, and now in the provincial membership drives which anticipate an upcoming provincial election, it is my opinion that the Liberal Party continues to use members of the ethnic community for their own gain in respect of voting membership and delegates.

Several sitting Liberal provincial members, including the Solicitor General for Ontario, now find themselves in jeopardy of losing their upcoming nominations because of these questionable Liberal Party tactics. They can thank their federal counterparts for the example set by delegate voting practices in the federal leadership race. Indeed, it is a most irregular practice which questions the ethical integrity of the Liberal party and threatens the very core of our electoral process.

Overlooking the abuse of party membership and thus supporting the practice for their own gain will backfire in the end. The Liberals, Mr. Speaker, will ultimately reap the wild wind.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[*English*]

AGRICULTURE

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister and relates to the visit to Canada of Soviet President Gorbachev.

As we said in a statement issued today, we in the Official Opposition welcome this visit and look forward to it strengthening relations between our two countries.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Gray (Windsor West): Canada's agreement for wheat sales to the Soviet Union expires next summer. Yet we understand that the Soviet Union has recently secured arrangements for the purchase of wheat from Argentina and the United States. The Soviet Union is one of Canada's most important wheat customers, taking one-quarter of our exports.

Will the Prime Minister of Canada and Soviet President Gorbachev be signing a new wheat agreement during the President's visit to Ottawa today and tomorrow?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I share with the hon. Leader of the Opposition the need to co-operate on a bilateral basis with the Soviet Union, particularly in the area of trade and cultural exchange.

We have had a ongoing trade relationship with the Soviet Union, particularly in the area of grains and oilseeds. The existing long-term agreement between Canada and the Soviet Union will expire on July 31, 1991. Preliminary discussions have already begun on renewal under the auspices of the Minister of State for Grains and Oilseeds, and obviously the Prime Minister will be raising this issue with Mr. Gorbachev during the bilateral exchange that will occur on the occasion of his visit.

[*Translation*]

ARCTIC ENVIRONMENT

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question as well for the Deputy Prime Minister.

We know that Canada and the Soviet Union occupy a large part of the vast, ecologically fragile Arctic region.

We know that Canada and the Soviet Union last November signed an agreement on the Arctic environment that put sustainable development at the forefront of their bilateral relations.

Therefore, can the Deputy Prime Minister tell us what concrete action has been taken since this agreement was signed and what will the Prime Minister of Canada actually do to protect the fragile Arctic environment and have true sustainable development in this important region of our world?

[*English*]

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, this was raised during the reception at the airport. When the President arrived he mentioned the importance of co-operation in Arctic matters, and particularly the enhancement and preservation of the environment in that very sensitive and delicate area.

This will obviously be a part of the bilateral discussions, as well as items such as the future of the European architecture, the Baltic republics, the ongoing bilateral relations that exist between Canada and the Soviet Union, the ongoing disarmament talks, and of course east-west relations in a general sense.

Obviously the point that the Leader of the Opposition makes is a very valid one. Both the Prime Minister and the President have indicated that this will be a topic for discussion.

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I have a further supplementary for the Deputy Prime Minister. When members of the Official Opposition were in the Soviet Union recently they were disturbed to hear reports of a possible decision by the Soviet Union to shift its nuclear testing to sites in the Soviet Arctic in 1995.

• (1420)

Will the Prime Minister of Canada request that the President of the Soviet Union publicly reject such a proposal because of the adverse effect it would have if implemented on the fragile environment of the Arctic, and because of the way it would contradict the stated Soviet view that there should not be further nuclear testing and, in fact, nuclear armaments should be reduced in the Arctic. Will this request be made?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, of course we are concerned about the possible implications of increased testing in the fragile Arctic environment, particularly at a time when we are intensifying environmental co-operation between Canada and the U.S.S.R. We obviously will be raising this issue and expressing our deep concern. This will be conveyed directly to the President and in other ways that will come to our disposal.

I can assure the hon. member we share his concern and that this matter will be taken up during the bilateral discussions today and tomorrow.

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[*Translation*]

LITHUANIA

Hon. André Ouellet (Papineau—Saint-Michel): Mr. Speaker, my questions are also directed to the Deputy Prime Minister who has to be aware that the Lithuanian community in Canada is deeply concerned over the changing situation over there. Will the Prime Minister raise this issue with his distinguished visitor and, more specifically, is the Prime Minister prepared to ask President Gorbachev to remove all sanctions which aggravate the conflict rather than solve it?

[*English*]

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, the position of the Government of Canada has been made clear. It is to continue to ensure *de jure* non-recognition of the Soviet annexation of the Baltic states. Of course, we have urged, and will continue to urge, restraint upon the Soviet authorities in their actions against the Baltic states. We call on both Vilnius and Moscow to engage in productive discussions and negotiations in an attempt to resolve this matter.

As for Canada, we are considering ways and means in which we can support Lithuania and other Baltic states in this quest for greater self-determination. Those discussions will obviously be a very central part of the visit between the Prime Minister, the Secretary of State for External Affairs and the President of the Soviet Union.

Hon. André Ouellet (Papineau—St-Michel): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member will certainly know that there is a shortage of medical supplies because of the blockade, and I hope that the Government of Canada will find ways to help to alleviate such problems.

I would like to ask the Deputy Prime Minister a question on another point. He knows that next year the Soviet Government will host an international conference on human rights. As a prelude to this conference, is the Prime Minister ready to recommend to President Gorbachev that he take all necessary steps to relax general travel restrictions on all its citizens and particularly, to ensure that Soviet Jews can leave the Soviet Union without threats.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Monique Landry (Minister for External Relations): Mr. Speaker, I should think that my colleague knows full well to what extent respect for human rights is a matter which the Government of Canada defends with utmost determination in all institutions.

As to the specific problem he has raised, he also knows that our government supports the notion that Jewish people should be free to leave the Soviet Union and that this issue will also be the subject of discussions later today between the Secretary of State for External Affairs and his counterpart.

* * *

[*English*]

BILL C-43

Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Justice.

If Bill C-43 passes today, this government will once again have relegated women to second class citizenship. Today a doctor in a Halifax hospital said that that hospital will no longer provide abortion services if this bill passes. Doctors in Winnipeg say they will no longer provide reproductive health services. Other doctors, afraid of criminal prosecution and jail sentences, will require signed statements, witnesses and expensive psy-

chiatric evaluations. One doctor has said, and I quote: "What this law is doing is—"

Mr. Speaker: I am having some difficulty with the question. I would like the Leader of the New Democratic Party to put her question.

Ms. McLaughlin: Mr. Speaker, doctors from one end of this country to the other have said that this law will cause—

Mr. Speaker: I would ask the hon. member to put the question.

Ms. McLaughlin: In light of the potential denial of basic medical services and dignity, will the Minister of Justice take the last opportunity to prevent this unjust violation of women's rights and see that the bill is defeated today?

Mr. Speaker: The minister, of course, can answer. I must say though that the question is speculative at the very least.

Hon. Kim Campbell (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, even a question that is out of order requires a response, I think.

A great many things have been said about the potential effect of Bill C–43, which may or may not be accepted by the House today. I will simply repeat what I said in the legislative committee, that no doctor who is practising medicine according to the canon of ethics of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons in Canada need fear anything from Bill C–43.

I also made it very clear that should the bill be accepted by Parliament, in the period between its acceptance by Parliament and its coming into force—which as the hon. member will be aware, will be some time, depending on the speed with which the Senate deals with the bill, were it to be passed because that is anticipatory—that I believe it is the obligation of the government to ensure that all people who are affected by the bill are clear as to its effect.

In my profession of law, we regularly have courses and opportunities whereby lawyers become aware of new obligations that may apply to them, et cetera. I believe that were this bill to become law, the government would have a similar obligation to make sure that doctors in Canada are aware of the genuine implications of the bill and not implications that have been communicated to them by scaremongers who wish to detract them from the ethical practice of—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

[*Translation*]

Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Yesterday in Montreal, Dr. Jean Guimond, a spokesperson for the monitoring committee, talked about the impact Bill C–43 would have on women and on doctors. He said, "They are forced to lie, to distort reality, to say what is not true—"

My question for the minister is: What does she have to say to Quebec women who denounce this bill as sinisterly hypocritical?

Hon. Kim Campbell (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I repeat what I said in English: No doctor in Canada need fear Bill C–43. What is described in the bill as legal conforms to the Canadian Medical Association's code of ethics. If the bill is passed by the House, I would assure all physicians in Canada that they have nothing to fear.

[*English*]

Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, this government has said that it cares about Canadian families. Yet we have over one and one–half million children in this country living in poverty. We have half a million children relying on food banks. The government says it cares about Canadian families, but only spends .0004 per cent on family planning and contraceptive research.

Why does the government not bring in a humane family policy which will feed our children, clothe our children, provide shelter for our children, instead of sending women and doctors to jail?

• (1430)

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member will be aware of the fact that the government has announced its intention to increase research and family planning and the dissemination of information with regard to family planning.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Beatty: Mr. Speaker, members of the NDP ask questions and then they shout down the answers. Surely, they should give the House the courtesy of receiving the answers.

The hon. member should be aware of the fact that between 1984 and 1989 the child tax credit was increased by more than 50 per cent.

She should be aware of the fact that poverty, including child poverty, in Canada has declined.

She should be aware of the fact that the government made major commitments to dealing with issues such as child sexual abuse and family violence.

All these are initiative which show the commitment of this government to the family in Canada. They are important commitments. They deserve her support.

[*Translation*]

MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, my question to the Deputy Prime Minister deals with the meetings the Prime Minister had with his provincial counterparts in an effort to break down the resistance of those who oppose the ratification of the Meech Lake Accord.

Could the Deputy Prime Minister report briefly to the House and the Canadian people in general on the current negotiations and tell us if possible, if we can expect that a way out of the constitutional deadlock will be found soon?

[*English*]

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I am not sure that I can add anything to that which was outlined to the House yesterday by the Acting Prime Minister, the Secretary of State for External Affairs, other than to say, as I am sure the hon. member is aware, that Senator Lowell Murray has travelled to Newfoundland to meet further with Premier Wells, the objective still being to narrow the differences, to try to bring about an appropriate process and to outline and explore what approaches might be employed in bringing those premiers who have not seen fit to support the Meech Lake Accord to do so.

As soon as we can report some definitive progress in that particular area, I am sure that the Prime Minister or someone on behalf of the government will outline that to the House. While progress is being made at the present time, it does not appear that sufficient progress has been made to call a First Ministers' conference.

It is fair to say that that would be the objective as we move toward ironing out some of the details which have been raised as a result of the bilateral meetings between the Prime Minister and the premiers.

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, the consultations have been going on for some time. Canadians are worried. They would like to have the assurance that the government is in control.

Can the Deputy Prime Minister tell the House if a federal-provincial conference of First Ministers will be held this week? Where will it be held, on what day and, if not, why not?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): I cannot answer that question precisely, Mr. Speaker. The objective, as I said and as the Secretary of State for External Affairs told the House yesterday, is to narrow the differences.

I think it is fair to say that progress is being made.

Senator Murray will return from Newfoundland later today. He will be briefing the Prime Minister on the results of his bilateral discussions. Perhaps some time later this week we can report to the House.

I regret that I cannot give him a definitive date at the present time.

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INDUSTRY

Mr. Jim Peterson (Willowdale): Mr. Speaker, since other countries do not allow their key industries to be taken over by foreigners, will the Minister of Industry, Science and Technology explain to us how Canada benefits when our key industries are taken over by foreigners?

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Industry, Science and Technology): Mr. Speaker, it is obvious that I do not have the same perception about foreign ownership in Canada as my colleague from Willowdale.

What I have to say is that foreign investors in Canada are welcome from the moment they are considered to be of net benefit for the country.

Canadians know very well that we need new technology and that we need to keep and develop our labour force.

Canadians also know that those foreign investors bring to Canada investment which will provide net benefits. I know that my colleague knows that very well.

If he were to compare the 1984 figures with today's, he would see that there is no comparison to when FIRA was in place.

Mr. Jim Peterson (Willowdale): Mr. Speaker, so much for the theory and the rhetoric.

Let us look at the facts, what the minister talked about himself.

First, research and development is on the decline under this government.

Second, in terms of the record number of takeovers welcomed by this government, we have now seen that 46 per cent of Canadian manufacturing is foreign controlled.

Some hon. members: Question.

Mr. Peterson: We have seen how Canada—

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member is setting the basis of his question. I think that that is done and that he should put his question.

Mr. Peterson: My question is this, Mr. Speaker. As his country has lost 107,000 manufacturing jobs since January of last year, when will the minister announce new measures to stop this job loss, to give Canadian manufacturers a level playing field?

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Industry, Science and Technology): Mr. Speaker, as usual my friend forgets to refer to the jobs which have been created by foreign investors who have invested here in Canada. It is wrong for him to say that we have less money for research and development. But that has always been the song by the Liberal party.

When we consider the number of jobs created in this country since 1984, we see there is no comparison with what the Liberals did before 1984.

Once again, we are proud of what we have done in terms of job creation and industrial development.

We will continue to welcome investors from abroad, if they respect the net benefits for Canada.

We have many examples of success stories, something which he knows very well.

* * *

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of National Defence.

I am hoping that the Minister of National Defence has had an opportunity to read the speech given by the right hon. Secretary of State for External Affairs on Saturday in which the Secretary of State for External Affairs said: "It makes little sense to retain nuclear weapons whose only target can be our new friends in Poland, Czechoslovakia and East Germany".

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Blaikie: This sounds remarkably like something I said to the Minister of National Defence just last Thursday, something for which he felt it appropriate to ridicule me and to reject.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Blaikie: Does the Minister of National Defence now agree with the view that the Secretary of State for External Affairs has expressed or is there some discrepancy which exists between himself and the minister? If there is no discrepancy, is he prepared to say today that the government is now considering cancelling testing of the cruise missile and refusing even to be asked to test any new delivery system for nuclear weapons?

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Bill McKnight (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, I must apologize to my colleague if he feels I was picking on him. I was just drawing to his attention the inaccuracies of a statement that he made.

Anyone who is concerned about the foreign policy of this government should read in its entirety the speech of the right hon. Secretary of State for External Affairs. I would suggest that the hon. member read it in its entirety.

As I explained to the hon. member when he asked the question last Thursday, NATO is adjusting its military strategy. That was part of the meetings of the nuclear planning group which took place in Kananaskis, Alberta.

• (1440)

It was also part of the meetings of the defence planning committee which took place in Brussels.

I can quote to the hon. member from the communiqué issued by NATO, although I am sure he has a copy of it. It states that NATO is determined to make the most of the opportunities created by these developments and is adapting to the new conditions in Europe.

As always, NATO and the Government of Canada are prepared to change and adjust our strategies.

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona): Mr. Speaker, the fact remains that when the Ministers of Defence came out of Kananaskis they said that it did make sense to continue to use these weapons. The minister said on Saturday that it does not make any sense.

I would like to know what the government policy is. Does it, or does it not make sense to retain these kinds of nuclear weapons? If it does not, and if the Secretary of State speaks for the government, then when is Canada going to announce a new policy with respect to cruise testing and, for that matter, with respect to forward defence, which is something else the Secretary of State for External Affairs says does not make sense any more?

Hon. Bill McKnight (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, the only inconsistency is that the hon. member has not read the speech delivered by the Secretary of State for External Affairs.

Mr. Blaikie: You have not read it.

Mr. McKnight: Let me assist him in that. In the next paragraph, right after the one from which the hon. member has read, it states: "This is not to deny the continued requirement for prudent military stability at this time of historic change. Twelve months do not invalidate the lessons of history. The possibility of instability is there and the Soviet military capabilities remain substantial. Therefore a strong military mandate for NATO continues to be valid and a North American commitment to Europe represented by the presence of Canadian and American troops there is crucial as we strive for strategic stability at significantly lower levels of military force".

If the hon. member would read the whole speech, he would understand exactly what this government is about. This government believes there is opportunity for change. This government will take part in it.

I can only say that if the NDP happen to be government some day—God forbid—they would not even be sitting at the negotiating table.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

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FORESTRY

Mr. Réginald Bélair (Cochrane—Superior): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Forestry.

On December 19, and more recently in May, the minister received a letter from the Ontario Minister of Natural Resources in which she urged the government to negotiate seriously the renewal of the forestry agreement which expired over a year ago. The Ontario minister is troubled by the federal government's inaction.

Why does the minister keep blaming the province of Ontario for his own failure to renew the agreement?

Hon. Frank Oberle (Minister of Forestry): Mr. Speaker, my hon. friend is right. I do have a letter from the Minister of Natural Resources for Ontario in which she suggests that we begin serious negotiations toward a new forest resource development agreement.

I very much welcome this letter and the opportunity it will provide us to start negotiations with the province toward a future agreement.

However, I would also like to point out to my hon. friend that another of the minister's colleagues writes as well pointing out that there are difficulties in mobilizing the resources that would be necessary to meet the expectations about which my hon. friend asks.

Mr. Réginald Bélair (Cochrane—Superior): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the same minister.

The softwood lumber industry is hurting very badly because of the 15 per cent export surtax on exports to the United States. Pulp and paper profits have fallen from $400 million in the first trimester of last year to $93

million this year. Both industries are now choking under the federal government's high interest rate policy.

When will the minister impress upon his colleague, the Minister of Finance, that the government's policy is devastating to the forestry industry?

Hon. Frank Oberle (Minister of Forestry): Mr. Speaker, I assume that my hon. friend knows that the tax that is being collected is returned immediately to the province from whence it came. One must assume that that province would return the windfall revenues that accrue back to where it belongs, perhaps in the form of planting trees or other silviculture activities which are urgent and permissible under the agreement.

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TRADE

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister.

When the President of the United States was asked by Canada to veto legislation regarding Canadian lobsters, he turned thumbs down to our request.

The decision taken by the free trade panel has once again ruled against Atlantic Canadian lobster fishermen. Decisions of this nature will only serve to enhance regional disparity in this country.

Will the Deputy Prime Minister take members of the House into his confidence and explain what Canada will be proposing during the 90-day negotiation period with our counterparts in the United States? What will the Government of Canada be suggesting to its U.S. counterparts in order for them to change their decision and rule in favour of Atlantic Canadian lobster fishermen?

Hon. Tom Hockin (Minister of State (Small Businesses and Tourism)): Mr. Speaker, my hon. friend knows that this 90-day period is a period for the industry, the unions, and the government to talk about a new configuration.

During this 90-day period I hope that the hon. member will talk with the industry and help the industry. We are going to do that. The panel decision is simply a context for more fruitful discussions during the next 90 days.

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, I am appalled. Atlantic Canadian lobster fishermen are appalled at the lack of leadership and concern being exhibited by the Government of Canada with regard to lobster fishermen in this country.

In view of the fact that $30 million will be drained from the pockets of Atlantic Canadian lobster fishermen, does the minister not think it only fair, equitable and good public policy to put in place forthwith a compensation package as it has done for other sectors of the Canadian economy?

Hon. Tom Hockin (Minister of State (Small Businesses and Tourism)): Mr. Speaker, it is clear that the $30 million figure is certainly an oversized figure.

The hon. member knows that we have under way a number of promotional opportunities for larger sized lobsters in the United States. That will be a major marketing initiative of the government.

There are also a number of promotions that the industry, together with the government, will be undertaking around the world for lobsters. It will not involve $30 million. It will be considerably less than that.

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IMMIGRATION

Mr. Dan Heap (Trinity—Spadina): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Employment and Immigration. It is about the case of Mahmood Hassan Randeree who wants to stay in Canada where his parents and sister are citizens.

I would like to know why the government is so determined to have a South African activist of the African National Council leave this country. Why does the government want him to leave Canada for a country where he will be in danger?

Will the rejection of his refugee claim and the departure notice remain in effect? Or, will the minister consider issuing him a permit on humanitarian grounds?

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member knows, the decision to give Mr. Randeree a departure notice—not a deportation notice—was made by an

adjudicator after the adjudicator and members of the refugee determination board found that he did not have a credible claim. I know the hon. member believes in the case by case review as we do. The case has also been reviewed on humanitarian and compassionate grounds.

The departure order simply means that he can go to a country of his choice between now and June 10. It is not a deportation notice. The means by which he chooses to leave and the country to which he goes is up to him.

Mr. Dan Heap (Trinity—Spadina): Mr. Speaker, the minister avoids the fact that Mr. Randeree's natural choice is Canada where his parents and sister are citizens.

If the minister feels that Mr. Randeree could return or be sent back to Germany, east or west—it is hard to tell which is which these days—will the minister table documents from the government of Chancellor Kohl assuring us that Mr. Randeree will be allowed some kind of permanent residence in that country and, if not, that he would not at some later date be sent to South Africa?

• (1450)

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I am given to understand that Mr. Randeree has a wife and child in Germany. We have been assured by the German authorities that there would be no impediment to his going there.

Because his father is a citizen of Canada and if he departs voluntarily, he will have the option of having his father sponsor him as an assisted relative. While there are not any guarantees under this program, it is certainly a legitimate way for him to come back to Canada, if this is his country of choice.

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THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Terry Clifford (London—Middlesex): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of the Environment.

Very important environmental programs were put into effect by the minister's predecessor and this government. I refer to the Environmental Partners Fund and the Mobile PCB Destruction Program. This program has been most useful in helping the citizens of northern Ontario address the problem of PCB storage and what to do with PCBs to make their future safe in their community.

Indeed many Canadians have used these programs and want these initiatives because they meet the concerns head on right in the communities.

Will the minister give an assurance to Canadians that existing programs, rich as they are and as helpful as they are to Canadians, will be available to Canadians?

Hon. Robert de Cotret (President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, first I would like to congratulate the member for London—Middlesex regarding the very important role he has played in bringing together from June 11 to June 14, here in Ottawa, some of the world's most noted scientists and parliamentarians from 30 countries for a conference on the environment. I am looking forward to participating in this event.

I would like to assure the hon. member that the federal government has already set aside, as he knows, a $50 million Environmental Partners Fund over five years to help local groups take action in protecting, preserving, and enhancing the environment. We will continue along that same road. That fund is certainly in place, and we will continue living by it.

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TRANSPORT

Mr. Stan Keyes (Hamilton West): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport.

Yesterday the minister said that recommendations of a leaked Transport Canada report, which called for among other things a reduction in flight inspections and weather forecasting and cancellation of air traffic control training, would not affect safety.

Since the same report states that "budgetary cuts would have a substantial impact on air navigational systems", how can the minister say, as he did yesterday, that these cuts will not be made at the expense of safety?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, my hon. friend will understand that from time to time literally dozens of reports are made within any ministry,

and especially the Ministry of Transport. Those reports have to be actioned.

I asked this morning if such a report had reached the desk of my deputy minister for consideration. I was advised that the answer was no.

Mr. Stan Keyes (Hamilton West): Mr. Speaker, is it not interesting that this document has been available since March of this year? The minister does not know what is going on in his own department. I have a supplementary question.

This leaked report, which I produced in this House yesterday, also cautions against any cuts in air traffic control training as "there are already too few controllers".

Will the minister now stand in his place and totally reject the recommendations in this report which has been available to him since last April or March?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, there is absolutely no way I am going either to accept or reject the information in a report that I have not seen.

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NATIONAL REVENUE

Mr. David Berger (Saint-Henri—Westmount): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Revenue.

We learned today that the government is considering hiring hundreds of tax cops to review as many as 10,000 returns of individual Canadian taxpayers.

In 1984 the Conservative task force on Revenue Canada recommended that fishing expeditions be stopped "in situations where the minister had no specific reasons to believe that certain individuals had not complied with the Income Tax Act".

If fishing expeditions were wrong in 1984, why are they not wrong today? Or, is the minister saying he is as incapable of stopping overfishing as his colleague the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans?

Hon. Otto Jelinek (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, first I would like to welcome the hon. member back to the House of Commons. I think the last time I saw him was—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: The minister's comment of course raises two questions: who was here and who was not. The hon. minister.

Mr. Jelinek: I think it was in the streets of Leningrad.

In any event, it is obvious that the hon. member does know that this is an old story, that the department is always looking at improving the effectiveness of collecting taxes.

The hon. member knows that it was the Auditor General who asked us to review these options on a yearly basis. In any event, this is for discussion purposes only at this point in time. We are not in the process of hiring any army of tax collectors or tax police for this, the GST, or anything else.

At all times we are looking at the possibilities of more effectively and efficiently collecting taxes on behalf of the majority of honest taxpayers in Canada.

[*Translation*]

Mr. David Berger (Saint-Henri—Westmount): Mr. Speaker, the bill of rights for Canadian taxpayers which was adopted by this Conservative government includes a presumption of honesty. We are told that a taxpayer must be presumed innocent until proven guilty.

How can the Minister justify such a program which goes against his so-called bill of rights for the Canadian taxpayers?

[*English*]

Hon. Otto Jelinek (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, I wish that had been the case in the 16 or 20 years of Liberal administration, which it was not.

In order to answer the hon. member's question, surely the Liberal party is not suggesting or recommending that the Government of Canada remove all auditors and all audit movements in Canada, whether it involves personal or corporate income taxes. If that is the position of members of the Liberal party, I would very much appreciate for them to come forward with that view.

AGRICULTURE

Mr. Lyle Dean MacWilliam (Okanagan—Shuswap): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Agriculture.

British Columbia orchardists are facing serious financial difficulties as they prepare for their 1990 crop season. As the minister knows, they have not received the cost of production for over a decade now and bankers are becoming quite twitchy because of the growers' financial uncertainty.

B.C. fruit growers have pleaded for financial help, but the Minister of Agriculture has not yet made any firm commitments.

Can the minister assure British Columbia fruit growers that financial help is forthcoming so that they can obtain operating credit? Can he also advise as to the specific dollar value of that financial aid? Last, can he confirm as to precisely when that aid package will become available?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, as I am sure the hon. member knows, this industry is the subject of a provincial commission of inquiry. In our discussions with the provincial government it was felt that it would be appropriate to await the recommendations which will be brought down by that very intensive inquiry.

We have indicated to the provincial government that we would be prepared to work with it in providing the kind of support programs—

Some hon. members: Time.

Mr. Mazankowski: Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member's colleagues do not want to listen to the answer—

Mr. MacWilliam: I am listening.

• (1500)

Mr. Mazankowski: I appreciate that the hon. member is listening. Perhaps he can control his neighbours.

I can assure the hon. member that in our discussions with my provincial counterpart we indicated when the report comes down we will be prepared to sit down with him and look at an appropriate program of support, adjustment and restructuring as may be deemed necessary. I think it is important to await these findings.

Mr. Lyle Dean MacWilliam (Okanagan—Shuswap): Mr. Speaker, I am sure the minister is aware that because the growers are right in the middle of thinning and preparing for the 1990 season now, financial assistance is required at this point. A bank draft cannot simply be signed on a lick and a promise.

I would like to ask the minister whether he would assure B.C. growers that if the special assistance is provided, it would at least cover the cost of production for the 1990 season so that the creditors can be assured that they will have some financial security to proceed with their operations.

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member knows, I am sure, that the federal government has provided a great amount of support and assistance to the industry over the years.

We are prepared to continue this, but it is important to do it in an effective and balanced way so that it does provide stability for the industry in the future.

The hon. member is aware that a portion of the $500 million set aside for assisting the bottom line of the agriculture industry is available. We are engaged in bilateral discussions with the provincial government. We believe that the recommendation of the report of the commission of inquiry is imminent. We hoped that we can use that as a guide in terms of how we might design a program and for what period of time.

We do have some funding available for that purpose. As soon as we can arrive at an arrangement with the provincial government, hopefully it will provide a basis through which that industry can be supported.

Mr. Speaker: I want to advise the House that I must hear a question of personal privilege from the hon. Minister of National Revenue. I do not anticipate it will be long. We will then move to the vote according to the order.

PRIVILEGE

DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL REVENUE MEMORANDUM

Hon. Otto Jelinek (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, indeed, I will be very brief on a personal question of privilege which stems from yesterday's question of privilege by the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands.

If I may, in order to shed some light on the issue reads to read a communication into the record. It goes as follows:

Dear Mr. Speaker:

I have recently become aware that officials of my department issued a letter to a number of townships and municipalities in Northern and Eastern Ontario, the contents of which, were inappropriate given that the letter failed to reflect the status of bill C–62 respecting the proposed goods and services tax.

On my instruction, my officials are in the process of forwarding a modified letter to each of the recipients of the original letter, along with an apology from the director of the regional office involved. Copies of both letters are attached for your reference.

I regret the unfortunate wording of the original letter and assure you that in no way was it intended to mislead the public.

It is signed by myself, as Minister of National Revenue.

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, I may say I am delighted that the minister has taken these appropriate steps.

Mr. Speaker: I think, under the circumstances, there would be no need for comment from the Chair except to say that the Chair and all hon. members no doubt appreciate the minister's speed in coming back to the House.

The Chair also appreciates the comments of the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands who raised the matter.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*Translation*]

CRIMINAL CODE

MEASURE TO AMEND

The House resumed from Thursday, May 24, 1990, consideration of the motion of Mrs. Campbell (Vancouver–Centre) that Bill C–43, an Act respecting abortion, be read the third time and passed.

Mr. Speaker: It being 3 p.m., pursuant to an order adopted on Thursday, May 10, 1990, the House will now proceed to the taking of the divisions on third reading motions of Bill C–43, an act respecting abortion.

[*English*]

This will be followed by the taking of the deferred division at report stage of Bill C–69, an act to amend certain statutes to enable restraint of government expenditures.

[*Translation*]

The question, therefore, is on the main motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

Mr. Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: In my opinion, the yeas have it.

And more than five members having risen:

Mr. Speaker: Call in the members.

The House divided on the motion (Mrs. Campbell) (Vancouver Centre) which was agreed to on the following division:

• (1540)

(*Division No. 269*)

YEAS

Members

Anderson	Andre
Atkinson	Attewell
Beatty	Belsher
Bernier	Bertrand
Bird	Bjornson

Blackburn (Jonquière)
Blenkarn
Bouchard (Lac-Saint-Jean)
Boyer
Browes
Campbell (Vancouver Centre)
Chadwick
Charest
Clark (Brandon—Souris)
Cole
Cook
Corbeil
Couture
Danis
DeBlois
Della Noce
Dick
Dorin
Edwards
Fee
Ferland
Fretz
Gérin
Gray (Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine)
Guilbault
Halliday
Hawkes
Hogue
Horner
Hughes
Jelinek
Jourdenais
Koury
Langlois
Layton
Lewis
MacDougall (Timiskaming)
Malone
Martin (Lincoln)
Mayer
McCreath
McDougall (St. Paul's)
McLean
Milliken
Oberle
Paproski
Plourde
Redway
Reimer
Richardson
Roy-Arcelin
Schneider
Shields
Sobeski
Sparrow
Tardif
Thorkelson
Tremblay (Québec-Est)
Turner (Halton—Peel)
Valcourt
Vézina
Vincent
Wenman
Wilbee
Assiniboia)
Worthy—140

Blais
Bouchard (Roberval)
Bourgault
Brightwell
Cadieux
Cardiff
Champagne (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)
Clark (Yellowhead)
Clifford
Collins
Cooper
Côté
Crosby (Halifax West)
Darling
de Cotret
Desjardins
Dobbie
Duplessis
Epp
Feltham
Fontaine
Friesen
Gibeau
Greene
Gustafson
Harvey (Chicoutimi)
Hockin
Holtmann
Hudon
James
Joncas
Kempling
Landry
Larrivée
Leblanc (Longueuil)
Lopez
MacKay
Marin
Masse
Mazankowski
McDermid
McKnight
Merrithew
Monteith
O'Kurley
Plamondon
Pronovost
Reid
Ricard
Robitaille
Saint-Julien
Scott (Victoria—Haliburton)
Siddon
Soetens
Stevenson
Thacker
Tremblay (Rosemont)
Tremblay (Lotbinière)
Turner (Vancouver Quadra)
Venne
Vien
Weiner
White
Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek—
Winegard

NAYS

Members

Althouse
Angus
Assad
Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre)
Bélair
Benjamin
Bevilacqua
Blackburn (Brant)
Blondin

Anawak
Arseneault
Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing)
Barrett
Bellemare
Berger
Black
Blaikie
Bosley

Boudria
Butland
Callbeck
Casey
Chartrand
Comuzzi
Corbett
de Jong
Dionne
Duhamel
Ferguson
Fisher
Fontana
Fulton
Gaffney
Gardiner
Gray (Windsor West)
Guarnieri
Harvard
Heap
Horning
Hunter
Karpoff
Keyes
Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)
Kristiansen
Laporte
Lee
MacDonald (Rosedale)
MacLellan
Maheu
Marchi
Martin (Lasalle—Émard)
McGuire
Mills
Murphy
Nicholson
Nunziata
Ouellet
Parent
Peterson
Pickard
Proud
Riis
Robinson
Rodriguez
Scott (Hamilton—Wentworth)
Skelly (North Island—Powell River)
Speller
Stupich
Thompson
Vanclief
Vankoughnet
Waddell
Wappel
Wood
Young (Beaches—Woodbine)—131

Brewin
Caccia
Campbell (South West Nova)
Catterall
Clancy
Copps
Crawford
Dingwall
Domm
Edmonston
Finestone
Flis
Foster
Funk
Gagliano
Gauthier
Grey (Beaver River)
Harb
Harvey (Edmonton East)
Hopkins
Hovdebo
Jordan
Karygiannis
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)
Kindy
Langan (Mission—Coquitlam)
LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso)
MacAulay
MacDonald (Dartmouth)
MacWilliam
Manley
Marleau
McCurdy
McLaughlin
Mitchell
Nault
Nowlan
Nystrom
Pagtakhan
Parker
Phinney
Porter
Rideout
Robichaud
Rocheleau
Samson
Simmons
Skelly (Comox—Alberni)
Stewart
Taylor
Tobin
Van de Walle
Volpe
Walker
Whittaker
Young (Gloucester)

Mr. Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Bill concurred in, read the third time and passed.

Mr. Prud'homme: Mr. Speaker, you have certainly noticed that I did not vote. I was paired—

[*Editor's note: Some shouting in the Gallery*]

Leave her alone!

As I was saying, Mr. Speaker, I was paired with the Right Hon. Prime Minister who is currently busy with His Excellency President Gorbachev.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lapierre: Mr. Speaker, you must have noticed that I also abstained. It was out of courtesy for the Minister of State for Finance who has been urgently called to Paris. But if I had not been paired, I would have voted against this bill, because I am pro-choice.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

[*English*]

Mr. Angus: Mr. Speaker, I wish to draw to your attention that after the first suspension during the taking of the vote, the member for Pontiac—Gatineau—Labelle entered the House and then proceeded to vote when it came to his turn.

I would ask that the records be examined to see whether the member's vote should have been counted.

Mr. Speaker: The member for Thunder Bay—Atikokan has raised a point of order. The member for Pontiac—Gatineau—Labelle wishes to address the Chair?

Mr. Moore: Mr. Speaker, indeed I did arrive late. There was a hold-up during the vote. I did everything I could to be here. I hired a helicopter. If I were to register my vote, it would be with the government.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member has made it very clear that he did arrive late. I have to accept the point of order of the hon. member for Thunder Bay—Atikokan. The vote will be changed accordingly.

* * *

GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES RESTRAINT ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

The House resumed from Monday, May 28, consideration of Bill C-69, an act to amend certain statutes to enable restraint of government expenditures, as reported (without amendment) from the Standing Committee on Finance.

Mr. Speaker: The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred divisions on Bill C-69, an act to amend certain statutes to enable restraint of government expenditures.

Shall I dispense with the ringing of the bells?

Some hon. members: Dispense.

Mr. Speaker: Accordingly, the first question is on Motion No. 4, standing in the name of Ms. Langan.

The House divided on the motion, which was negatived on the following division:

(*Division No. 270*)

YEAS

Members

Althouse	Angus
Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing)	Barrett
Benjamin	Blaikie
Brewin	Butland
de Jong	Fisher
Fulton	Funk
Gardiner	Harvey (Edmonton East)
Heap	Hovdebo
Hunter	Karpoff
Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)	Kindy
Kristiansen	Langan (Mission—Coquitlam)
Laporte	MacWilliam
McCurdy	McLaughlin
Mitchell	Murphy
Nystrom	Parker
Riis	Robinson
Rodriguez	Skelly (North Island—Powell River)
Skelly (Comox—Alberni)	Stupich
Taylor	Waddell
Whittaker	Young (Beaches—Woodbine)—39

NAYS

Members

Anawak	Anderson
Andre	Arseneault
Assad	Atkinson
Attewell	Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre)
Beatty	Bélair
Bellemare	Belsher
Berger	Bernier
Bertrand	Bevilacqua
Bird	Bjornson
Blackburn (Jonquière)	Blais
Blenkarn	Blondin
Bosley	Bouchard (Roberval)
Bouchard (Lac-Saint-Jean)	Bourgault
Boyer	Brightwell
Browes	Caccia
Cadieux	Callbeck
Campbell (Vancouver Centre)	Cardiff
Casey	Catterall
Chadwick	Charest
Chartrand	Clancy
Clark (Yellowhead)	Clark (Brandon—Souris)
Clifford	Cole
Collins	Comuzzi
Cook	Cooper
Corbeil	Corbett
Côté	Couture
Crawford	Crosby (Halifax West)
Danis	Darling
DeBlois	de Cotret
Della Noce	Desjardins
Dick	Dingwall
Dionne	Dobbie
Domm	Dorin
Duhamel	Duplessis
Edwards	Epp
Fee	Feltham
Ferguson	Ferland
Finestone	Flis
Fontaine	Fontana
Foster	Fretz
Friesen	Gaffney
Gagliano	Gauthier
Gibeau	Gray (Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine)

Gray (Windsor West)	Greene
Guarnieri	Guilbault
Gustafson	Halliday
Harb	Harvard
Harvey (Chicoutimi)	Hawkes
Hockin	Hogue
Holtmann	Hopkins
Horning	Hughes
James	Jelinek
Joncas	Jordan
Jourdenais	Kempling
Keyes	Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)
Koury	Landry
Langlois	Lapierre
Larrivée	Layton
LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso)	Leblanc (Longueuil)
Lee	Lewis
Lopez	MacAulay
MacDonald (Rosedale)	MacDonald (Dartmouth)
MacDougall (Timiskaming)	MacKay
MacLellan	Maheu
Malone	Manley
Marchi	Marin
Marleau	Martin (Lincoln)
Masse	Mayer
Mazankowski	McCreath
McDougall (St. Paul's)	McKnight
McLean	Merrithew
Milliken	Mills
Monteith	Moore
Nault	Nicholson
Nunziata	Oberle
O'Kurley	Ouellet
Pagtakhan	Paproski
Parent	Peterson
Phinney	Pickard
Plamondon	Plourde
Porter	Proud
Prud'homme	Redway
Reid	Reimer
Ricard	Richardson
Rideout	Robichaud
Robitaille	Rocheleau
Roy-Arcelin	Saint-Julien
Schneider	Scott (Victoria—Haliburton)
Scott (Hamilton—Wentworth)	Shields
Siddon	Simmons
Sobeski	Soetens
Sparrow	Speller
Stevenson	Stewart
Tardif	Têtreault
Thacker	Thompson
Thorkelson	Tobin
Tremblay (Rosemont)	Tremblay (Québec-Est)
Tremblay (Lotbinière)	Turner (Halton—Peel)
Turner (Vancouver Quadra)	Valcourt
Vanclief	Van de Walle
Vankoughnet	Venne
Vézina	Vien
Volpe	Walker
Wappel	Weiner
Wenman	White
Wilbee	Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek—Assiniboia)
Wood	Winegard
Young (Gloucester)—216	Worthy

Mr. Speaker: I declare the motion lost.

The next question is on Motion No. 8 standing in the name of Mr. Langan.

Mr. Riis: Mr. Speaker, I suspect you would find unanimous consent to apply the last vote to this particular motion as well.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gérin: Mr. Speaker, I wish to add my vote to those of the Government side.

[*English*]

Mr. Speaker: So ordered. The House has heard the syggestion of the hon. member for Kamloops. It is agreed. Therefore, I declare Motion No. 8 lost.

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The House divided on the motion which was negatived on the following division:

(Division No. 271)

YEAS

Members

Althouse	Angus
Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing)	Barrett
Benjamin	Blaikie
Brewin	Butland
de Jong	Fisher
Fulton	Funk
Gardiner	Harvey (Edmonton East)
Heap	Hovdebo
Hunter	Karpoff
Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)	Kindy
Kristiansen	Langan (Mission—Coquitlam)
Laporte	MacWilliam
McCurdy	McLaughlin
Mitchell	Murphy
Nystrom	Parker
Riis *Robinson	Rodriguez
Skelly (North Island—Powell River)	Skelly (Comox—Alberni)
Stupich	Taylor
Waddell	Whittaker
Young (Beaches—Woodbine)—39	

NAYS

Members

Anawak	Anderson
Andre	Arseneault
Assad	Atkinson
Attewell	Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre)
Beatty	Bélair
Bellemare	Belsher
Berger	Bernier
Bertrand	Bevilacqua
Bird	Bjornson
Blackburn (Jonquière)	Blais
Blenkarn	Blondin
Bosley	Bouchard (Roberval)
Bouchard (Lac-Saint-Jean)	Bourgault
Boyer	Brightwell
Browes	Caccia
Cadieux	Callbeck
Campbell (Vancouver Centre)	Cardiff
Casey	Catterall
Chadwick	Charest
Chartrand	Clancy
Clark (Yellowhead)	Clark (Brandon—Souris)
Clifford	Cole
Collins	Comuzzi
Cook	Cooper
Corbeil	Corbett
Côté	Couture
Crawford	Crosby (Halifax West)
Danis	Darling
DeBlois	de Cotret
Della Noce	Desjardins

Dick	Dingwall
Dionne	Dobbie
Domm	Dorin
Duhamel	Duplessis
Edwards	Epp
Fee	Feltham
Ferguson	Ferland
Finestone	Flis
Fontaine	Fontana
Foster	Fretz
Friesen	Gaffney
Gagliano	Gauthier
Gérin	Gibeau
Gray (Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine)	Gray (Windsor West)
Greene	Guarnieri
Guilbault	Gustafson
Halliday	Harb
Harvard	Harvey (Chicoutimi)
Hawkes	Hockin
Hogue	Holtmann
Hopkins	Horning
Hughes	James
Jelinek	Joncas
Jordan	Jourdenais
Kempling	Keyes
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)	Koury
Landry	Langlois
Lapierre	Larrivée
Layton	LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso)
Leblanc (Longueuil)	Lee
Lewis	Lopez
MacAulay	MacDonald (Rosedale)
MacDonald (Dartmouth)	MacDougall (Timiskaming)
MacKay	MacLellan
Maheu	Malone
Manley	Marchi
Marin	Marleau
Martin (Lincoln)	Masse
Mayer	Mazankowski
McCreath	McDougall (St. Paul's)
McKnight	McLean
Merrithew	Milliken
Mills	Monteith
Moore	Nault
Nicholson	Nunziata
Oberle	O'Kurley
Ouellet	Pagtakhan
Paproski	Parent
Peterson	Phinney
Pickard	Plamondon
Plourde	Porter
Proud	Prud'homme
Redway	Reid
Reimer	Ricard
Richardson	Rideout
Robichaud	Robitaille
Rocheleau	Roy-Arcelin
Saint-Julien	Schneider
Scott (Victoria—Haliburton)	Scott (Hamilton—Wentworth)
Shields	Siddon
Simmons	Sobeski
Soetens	Sparrow
Speller	Stevenson
Stewart	Tardif
Tétreault	Thacker
Thompson	Thorkelson
Tobin	Tremblay (Rosemont)
Tremblay (Québec-Est)	Tremblay (Lotbinière)
Turner (Halton—Peel)	Turner (Vancouver Quadra)
Valcourt	Vanclief
Van de Walle	Vankoughnet
Venne	Vézina
Vien	Volpe
Walker	Wappel
Weiner	Wenman
White	Wilbee
Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek—Assiniboia)	
Winegard	Wood
Worthy	Young (Gloucester)—217

Mr. Speaker: I declare the motion lost.

Hon. Michael Wilson (Etobicoke Centre) moved that the bill be concurred in.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: No.

Mr. Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: In my opinion the yeas have it.

And more than five members having risen:

Mr. Speaker: Call in the members.

Shall I dispense with the bells?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:

(*Division No. 272*)

YEAS

Members

Anderson	Andre
Atkinson	Attewell
Beatty	Belsher
Bernier	Bertrand
Bird	Bjornson
Blackburn (Jonquière)	Blais
Blenkarn	Bosley
Bouchard (Roberval)	Bouchard (Lac-Saint-Jean)
Bourgault	Boyer
Brightwell	Browes
Cadieux	Campbell (Vancouver Centre)
Cardiff	Casey
Chadwick	Chartrand
Clark (Brandon—Souris)	Clifford
Cole	Collins
Cook	Cooper
Corbeil	Corbett
Côté	Couture
Crosby (Halifax West)	Danis
Darling	DeBlois
de Cotret	Della Noce
Desjardins	Dick
Dobbie	Domm
Dorin	Duplessis
Edwards	Epp
Fee	Feltham
Ferland	Fontaine
Fretz	Friesen
Gérin	Gibeau
Gray (Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine)	Greene
Guilbault	Gustafson
Halliday	Harvey (Chicoutimi)
Hawkes	Hockin
Hogue	Holtmann
Horning	James
Jelinek	Joncas
Jourdenais	Kempling
Koury	Landry
Langlois	Larrivée
Layton	Leblanc (Longueuil)
Lewis	Lopez

MacDonald (Rosedale)	MacDougall (Timiskaming)
MacKay	Malone
Marin	Martin (Lincoln)
Masse	Mayer
Mazankowski	McCreath
McDougall (St. Paul's)	McKnight
McLean	Merrithew
Monteith	Moore
Nicholson	Oberle
O'Kurley	Paproski
Plamondon	Plourde
Porter	Redway
Reid	Reimer
Ricard	Richardson
Robitaille	Roy-Arcelin
Saint-Julien	Schneider
Scott (Victoria—Haliburton)	Shields
Siddon	Sobeski
Soetens	Sparrow
Stevenson	Tardif
Tétreault	Thacker
Thompson	Thorkelson
Tremblay (Rosemont)	Tremblay (Québec-Est)
Tremblay (Lotbinière)	Turner (Halton—Peel)
Valcourt	Van de Walle
Vankoughnet	Venne
Vézina	Vien
Weiner	Wenman
White	Wilbee
Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek—Assiniboia)	
Winegard	Worthy—143

NAYS

Members

Althouse	Anawak
Angus	Arseneault
Assad	Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing)
Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre)	Barrett
Bélair	Bellemare
Benjamin	Berger
Blaikie	Brewin
Butland	Caccia
Callbeck	Catterall
Clancy	Comuzzi
Copps	Crawford
de Jong	Dingwall
Dionne	Duhamel
Ferguson	Finestone
Fisher	Fontana
Foster	Fulton
Funk	Gaffney
Gagliano	Gardiner
Gauthier	Gray (Windsor West)
Guarnieri	Harb
Harvard	Harvey (Edmonton East)
Hopkins	Hovdebo
Hunter	Jordan
Karpoff	Keyes
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)	Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)
Kindy	Kristiansen
Langan (Mission—Coquitlam)	Laporte
LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso)	Lee
MacAulay	MacDonald (Dartmouth)
MacLellan	MacWilliam
Maheu	Manley
Marchi	Marleau
McCurdy	McLaughlin
Milliken	Mills
Mitchell	Murphy
Nault	Nunziata
Nystrom	Ouellet
Pagtakhan	Parent
Parker	Peterson
Phinney	Pickard
Proud	Rideout
Riis	Robichaud
Robinson	Rocheleau
Rodriguez	Samson
Simmons	Skelly (North Island—Powell River)
Skelly (Comox—Alberni)	Speller
Stewart	Stupich
Taylor	Tobin
Vanclief	Volpe
Walker	Wappel
Whittaker	Wood
Young (Gloucester)	Young (Beaches—Woodbine)—104

• (1600)

Mr. Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

• (1610)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Danis: Madam Speaker, with your permission, I would ask the House for unanimous consent to return to presentation of committee reports. If leave is granted, I will table a report.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Does the hon. minister have unanimous consent to table his report?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*Translation*]

PARLIAMENT OF CANADA ACT

PRESENTATION OF THIRD REPORT OF SPECIAL COMMITTEE

Hon. Marcel Danis (Minister of State (Youth), Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): I thank my colleagues in the House.

Madame Speaker, I have the honour to present the third report of the Special Committee on the Review of the Parliament of Canada Act. Also, Madam Speaker, if I again have unanimous consent, I would move concurrence in it.

[*Editor's Note: See today's Votes and Proceedings.*]

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CONCURRENCE IN THIRD REPORT OF SPECIAL COMMITTEE

Hon. Marcel Danis (Minister of State (Youth), Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): I move that the third report of the Special Committee on

the Review of the Parliament of Canada Act, presented in the House earlier today, be concurred in.

Motion agreed to.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

CANADIAN RACE RELATIONS FOUNDATION

MEASURE TO ENACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Weiner that Bill C-63, an act to establish the Canadian Race Relations Foundation, be read the second time and referred to a legislative committee.

Madam Deputy Speaker: When the House rose at 1 p.m. the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre had the floor.

Mr. David Walker (Winnipeg North Centre): Madam Speaker, I rise in the House today to continue debate on the introduction of the Canadian Race Relations Foundation. As members of the House know, this is a piece of legislation for which we in the opposition have been waiting several months. It was first promised two years ago and has finally worked its way to the House.

While I join with the members of the House who support this bill, because I think it is a very important step forward, I would like to take this opportunity to remind the House how much work has to be done in the area of race relations. I speak particularly from a perspective in the west.

As one generation after another have come to the west they have had to deal with incredible problems of racial discrimination. It began with the problems of the Chinese before the turn of the century when they came to work on Canadian railroads and had to deal with very severe immigration laws which worked against the reunification of their families. The fact that they have managed to survive and to flourish into a strong Canadian community is more a testimony to their own strength than to any Canadian legislation.

A second sad chapter, particularly in western Canada, but one which in fact led to the establishment of this Race Relations Foundation, was the treatment of Canadian Japanese on the west coast. It has taken close to 50 years since World War II to rectify one of the blackest moments in our history.

Third, the fact that our native peoples continue to be subject to racial discrimination throughout western Canada, and perhaps throughout the whole country, haunts all politicians and legislators in this country. I note that Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta are all carrying out judicial enquiries to rectify some of the conditions that exist within our legal system.

We hope that as this Race Relations Foundation evolves it will have an eye for what takes place in the different regions in addition to dealing with questions on a national scale.

One of the reasons I took a particular interest in the foundation when it was first suggested is that I thought this was an opportunity for the Government of Canada to show its commitment to regional development. In Winnipeg in the last five years we have lost a disproportionate number of jobs in the federal civil service. Some statistics show that one in five job losses in the federal government has been in the Manitoba region. The loss of 1,000 jobs in Manitoba could be partly compensated by placing an institute such as this one in a community which has shown more concern about race relations than any other in the country. While I appreciate that at first glance the problems appear to be more pressing in cities such as Toronto, Montreal and elsewhere where there are greater populations, Winnipeg has always been an immigrant city and therefore questions of race relations have been paramount in the minds of its decision makers.

The city of Winnipeg was one of the very first cities in the country to set up a race relations committee which meets on a monthly basis and brings together leadership from the different communities. Not only do we have traditional groups from eastern Europe and central Europe, we also have representatives from the newest of Canadians—the Caribbean community, the African community and the different Asian communities. The Canadian aboriginal communities also have representatives at these meetings to discuss issues.

We just finished a series of hearings in the city of Winnipeg on race relations and the police force. Again we see that at the community level it is really important that federal politicians lend support to working out

problems among people who have to deal with it daily on the street.

Winnipeg would be an ideal place for the centre of such a foundation because Winnipegers have spent many years trying to work out relationships among these different groups so everyone feels comfortable, not only in this city, but across the country.

Before we give too much credit to the federal government for moving to establish the race relations foundation, we should put it in the context of what else this government is or is not doing. Time after time in the last 15 months the House has been reminded of the inability of this government to move quickly and without any hesitation on issues of race relations and human interaction. For example, on the issue of turbans, how many months did this government wait before it made a decision dealing with the right of Sikh Canadians to wear their turbans? By the time the decision was made members of this House had to deal with petitions from hundreds of thousands of Canadians who are concerned about the wearing of turbans.

Within the aboriginal community we have had ongoing difficulties in the judicial system. It is quite apparent at this point from responses to questions in the House that the government has no strategy for dealing with some of the fundamental changes that must take place in our judicial system to respond to the concerns of aboriginal peoples.

Instead, the last budget cut back on the ability of native people across this country to communicate. The reduction of the communications budget under the Secretary of State, which in the past assisted so many native organizations to communicate among themselves and with other Canadians, shows that when it really comes down to it this government is not committed to assisting native people. It may set up a race relations foundation which gives the public the impression that it is in favour and support of race relations and the public education thereof, but in reality in the activities that really count in these communities it is withdrawing services.

A second example that I would like to use, one that I think is very important and often overlooked in this House, is English as a second language. This government has constantly undermined the ability of new Canadians to learn English as a second language. It did it by first of all withdrawing materials available to organizations which teach English as a second language to Canadians when they first arrive in this country. Second, through other programs and through transfer payments, it has made it more and more difficult for the provinces to provide training in English as a second language.

This has to be discussed in the House as part of this package for dealing with race relations because it is very difficult for new Canadians, particularly those from Asian countries, to learn the language skills necessary to obtain the proper training to get themselves into a better paying job. It is not just a cliché, it is a reality of the workforce that when you first come to cities throughout this country you enter the labour market at the lowest wage going—somewhere around $4.50 to $5 depending on which province you are in. You can only get out of those jobs if you obtain skills, if you have access to better job markets, if you have access to language, if you understand how our system works. How can you do that if you do not have access to training?

We can talk in all our studies and everything we do about the willingness of the federal government to assist new Canadians, but when we apply the test of action rather than words we find that the immigrant communities in Canada are being underserviced. The basics that we thought were necessary a generation ago are being removed and they have been made more vulnerable.

• (1620)

That, of course, leads to tension in the street. One of the other members raised the question of the relationship between economic problems among new Canadians in their immigrant communities and the fact that there are rising rates of racism. One of the difficulties that young Canadians from families of new Canadians have is that without the language skills, the understanding of the job market, the need for training and the access to training, they cannot get themselves into the job market when they are 16, 17, 18 or 19, or into the community colleges or universities. They have watched their parents suffer year after year in jobs paying less than $5 a hour.

Street life is rough. It is rough in Winnipeg and it is rough in Toronto. We occasionally catch a glimpse of headlines which indicate just how rough it is.

If the government is not looking for ways to support the needs of people, it does not matter if we set up a foundation for public education. People are looking for reinforcement in their community, that we are there for them. At this time I just do not see how this particular foundation, unless strengthened immensely, is going to contribute to that need.

Recently the director of the race relations group within the city of Winnipeg requested that the city of Winnipeg now provide additional funds. The city of Winnipeg is still considering this request. I raise that with you as another example of the underfunding and the need, not for a central foundation, but, in each individual community so that people have the opportunity to talk with each other about the problems they are facing in the area of racism.

The establishment of a race relations foundation can become a hallmark of the commitment of Canadians to a better justice system that accommodates all Canadians. The public education components and the money available can be used wisely to ensure that we all understand each other's perspectives. I hope that in the choice of the board of directors the government is able to bring to bear all these perspectives which are so necessary to broaden our horizons.

This is also an opportunity for us to encourage academics and research organizations to think of race relations not as a peripheral problem, a minor problem to be dealt with by a few sociologists and a few political scientists, but as one of the mainstream problems of our society requiring a tremendous amount of energy to research and rethink how we should approach these problems. From that hopefully will come suggestions to this House in future years that will enable us to respond more positively and perhaps with more sensitivity to the needs of these new Canadians.

From the annual reports of the Canadian Human Rights Commission, from the reports coming out of the Donald Marshall Commission and from other inquiries across the country we hear how frustrated people are in trying to get this House to respond. Through the different committees of the House of Commons we all know that a race relations foundation could go a long way to marking a new beginning.

Thus, in the context of the government not doing very much in the past and making many mistakes in the last two years, I wish the new foundation the independence and the wisdom to contribute to this debate and to help us as legislators see better ways of serving new Canadians.

Mr. Howard McCurdy (Windsor—St. Clair): Madam Speaker, it is pleasant to have an opportunity to speak on Bill C–63, a bill to establish the Canadian Race Relations Foundation which, it should be noted, is a result of the Japanese redress settlement in 1988, one of the significant events in race relations in this country.

As you recall, Madam Speaker, as a result of the settlement signed with the Japanese Canadian community, that community received an acknowledgement of the injustice perpetrated upon Japanese Canadians by virtue of their incarceration, loss of property and loss of rights; compensation for those victims; a rectification of government records; a commemorative farm for the Japanese Canadian community and the creation of a race relations institute.

Of the $24 million provided for the initial endowment fund for the institute, $12 million is provided on behalf of and in recognition of the struggle of the Japanese Canadian community and its horrendous experience as a result of World War II.

I must confess that it is with a lack of enthusiasm that I approach this legislation for the creation of this institute because I am one of those who, over the last half century, have been involved in a struggle to eliminate discrimination in this country. Quite frankly, I thought we understood racism. We certainly understood, and I think we still understand, how we can eliminate in a nation the effects of racism. The latter is far more important than anything else because what people feel and think about other peoples, other races, can be changed if we change the way in which they treat members of minority races.

It is not too long ago that I stood in this House and noted the significant progress that had been made in this country over that 50 years. I said at one time that I could hardly have believed that I would stand in this House, an elected member of Parliament, given the experiences that I had as an Afro-Canadian boy growing up in southwestern Ontario. That we are now again faced with a variety of manifestations of racism in this country

making it justifiable to have a race relations foundation is something that disappoints me very deeply.

Yet it is perfectly clear that we have learned very little. Even the literature of the 1940s or the 1930s could have predicted the events and the experiences of the Japanese at that time. Even then it was understood that exacerbations of racism and conflict among a diverse population inevitably result when there is some kind of crisis, as there was during World War II.

Others have mentioned that it was not only the Japanese who suffered during that period. The Ukrainian and Italian Canadians also suffered. This relates to another well understood aspect of racism. John Porter, in his *The Vertical Mosaic* pointed out quite clearly that racism is a function of belonging, the creation of "in" groups and "out" groups.

During World War II, in the great campaign to attain Allied victory, it was very easy to bind the country together in a collectivity identified with all the great things. But some were excluded, a significant portion of our own population was excluded. Japanese Canadians were not part of the "in" group because their colour identified them with another nation. Italian Canadians were members of the "out" group, not of the "in" group, because their language and appearance identified them with another nation.

• (1630)

One of the things achieved during the late 1950s, 1960s and the early 1970s was that we ceased talking as if this country consisted of only two peoples and began to identify Canada as a multicultural nation. Thus we defined a whole variety of peoples as belonging to the "in" group of Canadians. No longer was there a notion of bilingualism and biculturalism. It was bilingualism and multiculturalism, a diverse Canadian society made vigorous by its very diversity.

Another thing that John Porter and others who studied racism knew was that, to the extent to which a society in general is civilized and humane in its treatment of all of its people, one will thus encourage understanding and acceptance—not tolerance, but acceptance—as belonging.

This country, over the years, had built up a fabric of institutions, a social infrastructure, and a philosophy of social justice, which contributed as well to the creation of a nation in which diversity characterized the "in" group of Canadians. If Canada is experiencing an increase in manifestations of racism, perhaps we should look at the fundamental changes in the fabric of the country that have not just happened or evolved. These changes have been specifically imposed upon a nation not ready for such dramatic changes in the relationships among its peoples, its regions, and its linguistic groups.

Most Canadians have a sense that somehow the country is being changed by the government in ways that are terribly fundamental and threatening to their security. This raises another aspect of racism that is well understood and that is scapegoatism. When people are hurting or when they are threatened, they look around for someone to blame, someone accessible, someone vulnerable, someone who can be identified as in some way threatening the security of jobs, income, or whatever, of people. There is abundant evidence all over our nation that this is occurring. In my memory, there has not been so many outward and explicit expressions of antagonism of various sorts in the country before. And so, we are going to have a foundation to study the roots of racism, even though the roots of racism are well understood.

It would be better if more focus was placed on the inaction and the changes that the government has perpetrated, and what has contributed to those outward manifestations of racism and, my God, there have been many of them.

In Toronto, there is outrage in the black community over the shootings, over the last decade, of some four individuals by the police. There is a similar situation in Montreal. These naked facts are not in themselves all that significant, but when members of a police commission in Toronto say that the police are justified in attributing different characteristics with respect to law-abidingness to blacks or Afro-Canadians as compared to the general population and that these crises are justified on the basis of a generalization about the criminality of Afro-Canadians and other black citizens of Toronto, that bespeaks a very dangerous situation.

It is no less dangerous when pins, T-shirts, and posters are circulated with impunity to arouse the antipathy of Canadians towards Chinese, Asians, blacks, and others within our nation. To a very large extent, these are manifestations of the scapegoating that has occurred. That scapegoating is all too often contributed to by the

ill-thought remarks and responses of politicians and those in leadership who should know better.

Racism is best attacked, not by study, but by action. Increasingly, there is disillusionment with the way in which questions of race and racial discrimination are being dealt with by this very government. There have been any number of examples.

The federal government has failed to implement adequately an employment equity program that results in an over-all performance with respect to the employment of minorities by the federal government. That program does not even compare well with private corporations that the government is supposed to be regulating, and does regulate with respect to employment equity through legislation.

Whereas, 6.4 per cent of the workforce available to federally regulated corporations and 5.7 per cent of the employees of those corporations are members of minority groups, the federal government has only 2 per cent in its employ of visible minority groups.

I would like to cite two examples of quite outrageously bad performances. One is in External Affairs and the other, in Correctional Services. I want to cite the latter, in particular, because last Friday I visited Kingston Penitentiary, Joyceville, and the Women's Prison in Kingston. There we heard testimony revealing an outrageous, tragic situation with respect to the treatment of black prisoners and native prisoners.

I asked whether any natives or blacks were in positions of significance in the prisons. Were there a significant number of native or black guards in those prisons? We are talking about a situation in which a far higher percentage of natives and a far higher percentage of those of African descent find themselves in prisons under circumstances revealed in the Marshall inquiry and other studies. Racial discrimination itself has lead to their disproportionate representation in those places. It is well documented that the legal system of the country is biased against native people and minority groups and the poor. Yet, Correctional Services of Canada has one of the worst records with respect to the employment of minorities.

With respect to the Secretary of State Department doing its job, one of the most important things in attacking racism—not in trying to understand it, but in attacking it—is to empower those minority groups that seek to bring about appropriate change in that regard. Yet, instead of engaging in legitimate consultation with affected minority groups in the country, we find that the Minister of State for Multiculturalism and Citizenship and Secretary of State is contriving to create his own network of chosen Progressive Conservative minority members, rather than the legitimately chosen leaders of the variety of affected communities.

• (1640)

I am told that the commitment to a real attack on racism in the Secretary of State Department is revealed by an insistence that they be very careful even to talk about racial diversity in documents released from that department. I find this incomprehensible. Increasingly, there is an impression that there is a certain lack, if not of commitment, then of a structured, coherent, and consistent approach that can be respected with regard to the treatment of the issues—not the roots of racism, but the effects of racism.

The legislation would also provide the Race Relations Foundation with the means to consult with industry, government, and various other institutions and organizations with respect to how to eliminate racism. Yet, we have departments that are supposed to be addressing that issue. We have a Human Rights Commission which is a scandal in its ineffectiveness. We have the machinery in place, but now we are going to back up and start all over again to see if we can understand racism better.

I suppose the evidence is there that the government and other elements in our society, including the provincial governments, have utterly failed to understand racism adequately. Otherwise, after 50 years, we would have seen a deterioration in the attack on racism and its practice, racial discrimination. Instead, we find ourselves still almost at square one.

If we are back at square one, then we should do it and do it right. I hope it will be done right. I am not standing to oppose this legislation, because in principle it is fine. It just seems to me that it is a significant disappointment that we should have to stop and study, when by now we should have made so much more progress. Circumstances change and maybe this new foundation will permit the government to understand how it, itself, has contributed to the evolving situation in this country. There is an interconnectedness between racism and the

whole sense and philosophy of what is a just and equal society, not just for minorities, but for everyone.

I hope when this bill goes to committee there will be wide consultation to reveal that within and among those who are victims of racism there is a clear understanding. If one has to have an institute to reach out to them so they will communicate their experiences and increase our ability to respond, fine.

Let me say one more thing before I close, because I know you are very anxious to hear the next speaker, Madam Speaker.

I hope that the board of directors of this institute will not be chosen on a political basis, as a vehicle for patronage. I hope instead that we will follow the lead of previous bills in respect of which there was agreement on all sides of the House about the legitimate nature of the institute or the centre that was to be established. Instead of patronage appointments of directors, it should involve an all-party agreement on the selection of those directors in such a way as to reflect the unanimity that ought to exist, and generally does exist in the House, about the tragedy and injustice of racism and the need to address it appropriately.

Madam Deputy Speaker: If I may, I would like to mention to the hon. member that my signals about time are simply to let him know how much time he has left so that he can complete his very interesting speech without me standing and abruptly stopping him. Of course, I will be listening to the next speaker with the same interest, but I did not mean him to cut his intervention short.

[*Translation*]

Pursuant to Standing Order 38, I must inform the House of the questions to be dealt with this evening at the time of adjournment: the hon. member for South West Nova—Fisheries; the hon. member for Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing—Health; the hon. member for Mackenzie—Agriculture.

[*English*]

Mr. Rey Pagtakhan (Winnipeg North): Madam Speaker, I am delighted to rise and speak to Bill C-63, an act to establish the Canadian Race Relations Foundation. I support this bill, which is to contribute to the elimination of racism and all forms of racial discrimination in Canadian society.

On March 21, some two months ago, I urged the government to muster the political will to grant adequate funding for programs to combat racism and to promote racial harmony in Canada on the occasion of the celebration of the International Day for the Elimination of Racism.

Why did I urge the government at that time, Madam Speaker? It would give me the opportunity at that juncture to indicate to you that this government has failed fully to promote tolerance and to curb racism in the country.

Let me cite a few examples. The treatment of refugees by this government has created apprehension and mistrust of refugees among the Canadian population, thereby generating negative reactions on the part of the population at large to new immigrants and visible minorities in particular.

The failure on the part of the government to properly address pay equity in the workplace for visible minorities is another example. A March 1990 study by the Canadian Ethnocultural Council reported that only 2.9 per cent of public servants are visible minorities, whereas 6.4 per cent of the general labour force is made up of them.

The Canadian Human Rights Commission in its 1989 annual report stated that hiring and promotion practices reinforced the present concentration of visible minorities in poor paying jobs. This practice ought not to continue.

We have also witnessed the recent occurrences of racial discrimination within the Canadian justice system, particularly as it affects our aboriginal people.

Also, we have seen cuts of about $9.7 million to native programs, cutting their native communications program, native broadcast access program and native friendship centres.

The Heritage Languages Program is one of the recent calamities of this government. I submit that heritage language is a crucial factor in the maintenance of multiculturalism in Canada. Without such education, the rich multicultural fabric of our country is bound to fade into insignificance within a few generations.

What is more disturbing is that the notice to discontinue support for this program arrived at a school in my constituency on March 16, 1990, advising that support to the school would stop on April 1, a couple of weeks thereafter, making it very difficult for the school to search for alternative sources of funding.

The Liberal party has the excellent tradition of having started multiculturalism and continues to support it in heart and mind. In contrast, this government, instead of reacting to the turban issue with dispatch, waited almost two years and thereby negative reactions were generated across the country, instead of solving the issue promptly.

• (1650)

No wonder that in February of this year an Angus Reid poll indicated that the majority of Canadians believed intolerance is increasing. This state of affairs goes against the very fabric of our multicultural society.

I support this Canadian Race Relations Foundation based on the preamble that we will support and reaffirm our support for the international convention on the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination; that we will henceforth reaffirm our belief and support in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms; that the Canadian Multiculturalism Act would assume greater and greater meaning.

I applaud the minister. I applaud the government for initiating this bill. But I would also like to challenge the government that to give teeth to this bill it must provide the funding necessary for the very problem that this foundation hopes to address.

Regardless of one's race, ethnic or cultural background, to participate fully and equally in all aspects of Canadian society economically, socially, culturally and politically is a natural aspiration of every Canadian.

Canada is one of the luckiest nations in the world. If we recall and imagine the African populations struggling to survive, of the Latin American and Asian countries threatened by civil wars, we in Canada as a nation are really lucky. But we must not forget that there continues to be concern. Recently we have seen the racist themes, the desecration of Jewish tombstones. All these are symbols or manifestations that show that we still have a lot of work to do.

Racism, as a sociologist defines it, "is the manifestation of one group's effort in a society to free itself from a feeling of inadequacy by casting another in an inferior light".

How does this happen? By prejudice, by having a set of negative attitudes in which another group is held unwanted, despite the absence of legitimate bases. Of course, racism by way of discrimination can also happen in a very overt way. It can also happen through institutions. When we examine some of our textbooks, for example, and they depict that non-whites are primitive, cruel and savage, we know that the result will be racism and discrimination.

Why do we need to develop racial harmony in Canada? UNESCO in 1967 stated: "It divides nations within themselves, aggravates international conflict and threatens world peace. Racism stultifies the development of those who suffer from it and perverts those who apply it".

We have to continue to remember that multiculturalism is not about allowing separation, but to be sensitive to the needs of others. It is not about the recent arrivals or even of those descendants of generations past. It is not about the shedding of symbols of our heritage, but freedom to exercise our heritage and still be able to participate fully in Canadian society. It is not about inferiority, but to affirm our commitment to excellence and merit. It is not about merely a condominium of cultures but a consensus and sentiment of national purpose.

Indeed, the focus and the challenge by the Canadian Race Relations Foundation truly would be in the hearts and on the minds of Canadians. Mayor George Ferguson, president of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, in a keynote address at "The Challenge of Municipal Race Relations" conference in November, 1989 stated:

> Social harmony cannot be created by posters, proclamations or literary contests or even by co-operation between business and government, or direct government action. The real challenge is in the hearts and minds of each of us as individuals.

In conclusion, I would like to remind my colleagues that the forces of discrimination and racism are by nature centrifugal in direction and, therefore, pull Canadians away from each other. But the forces of a national

purpose are a cultural magnet that pull Canadians together.

As the author wrote in the book entitled *Canada in the '90s*, we need an *élan vital*, a mission, a statement, a national purpose. Why do we need it even more today? Because we see that there is a continental pull to the United States, as a consequence, I believe, of the free trade agreement that will pull our provinces apart. And, of course, there is the present constitutional impasse that threatens the unity of our country.

Third, and perhaps more important, are the demographic shifts in our country with the arrival of new immigrants. It is estimated that beyond the year 2000 we will see more and more immigrants from Asian countries which will thereby change the demographic composition of Canada as we know it today.

The challenge is to the minds and hearts to have that mission, that so-called *élan vital*, the psychological force that should drive citizens, countries and institutions together. When we have achieved that, then the meaning of the establishment of a Canadian Race Relations Foundation will truly be appreciated. We will truly support the concept of multiculturalism, the essence of which, I submit, is equality and dignity for all Canadians.

Mrs. Beryl Gaffney (Nepean): Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to discuss Bill C-63, an act to establish the Canadian Race Relations Foundation.

The foundation which will be established as a registered charity will facilitate the development, sharing and application of knowledge and expertise, and contribute to the elimination of racism and all forms of racial discrimination in Canada.

The preamble to this bill outlines the international and domestic obligations of the Canadian government to the protection of minorities and prevention of discrimination. Such obligations include one to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination which commits nations to the adoption of all measures designed to eliminate all forms of racial discrimination.

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, 1982 states that every citizen is equal and thus, the establishment of such a foundation will help bring the social and legal reality closer together.

The Multiculturalism Act attempts to bring about the participation of all Canadians in our society. In concluding the Japanese Canadian redress agreement, the government agreed to establish a race relations foundation.

The above obligations are attempts by the federal government, in particular past Liberal governments, to make a commitment to equality in Canada.

First, I would like to point out how unfortunate it is that in this day and age we even need a foundation to promote racial harmony and tolerance in our country. The fact that every day we see more and more evidence of racism is deplorable.

When I was reading the information for this debate, I could not help but think about how sad it is that we even need to take up time discussing racism in Canada. I could not help but ask myself, why can't people treat each other regardless of colour, religion, or language with the same respect every human being deserves. Unfortunately there are people in this world and in this great country of ours who are intolerant to minorities and who harbour racist discriminatory sentiments.

• (1700)

We see evidence of this almost daily now. Just last week I was one of many people who attended a rally in my riding of Nepean condemning vandals who attacked the Ottawa Jewish Community Cemetery, knocking over headstones and spray-painting swastikas and Nazi slogans on graves. I pointed out that Canadians everywhere joined together to voice our disgust about the barbaric action by a few individuals filled with hate.

Unfortunately, because of individuals like these who advocate intolerance, we are forced to stand in this House today to debate the establishment of a foundation to promote racial harmony and tolerance. The creation of institutions such as this one is important to the fight against racism. However, the creation of institutions is no substitute for concrete policy action and in this respect the present government has failed miserably.

The government's action concerning refugees and immigrants has created apprehension and deep mistrust of refugees among the broader population.

The government's lengthy delay with regard to a decision on the Sikh turban issue contributed to the rise of racial discord, particularly in western Canada.

This government has failed to adequately address the issue of pay equity and discrimination in the workplace for visible minorities. A Canadian Ethnocultural Council study demonstrated that only 2.9 per cent of the public servants were visible minorities. This figure hardly approximates the labour force participation rate of 6.4 per cent.

Numerous reports and the government's own statistics show that visible minorities have a one in four chance to be hired in the Public Service of Canada compared to an applicant whose skin is white.

The Canadian Human Rights Commission stated in its 1989 annual report that "systemic biases will no doubt be brought to light by serious employment equity analysis". The federal government must do more to prevent discrimination in testing and selection for federal public service employment.

Recent revelations about racial discrimination within the Canadian justice system have shocked many Canadians. The Manitoba Justice Inquiry, the Donald Marshall Inquiry, and various judicial inquiries have pointed to the existence of institutional racism.

The Department of the Secretary of State claims in a report to the United Nations on the International Convention of the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination that "measures have been adopted to protect and advance the special position of the aboriginal peoples in Canadian society".

In reality the department has cut funding totalling $9.7 million to native programs. Furthermore, 99 per cent of the total loss in departmental funding comes at the expense of native peoples.

Cuts to the Native Communications Program, the Native Broadcast Access Program, and the Native Friendship Centres have closed off avenues that would have led to the greater participation of aboriginal peoples in the Canadian mosaic.

The government, through the Secretary of State, has also decimated through recent budget cuts the Heritage Language Schools program. This program was designed to promote racial harmony and national unity by providing an opportunity for the preservation and understanding of ethnic languages and cultures.

Madam Speaker, at a time when racial intolerance is on the rise in Canada this government should be taking steps to promote and protect minorities.

Yes, institutions such as the one we are debating today are needed, but government action should reflect the will of those institutions.

The government cannot create an institution that promotes racial equality and then turn around and continue to discriminate in its hiring practices, and continue to slash programs set up to promote understanding.

If we want to eliminate racism and intolerance, we must begin to take down barriers to minorities. The government has a responsibility to be a leader in this respect and it has yet to take on that role.

I support the creation of the Canadian Race Relations Foundation because any and all steps to end racism must be taken. The hatred of racism must be extinguished. We can do this only through educating Canadians. Racism is not hereditary or innate. No man or woman has ever been born a hater of Jews, Sikhs, blacks, Chinese, or of any religion or race. It is not natural to hate, and every measure must be taken to show all Canadians that racism will not be tolerated in this great land. If the establishment of the Canadian race relations foundation can help to do this, then let us get on with establishing the foundation and putting an end to racism in Canada.

Mr. Ron Fisher (Saskatoon—Dundurn): Madam Speaker. I congratulate the previous speaker on a very well expressed, deeply emotional speech.

I have received several letters from multicultural groups in Saskatoon concerning cuts in funding to the Heritage Language Program. I wonder if the member could elaborate on that.

Mrs. Gaffney: Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to respond to that. I briefly alluded to the heritage language schools in my comments.

As a matter of interest, some of my colleagues and I met with the leaders of the heritage language schools in the national capital region. We met with about 30 local people who were involved in the various schools—and we have quite a number of them, probably 15 in this

area—for at least two hours in the West Block one evening.

There is great concern among the heritage language schools. They do not know how they will continue to operate. They are very dependent upon the few dollars the federal government gives them.

As I mentioned in my comments, the whole basis of these schools is to allow them to enjoy and expand upon their culture and to allow their children to be knowledgeable about their different backgrounds.

At the same time it allows you and I, who are not of their particular culture, to be informed as to what their culture can bring to our community. We are very fortunate to have so many different cultures in our community from which we can draw and to participate in their programs and cultural activities.

Every single one of the leaders from the heritage language schools in the national capital region said that it would be very difficult for them to continue to operate, that it could be the fine edge that pushes them over the brink and that they would not be able to continue.

We are only talking about a very basic amount of money, considering the major funds spent by the Government of Canada. Reinstating these funds would mean the difference between folding and not folding for these heritage language schools. I urge the government to reinstate these funds.

Mr. Phillip Edmonston (Chambly): Madam Speaker, I would like to ask my hon. colleague a question dealing with this law as compared with the government's lack of hiring visible minorities. Perhaps the hon. member could give us her thoughts on that. It seems to be an obvious contradiction. When we want to show that we are a multicultural country and have a desire to employ, and show that we have employed people from different cultures, we seem to be far off the mark. Once again I hear my Conservative colleagues speaking with a sense of irony or sarcasm, but the question has to be put. I would like my hon. colleague to tell me how this bill compares to the actions of the government.

• (1710)

Mrs. Gaffney: Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for the question. It is very much a contradiction to stand here and talk about establishing a Canadian race relations foundation and then to look at the lack of initiative by the present government in bringing visible minorities up to the level of hiring or the level of visibility in the Public Service in particular. When we look at their six point, or whatever per cent it was of our population, we see that only 2 plus per cent are hired within the Public Service. I realize that there are many initiatives that can be taken to raise this average and I encourage the government to do so. Otherwise there is very definitely a blatant contradiction to what they are saying we must do and then on the other side of what they are actually doing.

Mr. Phillip Edmonston (Chambly): Madam Speaker, I rise to speak on this bill to establish a Canadian Race Relations Foundation.

Being an immigrant to this country and having lived in the United States during the heady days of the sixties where there was a great deal of work in this regard, I am very pleased to have this opportunity to speak. I worked in the field of race relations and was involved in working with groups trying to get blacks registered in the political process in the south. At the time they were called freedom riders. I have first-hand knowledge of how the question of race relations can be a volatile one, one which is very difficult for government to handle.

I may surprise members on the government side—I am looking directly at a couple of ministers right now who are in conversation—but I hope I am not surprising you too much by saying that this is legislation which does make some progress. It is progressive to a certain extent, although I have heard my Liberal colleague tell me how far short the government does fall as far as promoting race relations in Canada. This particular foundation is a good start.

If you look at what is a cause of racism, I am sure the two ministers would agree that one of the major causes is lack of knowledge and the lack of information as to the other side; that being the race that you have a tendency to perhaps joke about, the race that you are looking at in a sense of being somewhat inferior to whom you happen to be or a race which may seem to be responsible for your economic hard times. All of this comes about through a lack of information. I believe that this legislation would to a certain extent meet this problem of a lack of information.

I come from Montreal—as I say, I have emigrated from the United States—which is a city with many cultures. Before that I lived in Saint Hyacinthe, actually a small town called St. Barnabe Sud. I am sure, Madam Speaker, you are aware of it. I am proud of what I found in that small town in Quebec. I found a tolerance for people from other cultures. There is a tolerance for English speaking people and even for Americans, particularly for this American while he was learning his French.

By learning French and living with the people in that town of St. Barnabe Sud, Quebec, I learned less to fear making a mistake. I learned less to fear the French fact. Much more, I learned to respect the differences in other people. Surprisingly enough, I learned that as much as the English language versus the French language separates us, there is much more that unites us. To me it was an amazing discovery.

To this day I find that when I am speaking with my English speaking counterparts in Quebec, many times they do not have a full appreciation of what the Quebec government or Quebec itself is about or they do not understand what we are dealing with either in Meech Lake or in any other subject touching almost to the quick English speaking Quebecers. I find invariably that there is a lack of contact, a lack of knowledge, and a lack of living the French fact, really.

This exists between French and English in Canada. We see it not just in Quebec but in Newfoundland, in Manitoba, and in other provinces in dealing with Meech Lake. We have a failure to communicate, to borrow a phrase from the film *Cool Hand Luke*.

If this can happen just because of something that is recognized as French and English, imagine to what degree this occurs when a person happens to be black, wears a turban, or comes from Asia. It is far easier to hate people who you do not know than it is those who you know or those about whom you know.

I am not suggesting that we live in communes with everybody so that we can have one happy family. I do not think that is possible, but I do believe when we are talking about Canadian Race Relations Foundation that by facilitating the information and contact among groups we take a large step toward better comprehension among groups, a less volatile situation, and in the end we create understanding.

This is not a panacea to the problems we have today. Certainly it is not a panacea for some of the most outrageous images we see on TV that create tremendous amounts of friction among our different cultures. I was shocked and tried to understand when I saw the image of the Quebec flag trampled and walked upon in I believe Brockville, Ontario. The people of Brockville said—I believe them—that that was not their sentiment.

I am sure the minister on the other side would agree with me. I am sure he would also agree with me that by that time the damage had been done. I do not think the foundation can prevent that kind of damage, because we are always going to have hotheads and people who are going to be attempting to make a statement visibly with the media. Being a part of the media, many times we are part of the problem because we have a tendency to cover that which is exciting and explosive. By doing so we tend to create the situation. I believe that with the foundation we have an opportunity to give people a fair chance to learn about each other. By learning and understanding I believe we can reduce the number of such incidents.

• (1720)

I realize that the minister of state responsible for this legislation will have the right to appoint people who he thinks best represent the multicultural society in Canada. I wish him good luck because it will not be easy.

I ask the minister to be extremely careful and do something that we have not seen for a long time from the other side. I ask the minister not to appoint people for patronage purposes. He should not give this foundation a false start by appointing people who are more beholden to the Conservative party than they are to their own constituents. That would run counter to the foundation's objective and would destroy what confidence people could ever have in in it. That is the crux of the problem.

We ask the government to do something that is done rarely. We ask it to proceed with appointing directors to this foundation who will consider of primary importance the competency of the representatives they appoints rather than their political stripe. I hope and trust that the minister will do so. If he does not, people will quickly find that this is a $12 million boondoggle and only

window dressing for the Conservative party. Canadians will see, once again, that there is no strong government initiative or even concern about racism in Canada.

It will reinforce this view, particularly as a result of what we have seen with the government dragging its feet on the question of turbans in the RCMP. The government has dragged it out, did not make a decision, and let tempers become inflamed. We have seen it in other areas as well.

If we are to get this foundation off to a good start, the only way to do so is to make sure the people appointed by the minister are bona fide representatives of their constituents and not people who have been receiving political pay-offs from the Conservative party.

Mr. Ron Fisher (Saskatoon—Dundurn): Madam Speaker, on the matter of discrimination, the member has said that he is not a Canadian by birth. Has he felt, as someone who is not part a visible minority, any kind of discrimination?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Phillip Edmonston (Chambly): Listen, Madam Speaker, perhaps I am— It is not obvious that I belong to a minority in Quebec, but the moment I open my mouth people know that I am not a true-blue Quebecer like the hon. member for Chicoutimi may claim to be. I was not born in Quebec, I belong to the minority and, as a member of a Quebec minority I know I have some rights and I feel just fine. I can tell you that as a Canadian citizen and resident for 23 years I have never felt the least discrimination as an anglophone, and I am extremely proud of that, Madam Speaker, because I chose Quebec.

This was not an accident of birth. When I left the United States I travelled throughout Canada to see where I would want to live in this country, and I chose Quebec. I chose Saint-Barnabé-Sud, but it could have been Jonquière, Chicoutimi, Alma—I just love blueberries—but I picked Saint-Barnabé-Sud. The night I was elected in Chambly I wanted to stress the fact that Quebecers are very tolerant. We tolerate many things. But there are a few things that we do not tolerate, Madam Speaker. What struck me on the night of February 12 was the tolerance, the understanding and especially the warm welcome I was given by the residents of Chambly in spite of all the problems I experienced during the election campaign. I was deeply moved, and this is why I do not think that, basically, Canadians are xenophobic. I do not think so. When I converse with my American friends I get the impression we are less xenophobic than Americans. It does not mean there are no cases of discrimination and racism. I could tell you about it. There are exceptions, in Montreal Haitian taxi drivers have often heard people say they want a taxi, but not one driven by a Haitian. That is unacceptable. It is inconceivable that anyone would make such a request these days, considering the progress made to give everybody equal access to government services. We sought to give equal access to everybody, we sought to put an end to discrimination. But in our hearts we still harbour the odd prejudice. It happens.

But to get back to the question of my colleague, I find that —and all I know is Quebec—back home there is very little English-French discrimination, Madam Speaker. I am very proud to be able to attest to that here in the House, and to do so in both official languages.

[*English*]

Mr. Jack Whittaker (Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt): Madam Speaker, as I have travelled throughout Canada over the last couple of years I have noticed something rather upsetting to me. Perhaps it is because as a member of Parliament I am now getting out more and speaking to more people; I hope that is the reason. I have noted that there is less and less tolerance toward people of other races, colours, religions, and a lessening in the desire to understand the other cultures.

I applaud the idea and the thrust of this particular bill on the Canadian Race Relations Foundation, but I wonder about the record of this government in cutting funding for some of the past programs and projects and for various functions that had been set up as important and necessary. It has recognized in this particular foundation something that needs to be done. The research, the study, and the recommendations that hopefully will arise out of this committee will perhaps assure the tolerance and understanding that I alluded to earlier.

• (1730)

I am wondering if the way that this committee has been set up will really work, or is there a recipe for failure that this government can call upon if it is not very careful? In other words, is what we have here recognition of a problem with respect to which there will not be or may not be proper follow through and proper funding made by the government to this foundation? Is it

window-dressing or is it something really concrete in the mind of the member?

Mr. Edmonston: Madam Speaker, I think that is a very appropriate question. It makes me go back to my days as a consumer advocate when we were coming to Ottawa on hands and knees asking for money in order to keep the consumer advocacy organizations going.

At that time a Liberal government was in power. We found that there were tricks that governments could use. On one hand they would talk about how much they were promoting a particular principle, they would create an agency and give money to it. Then the tricks would start because the government really did not intend to promote that particular principle or that particular idea in its entirety. It was just window-dressing.

What it would do initially, and I hope I am not giving the government any ideas—it has been done to us already by Liberals and I hope that the Conservatives would not attempt to do this with the race relations foundation—is put in place people to run the program who would be incompetent. They would be hired through patronage. They were taking their orders from the government, not from the people. Thus they were marching to a different drummer.

The first thing we found out in the consumer movement was that we at the grass roots who were manning the barricades, so to speak, were actually depending upon a government to follow through on what we were doing. The government, through the different agencies it had set up, had no intention of doing that.

We need good strong and independent people if this thing is going to work.

Next, there is the question of funding. Some $12 million is going to be spent on this foundation. As soon as we get into harder times the government is going to find that it does not have a sufficient amount. Where is the money going to come from? What will stop the government from saying: "We do not have enough money for this foundation. It was a good idea but it is gone"? We need a long-term commitment, one which is realistic, and then we can have a foundation.

Mr. Ron Fisher (Saskatoon—Dundurn): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to be able to stand here today and speak in favour of the Canadian Race Relations Foundation for a number of reasons.

One of the main reasons has to do with the fact that we are not dealing directly with English-French. When I asked the member for Chambly whether or not he had experienced any discrimination, I was more or less referring to his being discriminated against on the basis that he was an American, not any kind of discrimination he may have experienced in the province of Quebec.

On that very issue I would like to add to what the member said in case there is any kind of misconception with respect to my question. It gives me the greatest pleasure in the world to stand here and say that since I first was in the province of Quebec in 1978, and I have been back there several times since, not once have I felt any twinge of discrimination. I have never been received with anything but kindness and accommodation. I do wish that more Canadians from elsewhere in the country who have never been there could visit *la belle province*. I am sorry I do not speak French, and I certainly feel a lack since I do not.

As far as the race relations foundation is concerned, I would like to try to broach the subject of why on earth there would be any kind of discrimination, person against person, race against race, at all. Although not all countries are homogeneous linguistic units and nations, it seems to be a universal truism that every religion has what we in the English-speaking world refer to as the golden rule.

To repeat myself, I think it is a universal truth that every one of those groups has the equivalent of the golden rule. The golden rule states: "do unto others as you would have them do unto you". If it is something that we all think and have as part of our culture, then why in the name of whatever deity one may choose do we find ourselves in this situation either in Canada or anywhere else in the world where there are such antagonisms and animosities?

It seems to me that we are simply going to have to expand our whole human consciousness on the subject.

It goes far beyond Canada, but let us at least start here, that, unfortunately, the golden rule as it applies to each of those units is viewed by each of those units as only applying to themselves.

Without getting into any specifics we can make the comparison to Swift. We have the example of the big Indians and the little Indians. It is okay for the big Indians to apply the Golden Rule to the little Indians but, by God, it is open season on the big Indians.

We have to expand what is commonly known as the Golden Rule to all of us and in all cases. That certainly applies in Canada where we perceive these differences rather than have them because at the basis of it all we are all human beings. That is precisely what the issue ought to be, not the colour of our skin, not the language we speak or what part of the country we live in or anything else.

I cannot help but go back to something I referred to when we were talking about the creation of the Department of Multiculturalism and Citizenship. That is the very emotional experience I always feel when I go to Citizenship Court as a member of Parliament. I consider it to be one of the major privileges of being a member of Parliament, and I am sure I will as long as I am a member of Parliament. There are several reasons for that, not the least of which is I can remember, as I am sure other members can, when there was a time when it was not possible to call oneself Canadian. That is slightly irrelevant, but I will get to the relevant parts of it a little later on. There was no such thing as Canadian citizenship.

From my point of view, remembering that and viewing Canadian citizenship now for all that it includes, it gives me a feeling of empathy and unity with everyone else who is in the country, those who came over before, because we related as nationalistic groups prior to that, and certainly those who have come since that time because they are Canadian citizens.

• (1740)

I have a rather personal stake in this whole idea of multiculturalism since my wife is not a Canadian. She is a naturalized Canadian of German birth.

I must say that I have benefited enormously by my association with my wife, someone from another nation, someone who spoke a different language and very, very little English when I met her. I have to admit that her cultural background has given an enormous amount of richness to what I now consider to be part of my whole cultural background, of my being a Canadian, whatever that means in total. It also includes part of my wife's German culture.

That brings me down to something more specific. I do not know if all Citizenship Courts are the same, but the clerk of the Citizenship Court to which I go emphasizes at every proceeding the number of different countries represented by those who are becoming Canadian citizens. It is very gratifying at times when we may have as many as 50 or 60 people taking up Canadian citizenship for the clerk to point out that those people represent as many as 20 or 21 different countries. It gives me a tremendous feeling of joy when I think of all these different people coming into this country who have chosen this country of which I am by birth a member.

There is an enormous amount of goodwill on the part of those people when they become Canadian citizens. If I feel joy at them becoming Canadian citizens, it is obvious. I am sure those who attend Citizenship Court would agree that it is an extremely gratifying experience, not to mention the joy experienced by the people who become citizens.

I am reminded as well by Judge MacPhail of the Citizenship Court as she makes her presentation that Canada does not have any linguistic unity, cultural unity or any geographic unity. In fact it may be that it is not possible to identify a unity which can be described as Canada. In light of what we are talking about, I think that may be precisely the case. That may be precisely what makes Canada the wonderful mosaic, the wonderful rainbow of a country that it is.

If I find that quotation, and if I ever get a chance to speak in the House on this subject again, and I may possibly do so, I am going to make sure that I get the quote verbatim because it is an extremely moving quotation.

As I say, there is the joy expressed by these different groups coming into Canada. They express a lot of that joy by a desire to maintain their heritage language. Canada has done up to now an admirable job of aiding those people to be able to maintain their heritage languages.

I am not sure that this was not implemented out of partially selfish reasons. It is an advantage for our country in many, many ways, not the least of which are

economic, for these groups to be able to maintain their linguistic ability.

It is advantageous that people from Poland, for example, maintain the Polish language. In future years, as trade with the rest of the world develops, we will have people who are able to speak the language as a natural part of their personal expression.

The same could be said of any other group. At the present time, the most obvious example would be the maintenance of Pacific Rim languages as our relations with the Pacific Rim become much broader. I do not mean necessarily to point out those groups for economic reasons. I think it is absolutely essential that, as part of their humanity and their living in Canada, they ought to be able to maintain their languages.

The Saskatchewan Multicultural Council has written to me expressing a great deal of dismay at the cutting of funds to the heritage languages program which is so valuable. Unfortunately, that these cuts were announced during National Volunteer Week makes it particularly sad for two reasons. The first is that the cuts were made. The second is that these programs survived primarily on the basis of volunteers. Even though the government does put some money into them, it certainly does not go all the way toward being able to pay the costs of them.

I also have a letter from the Ukrainian Canadian Committee in Saskatoon.

One letter points out that, when the cuts were made to multiculturalism, they were only to the tune of 5 per cent. The letter states that in view of the deficit and so on it was essential to make these cuts and that everybody has to pay their fair share. That 5 per cent cut to multiculturalism was one thing, but the heritage language program was cut by 100 per cent. This means that in all probability it will not survive.

I even received a letter from as far away as Edmonton from the Edmonton Centre of Chinese Heritage and Second Language.

I also received a letter from the president of the Saskatoon Cambodian Society.

I refer to these letters just to give you, Madam Speaker, some idea of the variety of people who have expressed concern about this matter and the variety of people who have taken up Canadian citizenship.

I have two letters here from the Jewish community in Saskatoon who express as well their concern about the withdrawal of funds from the heritage language program. In the context of racism, the Jewish Centre in Saskatoon, of which the synagogue is a part, was desecrated recently. This demonstrates the depth of the problems that we are experiencing in Canada and the kinds of things which have to be worked on and alleviated.

I have referred to the cutting of funding to the heritage language program. In spite of listening to the minister making his statement on the introduction of the legislation, I can not help but feel that he believed everything he said. He made as impassioned an expression of humanity as any other speaker in the House has. My problem is that, when it comes to being a matter of translation into action, the government has not lived up to its promise, and I refer specifically to the heritage language program cuts. The government has not lived up to the promise and the commitment which I think the minister did feel when he was making his statement. I only wish that that were not the case, that the government would live up to the sincere expression that the minister made at the time.

• (1750)

The problem is that wherever we look within the government service the matter of employment equity has not been fully addressed. The member for Windsor—Lake St. Clair said he went into the prisons within his constituency and found a disproportionate number of our Canadian native people in those prisons in relation to the rest of the population. In addition to that, there was an absence of native people charged with the custody of those prisoners. That not only sends a very negative message to those people, but also indicates that there is a tremendous problem insofar as equity within the community *vis-à-vis* the native people.

One of the greatest travesties of Canadian society which illustrates again the government's lack of concern—I hesitate to use that phrase, but I do not know how else to express it—is the delay of the decision to allow members of the Sikh community to wear their turbans when they are in the RCMP. That was a horrific example of how justice delayed is justice denied. More damage was done by the government's indecision on that

issue than by anything that has happened in Canadian society for a long while.

I suggest that had we had a decision quickly we would not have had those pins and those calendars. Even having said what I said, and believing the minister and his expressions when he introduced the legislation, I certainly do support the idea of the Canadian Race Relations Foundation. I just hope it lives up to its promise.

Mr. Jim Edwards (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Communications): Madam Speaker, I have listened with great interest to the contributions to this debate made by members opposite, particularly in the last hour. I find that there is general support for this initiative and the government is very pleased to receive that general support.

I did, however, want to set the record straight on two issues, and they emerged in the exchange between the hon. member for Chambly and the hon. member for Saskatoon—Dundurn in the previous question and comment period.

First, a question was raised as to the government's financial commitment to this particular project. I would draw to the attention of both hon. members that what we are talking about here and what the bill establishes is a foundation. The money goes into a trust fund which generates interest and the interest fuels and supplies the foundation.

The other question that was raised was with respect to the quality of the appointees to the board of the foundation. A number of members have raised that question today. The suggestion was made in the exchange I alluded to that the government might, for some reason, choose appointees who were incompetent and who would mismanage the affairs of the foundation and then it would wither on the financial vine and perish. I am not sure that that was the exact wording but that suggestion was made. I want to reiterate to hon. members the commitment made by the minister, when he first announced the project and the bill, that the foundation will be managed by a board of directors. It would be in the interest of no government to be neglectful in that regard, both as to the quality of the appointees and the diligence of those appointees once they were in office.

I would also underline that the minister said that when he recommends board appointments to the Governor in Council he will consult widely, taking into account Canada's multicultural character, to ensure that the board has the necessary skills and expertise. Knowing the minister as I do, I think we can expect him to recruit appointees of the highest calibre. Some of them might not even have any identifiable political stripe. It is possible when he consults widely that he may even carry his consultations into the environs of Saskatoon and Chambly.

Mr. Phillip Edmonston (Chambly): Madam Speaker, I would just like to add to what my hon. colleague opposite said. As I understand it we are looking at $24 million. I do not want to give the wrong impression. But I also do not want the Canadian public to have the wrong impression from what my hon. colleague from the Conservative side said when he said that the government has a tendency to get the best people.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I will have to interrupt the hon. member. He should be asking questions in reference to the speech of the hon. member from Saskatoon and not the comments made by the hon. member for Edmonton Southwest.

Mr. Edmonston: Madam Speaker, it was just a burst of over-exuberance, I am afraid.

Let me return then to my hon. colleague from the NDP. It was a pleasure to listen to my hon. colleague in terms of the passion with which he spoke as well as the way he put his argument. It was a pleasure to hear something that was not theoretical but which was quite practical.

I would like to ask my colleague a question. When he was talking about how people have a tendency to make quick judgements on the way other people are dressed, such as the turban issue and others, is he satisfied with the way the government, apart from this bill, has treated that issue and others much like it?

Mr. Fisher: Madam Speaker, unfortunately, the answer to that would have to be no. I am not satisfied. I guess to be a bit repetitive, with respect to the matter of the turbans, I and a good many other people are thoroughly convinced that had the decision been made post-haste we would not have had the tremendous backlash which I think we are experiencing now. We would not have had the calendars. We would not have had the issue of whether or not it is racist, whether or not

it is a breach of the law to be making such things and to be wearing those things.

I have no idea why the government delayed so long. I am thoroughly convinced that had that not occurred we may not have to be speaking in these terms. We may not even have to be talking about a race relations foundation. It is a very unfortunate situation.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion.

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and referred to a legislative committee.

• (1800)

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[*English*]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

FISHERIES

Mrs. Coline Campbell (South West Nova): Madam Speaker, it is my first opportunity to rise and congratulate you on your appointment. I know it is late but I do wish you well.

On November 28, 1989, I rose in the House and asked the Prime Minister what action he planned to take regarding amendments to the Magnusson Act which had recently been enacted by the U.S. Congress. This law restricts the importation of certain sizes of lobsters, a size that is larger than a lot of lobsters caught for export in Canada.

The Prime Minister told me that he would be dealing with the issue on an impending trip to Washington to see President Bush. In answer to my supplementary question, the Minister for International Trade assured me that the President would be asked to veto the legislation. As it turned out, the president did not veto it, disrupting another sector of the already beleaguered Atlantic fishery.

As a result of these regulations, Canadian lobster exporters were left without their prime retail market, worth some $30 million annually. In turn, prices plummeted. In southern Nova Scotia, they fell to $2.50 a pound from $4.50, from the same time the year before. In the Gulf of St. Lawrence, it was worse, they fell to $1.75 per pound. Many lobster fishermen will not be able to survive such prices.

Apart from the obvious hardship these regulations impose on lobster fishermen, the government's handling of this issue has further educated Canadians on the application of the free trade agreement, the lesson being that Canadians will have to learn to accommodate U.S. trade law and that we cannot expect this government to stand up to the Americans and protect our legitimate economic interests.

Further, the free trade agreement does not provide the security of access that the government promised Canadians during the last federal election campaign. When the president declined to veto the new size, the government immediately sought a reference to a binational dispute settlement panel, under Chapter 18 of the free trade agreement.

Given the immediate economic effect of the offending size regulations, an accelerated schedule of deliberations was agreed to. In sum, the government's argument to the panel was the Americans had not enacted the size restrictions for conservation purposes, but rather as a way to restrict Canadian imports and thus protect their own industry. This is an interesting turn of the tables, when you remember the arguments presented to a similar Chapter 18 panel last year on the subject of Canadian rules regarding the processing of west coast salmon and herring.

As we found out last Friday, the final decision of the panel was in favour of the United States. Its management regime was endorsed, and the result was the same as last year: Canada lost. But the reasons were reversed. This time the American conservation regime was upheld and the economic result was also the same. The Canadian industry and workers have been harmed and left with an uncertain future.

How can we explain this decision? How do we explain the apparent inconsistency with the logic of the earlier ruling? True, our government and the United States can now enter a 90–day period wherein the two governments can negotiate a settlement. It is only fitting that this government would take solace with the prospect of more

negotiations, since all around us we see the results of its belief that everything is negotiable.

I could not enumerate the areas where the government seems to try to negotiate its way through to policy. But, we have the free trade agreement which the Prime Minister insisted on negotiating from a position of weakness and with the predictable result. The Americans will be dealing from an almost unbeatable position of strength during the next 90 days. Why should they make any concessions when they know that at the end of 90 days their law will be upheld anyway?

• (1805)

Once again the government will have to bargain away more Canadian interests to achieve a negotiated compromise. We saw an example of this on the east coast with the scarce fish resources traded to France just to get that country to come to the negotiating table on the St. Pierre and Miquelon boundary.

Taking all this in combination with the Canadian defeat before the earlier panel decision, this latest setback should make it very clear to Canadians what the future holds under the free trade agreement.

In order to maintain the access they have to the American market, Canadians should prepare themselves to accommodate whatever new American trade regulations come into effect, regardless of how trade distorting they may be.

They can do this in the confident knowledge that they are backed up by a government willing to play "Let's Make a Deal" on any issue. In this case, the lobster fishermen on the east coast are the losers. As usual, the Americans are the winners. The free trade agreement that was negotiated by this government incorporates another area where they have not governed on behalf of Canada. Instead, they tried to negotiate away an area that is a natural resource.

Mr. Jack Shields (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Trade): Madam Speaker, this government believes that the free trade agreement, in providing an opportunity for both the U.S. and Canada to bring issues to the dispute settlement process, provides for a rational and amicable settlement of disputes more quickly and effectively than previously. We all know that.

The system was established to ensure full consideration of the bilateral implications of trade action by either country. On December 21, 1989 when the U.S. President signed what has come to be called Mitchell amendment into law, our Prime Minister wrote immediately to the President indicating Canada's intention to challenge the U.S. measure under the free trade agreement. A majority of those on the panel agreed with the United States' position that the Mitchell amendment was an internal measure rather than an import restriction.

The Minister for International Trade and the United States representative, Mr. Hills, have agreed to consider the report over 90 days. During that time, our two countries will seek to reach a mutually advantageous resolution of the issues concerning trade and lobster. The discussions will be based on continuing consultations with interested parties, including the United States, the provinces and the two lobster industries that have been supportive of our negotiations.

This government has recently been requested by fishermen and provincial governments to provide short and long-term solutions to high inventories of processed products. External Affairs and International Trade Canada has set up a lobster promotion campaign in more than 30 of our missions abroad.

As the fisheries minister recently pointed out, the marketing campaign is working because the $20 million inventory of frozen lobster present in January of 1990 has been currently cut to $4.5 million. Of course, this government is concerned with the implications of the decision, but is seeking, with our lobster industry, a mutually beneficial conclusion to this issue. There is nothing preventing us, should there be any outstanding lobster issues remaining after conclusion of negotiations within the 90-day period, from seeking the formation of another panel to deal with those issues.

HEALTH

Mr. Chris Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing): Madam Speaker, in the last general election the New Democratic Party warned Canadians about the future agenda of the government.

We said that the free trade deal made between the Prime Minister and the United States posed a great threat to Canadian sovereignty and to our distinct political culture. In Canada, we have always cared for and protected the less well off members of society,

whether disadvantaged because of poverty, race or region. We have a long way to go, but our orientation has been clearly towards equality.

On the other hand, the United States has quite a different political culture, emphasizing the individual, largely to the exclusion of society, and rejecting such programs as universal health care as being an unwarranted intrusion into the marketplace. The fact that 37 million people in the United States have no health insurance appears to be immaterial in that society. The sanctity of the market and the freedom of position to make as much money as possible appears to be the highest good. In the last election we stated that the provisions in the free trade agreement calling for harmonization of policy between Canada and the United States, the future random negotiations that will determine the definition of a subsidy, and the provisions allowing for open American competition for health services all pose a threat to the universal social programs that Canadians cherish.

• (1810)

Conservatives reaction to this argument was really quite vicious and, in the final weeks of the campaign, millions of dollars were spent telling Canadians that Ed Broadbent was a liar for claiming that social programs were at risk. But they never did refute our arguments or facts.

This tactic succeeded in many parts of the country but it did not succeed in Saskatchewan where my party won most of the seats, largely because of the opposition to free trade.

The same broad-based coalition opposed to free trade recently defeated the provincial government of Grant Devine in its attempt to privatize provincial utilities. The people of my home province are very sensitive to attempts to dismantle the social services system which has sustained them through bad times and to which they have contributed in good times.

A short time ago I asked the Minister of National Health and Welfare what the future plans of his government were in regard to medicare. I asked if there were plans to privatize medicare and if the minister was opposed to privatization.

True to form, rather than pledge himself to protect medicare, the minister repeated the same charges his party made during the last general election. He accused me and the New Democratic Party of waging a fear campaign by "trying to scare the sick and the elderly and the poor by telling them they were going to lose their benefits". He said it was false then, and it is false now.

It took a lot of moxie for the Tories to say this during the last election, but it is beyond belief that the minister would repeat these same charges today. Will the sick lose their benefits? The government is in the process of cutting billions of dollars from medicare and hospital insurance with Bill C-69. In my own province of Saskatchewan from 1984-85 to 1994-95, more than a billion dollars will be cut, and in Canada over that same period almost $29 billion will be cut.

Will the elderly lose their benefits? The federal government has just passed a claw back of old age pensions and announced its intentions to increase charges to veterans homes.

Will the poor lose their benefits? The government has just cut its contribution under the Canada Assistance Plan by $150 million and broken a contract with three provinces in the process.

With the recent track record, with massive cuts to social programs immediately after making a solemn promise never to touch them, it is little wonder that many Canadians are not reassured by generalities from the government about medicare.

Contrary to what the minister said, it is clear that there is an agenda to privatize medicare and hospital insurance. The only question is the speed with which it can be accomplished. We can see that by looking at the recent record.

With Bill C-69, the federal government has drastically cut transfers for medicare and hospital insurance. Every province will be affected but particularly the smaller and poorer provinces that spend a higher proportion of their budgets on health care.

These provinces also depend on the federal government for a higher percentage of their health care expenditures. Therefore, a cut in transfers to all the provinces has a regressive effect as it punishes the less well off more than the rest.

When questioned in the House of Commons about these cuts, the Minister of Finance indicated that in his opinion, health was a purely provincial responsibility and the transfers to the provinces were simply sources of

general revenue to the provinces, bearing no relation to the programs they were designed to fund.

Of course this ignores the provisions of the Canada Health Act which sets out several criteria that are necessary before federal money will be transferred to the provinces for medicare and hospital insurance.

The most important provisions for the purposes of today's debate are those outlawing extra billing, user fees, and private administration of health care. The Minister of Finance ignored these provisions because he is signalling to the provinces that this government has no intention of enforcing them.

If we look at the eventual effect of the successive cuts to health transfers made by this government, we see a scary end result. The most important effect is that the cash component of the transfer is shrinking rapidly, both in absolute terms and as a percentage of transfers made to the provinces.

The rest of the federal share of health money of course comes in the form of tax room. What the federal government does is agree to allow the provinces to collect certain taxes, mainly personal and corporate income taxes that the federal government could collect. Rather than collect the money and then give it to the province, the federal government has removed itself from the equation and allows the provinces to collect the money themselves.

The problem with this is that the provisions of the Canada Health Act enforcing the ban on extra billing, user fees, and private administration of health insurance only apply to the cash portion of federal transfers.

If the federal government continues on its present path, the time will soon come when the cash portion of the transfer will disappear. The federal government will have no stick left with which to enforce the act.

It is estimated by the Quebec government that the cash portion for that province will end within the decade and will end for other provinces soon after. Therefore, there will be no way to prevent the provinces from bringing back extra billing or user fees.

• (1815)

This gradual whittling away of medicare must stop. We have seen it in terms of social programs, with unemployment insurance, pensions and family allowance clawbacks, cuts to medicare, social assistance plan payments and post-secondary education. I challenge the government to either commit itself to medicare and provide the funding and legislative framework necessary to prevent the privatization of this essential service or to proclaim its allegiance to free enterprise medicine and let the people of Canada make their choice between competing visions.

In conclusion, Canadians are watching with horror at what is happening to their health care system. They see the impact of government policies, both federal and provincial. Canadians want the government to commit itself to using its powers to ensure that privatization of our health system is ended. Canadians have yet to hear this government make such a commitment and that is why they are worried. If the government is opposed to privatization in the health care system, it would be an easy and straightforward thing to tell Canadians. Silence speaks a thousand words.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Lise Bourgault (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Health and Welfare): Madam Speaker, the question raised by the hon. member for Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing gives me an opportunity, on behalf of the Minister of National Health and Welfare, to stress again in front of this House and the Canadian people that the government is opposed, both in principle and in practice, to the imposition of direct charges, especially extra billing and user fees.

The Canada Health Act contains the principles on which our health insurance system is based: public funding, comprehensiveness and universality. Extra billing and user fees are contrary to the principle of accessibility. The federal Health Act contains provisions to discourage such practices and studies have shown that direct charges on patients discourage the least advantaged segments of the population from obtaining the health care to which they are entitled. Imposing direct charges on patients for necessary medical services would lead us to a two-tiered health care system, which is absolutely contrary to the intentions of our government, the Progressive Conservative government.

Canada undoubtedly has an outstanding health care system. Our public health insurance system is based on the principle of universality and accessibility of care for all Canadians.

In Canada, access to health care does not depend on one's ability to pay. In the United States, however, more than 30 million people do not have health insurance.

In conclusion, as Canadians, we are proud of our health insurance system. Three years ago, in April 1987, direct charges to patients were finally eliminated. The commitment to respect the principle of universal access to care is as strong today as when it was implemented.

I hope my answer is satisfactory to the hon. member for Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing.

[*English*]

AGRICULTURE

Mr. Vic Althouse (Mackenzie): Madam Speaker, on April 11 I rose to find the details on the farm aid program that the minister had promised would be known before Easter. I did so on April 11 because that was the last day the House sat before the Easter recess. I was curious, as are farmers right across the country, as to what sort of aid package it will be to offset the disastrous fall in net farm income that is being felt on the farms across Canada, particularly on the grain farms and those producing fur in the country.

The Minister of Agriculture at the time indicated that he had initiated discussions with the provinces and that he was attempting to raise $1 billion by combining $500 million of federal aid with a hoped-for equivalent amount of money from the provinces. The expectation in the farm community and among the bankers of that farm community was that in the west, at least, this would translate into a package that would amount to somewhere between $8 and $10 per cultivated acre.

• (1820)

That was almost seven weeks ago, one day short of seven weeks, and farmers of this country are further enlightened very little as to what that aid package will entail.

We have been told there are tentative agreements reached with some of the provinces. We have the details of the agreement reached with Alberta as to how the sharing will occur in order to get $89 million of federal funds. The province of Alberta will add an additional $11 million of new money and will be credited with contributions from approximately $78 million of existing programs to assist the income needs of Alberta farmers in the past few months.

The total there amounts to approximately $190 million of which about $100 million will be new money into the pockets of Alberta farmers. So far we do not know how that money will be distributed even after seven weeks of going past the deadline the minister promised.

I remind the House and the country that that disaster or shortfall has been well known for sometime. It was before Christmas at the agriculture outlook conference that we first became aware that the crop year of 1990-91 would be one in which farm incomes would be below those of previous years, that we would drop from approximately $5 billion of net income to a net income now revised upward to something in the order of $2.95 billion; in other words a shortfall of about $2 billion. In response to that shortfall of $2 billion, the federal government offered about a quarter of the damage that has been done.

In his response to me on April 11 the Minister of Agriculture and Deputy Prime Minister indicated that Canada could not match the treasuries of some of the other countries. At one point in his answer he indicated that Canada was doing much better than the Export Enhancement Program in the United States, leading one to believe that the Export Enhancement Program in the United States is the only farm subsidy program offered to that country's farmers when in fact the minister should know—and most farmers and members of the opposition realize it—that subsidy programs in the United States are far more endemic and far more expensive than that. They amount to billions of dollars, not just a few hundred millions. A portion of that money is available in the farmers' pockets to assist with seeding. They have what amounts to an interest-free storage program and an interest-free advance program where they can lock their crop into storage at harvest and get the loan rate: no interest. If the price goes up they have the option of taking the grain out of storage and realizing the difference between the locked-in price and the current market price. The total farm program in the

United States means billions of dollars and a much more viable farm operation than we maintain in this country.

The minister seems to be somewhat concerned, though he did not express it in the House but outside the House, about the OECD figures which show that Canada is close to being equivalent to the Americans and Europeans when it comes to subsidizing wheat production.

He looked at an OECD study that included a special grains pay-out of $1 billion and a write-off for that one year of three-quarters of a billion dollars on the deficit of the western grain stabilization fund. Farmers did not get any money out of that three-quarters of a billion dollar write-off, yet the accounting system used shows that we received $1.75 billion extra funds that year, over and above existing programs, through those two *ad hoc* measures.

The minister knows full well—and if he does not his officials will know—that that will not be repeated last year or this year and that a mere $500 million as opposed to $1.75 billion will still leave us much short of the subsidy levels that the Americans and Europeans are using.

I am concerned that after all these weeks farmers still do not know the details of the farm program. I am also concerned that trappers and fur farmers have no idea as to what is involved in the defer component of the program to which he also alluded.

The three minutes available to the parliamentary secretary would be a good opportunity to enlighten the farmers and trappers in this country as to just where the government stands with regard to this half billion dollar so-called aid package that has been offered to them.

What will be the amounts received? When will they get it? How much longer do they have to wait for details? How much longer after the details are known will they have to wait before the cheques are in their pockets?

Mr. Murray Cardiff (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Madam Speaker, all members of the House have anxiously awaited the agreement by the provinces on the $500 million short-term farm assistance package.

As we know, on May 18, federal and provincial ministers of agriculture met to discuss this package among other things. It is also my pleasure to inform the House that at that meeting agreement in principle was reached on several issues. We have decided how the funds will be divided among provinces and the nature of cost sharing arrangements. Details are being worked on a bilateral basis between the federal government and each province. These negotiations are coming to positive conclusions.

The agreement on farm aid reached between the province of Alberta and the federal government was announced yesterday in Edmonton, and farm aid for Ontario was announced earlier today in Toronto.

Other bilateral negotiations are continuing. I am advised that we are close to reaching agreement with several other provinces. The government is very encouraged by the progress that has been made. Meetings will take place with each province so that individual federal-provincial agreements can be drafted.

The provinces have agreed to administer assistance to producers. This will allow them to direct funds to producers most in need. These mechanisms will be written into the federal-provincial agreements. Once the provinces have designed their programs, they will be able to determine their cash flow needs. When these are finalized federal funds will flow to the provinces. We are confident that all parties will now work fast to determine these last details.

In addition, the government is increasing the flexibility of the farm debt review fund which currently has $180 million available. It will be made more adaptable to current circumstances so that arrangements which farmers have worked out with the Farm Credit Corporation through the farm debt review process can be extended.

Farmers will also be able to build up funds for a down payment on a farm through an equity building fund. These measures will give breathing space to farmers whose arrangements with the FCC are expiring but who are not yet ready to buy back their land. This initiative gives farmers access to between $10 million and $15 million as well.

As can be seen, the federal government, in co-operation with the provinces, is endeavouring to get as much money as possible into farmers' pockets as rapidly as possible.

[*Translation*]

Madam Deputy Speaker: The motion that the House do now adjourn is deemed to have been adopted. Therefore, the House stands adjourned until 2 p.m. tomorrow, pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

The House adjourned at 6.29 p.m.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, May 30, 1990

The House met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S. O. 31

[*English*]

AGRICULTURE

Mr. Geoff Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek—Assiniboia): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture some time ago announced federal assistance of $450 million to Canadian grain and oilseed producers to help address the projected income shortfall caused by unfair foreign export subsidies. I congratulate the minister on his decision to turn these moneys over to the provinces so that each province can devise eligibility and delivery criteria that will best address the needs of its producers. Putting the province in charge of distribution should reduce the time delays inherent in national *ad hoc* programs.

Some $237 million of this federal money will go to Saskatchewan for distribution to producers along with whatever additional funds the province of Saskatchewan is prepared to put up. This assistance is further tangible evidence of this government's ongoing commitment to Canadian and Saskatchewan producers.

* * *

AGRICULTURE

Hon. Ralph Ferguson (Lambton—Middlesex): Mr. Speaker, a few days ago the government finally released the initial prices of Ontario wheat, affecting 18,000 producers. In spite of numerous requests from the Ontario Wheat Producers Marketing Board, the government should recognize its responsibilities in the international trade war which threatens to destroy Canadian agriculture and ensure an initial price for all Ontario wheat of $130 a tonne. The government has refused.

The government eliminated the at and east transportation program, the Advance Payments for Crops Program, and now the government has set the initial price at $20 to $30 per tonne below the farmers' actual cost of production. These initial low prices cannot be justified by the market when world stocks are at historic lows. An initial price for Ontario white winter wheat of $115 a tonne is unacceptable. This is a drop of $15 a tonne, a drop of 11.5 per cent.

I call on the government to respond to the international trade war, which has lowered grain prices by $20 to $30 a tonne, by implementing an export program for Canada's producers and restore the two-price wheat policy to ensure an equitable return for Canada's producers.

* * *

PRINTING INDUSTRY

Ms. Joy Langan (Mission—Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, in the printing industry today, space-age satellite technology allows typesetting and film to be prepared offshore, usually in Pacific Rim countries, and then to be transmitted to Canada by satellite. Before the advent of this technology, when that work entered Canada, it was subject to duty. Today it is not. This means pre-press shops in Canada compete with firms in Hong Kong and Taiwan with wage scales two-thirds lower than ours. This is a clear case of public policy not keeping up with technology.

As a result of the free trade agreement, the hyper competitive Canadian print market has been opened to giant U.S. printing firms, squeezing the Canadian industry and limiting its ability to modernize. As well, a 25 per cent drop in Canadian print exports is a direct result of this government's high interest rate policy.

I urge the government to move to ensure this critical part of the communication industry remains healthy and viable.

S. O. 31

NATIONAL UNITY

Mr. Terry Clifford (London—Middlesex): Mr. Speaker, Alice Linden of London, Ontario, says she does not want to tell her great-grandchildren she stood by in 1990 and did nothing to stop Canada from breaking up.

So, at noon today in London, she organized her own rally to send a message of unity to the people of Canada. In so doing, she awakened the sleeping giant in our community. Hundreds of Londoners, including John King and the students from Mountsfield Public School, used their lunch hour to stand up and be counted. Their message was simple. With hand lettered signs, and dressed in red and white, these people reached out in support and understanding to our neighbours in Quebec.

The people of London, in the heart of English Canada, want the rest of Canada to know that they will not sit quietly and allow a noisy minority to split the country we love. Alice and people like her are the silent majority in our country. With them, a powerful momentum is building in the hamlets, villages, towns and cities across our great land. It begs to be heard before it is too late. Keep Canada together. *Gardons le Canada uni.*

Congratulations, Alice. I call upon the silent majority of Canadians to break their silence and join her fight.

* * *

• (1410)

PRINTING INDUSTRY

Mr. Jim Peterson (Willowdale): Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Printing Industries Association is meeting this week in Ottawa. Our printing industry employs 60,000 Canadians through more than 3,000 establishments, almost all of them Canadian-owned small businesses. Its sales are nearly $2 billion per year.

In 1989, the first year under free trade, our printing imports were up 20 per cent, exports were down 25 per cent, and Canada's trade deficit in printed materials skyrocketed 142 per cent.

One thousand Canadian printers lost their jobs last year. This sorry performance is a result of Tory government policies, high interest rates, a high dollar and a free trade deal that permits Americans to unfairly discriminate against our Canadian printers. When will the Government of Canada stand up for Canada's printers? When will the Government of Canada stand up for Canada's businesses? When will it stand up for Canada?

* * *

[*Translation*]

RAIL TRANSPORT

Mr. Guy Saint-Julien (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, I have a copy of CN inter-office correspondence dated February 22, 1990, sent by Mr. Bourgeois, Director of Quebec City operations, to Mr. Boucher, Regional Director in Montreal, concerning two different scenarios for putting the Chapais subdivision, between Franquet and Chapais, back in service.

The first scenario would be to accommodate traffic if necessary—which implies that the section will be strictly used as an emergency detour—and the second, to put back into circulation a certain volume of traffic as specified in another memo.

In concluding, Mr. Bourgeois added the following: "If, as expected, we plan to put the section back into service, to be used only if necessary".

Mr. Speaker, once again, the President of CN and the big bosses in Quebec City and Montreal have blithely ignored the ruling by the National Transportation Agency of Canada on January 31, 1990, as well as CN workers and the various economic partners in Abitibi.

* * *

[*English*]

FORESTRY

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, the low value placed on Canada's forests by provincial governments has led to wasted resources and a poor return to Canadians. A classic example is the strong demand in the United States for recycled newsprint. Because of the ready access to under-priced trees, pulp mills in Canada produce almost entirely virgin pulp and paper, much of it for U.S. markets.

At a time when existing mills should be adding de-inking facilities to recycle newsprint and paper, and when new mills should be designing in recycling capacity, we see inaction.

The Canadian forest barons clearly intend to hand over the major recycling market to U.S. firms and to continue gobbling Canadian forests.

The former Minister of the Environment pointed out that 80 million trees, the entire annual cut of the province of Ontario, could be saved by setting recycling standards in Canada to that of Japan. We should not be filling our landfills with recyclable paper. Paper fibre can be recycled seven times, not once.

Forty per cent of the marine pollution in Canada is from pulp mills. It is time they cleaned up, reduced their cut and waste, and recycled their product. Canada needs law on recycling.

* * *

THE ARTS

Mr. Larry Schneider (Regina—Wascana): Mr. Speaker, I recently had occasion to go through Pearson International Airport's Terminal II which is presently undergoing renovations. I noticed that the terminal was sporting many cartoons and murals and had pamphlets with cartoon characters drawn by American *Mad Magazine* artist Don Martin.

Upon investigation it was discovered that the art was commissioned by Air Canada, a Crown corporation. While the characters are highly amusing, I could not understand why Air Canada would choose an American over a Canadian artist. There is a happy ending to this. Further investigation found that while the copyrighted figures belong to artist Don Martin, the layout and design was done by Canadian artists. In fact, I discovered that Air Canada has the largest private art bank in Canada and they are very involved in promoting young Canadian artists.

I would like to commend Air Canada on their role for the enhancement and the status of the Canadian artist.

* * *

SOVIET UNION

Mrs. Christine Stewart (Northumberland): Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the visit of Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev and his wife Raisa to Canada. They have certainly impressed Canadians and we warmly wish this man of peace every success.

I would also like to take this time to urge our government to support President Gorbachev's efforts of reform. But, to do so, Canada must first increase its diplomatic presence in the Soviet Union.

Mr. Speaker, the opening of a new Canadian consulate in Kiev has been delayed. Canada should have a consulate in Leningrad. Our Moscow embassy is seriously understaffed. Stronger ties between the Soviet Union and Canada are impossible without a greater Canadian presence in the Soviet Union, including greater Canadian expertise in Soviet languages and Soviet affairs. Among other faults, the lack of Canadian personnel in the Soviet Union makes it unnecessarily difficult for those wishing to emigrate from the Soviet Union to Canada. We in the Liberal party believe in supporting greater Canadian-Soviet relations in areas such as economy, agriculture, Arctic protection, and the environment.

Therefore I urge the government to take the opportunity of Mr. Gorbachev's visit to secure Soviet co-operation, to proceed immediately with the opening of new Canadian consulates in the Soviet Union, and to increase the Canadian presence in our existing embassy in Moscow.

* * *

[*Translation*]

SOVIET UNION

Mr. Jean-Guy Guilbault (Drummond): Mr. Speaker, we have the honour and the privilege of receiving in Canada a great statesman, the President of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Mr. Mikhail Gorbachev, the man who ended the cold war.

Thanks to wide-ranging reforms that are taking place in Eastern Europe, a new era of liberalization, unification and openness is born.

Canada has its place in the history of this process. Last February, it hosted the first "Open Skies" conference, attended by foreign affairs ministers of the 23 NATO And Warsaw Pact countries.

During our Prime Minister's visit to the Soviet Union last November, 14 bilateral agreements were signed, on subjects ranging from international relations in the Arctic to the environment and trade.

President Gorbachev's visit to Canada will no doubt be an important event in the history of Soviet–Canadian relations. We must now look to the future and consider the major issues.

Mr. Speaker, once again, Canada and our Prime Minister are playing a leading role in achieving more peaceful relations between countries the world over.

* * *

[*English*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. George S. Rideout (Moncton): Mr. Speaker, the government's commitment to the environment does not stand the test. Salisbury, a community in my riding, is very disappointed at the lack of support it received from the government when it tried to participate in federal government environmental programs. Schools in my area are in need of federal funds to support their recycling projects.

[*Translation*]

Their students are not trying to collect money to pay for trips or the prom. These students are concerned about the environment. All they want is a small amount of money to help them carry out their project.

[*English*]

We are encouraging people to get involved, but we are not delivering at the other end. We are building support and commitment, but we cannot deliver at the program level. We have top down programs rather than bottom up. Without effective programs we will ultimately lose the support of the people and then we will lose our environment.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[*English*]

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Douglas Young (Gloucester): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of most people responsible for economic policy, I will direct my question to the Acting Prime Minister whoever he or she may be.

The Canadian Manufacturers' Association and the Canadian Exporters Association both agree that the government's high interest rate policy as well as the exchange rate policy are creating a lot of problems for exporters in the country. As a matter of fact it is disastrous for the manufacturing sector particularly.

Is the government now prepared to listen to the manufacturing sector, the Canadian premiers, the Canadian Labour Congress, and consumers and change the disastrous monetary policy that is wrecking our economy?

Hon. Tom Hockin (Minister of State (Small Businesses and Tourism)): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member asks about the level of the dollar and our manufacturing sector.

I think he knows that the World Economic Forum judged Canada the fourth most productive economy in the world in 1988. The study to which he is making reference was done in 1988. This was before the government was able to bring in the free trade agreement, which makes our manufacturing sector more competitive. It was also before we were able to bring legislation before the House to get rid of the manufacturers' sales tax, which is very important to the manufacturing sector.

• (1420)

More important, we have for example Chrysler's $400 million investment. We have Stelco expanding. We have the forest products industry expanding. We have CATO Industries expanding and a number of high–tech firms. There are endless stories of manufacturing investment increasing.

However, the most important point for the hon. member to remember is that recently we have some pressures on labour costs. They are starting to rise. This we must deal with, and that we are doing.

Mr. Douglas Young (Gloucester): Mr. Speaker, obviously the minister is not aware that as recently as this week the Canadian Exporters Association and the Canadian Manufacturers' Association both indicated that they are in a very precarious position as a result of the high dollar policy of this government.

There are studies that indicate we are at a 40-year low in terms of our competitiveness in the U.S. market. I want to ask the Acting Prime Minister or whoever is speaking for the government on economic matters today a question.

Do they not understand the depth of the problem being articulated by the leading Canadian business spokespeople in this country? Do they not recognize that they have to change their high interest, high dollar policy, or Canadian exports are going to face a disastrous situation from which they will not recover for many years, if ever?

Hon. Tom Hockin (Minister of State (Small Businesses and Tourism)): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member should know that the way to be competitive is to control costs. Two absolutely essential ways to control costs is to make sure that labour costs are reasonable and that inflationary pressures in the country do not increase.

The two biggest threats we have to the structure of costs in the manufacturing industry are inflationary pressures that come from excess demands and excess credit. The Bank of Canada's efforts on the monetary side are helping with that. However, more important, we have a fiscal policy which has been responsible and which is also doing its bit to ensure costs are kept in line. This we must do. To lower the dollar would simply increase enormously input costs, especially for the manufacturing sector. That is not the way to go.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Douglas Young (Gloucester): Mr. Speaker, it is clear the minister fails to understand what all Canadians are trying to tell him. The budget brought down by the Minister of Finance on February 20 projected a bank rate of 11.1 per cent. The Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce tells us this is out of the question. In fact, people have been saying this ever since the budget was brought down.

My question for the Acting Prime Minister is this: Considering that the bank rate will not be 11.1 per cent this year, and considering that our expenditures will be at least $2 billion more than was estimated in the Budget, will the government bring down a new Budget that reflects the current economic situation in this country?

[*English*]

Hon. Tom Hockin (Minister of State (Small Businesses and Tourism)): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member knows that the Minister of Finance has said no to that proposition. He has also made it clear that income tax revenues are flowing a little better than expected. That helps to balance the pessimistic comments he made about interest rate costs.

However, more important, to artificially take the dollar or to take interest rates and lower them would simply chase investment out of Canada and increase enormously the cost of manufacturing inputs and all sorts of imports we get from other countries. This would simply lead to the kind of spiral we had in 1981-1982 when interest rates were 22 per cent and 23 per cent and inflation was running at 14 per cent and 15 per cent. This we do not want, and this is what we are fighting.

* * *

[*Translation*]

TRADE

Mr. Alfonso Gagliano (Saint-Léonard): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Acting Minister for International Trade, if there is one in the House. A report by the Canadian Printing Industries Association, published a year after the free trade agreement with the United States came into force, indicates there has been a 25 per cent drop in exports. Could the Acting Minister for International Trade inform the House what the government intends to do to stop a process that threatens the very existence of the printing industry in this country?

[*English*]

Hon. Tom Hockin (Minister of State (Small Businesses and Tourism)): Mr. Speaker, there is probably no industrial sector in Canada more dependent on high cost machinery than the printing industry.

The government is trying to moderate inflation and to keep the cost of inputs and imports down. A large part of the imports in the printing industry come from offshore. We are trying to moderate inflation, to make sure those costs do not go up, and to make sure the price of imports

do not go up. However, above all, by removing the manufacturers' sales tax, by removing the 13.5 per cent tax and putting in its place a tax which is virtually instantly rebated through input tax credit, is good news for that industry. I hope the hon. member will support us in that.

Mr. Alfonso Gagliano (Saint-Léonard): Mr. Speaker, contrary to what the minister says, free trade, the high dollar, the elimination of postal subsidy, and the GST are badly hurting the Canadian printing industry.

Maybe the minister should read the report from the Canadian printing industry so that he will realize the damage they are doing to the industry.

My question to the minister is very simple. Why does the government want to destroy the printing industry in Canada?

Hon. Tom Hockin (Minister of State (Small Businesses and Tourism)): Mr. Speaker, if one takes the conclusions at which the hon. member has just invited the House to arrive with him, that first we should have a lower dollar which would increase the cost of machinery for the printing industry enormously, and if he wants to reinstate all the tariffs that existed before free trade and make sure we could not lower tariffs, that would increase the cost to the printing industry enormously.

If he is also arguing that he does not want the industry to look globally and in a continental sense, then he is asking for the very opposite of what this industry is asking for. It wants to be competitive, it wants a chance at world markets, and it wants low cost imports.

* * *

BALTIC STATES

Ms. Lynn Hunter (Saanich—Gulf Islands): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Acting Prime Minister or whoever is responsible for external affairs today.

Many Canadians have shown strong support for the democratic aspirations of the Baltic nations and for a peaceful resolution to the present crisis in that part of the world.

Will the Acting Prime Minister assure us that it has been made clear to Mr. Gorbachev that Canadians know his economic blockade of Lithuania runs contrary to his earlier assurances of no forceful intervention?

Given the conciliatory offers of compromise recently made by the Baltic negotiators, will the Canadian government urge Mr. Gorbachev to suspend the economic boycott of Lithuania and, particularly, the blockade of medical supplies which is now reaching catastrophic dimensions?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Monique Landry (Minister for External Relations): Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member is aware of our policy, which has been consistent in this House, from statements made on several occasions by the Secretary of State for External Affairs. She knows perfectly well that our position remains the same. We have confirmed our position of non-recognition, *de jure*, of Lithuania's annexation by the Soviet Union. We urged the Soviet authorities to show moderation, and we condemned their blockade of Lithuania. We emphasized the need for dialogue, and that is certainly the message that has been transmitted to the authorities during their visit. We still think that dialogue and moderation are the best way to deal with this kind of conflict.

[*English*]

Ms. Lynn Hunter (Saanich—Gulf Islands): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is very brief.

Would the government be willing to provide advice and assistance to the Lithuanian Canadian community and others in Canada who are trying to find a way to get much needed medical supplies into Lithuania?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Monique Landry (Minister for External Relations): Mr. Speaker, we are of course very concerned about the situation in Lithuania, and we can assure Canadians that, should certain groups wish to send medical equipment or supplies to Lithuania, we would be willing to consider, assist and support this kind of operation. At the present time, however, we have not received any requests from official authorities in that country. We are prepared to consider any assistance offered by Canadian authorities or the Canadian public.

[*English*]

Ms. Lynn Hunter (Saanich—Gulf Islands): Mr. Speaker, the government knows that the Baltic crisis should be resolved within the framework of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe.

The Baltic republics will be seeking observer participant status at the upcoming meeting on the human dimension in Copenhagen. Will the Acting Prime Minister give us her assurance that Canada will support that request?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Monique Landry (Minister for External Relations): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member knows perfectly well that the President of the Soviet Union is still in Canada and that the talks are not over yet. I am sure that when the Secretary of State for External Affairs returns to the House, he will be happy to inform the House about the discussions that took place and various representations the Government of Canada has made to the Soviet authorities.

* * *

• (1430)

[*English*]

FISHERIES

Mr. Lawrence MacAulay (Cardigan): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the minister who today answers for fisheries. The free trade panel has decided against Canada, a decision which will cost Canadian lobster fishermen $30 million. Will the minister now specify what financial assistance will be made available to Atlantic lobster fishermen to get them through this crisis?

Hon. Tom Hockin (Minister of State (Small Businesses and Tourism)): Mr. Speaker—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Hockin: Mr. Speaker, this is a trade question and the last time I looked lobsters were a commodity that this country trades.

On the question of the loss of trade through the decision made by the panel, I said yesterday that this gives us a 90-day-period for industry, labour and governments to get together to see what they can put together. The most important fact that this hon. member should be aware of is that we are promoting in a massive way the smaller lobsters in other countries as well as the larger lobsters in the United States, so much so that the original estimate of $30 million will certainly not turn out to be accurate. The promotional campaign is working very well. In fact, in recent months industry and the provinces have made a concerted effort to reduce inventories from $20 million in January to about $4.7 million. So we are having great luck with our promotion campaign.

Mr. Lawrence MacAulay (Cardigan): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the same minister. The promotional package announced last week is not enough. Promotion will only sell lobsters bought from fishermen at $1.25 a pound. This is not good enough if they are forced out of business by this year's low prices.

Therefore, will the minister immediately commit his government to providing a price package to help lobster fishermen now?

Hon. Tom Hockin (Minister of State (Small Businesses and Tourism)): Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member will find this list of what the minister has committed long, but it is very important.

First, External Affairs and International Trade have identified lobsters to Canadian posts as priority fishing market items for this year. We have also encouraged the formation of the Canadian Atlantic Lobster Promotion Association for generic image and quality promotion. We have undertaken a world-wide survey of markets through Canadian posts with results that are soon to be released. We are working with the industry, the provinces and the associations directly to make officials aware of the many opportunities, opportunities which this country has not taken proper advantage of in the past to promote this product, not simply through grocery stores and restaurants but through trade fairs and other contexts.

We believe not just in subsidizing and subsidizing but in promoting, and it is working.

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Joe Comuzzi (Thunder Bay—Nipigon): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Acting Prime Minister. The major environmental scourge in the Great Lakes is the zebra mussel, a parasite imported from Europe. It has already totally infested Lake Erie and Lake St. Clair,

almost all of Lake Ontario, and it is now showing signs in Lake Huron and Lake Superior. It creates havoc for industry and for governmental agencies, especially municipalities.

The American government is committing $37.5 million to control it. Ontario Hydro is spending over $10 million and we do not know how much Ford is spending to correct it. Industries like Ford are spending millions. The only institution not doing anything effectively is this government.

Will the minister commit the necessary funds today to control the zebra mussel spread in the Great Lakes?

Mr. Lee Clark (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, the question which the hon. member raises is very important. I want to reassure him by indicating that this government is working in close co-operation with the Ontario government, with American counterparts, with Great Lakes authorities and with the universities.

There are currently in place some 26 research projects which are designed to provide the science and technology we need to address the problem which already exists in the presence in the Great Lakes of the zebra mussels.

It is also very important, however, to understand that this government must continue with its actions of taking every step possible to ensure that ships coming into the Great Lakes from overseas waters are dumping their ballast at sea in order to ensure that no greater quantities of zebra mussels come into Canada than are already here.

We must continue to co-operate together in the future as we have in the past.

Mr. Joe Comuzzi (Thunder Bay—Nipigon): Mr. Speaker, I asked what this government is doing that is effective. If the government was doing anything effective we would control the spread of the zebra mussel in Lake Huron and Lake Superior. We have to take immediate action today. We cannot wait two years to control the spread of the zebra mussel in the Great Lakes. If this government does something immediately we can control its spread in Lake Huron and Lake Superior.

What will this government do to correct the zebra mussel problem in these two lakes?

Mr. Lee Clark (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, it is important to understand that action for the sake of action is not always as productive as the hon. member suggests.

We are working in very close co-operation with the universities to ensure that we have the technology and science in place which will enable us to reduce the number of zebra mussels.

At the moment we are also considering using chlorine in water in those areas where intake pipes are being blocked by the zebra mussels. That is one action which is possible within a constrained area. However, it is also important to understand that you cannot put massive amounts of chlorine into water because that will create another problem.

The hon. member is suggesting that the work of scientists in Canadian universities is not important. I suggest to him that it is exceedingly important and the net result will be evident in the very near future.

* * *

FISHERIES AND OCEANS

Mr. Brian L. Gardiner (Prince George—Bulkley Valley): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to whoever is the acting part-time minister of fisheries and oceans today. In 1987, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, the Government of British Columbia and the Alcan Aluminium Company signed an out-of-court agreement that will reduce the flows of the Nechako River, a major tributary of the Fraser River, by 50 per cent.

On Saturday, at a conference in Vanderhoof, B.C., a retired Fisheries and Oceans biologist reported that scientists in the department were put under political pressure to rationalize the diversion and justify their advice to the minister.

Is the minister, whoever that is today, aware of this evidence? Will he not investigate this serious allegation and report back to this House immediately?

Mr. Ross Reid (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, I hate to disappoint my friends opposite. The question that my hon. friend

raises is one to which, at this moment, I cannot respond. I think he knows that the government is very concerned about fish habitat and the situation in British Columbia.

I undertake to get back to him directly on the matter and to respond either to him directly or to the House.

Mr. Brian L. Gardiner (Prince George—Bulkley Valley): Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary secretary should speak to his leader. In June of 1984, the then Leader of the Opposition, the present Prime Minister, said that this project would receive a full environmental review. The settlement that was eventually decided on excluded the company from any environmental assessment.

In light of expected environmental assessment legislation under the Green Plan, will the minister order a complete and full review of this project as promised by the Prime Minister when he was Leader of the Opposition?

Hon. Frank Oberle (Minister of Forestry): Mr. Speaker, perhaps I could enlighten my hon. friend about this particular project. Of course there was an environmental assessment carried out at the time that the new arrangement was made.

In fact, the new conditions that are imposed on the company tend to enhance the environment of the area very significantly in the sense that it restores an old river bed.

• (1440)

If my hon. friend knew the area, as he should because he is the member from there, he would know that a river bed has been restored, that the temperature of the water can be regulated and that millions of dollars have been spent to improve the habitat of the fish. Every possible guarantee has been written into the agreement to make sure that actually happens.

* * *

TRANSPORT

Mr. Jim Jordan (Leeds—Grenville): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport. Last week the minister said that the independent truckers were satisfied with solutions proposed by him for the blockades and he said that the blockades would be lifted at international border points. However, several independent truckers in my riding and elsewhere say otherwise.

Can the minister now tell us precisely what he will do to assist the trucking industry and when he will do it?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, the the Minister of Transport for Ontario, Bill Wrye, and I, did reach an agreement with the independent truckers *vis-à-vis* what would be done by the province of Ontario and what would be done by the federal government to assist their situation.

Specifically, we suggested that we would crack down on illegal cabotage. We suggested that we would take up with the Bureau of Competition their complaints about certain U.S. truckers. Third, we undertook to try together to find a more effective way of collecting both the federal and excise tax on fuel and the Ontario fuel tax. We both agreed that a better method was necessary. We also agreed to have federal officials liaise with the committee with which they have.

The independent truckers were satisfied. The blockade has been lifted and the work is underway.

Mr. Jim Jordan (Leeds—Grenville): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the same minister. Why did the minister fail to notify the independent truckers of the so-called resolution to their concerns last week? Truckers at several crossing points, including Johnstown and the Thousand Island Bridge, were not notified.

Why were these independent truckers not notified at these border points?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, both the Ontario minister and myself put what we would do in writing and made every effort to communicate with the independent truckers. I think my hon. friend would understand that it is rather difficult to communicate without any organization being in place.

We made copies of my letter and that of Bill Wrye available to the Ontario Provincial Police. It is my understanding that through their network they were able to distribute it to the truckers.

[*Translation*]

MULTICULTURALISM

Mrs. Shirley Maheu (Saint-Laurent—Cartierville): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of State for Multiculturalism and Citizenship.

Yesterday the minister said that the government was committed to promoting interracial relations. Concurrently the Conservative government members on the legislative committee examining Bill C-37 have refused to hear evidence from Quebec witnesses and limited public representations to only four groups.

How can the government promote racial harmony when its members take such an aggressive position concerning Quebec witnesses?

Hon. Gerry Weiner (Secretary of State of Canada and Minister of State (Multiculturalism and Citizenship)): Mr. Speaker, apparently the hon. member is talking about something that happened before the legislative committee.

The committee is the master of its agenda and I certainly do not have anything to say about whatever may have happened in committee.

[*English*]

Mrs. Shirley Maheu (Saint-Laurent—Cartierville): Mr. Speaker, I think the minister could tell his committee that it would be too biased not to hear from Quebec.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member probably knows, as other hon. members know, that the questions that can be asked about what is taking place in committee are somewhat limited. The minister chose to answer, and the minister has given an answer. If the hon. member wishes to ask a supplemental I hope that she will keep in mind that it should be directed to the minister in an area in which he does have jurisdiction.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Maheu: Mr. Speaker, my second question is for the same minister. The government claims it wants to promote tolerance throughout the country, yet the members refused to hear Mr. Bitton, a witness who is an advisor to the Quebec government.

Can the minister explain how he will address the distinct problems of heritage languages in Quebec without listening to the province's representatives?

[*English*]

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker—

Mrs. Maheu: That is policy.

Mr. Speaker: If the hon. member is asking a question of policy, that is one thing, but that question is going right back into the committee, and the hon. member knows that the Speaker will have to remind members that that is not a question that is appropriate for ministers. The minister, of course, can make a reply if he wishes, but I have to say that that question is going too far.

The hon. member for Saskatoon—Dundurn.

* * *

HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. Ron Fisher (Saskatoon—Dundurn): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Acting Prime Minister, whoever he might be. Yesterday the Standing Committee on Communications and Culture learned of three serious cases of human rights violations at the Canadian Radio-Television and Communications Commission. It also heard for the first time that the chairman of the commission had just heard of these violations.

The management of the CRTC is refusing to comply with the ruling of the Canadian Human Rights Commission. Will the Acting Prime Minister tell us why the CRTC is forcing its employees to extreme lengths in order to seek basic justice? If not, will he undertake to fully investigate why the CRTC is refusing to comply with human rights rulings?

Mr. Jim Edwards (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Communications): Mr. Speaker, the CRTC, as the House well knows and as the member knows, is an arm's length agency. However, if the allegations are true, as the member suggests they are, and I have to accept his word for it at this point, I am sure the Minister of Communications will have the opportunity to relay the question to the chairman of the CRTC.

Mr. Ron Fisher (Saskatoon—Dundurn): Mr. Speaker, I would certainly appreciate if that were done because when an agency of the government forces its employees to go so far as to a tribunal in so far as the Human Rights Commission is concerned, it is unacceptable in Canada in 1990. Not only does that apply to the CRTC, it applies to the whole government service as well.

My supplementary question is addressed to the Solicitor General. Will the Solicitor General assure this House that he will not use the Section 59 discretionary loophole in the Human Rights Act and will prosecute cases if the investigating agency considers there is a basis for prosecution?

Mr. Benno Friesen (Parliamentary Secretary to Solicitor General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I think the parliamentary secretary to the minister has already answered the question completely.

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WESTERN DIVERSIFICATION

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Western Economic Diversification. I have here a copy of a letter that was written by his colleague, the member for Portage—Interlake, to the Minister of Energy wherein he states his opposition to any further funding for the core area initiative in Winnipeg, a program which, as the minister knows, has generated hundreds of millions of dollars of private capital and has assisted thousands of businesses and individuals to help in the renewal of that city.

• (1450)

Will the minister give his assurance that this does not reflect the position of the Conservative cabinet of this government? Will the minister give his assurance that he will undertake to start serious negotiation with the city and the province for the renewal of the core area initiative? Particularly, will he reject the know-nothing opinions of his colleague from Portage—Interlake?

Hon. Charles Mayer (Minister of Western Economic Diversification and Minister of State (Grains and Oilseeds)): Mr. Speaker, I take the hon. member's representation. We are presently looking at the whole area of the limited amount of funding that we have to go around. I will certainly take his representations into view as we go through and complete the review.

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, we did not get the assurances we need.

Why is it that when the Western Diversification Fund still has over $500 million yet unattached, it has not given its fair proportion to Manitoba? In fact, there have been cut-backs already for the cultural industries announced just last week by the Minister of Communications. There have been major cut-backs in transfers to the universities and hospitals. There has been a major cut-back on programs for research and agriculture.

Why is this government picking on Manitoba, denying it our proper share of regional development funds?

The member for Portage—Interlake may be an expert on art, but he knows nothing about regional development. Will the minister at least stand up for the province of Manitoba?

Hon. Charles Mayer (Minister of Western Economic Diversification and Minister of State (Grains and Oilseeds)): Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member looks at the record of the amount of money we have allocated to Manitoba on a proportionate basis relative to population, he will be interested to see that it is getting a little more than its share. So he is wrong there.

Second, I can recall about 10 years ago when that member was a member of the previous government. They went out to Calgary and promised a $5 billion Western Diversification Fund and we got little, if any, out of it.

We have committed over $1.8 billion to be spent in the west on regional development over a five-year period. We are on target for spending that amount of money. So far we have created something in the order of 25,000 permanent, diversified, quality jobs. That is a pretty good record in two and a half years as compared to what the previous government did. It did nothing except make big promises with a lot of zeros behind them and the result was zero as well.

UNEMPLOYMENT

Mr. Joseph Volpe (Eglinton—Lawrence): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Employment. Several task forces commissioned by the Minister of Employment over the last few years have recommended funding strategy for training that does not involve the complete destruction of the unemployment insurance system. All of those recommendations have been rejected. The latest of these is the one from the Canadian Employment and Immigration Advisory Council, which again recommends a refundable tax credit to finance training.

Since that recommendation allows the government to meet its funding obligations under the Unemployment Insurance Act and still allows for funding training for the government in its proposed labour force development strategy, why will the minister not accept that recommendation?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Monique Vézina (Minister of State (Employment and Immigration) and Minister of State (Seniors)): The report was just tabled, Mr. Speaker. We will therefore need some time to examine the recommendations and then try to implement them.

We could take this opportunity to reaffirm our commitment, as a government, to those programs. Already, several millions of dollars have regularly been invested in order to subsidize training and considerable amounts have been made available to the programs.

Of course, we can expand the Labour Force Development Strategy and take into account all the recommendations submitted to us to allow for the flexibility required to improve our programs.

[*English*]

Mr. Joseph Volpe (Eglinton—Lawrence): Mr. Speaker, the report has been released for at least one week. That advisory council also condemns Canada's monetary policy as a major contributor to manufacturing shut-downs, losses of good jobs, increases in the deficit and inflation, and the resulting high unemployment.

The unemployed are being made to bear the brunt of the government's high interest rate policy. Why will the minister not accept that recommendation? Further, why will she not ask the Minister of Finance why he insists on implementing policies that prevent her from fulfilling her mandate to the unemployed and to those whose jobs he is putting at risk?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Monique Vézina (Minister of State (Employment and Immigration) and Minister of State (Seniors)): Mr. Speaker, I think that, as a government, we certainly do not need to take any advice or lesson concerning the need to reform the labour strategy as required. Our strategy works fine and we have created the jobs needed. Women representation in the workplace has increased. The only thing left to do at this point, as far as I am concerned, is to ask the other place to approve expeditiously the reform we are proposing regarding the labour strategy and its improved programs. We will, of course, take into account the consultations made as well as the recommendations submitted and we will implement them according to our financial means.

* * *

[*English*]

INDUSTRY

Mr. Howard McCurdy (Windsor—St. Clair): Mr. Speaker, my question is addressed to whomever speaks for the Department of Industry, Science and Technology.

In 1982, the federal government and the government of Ontario bailed out what has now become Varity Corporation, in the sum of $200 million. For that amount of bail out the company promised to produce 1,500 new jobs in Canada. This morning it was announced that Kelsey-Hayes, which was purchased by Varity, is closing definitely in August, in spite of government promises that it would stop this.

Now Varity says it is going to move its headquarters to Buffalo, in spite of a promise to the government that it would maintain its corporate headquarters in Canada. What is the government going to do about it?

Hon. William C. Winegard (Minister for Science): Mr. Speaker, I am aware of the reports that Varity is considering moving its head office to Buffalo, but we have not been advised of any such move. I want the

member to know that a letter has been sent by ISTC officials reminding Varity of the undertakings it has in the foundation agreement and that we expect Varity to live up to those agreements.

Mr. Howard McCurdy (Windsor—St. Clair): Mr. Speaker, I think even this government might understand that if Varity buys a mansion in Buffalo that ain't a place for a summer cottage.

Is it the intention of this government, along with the government of the province of Ontario, to enforce the covenant and maintain corporate headquarters in Canada and save those hundreds of jobs in Windsor or not? Is it just going to be letter writing or is the government going to enforce the law?

Hon. William C. Winegard (Minister for Science): Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague should know that there have been no changes granted by the Government of Canada whatsoever in the foundation agreement with Varity, and there will be none.

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PUBLIC SERVICE

Mrs. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West): Mr. Speaker, the government likes to pretend it can treat people, especially its own employees, like pawns on a chessboard and move them around and knock them off at will. A memo leaked from Transport Canada last week shows that the cut-back of 300 employees is going to jeopardize air safety and is going to increase contracting costs.

Now that the Minister of Transport has had time to look into this leaked memo, will he admit that these cut-backs are in fact compromising air safety and will he immediately stop any action on cut-backs?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, there is no question we are looking at ways to save money, but in no way do any of the efforts that we have made compromise safety. Safety is first and foremost.

There have been allegations from other colleagues on my hon. friend's side as to alleged reports, alleged cut-backs, alleged this and alleged that, but I have not seen any of the allegations.

Mrs. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West): Mr. Speaker, the minister has had over five days to look into a report from his own department. It is no allegation. I will send it to him across the aisle.

• (1500)

This is the government that came to Ottawa promising pink slips and running shoes to public servants. It likes to pretend that it is only trimming fat in Ottawa when it hits Public Service employment.

Will the minister admit that, in fact, these 300 cut-backs are affecting jobs across the country, that it is 99 jobs lost in Atlantic Canada, 125 in western Canada and 60 in Quebec, and that these are not the kind of job cuts that should be hitting these regions of the country at this time?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): No.

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GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Neil Young (Beaches—Woodbine): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of National Revenue. The minister will recall that when the House of Commons increased disability benefits for people who were recipients of the Canada Pension Plan, provincial governments grabbed that money, and those disabled individuals did not receive an increase at all.

For those individuals who may be eligible for a refund under the GST, will the minister guarantee to the House today that provincial governments will not be permitted to grab those cheques off welfare recipients?

Hon. Otto Jelinek (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member will know that the federal government cannot control the actions and activities of the provincial government.

On the other hand, the hon. member will also know that the legislation proposed in respect to the GST offers GST credits for low and modest income Canadians.

May I add that we have received over 10 million applications thus far. In fact, we are expecting now as we are monitoring them that well over nine million Canadians are going to qualify and start receiving those GST credits as of December of this year for them to keep.

[*Translation*]

POINT OF ORDER

NOTICE OF QUESTION TO BE RAISED DURING ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

Mrs. Shirley Maheu (Saint-Laurent—Cartierville): Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. My question today dealing with the heritage languages was meant for the Chairman of the Standing Committee and I thought that, in his absence, the minister responsible would reply. Under the circumstances, I hereby give notice of my intention to raise the subject matter of my question on the adjournment of the House.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I take note of the hon. member's request. However, I must remind her that in accordance with our Standing Order she must give the Speaker notice in writing not later than four o'clock today.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*English*]

PETITIONS

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Madam Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table, in both official, languages the government's response to 146 petitions.

[*Editor's Note: See today's Votes and Proceedings.*]

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COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

PRIVILEGES AND ELECTIONS—FOURTEENTH REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

Mr. Chuck Cook (North Vancouver): Madam Speaker, the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections has the honour to present its fourteenth report.

I might add that, because this is a non partisan, all-party committee, this committee has filed more reports than any other House committee in the present session.

In accordance with its mandate under Standing Order 92(1), your committee recommends that the following items of Private Members' Business be designated as votable items.

There are four of them, Madam Speaker: Mr. Plamondon's bill to amend the Canada Labour Code; Mr. Boyer's bill to establish the Centennial Flame Research Award; Mr. Kempling's bill, an act to amend the Canada Pension Plan with particular regard to spousal agreements; and Mr. Proud's bill to mark the birthplace of Canada on the 125th anniversary of the 1864 Charlotte Conference.

FINANCE—SIXTH REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

Mr. Don Blenkarn (Mississauga South): Madam Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the sixth report of the Standing Committee on Finance on Bill S-15, an act to amend the act of incorporation of Desjardins Mutual Life Assurance Company.

[*Editor's Note: See today's Votes and Proceedings.*]

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[*Translation*]

STANDING COMMITTEE ON FORESTRY AND FISHERIES

CONCURRENCE IN MOTION TO EXTEND CONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN VOTES

Madam Deputy Speaker: Pursuant to Standing Order 81(4)(a), the following motion standing in the name of the Hon. Leader of the Opposition is deemed adopted:

> That, pursuant to Standing Order 81(4)(a), consideration of Fisheries and Oceans Votes 1, 5 and 10 of the Main Estimates for the year ending March 31, 1991, by the Standing Committee on Forestry and Fisheries, be extended beyond May 31, 1990.

* * *

[*English*]

PETITIONS

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Madam Speaker, I rise pursuant to Standing Order 36 to table a petition signed by a number of residents of the riding of Hamilton Mountain who are so well represented in this House by my colleague. The petitioners

humbly pray and call upon Parliament to reject the government's proposed goods and services tax which would be so damaging to the Canadian economy.

VETERANS AFFAIRS

Hon. Ralph Ferguson (Lambton—Middlesex): Madam Speaker, I rise under Standing Order 36 to present a petition on behalf of the veterans in my area. The petitioners humbly pray and call upon Parliament to reject those budget measures that deprive veterans of proper services and increase their financial hardship.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Hon. Ralph Ferguson (Lambton—Middlesex): Madam Speaker, I also have six petitions from the veterinarians in my area. They are calling upon the government to realize that veterinarians provide an essential service to Canada's livestock and poultry industry. They too will be hard hit by increased costs in accounting.

These veterinarians have gathered names from people in Alvinston, Petrolia, Watford, Thedford, St. Thomas, Forest, Arkona, Melbourne, Sarnia, Newbury, Brights Grove, Inwood, Camlachie, Glencoe, Wyoming, Strathroy, Pointe Edward, Clearwater and London, which shows the wide base of support and the level of concern among the petitioners who are represented here today.

VETERANS AFFAIRS

Mr. Russell MacLellan (Cape Breton—The Sydneys): Madam Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I have the honour to table a petition today from members and friends of Branch 12 of the Royal Canadian Legion in Sydney, Nova Scotia.

There are over 300 signatures on this petition and in part it states that the Government of Canada has introduced changes that will reduce some home-keeping services to veterans and substantially increase the costs of long-term care. Whereas the veterans have already given service to this country and should not be targeted by these measures, the petitioners call upon Parliament to reject those budget measures which deprive veterans of proper services and increase their financial hardship. The Minister of Veterans Affairs has leaned a little to changing this but has not gone nearly far enough. This petition is requesting realistic treatment from this government.

[*Translation*]

TAX BENEFITS FOR NORTHERN AND ISOLATED AREAS

Mr. Guy Saint-Julien (Abitibi): Pursuant to Standing Order 36, Madam Speaker, I wish to table a petition from Chibougamau, in the Roberval riding, concerning the findings of the Task Force on Tax Benefits for Northern and Isolated Areas.

The petitioners reject the findings of the Task Force on Tax Benefits for Northern and Isolated Areas and ask to designate Chibougamau as an isolated community under the current tax compensation scheme.

[*English*]

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Hon. Roger C. Simmons (Burin—St. George's): Madam Speaker, I have the honour to present a petition on behalf of my colleague, the hon. member for Hamilton Mountain. This is the latest in a long series of petitions from all over Canada. It is from communities like Hamilton, Ancaster, Caledonia and several other communities.

• (1510)

The petitioners are calling upon Parliament to reject this infamous goods and services tax which would raise taxes one more time. I support the petition wholeheartedly and ask hon. members opposite to give heed to the prayer of this petition which is representative of hundreds of thousands of people across this country, and I see some of them are beginning to listen.

Ms. Margaret Mitchell (Vancouver East): Madam Speaker, I have the honour today to once again present quite a number of petitions with hundreds and hundreds of names, and a very unique petition in Chinese and English which was sponsored by the Chinatown Merchants' Association in Vancouver East. This petition includes names of Chinese customers and many consumers who are concerned about the goods and services tax.

The petition states that the 7 per cent goods and services tax will hurt small businesses, costs will go up, incomes will go down, and it will be an accounting nightmare. The tax will also hurt consumers as prices of thousands of items and services will go up. Therefore, the undersigned petitioners call upon Parliament and the

Government of Canada to withdraw the goods and services tax.

[*Translation*]

PROGRAM FOR OLDER WORKERS ADJUSTMENT

Mr. Alfonso Gagliano (Saint-Léonard): Pursuant to Standing Order 36, Madam Speaker, I wish to table two petitions with 2,054 signatures concerning the Program for Older Workers Adjustment who ask that the minimum criterion of 100 employees for a business wanting to avail itself of this program be completely eliminated, and that all senior workers over 55 years of age who are laid off and cannot find new jobs be entitled to early retirements.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Mac Harb (Ottawa Centre): Pursuant to Standing Order 36, Madam Speaker, I have the honour and the pleasure to table in the House a petition signed by Canadian men and women who strongly oppose the proposed goods and services tax. Again, the petitioners ask the House to turn down the proposed GST.

[*English*]

Mr. Stan J. Hovdebo (Saskatoon—Humboldt): Madam Speaker, it is my honour and duty on behalf of a number of citizens of the communities of St. Gregor, Annaheim, Munster and Humboldt, to present a petition which calls upon the government to reject the proposed goods and services tax. The petition suggests that the minister's tax is unfair and there should be in place a tax which is fair to all Canadians.

Mr. Fred J. Mifflin (Bonavista—Trinity—Conception): Madam Speaker, I rise pursuant to Standing Order 36 to present petitions which are not from my constituents. I presented a petition containing 15,000 signatures from my constituents, and these petitions are presented on behalf of the hon. member for Windsor West, the leader of the Liberal party. His constituents are very concerned about the effect that this new tax will have on Canadians, particularly low and middle-income Canadians who spend 92 plus per cent of their income on consumables, which will be affected by the goods and services tax, versus those of high income who spend around 50 per cent.

These petitioners humbly pray and call upon Parliament to reject this goods and services tax.

Mr. Jack Whittaker (Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt): Madam Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I once again present a petition with respect to the goods and services tax.

The people of various communities in Ontario in the area of Winchester state that the government has not addressed the unfair taxation system currently in place which permits wealthy individuals and corporations to pay little or no federal tax, while forcing lower and middle-income taxpayers to bear more of the national tax burden.

The petitioners are calling on this government to scrap this particular tax and bring in a tax that is fairer for all Canadians, particularly those who are lower and middle-income earners.

Ms. Lynn Hunter (Saanich—Gulf Islands): Madam Speaker, I am honoured and privileged, pursuant to Standing Order 36, to present 12 petitions today. These petitioners are very aware that it is not over until it is over. They are sending us these petitions to put forth their voices in this Chamber in opposition to the goods and services tax.

This tax is a regressive tax. It will put an unfair burden on ordinary Canadians through a regressive consumptive tax instead of real tax reform. I urge members of this House to use every means at their disposal, including colleagues to my immediate right talking to their colleagues in the other place and asking them to kill the bill.

Mr. Jim Peterson (Willowdale): Madam Speaker, I have presented petitions from thousands of my constituents and many more than that on behalf of Canadians objecting to the goods and services tax.

Now that this House has gone against the will of majority of Canadians, our constituents are not laying back. They are still objecting and hoping that the Senate will have the wisdom and the courage to reject on behalf of all Canadians this iniquitous tax.

I am pleased to table the names of 287 petitioners before this House.

Mr. Rod Laporte (Moose Jaw—Lake Centre): Madam Speaker, I also rise today to place before this House a petition signed by well over 100 people from the riding of Moose Jaw—Lake Centre who are concerned about the goods and services tax. They are concerned because they see this tax as being a regressive tax, a tax that is unfair

for average Canadians, a tax that is unfair for seniors, and a tax that is unfair for young Canadians.

They call upon this government to implement a fair and just tax system.

CANADIAN WHEAT BOARD

Mr. Rod Laporte (Moose Jaw—Lake Centre): Madam Speaker, I also have a petition presented to me by a number of farmers and producers from throughout the province of Saskatchewan who are very concerned with the future of the Canadian Wheat Board.

They call upon the government to reinstate oats under the Canadian Wheat Board. They call upon the government to give oats and barley the same protection that wheat has under the Canadian Wheat Board. They call upon this government to do so today.

BALTIC STATES

Mr. Jesse Flis (Parkdale—High Park): Madam Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I too have the honour of tabling thousands of signatures in petitions on behalf of Canadians right across Canada.

Many of these signatories are demonstrating on Parliament Hill, together with thousands of other Canadians, giving President Gorbachev a clear message. I am proud to present them on the day that President Gorbachev is visiting our capital city. The message is to allow the three Baltic States their independence.

Canada never recognized the Soviet occupation of the three Baltic States. The petitioners are requesting that Mr. Gorbachev and the Soviet Union honour their independence.

* * *

QUESTION PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURN

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Madam Speaker, if Question No. 271 could be made an Order for Return, the return would be tabled immediately.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House that Question No. 271 be deemed to have been made an Order for Return?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

[*Text*]

REVISED STATUTES OF CANADA

Question No. 271—**Mr. Robinson:**

Are any statutes passed by the Parliament of Canada in effect but not included in the Revised Statutes of Canada, 1985, apart from those known in the rules of the House of Commons as private bills and, if so, which ones?

Return tabled.

[*English*]

Mr. Cooper: Madam Speaker, I ask that the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Shall the remaining questions stand?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

* * *

MOTIONS FOR PAPERS

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Madam Speaker, I would ask you to be so kind as to call Notice of Motion for the Production of Papers No. P-17 in the name of the hon. member for Regina—Lumsden.

VIA RAIL

That an Order of the House do issue for copies of all documents and studies prepared by or for the Department of Finance in the years 1988 and 1989 relating to VIA Rail and the level of subsidy VIA Rail would receive from the government between 1989 and 1994.

Mr. Cooper: Madam Speaker, this motion is acceptable to the government with the reservation stated in the reply and the documents are tabled immediately.

Motion agreed to.

* * *

MOTIONS FOR PAPERS

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Madam Speaker, would you be so kind as to call Notice of Motion for the Production of Papers No. P-21 in the name of the hon. member for Yukon.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

That an humble Address be presented to His Excellency praying that he will cause to be laid before this House copies of all documents and correspondence between the government and other levels of government pertaining to the imposition of a goods and services tax.

Mr. Cooper: Madam Speaker, the documents requested were provided in confidence to the federal government by other governments and disclosure could be damaging to the conduct of federal–provincial relations. I therefore ask the hon. member to withdraw her motion, or perhaps in her absence we can transfer it for debate.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Transferred for debate.

• (1520)

Mr. Cooper: Madam Speaker, I ask that the other Notices of Motions for the Production of Papers be allowed to stand.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Shall the other Notices of Motions for the Production of Papers be allowed to stand?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

CUSTOMS ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

Hon. Otto Jelinek (Minister of National Revenue): moved that Bill C–55, an act to amend the Customs Act, be read a second time and referred to a legislative committee.

He said: Madam Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to explain to the House very briefly Bill C–55, an act to amend the Customs Act. This bill proposes amendments to the Customs Act which will provide the Department of National Revenue, Customs and Excise, with the authority to implement fully recent amendments to the customs tariff.

If I may, by way of background, on January 1, 1988 Canada and most of its major trading partners converted their tariffs to the harmonized system of which I believe all hon. members are aware. The change over was certainly not intended to cause financial hardship to Canadian businesses. However, this could not be guaranteed because of the complexity of the conversion at that time. Therefore, the new tariff included Order in Council authority to allow the government during an 18–month period, after implementation, to respond to requests to restore the rates that existed before harmonization; in other words retroactively. Rate reductions are usually made retroactive to January 1, 1988, as outlined in the April 1989 budget.

The new customs tariff that implemented the harmonized system on January 1, 1988 included Order in Council authority to allow the government, during an 18–month period after implementation, to respond to requests to restore rates in effect under the old tariff, that is to say until June 30, 1989. A recent amendment to the customs tariff extends this authority for a further 12 months to June 30, 1990.

Currently the Customs Act does not allow for these provisions to be fully implemented, given that the authority to refund duties does not cover the entire retroactive period provided for in the tariff.

As a result, without an amendment to the Customs Act, importers will be unable to obtain refunds of duties overpaid and payments of accrued interest for the full retroactive period.

To remedy this I am proposing this legislation which does the following. First, it will allow the refund of duties where the Governor in Council has ordered that lower rates apply retroactively. Second, it will provide for the payment of interests on these refunds. Third, it will bring appeal rights into line with the new provisions.

In a nutshell, the purpose of this bill is to ensure that the Canadian business community continues to benefit fully from lower rates of duty established by the Governor in Council and that all importers are treated fairly and equitably.

I therefore count on the support of all hon. members of the House to pass this bill in a timely fashion.

Mr. David Berger (Saint–Henri—Westmount): Madam Speaker, as the minister has explained very briefly, this bill extends as I understand it to July 1992 the date by which changes can be made to the Canadian tariff schedule to assist manufacturers or importers who were inadvertently injured by the reclassification of tariffs which came about as Canada moved to the harmonized tariff system.

As the minister explained, this will allow the government to refund duties retroactively in cases where these increased duties were brought about simply as a result of this reclassification. Similarly, as the minister explained,

this bill allows payment of interest and appeal rights to importers or manufacturers.

This bill came about as a result of representations from business that it did not have enough time to assess the impact of changes arising from the reclassification of tariffs.

The bill is very straightforward. One cannot object to the help that is being provided to importers and manufacturers as a result of such a reclassification. On the contrary, I think we should support it. Our party is in favour of more liberalized trade internationally and this harmonized system of tariffs is indeed designed to ensure that there is more liberalized international trade.

While we can support the principle of this bill, it is appropriate to say that the government never hesitates to bring forward a bill to help businesses, but that it has failed to address the training and adjustment needs of Canadian workers adequately. It does not show the same haste and the same zeal when it comes to helping with the adjustment needs of workers.

I would like to remind this House and I would like to remind the minister that in 1988 the government established the advisory council on adjustment headed by Jean de Grandpré who at the time was the chairman of the board of Bell Canada Enterprises.

In a report tabled in March 1989 Mr. de Grandpré reminded Canadians of the abysmally low level of training done in Canada. In 1981, as incredible as it may seem, three out of four establishments in Canada did not provide any formal training to Canadian workers. These are figures that come from the de Grandpré report which was tabled in March 1989. In 1987, Canadian private sector expenditures on training were estimated at $1.5 billion, while American firms spent about $80 billion annually on staff training.

The de Grandpré commission had been set up in the context of the free trade agreement. In January 1988, at the time that this country was debating the question of free trade and liberalized trade, the government or the Prime Minister set up this commission in order to lead Canadians to believe that the government was actually serious about addressing the training needs of Canadian workers.

The major question that the council headed by Mr. de Grandpré had to address was: "Whether specific programs should be established to help Canadian companies and workers adjust to economic changes brought on by the free trade agreement".

The council decided that the answer to that question was no, that there should not be specific programs designed to address the effects of the free trade agreement because, the council argued, it is virtually impossible to attribute clearly and conclusively any particular economic event such as a plant closure solely to the effects of the free trade agreement. The same event might be attributed to global economic changes, to technological obsolescence, or simply to bad management.

Rather than recommending measures that were designed solely to help workers adjust to the effects of the free trade agreement, the council suggested policies to promote the swift reintegration into the workplace of workers displaced by changes of any kind. What they were talking about was the need for generalized policies. I do not think it is necessary today to go into any of the recommendations of the de Grandpré report in any great detail.

• (1530)

I would like to emphasize one such recommendation, which is that the government establish a corporate tax liability that would be offset completely if the firm provided a certain level of training to employees. It has now been over a year since the tabling of this report. It has been a year and a half since the free trade agreement came into effect and the government has failed to respond, to set up any generalized policies of this nature to correct the abysmally low level of training provided to Canadian workers by Canadian companies.

[*Translation*]

With respect to another issue, Madam Speaker, all members are familiar with the adjustment problems often experienced by older workers in our economy. A few years ago the government set up the Program for Older Worker Adjustment to help older workers who are victims of massive lay-offs. POWA provides support income to employees aged 55 or over who have been in the labour force for at least 30 years.

However not all workers are eligible under POWA, only those who are permanently unemployed as a result of a massive lay-off. Under the program such a major and permanent lay-off must have a serious impact for a

significant number of older workers. Exhaustive analyses are made to determine whether workers are eligible under the program. Among other criteria, in a community of 500,000 or more people, in a major Canadian city like Montreal where I live the minimum number of laid-off employees must be 100.

Madam Speaker, you can appreciate the injustices likely to arise from this kind of criterion. A few days ago I met with spokesmen for 13 laid-off Dominion Textile workers who were left jobless when the mill closed in 1988. About ten of these people are over 55 and, of course, the criterion concerning a minimum of 100 laid-off workers makes then uneligible for this program. I have a hard time trying to explain to these people why they are not eligible, because they tell me that aged 55, 57 or 58 as they are they have just as much difficulty landing jobs as a worker who was laid off along with 100 or 150 others. The number of lay-offs in a community has precious little to do with the ease with which a person might find another job, although that may indeed be a determining factor in a small community.

But in a big city of several million people, this may not be the most important factor. This arbitrary criterion in effect excludes many people who have as much difficulty as those who might be affected, as I was saying, by a lay-off of over a hundred employees.

Madam Speaker, I just heard my colleague, the hon. member for Saint-Léonard (Mr. Gagliano), who tabled a petition here, ask quite simply that this criterion be abolished. I think this is perfectly legitimate because in my opinion, the criterion should rather be more subjective, relate to the need felt by the worker instead of the number of employees who may be affected by the lay-off.

[*English*]

Those are just two areas that I wanted to point out in my remarks on the bill.

As I said earlier, the objective of the bill is laudable, and we support it. But we would like to see the government show as much concern in addressing the needs of workers who are affected by liberalized trade and other economic conditions as it does when addressing the needs of companies that are affected by liberalized trade.

Mr. David Barrett (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca): Madam Speaker, contrary to the custom of this House to which I am trying to get accustomed, and unlike the previous speaker, I will attempt to speak to the bill. Having said that, I do not want to confine myself entirely to the rigidity of the tariffs.

The minister presents this bill as an innocent victim of a cabinet colleague. I hate to bring this out in public, but it is necessary to alert him to the fact that through this amendment he is sending a message to people that they will be able to filter through our borders with goods and escape paying their fair share of tariff.

Nothing is closer to the heart of the government than collecting every cent which it is due. Obviously, the purpose of this bill is to make amends for when the government has been over zealous and collected money it should not have collected. It will pay the money back, and it will pay some interest on it. That is laudable. I will not oppose that part of the bill, and I can tell the government it will not be defeated on the bill even if I do oppose it.

However, having said that, I want to bring to the attention of the House why this minister is being taken advantage of, unfortunately and without malice, by his cabinet colleagues.

On this quiet afternoon while the rest of Canada is fascinated with *perestroika* and *glasnost*, this little bill is called into the House not by design but by accident so that the Canadian people will not discover what is really happening with harmonization. The minister says he is very proud of the bill. When I am through, he will be shamed into altering some of it.

Now, I want to bring the minister's attention to something that is not allowing Canadian taxpayers to get their fair share of existing tariffs. That is not to say that we should work toward freer trade, but this government signed a free trade agreement, which was alluded to by the member who spoke previously. He also alluded to the de Grandpré report. May I say I agree completely with the previous speaker's assessment of the de Grandpré report. However, I will not make an analysis of that because I want to stick strictly to the tariffs.

• (1540)

As a consequence of the free trade agreement there are some businessmen who try to take advantage of loopholes. It is true, there are some business people out there who actually hire lawyers and accountants to seek out loopholes in legislation rather than pay their fair

share. At this point I do not intend to name names but as a matter of philosophy, there are some members of the capitalist community who think nothing of their social responsibility in ensuring that every penny due the government is paid, so they hire loophole lawyers.

Mr. McKnight: Do you do your own tax forms, Dave?

Mr. Barrett: I do my own tax forms, Mr. Minister. I do not go to those tax companies. I have so little income that it does not really matter.

Having said that, I will give advice to my colleague, should he seek it, on a separate matter. I am not soliciting business through you, Madam Speaker, but should that be the case my fees are quite fair, and under this tariff legislation I would be able to give him loopholes like he has never seen before—big enough to drive a truck through, a big truck. A train!

What kind of opening does this loophole provide? This is an opening for the Maquiladora program. Is the Maquiladora a household word that would be accepted in this august Chamber? It is indeed. It is not a swear word, but it is becoming a curse to Canadian workers.

Madam Speaker, I want to tell you that the Maquiladora program is a device initiated by some business people who are interested only in maximizing profits and taking advantage of a gullible government and an exceptionally kind minister who thinks no evil of anyone even though they are skinning him alive and, as a consequence, skinning the taxpayers.

This harmonization will legitimize the ugly little practice that is taking place now under the free trade agreement and the Maquiladora program, and sanctify a loophole that will mean the Canadian taxpayers get hosed again.

How does this happen?

An Hon. Member: I don't know. Tell us.

Mr. Barrett: Well, I will tell you. I am glad you asked that question. I was not going to go into detail, but my colleague has asked me to do so. I know that some members of the House are breathless in anticipation of this big expose–today that will bring about front page headlines and perhaps cause the fall of this government. If it wasn't for Gorbachev's visit the government would be finished after my speech today.

Tariffs became a subject of great interest to corporations as they saw the advantages from the elimination of other tariff structures between Canada and the United States after the free trade agreement was signed.

They also closed down businesses here in Canada, wrote off the closures as losses, and then went down to the Maquiladora zone and started a plant to do the same jobs they were doing here in Canada. What would be the advantage of that?

The same job that was paying $12 or $14 to a Canadian working person is now being performed in the Maquiladora zone between the United States and Mexico at $1.60 U.S. an hour. Now, consider the Canadian framework to protect jobs through an inherited system of previous Liberal and Conservative administrations, God rest their memories, good or bad. The tariff system was structured in a way that gave some limited protection to Canadian jobs and Canadian secondary and tertiary manufacturing. But, this government, in its haste to embrace the American flag, and the desire of a lot of those members of Parliament to run for the U.S. Senate, abandoned their option of determining some limited protection for Canadian workers.

My good friend from Montreal gave an excellent presentation concerning the de Grandpré report. I listened with interest. He made an interesting proposition that is available to us all. Since we are losing all the jobs, the government should at least keep its word to the de Grandpré commission to look after these people with social safety nets. What my good friend was talking about was an aberration of the agreement that is forcing workers out of jobs and on to welfare and unemployment insurance.

Ms. Hunter: Tory planning.

Mr. Barrett: A correct analysis by my colleague, Tory planning.

While the workers in Canada have been shifted out of jobs, and we have entered into a free trade agreement with the United States, we still have tariffs under GATT to protect some of the Canadian markets in other

countries with whom we have not yet signed a free trade agreement.

Mexico, Maquiladora. The United States government came to a deal to set up this free trade zone. Mexican workers come across the border, work for $1.60 an hour and make components for secondary and tertiary manufacturing in the United States. And this is the shocker, and I want you to hang on, put on your seatbelt, Mr. Speaker. The clincher on this is that the Maquiladora program, which is taking jobs away from Canadian working men and women, manufacturing components for American products to be assembled in the United States of America are not, in every case, being stamped "Made in Mexico".

Mr. Kristiansen: Why not?

Mr. Barrett: My colleague says, why not? It is to take advantage of a loophole. By not stamping "Made in Mexico", because the products are made in the Maquiladora program, they can then be inserted into completed U.S. products and brought into Canada to avoid the proper tariff.

Mr. Kristiansen: That is not fair.

Mr. Barrett: That is not fair.

Mr. Kristiansen: It is not honest.

Mr. Barrett: It is not honest. As a matter of fact, it is true and it is not legal. Yes, it is true. Because it is true, the department was alerted to this concern. The bell rang. So, what did the government do? Did it hire a whole slew of new tariff collectors or customs inspectors at the border since the free trade agreement and the Maquiladora development?

Any prudent, thoughtful, cautious government that wanted to protect the taxpayers, would want to ensure that every penny coming to the government would come back. The Tories, who bleat nationally about their prudence, their fiscal responsibility—and they even have a cabinet minister who will not buy a new pair of shoes to bring down his budget as a symbol that they are concerned about every penny—how many new customs officers have they hired in the last year to watch the slip-over out of the Maquiladora unmarked components going into U.S. manufactured goods and coming into this country with lower and lower tariffs, after Carla Hills and our own minister signed a new agreement to accelerate the elimination of tariffs?

Mr. Kristiansen: How many?

Mr. Barrett: Well, I will tell you how many. Was it one?

Mr. Kristiansen: No.

Mr. Barrett: Was it 100?

Mr. Kristiansen: One hundred?

Mr. Barrett: No. Was it 50?

Mr. Kristiansen: Maybe 50.

Mr. Barrett: No.

Mr. Kristiansen: What was it?

• (1550)

Mr. Barrett: Was it 25? No. They have hired less than one dozen new customs officers since the signing of the free trade deal and—

Mr. Jelinek: Mr. Speaker, I am sorry to interrupt my hon. friend but I know that he is inadvertently misleading the House. When he talks about this specific issue, he will know that we have put in place a number of verification teams who go out on a regular basis, south of the border, to verify specifically—

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ferland): I am sorry to interrupt the minister but I do not think this is a point of order. It is more like a matter of debate. The hon. member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca.

[*English*]

Mr. Barrett: Thank you for your wisdom in pointing out that it was a matter of debate the minister wishes to enter into, not a point of order.

Since I am in order and I have assessed myself correctly—I have been in order ever since I came in here—I will continue with my comments. Yes, the minister in his interjection said they have assembled teams; I was coming to that and I am glad that he mentioned it. But that is not what I am talking about. What he has done is taken staff out of the existing staff complement—

Mr. Jelinek: I thought you were going to talk about the bill.

Mr. Barrett: Mr. Speaker, I have been listening and talking and watching. I have been like a ferret, watching this government allow its—

Mr. McKnight: A rattling rodent.

Mr. Barrett: —watching its sense of responsibility slip away because they have been awed by Uncle Sam. These long, lost, semi-nephews, who think it is their manifest destiny to bow in front of Uncle Sam, have not taken on their responsibility through these tariff openings to collect every penny that is due us. I do not mind having the uncle, but he should not be painted as a tightwad like this government is doing, in refusing to collect the money from our uncle.

I am talking about this bill very clearly. As I described to you, Mr. Speaker, and with your rapt attention, I know you understand fully the description I am giving. The fact is that the Maquiladora program is producing secondary and tertiary products as components for finished American goods. They are not stamped "Made in Mexico" and, even though he sends out his flying squads to check, how can you check if the plastic component has no marking of origin and it is in the finished American product.

He can have 20 of his minions standing around looking inside the bowels of a toaster. I warn them not to put the plug in while they are sticking their fingers in the toaster. Some of them, like the minister, are not fully trained in their job and I want to warn them to pull the plug out first because there are other ways to get burned, like the free trade deal. Nonetheless, having said that, there is no way to identify the components. His squad stands around, shakes the toaster, looks at it and says, oh, there are no Mexican components here, it was all assembled in the United States. Of course they can say that because they have no method of checking back on what the Maquiladora program is creating in certain instances.

Mr. Jelinek: If you shake your head, I can hear it rattle.

Mr. Barrett: My colleague, the minister, has a great sense of humour. He is the most trained minister that this government has.

Mr. Jelinek: You are skating around this.

Mr. Barrett: I made no illusion to his figure skating background, he did it himself; but in this instance, you are on thin ice because you are allowing this open door into this tariff escapement. As a consequence, the Canadian taxpayers are being taken for a ride.

I recommend that the minister hire more customs officers and have them on the Maquiladora border. As a matter of fact, I would feel more comfortable if the minister would instruct his customs staff to go down to the Maquiladora corridor and catalogue what is being made there as components for finished American goods so that they at least know ahead of time what to look for. They have not made one single assessment over there of what is going on in the Maquiladora program and the impact it has on Canadian tariffs. Not one. They have not done that.

Ms. Hunter: Negligence.

Mr. Barrett: No, I do not think it is negligence. Negligence means a wilful decision not to do something. No, they do not even know what to do, which is even worse than negligence. No one over there has ever thought to send someone down to the Maquiladora program and get an assessment or a study to find out what is happening in the Maquiladora program and see first hand, on the Mexican side of the Maquiladora program, what components are being made and installed in American finished products and trans-shipped into Canada.

Mr. Kristiansen: It is a good job you told them.

Mr. Barrett: I am telling them now, and if they follow my advice—

Mr. Jelinek: Send you.

Mr. Barrett: Send me? You come with me, we should go together. Mr. Speaker, I am not embarrassed, on occasion, to being seen in public with a Tory.

Mr. Jelinek: Especially a Tory like me.

Mr. Barrett: If the minister wants to go along with me to Mexico, to look into the Maquiladora program, I will go with him and we will show the rest of his colleagues how they are being loopholed into losing millions of dollars by not collecting tariffs on this. We will go together. Let it not be said that the barriers between politicians are so great that they refuse to go to Mexico together in January for three or four weeks.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, I want to state that whether or not the minister and I go to Mexico together, he should at least send some of his staff down and come back with a catalogue of what is going on. They never thought of this. Do you know why they did not think of this? They have been so busy playing politics and trying to survive, which is something that is foreign to most of the imperative that drives the members of this House,

because 99 per cent of the members in this House never think of politics, except on occasion. But when it consumes the government and it neglects to follow through on what is an open and obvious invitation for a loophole, the Canadian taxpayers lose again.

I do not blame this minister and I do not want anybody in the public to say that I am getting soft on this minister, but I think the real culprit is the Minister for International Trade, who is not available today. The free trade agreement is opening the huge loophole of the Maquiladora. We have records and analyses of the kind of subcontracting that is taking place in the Maquiladora program with cheap labour, and it is generally child labour, the unmarked components going into American goods and then trans-shipped into Canada without any tariff. Then we have this bill in front of us, with no assurance that the loophole is going to be closed.

I am not even debating the merits of free trade because that would be out of order. But, if I could debate the merits of free trade, I would point out, like other members of this House, what a very foolish agreement it was. I will not do that.

Mr. Kristiansen: I am glad you did not do that.

Mr. Barrett: I will not do that because I wish to maintain the dignity, the decorum, and the rules of this House.

Mr. Kristiansen: Right on.

Ms. Hunter: Laudable.

Mr. Barrett: Thank you. Having said that, I did want to bring to your attention that it was the passage of that disastrous legislation that allowed this to take place. When we talk of harmonization, we are not talking about walking hand-in-hand. With this government, it may be walking but it is someone else's hand in their pocket and the consequences of someone else's hand in their pocket is that the Canadian taxpayer loses.

I would like the minister, when he responds, to stand up and say that he confesses he was not aware that this possibility existed through the Maquiladora program. I would like the minister to stand up and say that he will invite himself and myself to Mexico, and short of that, he will send a team down there to find out what is going on, and that he will table a report in this House to ensure all Canadians that the loopholes that I have exposed will be closed.

I want to conclude by saying—

An Hon. Member: Conclude?

Mr. Barrett: —because I have other speeches to make. I mean, what is the obvious reason why I should conclude now? I have a few more speeches, if you—

An Hon. Member: But the government should have learned by now.

Mr. Barrett: What I am pointing out to you is, were this a Liberal administration, it would be just as bad.

An Hon. Member: No, no.

An Hon. Member: You're kidding!

Mr. Barrett: Yes, yes, I do not want anybody to get the idea that I am just beating up on Tories for being dumb-bells. The other side of the coin is the Liberals who allowed this mess to happen in the first place because for years their whole tariff structure had been ignored and they did not beef up the customs department.

• (1600)

I am not saying that they would not do it if they were re-elected. I do know that they probably will keep the free trade agreement. I want to warn Canadians about that.

However, that would be a political statement. All I will do is repeat it. I want to warn Canadians that the Liberals will probably keep the same loopholes and keep the free trade agreement.

My party will not blithely be going along on this quiet afternoon with this little piece of legislation that does not appear to mean too much.

Madam Speaker, to your great satisfaction and joy, you will know that our party will oppose but cannot prevent this bill from passing. You will know that I have informed the Canadian taxpayers of this major loophole. You will know that myself and my colleagues will continue this struggle against the loss of money. You will also be happy to know that I intend to take my seat, satisfied that I have done my duty by making the government aware of this loophole, earnestly hoping that within a matter of hours it will withdraw this bill and correct the error of its ways.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Resuming debate with the hon. member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell.

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Madam Speaker, I want to make a few brief remarks on this bill because it would amend the Customs Act. There is presently a difficulty involving the Customs Act that has adverse effects on the constituency of Glengarry—Prescott—Russell. I want to assure the government House leader that my remarks will be very brief.

This is an important issue that involves the potential loss of 165 jobs in the constituency that I represent.

I wish to tell the minister that I received a letter from a company in my riding known as McIntyre & Dodd Marketing Inc. It reads as follows:

> I would like to draw your attention a loophole in our laws that an American company is making use of that if it continues may force us to close our Hawkesbury plant. Our plant in peak periods last year employed 165 people.
>
> As you may be aware, the Canadian government a few years ago changed the dollar value amount on parcels that enter Canada from the United States through the postal system to be duty free if the value is $35.00 or less.

I understand that this does not apply in the case of parcels that are shipped across the border by parcel express, Purolator or other such companies. Only Canada Post has that particular exemption.

The letter continues:

> The U.S. company in question, Direct Marketing Enterprises out of Westbury, New York, is using Canadian media to promote its mail order products with a return address in Windsor, Ontario. The orders are dispatched to a fulfilment operation in Detroit where the orders are processed and shipped to the border ready to be mailed at the closest Canada Post parcel centre. The average value of each parcel is under $35.00 therefore allowing the goods to be duty free.

I will not read the rest of the letter because I have made a commitment to the minister to raise this issue briefly.

However, I want to bring to his attention an ad that I have here in my hand from the French version of the TV Guide. It states, for instance, that a transistor radio is available for $14.95 and it describes it in the ad as follows:

[*Translation*]

"similar to those sold by other companies on television in the United States".

The implication is obvious, Madam Speaker. These companies advertise their products on U.S. television channels that are carried on cable, and then ship them to Canada duty free, making use of a loophole in the Customs Act that allows Canada Post to carry this merchandise from the other side of the border.

I know the minister is aware of this question, so I can be brief. However, I would like to ask the minister for a commitment to close this loophole, so that perhaps these jobs can be saved.

[*English*]

I am really looking forward to a positive response from the minister. Hopefully, we can save these jobs because there appears to be a loophole that enables these companies in the United States to utilize Canada Post—and I am not blaming the post office here although I do that on occasion in my capacity as postal critic for my party—in a clever way to ship parcels with a value under $35 across the border. They use this loophole in the law which is basically designed for families, I suppose, to send small gifts to relatives who live on the other side of the border.

These companies are benefiting this way and are causing a loss of jobs at Canadian mail order houses.

This company is located in Rexdale, Montreal and Hawkesbury. Its operations in my riding will be shutting down if this situation is not fixed rapidly. If it is not fixed it will create the loss of 165 meaningful jobs in my area where there is very high unemployment.

I thank the minister for staying a little longer than he intended. I am looking forward to his assistance.

Hon. Otto Jelinek (Minister of National Revenue): Madam Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to answer briefly the concerns of my hon. friend.

As he pointed out in his comments, it is true that I am very much aware of this growing problem. I say "growing" because this law has been in place for many years. It is apparent that there are some organizations south of the border that are starting to abuse what was initially a good law to benefit families and other non-commercial uses, as the member pointed out.

I have already met on at least two occasions, and perhaps more, with individual business people who have outlined exactly the same concern, the latest of which was just a couple of weeks ago. At that time I told them, and I give my hon. friend the same commitment, that I would begin discussions immediately not only with my

officials but with officials from the Department of Finance to see how we could rectify the situation. I have brought it to the attention of my colleague, the Minister of Finance, with whom the final decision rests.

I do agree with my hon. friend, the people he represents and others in that same position that there is a semblance of unfairness here and we are going to take appropriate steps to correct it.

Mr. Boudria: Madam Speaker, I want to take a moment and thank the minister for his reply and indicate to him that I hope that among his colleagues and himself they can find a speedy solution. This is the type of thing which tends to move very quickly. The potential loss of jobs could occur very fast. I invite the minister either to review the legislation or the regulation, which may be necessary in this case, to change the rule in question and perhaps to ban the commercial usage of that provision.

I am not advocating that we create a situation which would make it difficult for families and so on to communicate with each other and to send a small parcel in the mail to each other.

If, for instance, the rule were changed in order to ban the importation of products using that clause for the purpose of resale, maybe that would accommodate what we are looking for and save these valuable jobs.

With that, Madam Speaker, I conclude my remarks. I thank the minister again for staying a little bit longer and providing this answer which I will take back immediately with me to my constituents with whom I am meeting tomorrow morning.

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): Madam Speaker, like other members I do not intend to delay this particular legislation because it is a useful response to change.

I want to take this opportunity to point out how discriminatory the government is being between one set of Canadians who are affected by changes in trade law and others who are also affected but who will be receiving no adjustment, no compensation or no response.

The changes brought about in the trade classification system are as a direct result of public policy. That was a decision made by government. It had nothing to do with external factors or anything else. It was part of our decision as a public sector to make changes that had some benefit to them.

• (1610)

The government in this case is accurately and properly recognizing that as a result of those classification changes certain businesses were faced with shortfalls. They were faced with changes in the tariff classification which created discrepancies in their income. I have no quarrel with that principle. It is fair.

If that is true for a business that is affected by a tariff change, then should it not also be true for workers who are affected by tariff changes? Is it not just as important for individuals who lose their jobs, who are dislocated or lose pension plans? Should they not have the right to some direct response?

We have raised the issue in this House, saying that commitments were made by the Prime Minister for a massive adjustment program. We have said that there were recommendations made by the MacDonald royal commission, which goes right back to the original source of the trade agreement, that major adjustment programs have to be made. Every time that issue has been raised we have been told: "We do not need it. It is impossible to tell. We do not know what adjustments are required because we do not know what is a trade related impact or trade related effect".

Yet the government finds it possible in this case to make that judgment and evaluation when a business or a company is being affected. However, when workers are being affected, that is not the case. In fact, what we have done is quite the opposite. We have substantially altered the unemployment insurance program.

I do not want to bring Bill C–21 up. It has been long and arduously debated in this House and in the other chamber. Nevertheless, the unemployment insurance system was the cornerstore of our ability to provide adjustments. Yet we have had a reduction of several hundred million dollars in that program. The principles in Sections 38 and 39 have been changed. Most important, Madam Speaker, as you well know since you have

heard the debates, there has been a withdrawal of direct participation of the government in the management of the UI program as a member of the commission. The government has turned it over to labour and business. Thus there is an abdication of public responsibility.

We are faced with an inherent contradiction wherein the government says: "We will use unemployment insurance to help compensate individuals affected by a public decision, and at the same time we pull out the membership of the public sector on the very commission that is supposed to provide the adjustments". The government is chasing its tail.

I simply want to refer the House to what I felt was an important report by the Canadian Labour Market and Productivity Centre. This is a group that is chaired jointly by Shirley Carr and Thomas D'Aquino. Never have two stranger partners been part of the same issue. However, both business and labour are part of the centre for labour productivity because they recognize that the investment in human resources is key to what we do in the country.

In this report is a whole series of recommendations about what the government should be doing to improve the IAS, the Industrial Adjustment Services, to provide new programs for adjustment through unemployment insurance and to provide assistance, none of which has been provided.

I simply want to point out to members opposite that there is an unfairness here. I am struck by the celerity with which the government responded to the problem of the business community affected by tariff classification but has been so reluctant, so slow, so laggard in responding to the changes that affect workers. Surely, there has to be equity. Surely, there has to be fairness in the way the two are affected.

I would suggest to the Minister of National Revenue, who can provide tax write-offs and tax changes, to help workers adjust and change. There are communities being shut down. There are families being disrupted.

I just came from my office where I met with a group of people from the printing industry who have indicated that they have lost 25 per cent of their business to the United States since the inception of the FTA—one-quarter of their business. That is part of the major rationalization. By rationalization they mean 500 workers have just lost their jobs at the Southam printing press in Toronto. That is being repeated across the country.

I do not know how many members have experienced in their own families the question of a lay-off or the loss of job, especially if it involves someone who is in their forties or fifties, an age when you have made your commitment to your profession for many, many years. All of a sudden that job can be pulled out from under you, not because you are a bad worker or because your company is inefficient. It is simply because of a change in Ottawa, a decision made by the government which it has a right to make, that all of sudden your livelihood is taken away.

For many workers—and I will go back to the old basic economic theory—the only investment workers have is their labour or what they have put into it over the years. All of a sudden it can be snatched away from them and the government in Ottawa will say: "We have no responsibility for that. We have no accountability. We have no special adjustment programs. We cannot determine whether it is trade related or not. I am sorry, you are simply going to have make do yourself". They are left on the scrap heap.

There are too many people on the scrap heap. We are facing a substantial build-up of those underutilized human beings in our society. I would think it should be a cause of some chagrin and embarrassment for our government to bring in a bill like this one which clearly recognizes its responsibility for one sector of the community and ignores the other sector of the community.

I simply wanted to use this occasion to make a plea on behalf of a large number of Canadians who are also affected by trade related changes, by reductions in tariffs, and by the new classification system. They are the people who work in those industries and who need some compensation or support because they have lost what is most precious to them. They are not the managers of big capital. The only real investment they have is the time, effort, and energy they have put into that job over the years. They deserve equal consideration, equal care and attention, and equal response and compensation by this government, something which it is providing for the businesses affected.

This is simply an argument based on the rightness of things. I ask the government to take into consideration that basic justice which needs to be met.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Shirley Maheu (Saint-Laurent—Cartierville): Madam Speaker, without wishing to hold up the debate on this bill, I would like to make a few comments on the speech by the hon. member for Winnipeg—South Centre (Mr. Axworthy) and ask him whether he has any statistics on the number of companies that might benefit as a result of this agreement with the United States, as compared with the number of jobs that will be lost on Montreal Island, for instance, a question I have been asking this government practically every other week.

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): Madam Speaker, unfortunately, there are no statistics on this particular question.

As you know, we suggested that the government set up a special commission to examine the problem of adjustment of Canadian industries to the impact of free trade. However, the government—the Minister for International Trade and others—said this was not necessary and that it saw no need for a study. Now we have a problem in this country. We do not know the extent of the impact of these changes on workers and industry. Perhaps the Minister of National Revenue has statistics or figures for specific industries. In fact, the problem was predicted by the Canadian Labour Market and Productivity Centre.

Unfortunately, we as members do not have the figures or sectoral studies for Canada. I think this is gross neglect on the part of the government because all the changes, all the layoffs we have been seeing for the past ten or twelve months since free trade are the result of legislation, and should therefore be dealt with by this government and Parliament.

• (1620)

[*English*]

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Question.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: On division.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and referred to a legislative committee.

* * *

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Andre: Madam Speaker, I would like formally to designate tomorrow an allotted day.

* * *

YOUNG OFFENDERS ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

Hon. Harvie Andre (for the Minister of Justice) moved that Bill C-58, an act to amend the Young Offenders Act and the Criminal Code, be read the second time and referred to a legislative committee.

Mr. Rob Nicholson (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): As you know, Madam Speaker, the review of the Young Offenders Act has been a major priority of this government.

The government's objective in introducing this bill is to ensure that the Young Offenders Act, which was unanimously adopted by the members of this House in 1981, appropriately reflects the needs and values of all Canadians, including Canadian youth who come into conflict with the law.

The Young Offenders Act has come under criticism for its provisions for youth charged with violent offences, particularly murder. This criticism has come from the general public, judges, the provincial attorneys general, members of Parliament, and the media.

A few murder cases involving youths have attracted national attention and contributed to the public sentiment that the transfer mechanism and the sentencing in the Young Offenders Act should be revised.

More than this, these cases have called into question the integrity of the act as a whole and diminished public confidence in Canada's system of justice.

To respond properly to these concerns, a number of major steps has been taken in the past year. A comprehensive federal-provincial territorial study of youth charged with murdered was completed. It included a

case by case study in four provinces of all the youth charged with murder from 1984 to 1989.

A meeting of ministers responsible for juvenile justice was held on June 9 and June 10, 1989 at which the provincial attorneys general and the Minister of Justice for the Northwest Territories unanimously endorsed a resolution that the Young Offenders Act be amended in a number of ways.

An extensive consultation process was undertaken. A consultation document was released to over 100 organizations involved with young offender issues and to the provinces and territories. Bilateral meetings with key organizations were held.

All jurisdictions responded in the course of the consultations. About 80 non-governmental submissions were received and a national seminar took place in Ottawa. As well, we listened to the concerns of members of Parliament.

Bill C-58 addresses the three aspects of the act which lie at the heart of the concerns identified in our consultations. The first is the test to be applied by the court in determining whether to transfer a case to adult court. The second is the sentence available in youth court for youth convicted of murder. The third is the sentence and parole eligibility period for youth who have been transferred to adult court and convicted of murder.

I would like now to speak to each of these points. Numerous cases have gone before the courts as to how the existing transfer provisions would be interpreted. The proposed changes to the test seek greater clarity and equality in the interpretation of the law. The proposal would require the court to consider the objectives of affording protection to the public and serving the needs of the young person and to determine whether those objectives can be reconciled by the youth remaining in the youth system.

Where the court determines that these objectives cannot be so reconciled, Bill C-58 states that the protection of the public is paramount and the youth's case shall be transferred.

This test, while remaining consistent with the principles of the act, provides clear direction for the court and states that ultimately the protection of the public is paramount.

The transfer test would be applicable to transfer applications for all offences. We believe that the changes to the transfer mechanism will result in a more uniform interpretation of the law.

Bill C-58 also proposes that the maximum sentence for youth convicted of murder in youth court be increased to five years less a day. The sentence would be comprised of a custodial period which could not exceed three years unless an extension is subsequently ordered by the court.

The grounds for ordering such an extension would parallel those in the Parole Act, that is, where the court is satisfied that there are reasonable grounds to believe that the young person is likely to commit an offence causing death or serious harm to another person.

Where no extension is ordered, a review hearing will be heard prior to the completion of the custodial portion of the sentence so the judge can set conditions which the youth will have to abide by in the community.

Where there is a violation of any condition the youth could be automatically returned to custody.

Finally, the bill proposes that the sentence of life imprisonment be retained for youth convicted of murder in adult court, but that such a youth be eligible for parole at an earlier period.

It is recommended that the parole ineligibility period be set by the sentencing judge somewhere in the range of five to ten years.

As you know, Madam Speaker, this only speaks to eligibility. The decision to grant parole is still made by the Parole Board.

This recommendation to reduce the period of custody that a transferred young offender must serve before being eligible for parole is strongly supported.

While the life sentence remains, it is believed that the reduction of the period of parole ineligibility will lessen the disparity in consequences which currently makes the transfer decision so stark for judges. In this way the justice system may be strengthened by allowing the courts greater flexibility.

Bill C-58 does not address the concerns of appropriate facilities and programs for violent offenders in either the youth system or the adult penitentiary system. This issue is very relevant at the transfer hearing stage as the judge

hearing the matter must determine which system is most appropriate in all the circumstances.

The resources in place in a given jurisdiction are a significant factor as individualized and well structured programs are viewed as a key to successful rehabilitation.

Beyond ensuring an appropriate response to youth charged with murder, many individuals and associations actively involved with youth have advocated a much broader based approach to violent youth. I whole-heartedly agree.

The first steps have been taken in the development of such an approach by inviting provinces and territories to join with the federal government in a collaborative study, the objective of which is to develop a systematic and financially viable approach to address violence by youth.

Hon. members may recall the Speech from the Throne in which there is a commitment to address not only the issue of violence but also the issue of treatment.

• (1630)

In fact, the issue of treatment along with issues pertaining to inadmissibility of evidence and custody have also been treated as priorities by the Department of Justice, the provinces and the territories. These issues were also the subject of consultations with the provinces, territories and non-governmental organizations involved with youth offender issues. There was not the same degree of consensus on what should be done. Therefore, more consultation with the provinces and territories is required.

In order to meet the federal commitment to respond to these issues, the Minister of Justice has proposed to her provincial and territorial counterparts that concrete proposals be put before ministers responsible for young offenders in June of this year in Niagara-on-the-Lake. I look forward to the tabling of the required legislative proposals in the fall of this year.

Bill C-58 will strengthen the justice system by allowing the courts to make the best decision in each case as to whether a youth should be dealt with in the youth or adult system. Also, Bill C-58 tries to balance the rights of Canadians to security with society's long term interest in rehabilitating young people.

Protection of the public and rehabilitation of our youth are the key objectives of this bill. I ask the members of the House to support Bill C-58.

Mr. George S. Rideout (Moncton): Madam Speaker, our party supports Bill C-58 and supports sending it to committee for study on possible amendments and new approaches that should be explored.

The basic theories of the bill are good. There is no question that public safety has to be paramount, as we have seen in other issues of criminal law administration. It has to be a major concern, but has not been so with this government. In the case of inmates in Corrections Canada's care, the paramountcy of public safety ranks about fourteenth. We are pleased to see, in this legislation, that there is a movement to have public safety paramount.

Also, it is laudable that the legislation is going to deal with the rehabilitation of young people. Quite frankly, our concern is that we are always dealing with half measures. As the former justice minister said: "This is a first step." We are continually taking first steps rather than taking all the steps that are necessary to deal with the problem. Dealing with young offenders is a major problem.

As originally introduced, the legislation was a progressive step in the proper direction. There is no question that it requires fine tuning. Why start with half solutions? Why not deal with all the problems? There is no question that the general changes dealing with criteria for applications to transfer to adult court from youth court are good.

There is no question that the change as far as the maximum period for incarceration for first and second degree murder is good; up from three years to five years. There is no question that early release and conditional supervision should be monitored more closely because of what we have seen in the past, particularly with the horrific situation in Scarborough.

There is no question that this legislation responds to the public outcry that has been generated by some cases. I know what effects public outcry can have. In my own area, I saw the effect of the escape of Allan Legere on the community.

This is a response to that. However, I think we have to go a step further and look at some other aspects. My colleague across talked about the unanimous resolution of the Ministers of Justice from the provinces. This bill has dealt with three or four of those recommendations, but it has left out a couple of important aspects. The Ministers of Justice or Attorneys General have asked that the act be amended to permit the admission of evidence of a voluntary statement. They have also asked for a greater flexibility to facilitate temporary release provisions to help rehabilitate young offenders. These are laudable objectives that have not been dealt with by the government.

Probably the more frightening aspect is this government's intention to get out of programs and to move away from financial commitments. The Attorneys General unanimously resolved that the recent unilateral decision to cap federal contributions toward provincial and territorial expenditures for young offenders represents a serious erosion of the federal government's commitment to the juvenile justice system in Canada.

It is interesting to note that there has been nothing done in this particular area to facilitate the operation of the system for young offenders. In fact, what we are seeing is a government intent on reducing its expenditures at the expense of young offenders.

It is time the government gets over this deficit-itis problem and moves toward dealing with juvenile crime, young offenders, and provides the necessary resources for the task.

There are other areas of concern with the legislation. As stated earlier, the Young Offenders Act amendments in Bill C-58 have not addressed the problems experienced by police in taking statements from young suspects and the evidentiary difficulties of introducing those in court.

Second, it has not dealt with the situation of the young offender being hospitalized for psychiatric treatment. The requirement of the legislation is that the young offender must consent. That obviously presents difficulties in the sense of trying to convince a person with those problems to consent to treatment. I do not think that is of any benefit at all.

We have to recognize in all this that habitual criminals, be they young offenders or otherwise, have to be dealt with firmly. Very serious crimes like first and second degree murder have to be dealt with, and dealt with firmly. But, we must, however, be careful not to overbalance our response in that area to the detriment of the youth of this country and the young offenders who are caught within the system.

We must have a renewed commitment to help the youth of the country so that they do not become young offenders. Perhaps the best way to spend our dollars in this particular area is to make sure that the systems of housing and the ability to respond to youth are in place and properly financed so that we do not force young people to a life of crime.

We are supportive of this legislation going to committee. We are supportive of the basic thrust but we believe that first steps are not enough. We have to view the whole problem and take more than one step. We must take all the steps necessary to deal with this situation, to deal with the hardened youth criminal and the youths needing rehabilitation.

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Kingsway): Madam Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to stand this afternoon to address the very important issues which are covered by Bill C-58, the Young Offenders Act.

I must say that I am disappointed to hear that the Official Opposition has decided to support the principle of this legislation.

The effect of this legislation will be to ensure that more young people are transferred into the adult prison system and ultimately ensure that the level of crime in communities across this land will increase as a result of the demonstrated failure of society to deal with the prevention of crime among young people, instead of just dumping them into the adult criminal justice system.

I think it is important that we look back on the history of the Juvenile Delinquents Act and the Young Offenders Act. I remember well the debate on the Young Offenders Act. I was here for that debate. I sat on the legislative committee that studied the legislation. We did a lot of work and we came up with a bill which, I think, moved the country forward. It was with a considerable sense of pride that we supported that legislation, as did all members of this House. That act was proclaimed in force on April 2, 1984. One of the most essential elements of that legislation, the Young Offenders Act, was a recognition that prison should be the last resort and that kids should only be sent to jail if there were no

other alternatives. The idea was that sending kids to jail ultimately is an admission of failure.

• (1640)

Indeed, one of the most important aspects of alternatives to imprisonment is ensuring that there are resources in place, so that when a judge must sentence a young person there is that range of alternatives which are set out in the bill. I said on May 17, 1982, some eight years ago, during debate on the previous legislation on the Young Offenders Act:

> If this government is serious about improving and humanizing the system of criminal justice for young persons, it has to be prepared to put additional financial resources into the hands of provinces and territories to ensure that the legal framework which is established in the proposed young offenders act delivers a system which will indeed encourage young people to stay out of involvement with the criminal law. If indeed the federal government does not come up with additional resources, the provisions in the bill which provide, for example, for dispositions alternative to incarceration, will be redundant.
>
> The provinces will argue that they cannot afford these provisions, and what we will see is an increased number of young persons dumped into jails for children. That is effectively what detention centres are. There should be disposition before an actual court appearance; in other words, diversion away from the criminal justice system. This will not take place unless the federal government is prepared to ensure additional resources are made available both to itself and to the provinces.

That was eight years ago. The bill took effect in 1984. What has been the history of our treatment of young people in conflict with the law since then? It has been a sorry history. It has been a history which has resulted in an increase in the level of crime among young people. It has been a history which has resulted in deep concern in communities across this land, whether it be in rural areas or in urban areas.

One of the most serious results of this is a dramatic increase in the level of imprisonment of young people. A study which was conducted by Raymond Corrado and Allan Markwart from British Columbia, both very learned professors who looked at the effect of the Young Offenders Act, said this: "It is clear that under the Young Offenders Act, B.C. youth courts have rather dramatically increased their reliance on incarceration as a dispositional sanction and correspondingly decreased their use of community sanctions, probation. This change cannot be attributed to a more general "get tough" climate in the community that has affected the sentencing practices of the courts. There is evidence that not only are young offenders under the age of 17 years being dealt with more punitively than under the Juvenile Delinquents Act, but also that 17-year olds transferred to the jurisdiction of the youth court are now being incarcerated at a greater rate under the Young Offenders Act than they were in the adult criminal court."

That is the experience in the province of British Columbia. I am very pleased that the hon. member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca is in the House today because one of the aspects of the New Democratic government from 1972 to 1975, under the leadership of that member, was a very enlightened approach to the question of young people in conflict with the law.

We recognized that we had to cut down dramatically on the use of jail as a sanction and indeed, former Judge Berger was appointed to head up a royal commission on the family and on children. He made some very progressive recommendations and I look forward to hearing from the member from Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca because I believe that probably his very first involvement with the political process was in the area of juvenile delinquents back in the early sixties. We have a great deal to learn from the experience of that New Democratic government of 1972 to 1975.

Instead, the experience under this legislation has been deeply disturbing. I mentioned the study by professors Corrado and Markwart but we do not just have to look at academic studies. Let us listen to what our judges are telling us as well, about the impact of this legislation. In a decision last year Judge Ann Rounthwaite of Surrey, B.C., refused to sentence a 13-year old girl who had an insignificant court history to a lengthy jail term in order to keep her off the streets until a bed became available in B.C.'s over-crowded Maples Adolescent Treatment Centre.

In other words, there was such a desperate shortage of beds in the Maples that the Crown was trying to put this 13-year old girl in jail until a bed became available at the Maples. Put her in jail.

Judge Rounthwaite refused to do that. The judge said that the Crown counsel and youth court workers have repeatedly asked her to store problem children in an

open custody jail until they could be treated at the chronically busy Maples Centre.

These children are in desperate need of treatment and are often dangerous to themselves and others. They are not facing charges that would warrant the lengthy sentences necessary to keep them in custody until they could get into the Maples. Judge Rounthwaite went on to sentence the 13-year old girl to seven days in open custody and one year probation.

She talked of the despair that she felt, the fact that—and I am quoting from the judge now—a criminal court cannot use a sentencing process to make Holly Cottage, which is an open custody jail, an alternate to a residential treatment centre for adolescents with psychological or behavioural problems. Those branches of government responsible for providing such resources cannot shift their burden, difficult as it may be, to custody facilities or jail.

That is what we have been seeing happen across this country as provinces and the federal government refuse to accept their responsibilities to put in resources to assist young people before they get involved in criminal activity.

What has been the response of this federal government? Back in 1984 the Prime Minister answered a questionnaire from the Canadian Council on Children and Youth. He was asked about the priorities of a Conservative government in the area of young offenders and said: "The Progressive Conservative Party supported passage of the Young Offenders Act and continues to endorse its philosophy and principles. We are committed to assuring financial assistance to the provinces to allow for equal application of the law and availability of programs and services across Canada."

What has happened to that promise made by the Conservative Prime Minister of Canada? That promise has been broken. In May of last year the Conservative government unilaterally, without any discussion, imposed a cap on contributions to all of the provinces and territories under the juvenile justice services cost-sharing programs. Shameful.

Effectively, what this means is that for a five-year period the federal government is going to freeze its contributions at the 1989 level. That is a real cut every year for the next five years. And who is it cutting? It is cutting young people in conflict with the law.

Ultimately the results of these cuts will be a greater level of crime in each and every community across this country. This from a government that talks about its commitment to law and order. By cutting back on funding for juvenile justice programs, this government is abdicating its responsibility for assuring that young people do not come in conflict with the law and ultimately abdicating its responsibility for safer communities, both rural and urban.

Obviously this decision is a breach of the promise that was made in the past.

Premier Tony Penikett, writing on behalf of all the ministers responsible for social services, wrote to the justice minister in March of this year. He wrote in his capacity as chairperson of the 1989 Interprovincial Territorial Conference of Social Service Ministers. He expressed his serious concerns about the effect of this federal cut-back in funding for young offenders. He said while it is accurate that the federal Department of Justice contributes approximately $160 million to programs under the Young Offenders Act, this does not even represent 50 per cent of the provincial-territorial expenditures under the act.

• (1650)

Premier Penikett notes that it is absolutely crucial the federal contribution grow by at least the cost of living each year in order to prevent the erosion of current service levels and to ensure equitable access across the country for young offenders, who require the cost-shared programs under the auspices of the Young Offenders Act.

What Premier Penikett is saying is that the Conservative government has betrayed the promises made in terms of adequate levels of funding for young offenders in this country. That is certainly unacceptable to us in the New Democratic Party. I am surprised and disappointed that members of the Official Opposition, the Liberal party, have not indicated that they, too, are opposed to the cuts in spending for young offenders. Their silence can only imply that they agree with the cuts that have been made. I hope that perhaps one lonely Liberal member of Parliament will stand in his or her place and speak out for our young people, speak out against the

federal cuts in programs to young offenders. I hope that one of them might stand and do that.

I see a member from Quebec. Let us look at the situation of young offenders in the province of Quebec. It is devastating. There are waiting lists of 22 months for boys who were sexually abused by up to 16 adults before they can get treatment.

Social workers in the Outaouais have pointed out that children who have been abused by their parents must wait while other cases take precedence because they do not have enough workers. In fact, the head of the agency has blamed the very serious delays on a logjam of cases and chronic underfunding.

The head of the agency has said that they have a choice between a 14–year–old and a baby. If we abandon the 14–year–olds, obviously, they will get involved in the kinds of criminal activities many of us are concerned about.

Earlier this spring, a report which was produced by Quebec's Youth Protection Committee condemned the Outaouais service for the lengthy delays and waiting lists that young people face before cases are dealt with. In fact, the president of the Youth Protection Committee in Montreal stated that Quebec society should feel a collective shame that the situation has been allowed to drag on as long as it has. Some 3,000 children in the province of Quebec are on similar waiting lists.

As Mr. Dowie stated, children need protection. You do not keep them on a waiting list for 22 months. You do not keep them on a list for five months. You deal with them now. That is why we have to talk about prevention instead of the kind of narrow approach of simply throwing more kids in jail for longer terms. We also have to recognize the other elements of prevention.

We have to recognize that far too many youths in trouble with the law have learning disabilities. It has been estimated that something like 70 or 80 per cent of young people involved in crimes and criminal activities have learning disabilities. What are we doing as a government to deal with that concern? Nothing, absolutely nothing.

What are we doing to deal with the problem of violence on prime time television and weekend children's television. Look at the cartoons. It has been estimated that the average child, during his or her childhood, sees something like 10,000 murders on television. What kind of impact does that violence on television have on the psyche of our young people?

The kind of aggressiveness, the Rambo mentality, which is all too common on television clearly must be reflected in the behaviour of our children. As a society we are failing our children by allowing that violence to continue.

The response of the government in this legislation is to make it easier to transfer young people to the adult courts and ultimately into the adult prison system. That is not the answer. We all recognize the concerns that people feel about violent acts committed by young people, particularly murder.

We all recognized the sense of outrage that the community felt at the Scarborough case when a young murderer was sentenced to a term of three years. After that, he was out on the streets. Obviously, communities do not accept that.

There is provision for transfer in the existing Young Offenders Act, and these provisions have been adjudicated by the Supreme Court of Canada. Indeed, the provisions for transfer can and should be used in appropriate circumstances. Because of some incidents that have given rise to understandable concern on the part of the community, it does not suggest that we have to change the test for transferring all young offenders. Surely, it is a step backward.

What it will do is dump more young people into adult prisons, not just after they have been convicted, but while they are waiting for trial. One serious concern raised by the Canadian Council on Children and Youth is the failure of this legislation to deal with the problem of young people who have been transferred to adult court who are awaiting trial and, while awaiting trial, are locked up in adult prisons. They can be locked up for months.

What does the government have to say about that? Nothing at all. What does the government have to say about young people who are 15, 16 or 17 years old, after being convicted, following transfer and serving their time in adult jails? Absolutely nothing. Apparently, it is acceptable to the government. It is not acceptable to New Democrats, and we intend to speak out on this in committee and when the bill comes back to the House. A

number of my colleagues will be taking the opportunity to speak from a variety of perspectives.

The hon. member for Saskatoon—Humboldt, a rural community, will be speaking on the legislation from the perspective of a rural member. He pointed out when speaking very eloquently to other members of caucus that, in fact, in rural communities young people do grow up earlier. In many cases, they are out driving, working and playing a responsible role in the community at the age of 14 or 15. He urged all of us to recognize that we cannot necessarily apply the same standard to urban and rural communities. He is right.

The hon. member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca pointed this out as well. We must respond to young people as individuals and deal with their tragedies individually. We should not follow the mindless trend of throwing them in jail for longer periods of time, or throwing them into adult jails.

Even the Chief of Police in Edmonton said in an interview just last year: "Increasing murder sentences for young offenders would be useless in dealing with youth crime." Chief Bob Claney of the Edmonton police force said: "The proposed changes are only a distraction and will not make a significant impact on the problem of teen crime." Chief Claney is on the front lines and is telling us: "Look, this is not the answer."

Instead, what does he say? He says that he would rather see the provincial and federal governments provide more counselling for the vast majority of young offenders rather than stiffer penalties for the tiny proportion who murder. I quote from Chief Claney. He says: "If we are successful with a youngster, he will not end up in adult court." He is right.

We cannot overestimate the impact of murder on our communities, whether it be a young person or anyone else. We also have to put it in context and recognize that murder is something like one-fortieth of 1 per cent of all the offences that are dealt with in youth court. In our understandable desire to respond in a serious and appropriate way to murder, we must not condemn hundreds of other young people to being dumped into the adult prison system and ultimately condemn them to a further life of crime. That is an abdication of our responsibility as a society.

What about a group of young people who are at risk more than any other? I speak now of aboriginal youth, native youth. We received a very powerful submission from the National Association of Friendship Centres. They asked us to recognize that this bill is not the answer to juvenile crime either among aboriginal youth or other youth. They give us some appalling figures around the area of aboriginal youth and crime. They point out that aboriginal youth are more likely to be charged by police for offences than are non-aboriginal youth, that aboriginal youth are more likely to plead guilty than non-aboriginal youth, that aboriginal youth are more likely to receive longer and harsher penalties, that aboriginal youth are more likely to be transferred to the criminal court system—and this bill will make that even easier—and that aboriginal youth are more likely to receive "secure custody orders", that being another term for jail.

• (1700)

Let us look at the figures for young aboriginal people in jail. The Manitoba Métis Federation reported that in Manitoba 92.8 per cent of the young women held on remand were native and 47 per cent of the young men held on remand were native. That situation is a national scandal. It has been described as a national shame by the chief commissioner of the Canadian Human Rights Commission and this government is cutting back on funding for juvenile justice programs.

Let us look at some figures on secure custody and open custody. The open custody unit of the Manitoba Youth Centre held 87.5 per cent native girls and 55.5 per cent native boys. In the secure custody unit of that jail, 100 per cent of the young women were native. So this government comes forward with legislation that makes it easier to dump young native women and men into adult jails. That is not the answer. That is surely not the answer to the devastating problems that face our youth in this country, whether they be aboriginal youth or other youth.

There are answers. The Senate Committee on Health, Welfare and Science some years ago produced an excellent report entitled "Child at Risk". It pointed out that society can identify at a very early age those kinds of conditions which will lead to a life of crime. Yet we are cutting back on funding to respond to those concerns.

Child abuse has been recognized as a very significant factor in the development of violent criminal behaviour in later years, but in the past our society has paid more attention to cruelty to animals than we have to cruelty to children.

We have to deal with the question of child abuse. I have talked about violence on television. I have talked about the question of poverty. One of the most direct links that can be established between crime and young people is the linkage of poverty. In fact, the National Council on Welfare published a report in 1975 called "Poor Kids". On what it means to be poor in Canada the report says that to be born poor is to face a greater likelihood of ill health in infancy, in childhood and throughout your adult life. To be born poor is to face a lesser likelihood that you will finish high school, lesser still that you will attend university.

On that I might add that a young native person in Canada today has a better chance of going to jail than of going to university.

Mr. Barrett: Or committing suicide.

Mr. Robinson: Or of committing suicide, as my colleague from Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca says.

To be born poor is to face a greater likelihood that you will be judged delinquent in adolescence and, if so, a greater likelihood that you will be sent to a correctional institution. To be born poor is to have the deck stacked against you at birth and to find life an uphill struggle ever after. To be born poor is unfair to kids.

Well, Madam Speaker, they were right in 1975 and they are right today. Fifteen years later we still have over 500,000 kids in this country dependent on food banks in order to survive. We still have kids, not just in inner cities but in rural communities as well, going to school hungry. What is this government doing to respond to these concerns around child poverty? It is doing nothing, nothing whatsoever. What is it doing to deal with the problems of foetal alcohol syndrome? We know the impact that that can have as well on a later life of crime. The government is doing absolutely nothing.

We are presented with a bill by a government which says that this is its answer to the concerns around the question of young people and crime.

This is not the answer of the Canadian Council on Children and Youth. The Canadian Council on Children and Youth is a broadly based body which held extensive consultations around this legislation. It has come to the conclusion that the legislation is a step backward and not a step forward.

There are some elements of the legislation that we do support, there is no question about that. Under the legislation a young person who is transferred to adult court and faces a sentence of life imprisonment for murder will be eligible for parole anywhere between five and ten years after they start to serve their sentence. Under the existing provisions of the Young Offenders Act, a judge is faced with a very difficult choice; either treating such young offenders as young offenders in youth court with a maximum term of three years or transferring them to adult court, in which case there is a maximum of life imprisonment with no eligibility for parole for 25 years.

That was the trade-off in 1976 for the abolition of capital punishment. As a society we have to ask ourselves, not just in the case of young people but in the case of all prisoners, whether the price we paid was not too high and whether we should not be re-examining the issue of the date for parole eligibility because our prisons are filling up rapidly with people who have been convicted of first degree murder and are not eligible for parole for 25 years. Surely that is a concept that we should, in fact, re-examine.

I have touched on some of the issues that we as a party want to address. I have touched on this government's failure to adequately fund services to young people and on the question of prevention.

Another concern is that of prevention in terms of programs for young people who are involved in drug and alcohol abuse. You would think that governments, both provincially and federally, would be doing everything in their power to ensure that these programs were adequately funded. Yet we hear over and over again that there simply is not enough space for young people who are abusing substances, whether it be alcohol or drugs.

We are abdicating our responsibility to young people who have been sexually abused and physically abused. We are abdicating our responsibility to poor kids. We are abdicating our responsibility to kids who are involved in alcohol and drug abuse. Instead we are making it easier to transfer them into the adult prison system. Great answer.

We in this party believe that the emphasis must be, surely, as the Canadian Council on Children and Youth has focused, on rehabilitation of those young people who have come in conflict with the law but, most importantly, on doing everything we can as a society to prevent young people from coming into conflict with the law in the first place. To the extent that they do, they should be dealt with with compassion and with understanding, but also with firmness, because that is what our society asks for as well.

I could go on at some length about the absence of psychiatric services. I have spoken about the question of learning disabilities and the chronic shortage of psychological services.

Ms. Hunter: Adequate child care.

Mr. Robinson: Adequate child care, as my colleague from Saanich—Gulf Islands has pointed out, is another area which is of great importance. We are still waiting for the government to keep its promise for a national child care program. That as well would go a long way to assisting in reducing the level of crime among young people in this country.

I want to conclude by expressing some disappointment, first in the response of this government to what is clearly a crisis involving young people and crime in this country. It could have come up with a thoughtful approach that would emphasize prevention and rehabilitation which would not involve cutting funds to provinces and territories as it has done. Instead, it has put together this piecemeal approach, an approach which, unfortunately, is guaranteed to fail.

I am also disappointed that the Official Opposition, the Liberal party, is supporting this approach. Liberal members have stood in their place and said that they agree with and support these principles.

• (1710)

Where are the members of the Liberal party when it comes to cuts in funds for juvenile justice? Why are they not speaking out for more funding for juvenile justice programs, instead of supporting the Conservative government in its cuts?

These are some of the issues that I wanted to address in the few minutes that I have had an opportunity to speak on this legislation.

I want to close by reminding the House of the words of a very distinguished judge, Judge David Bazelon, who just recently retired from the United States Circuit Court of Appeal for the D.C. Circuit. He said this: "Children who come through the courts are living evidence of the failures of our society to provide the basic necessities of a healthy, mental and physical life for all too many of those we call society's most precious resource. If we refuse to invest in our children, we can only expect more of the same".

Let us listen to that message. Let us invest in our children. Let us not take a step backward with regressive legislation that will result in more children in adult jails and more crime in communities across this land.

Mr. David Barrett (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca): Madam Speaker, first, I want to compliment my colleague for making a very reasonable and emotional appeal combined in a very forthright manner.

I regret that this is not of paramount importance to every single member, but I know that every member considers it an issue that affects themselves and their communities.

One of the reasons in my opinion that this remains a problem in terms of having adequate services for children in our country is the simple fact that children do not vote. Another compounding factor is that rich children do not go to jail. Middle class children rarely do, but poor children go to jail frequently.

When I first entered politics 30 years ago, I had come to politics out of jail. I am the only politician who left jail and came into politics, instead of the other way around. But I want to confess that I worked there. I was not sent there.

I spent my life, up until I came into politics, committed to working in the corrections system. At a very early age, I was so employed and discovered that what I had been taught in university and what I had assumed was taking place in institutions was indeed what was really taking place. I discovered other things that shocked and motivated me to come into politics.

Since I only have a brief few moments, I want to share with this House what goes on with a child after an offence has been committed and understanding that there is no structure whatsoever mandating care, protection or counselling for the victim. Let us get that on the

record. The focus is on punishment with absolutely no care for another child victim of a crime.

For those who suggest that an alternate plan to what the government is suggesting is bleeding heart, let me tell them that victims of crimes in this country, especially children, are the most abandoned group in our society. If this government were concerned about children, the first thing it would do is include in the act a guarantee that any child who is sexually abused, any child who is victimized physically or psychologically by anyone, young or old, is given by law a guarantee of the best possible services available to that child. Only then would I believe the motivation was totally in protection of the community.

It is on the record and we understand that the victims are only part of an ongoing system and have no care of real value in this whole process.

Let us take a look at the 16-year old boy who comes into court and who has been convicted of a violent crime after being transferred to an adult court. If that young boy has been in a remand centre for three or four months awaiting trial, then that child has already been the victim of gang rape.

This is not a very pleasant subject, but we should deal honesty with what takes place in our institutions. Any young boy who comes into an adult institution, either on the remand side of the institution or in the main population of the jail, or is exposed to the access of the main population of jail, is the victim of gang rape within a matter of weeks. Lots are drawn. This is the nature of the institution. These are not happy subjects, but this is the reality that members of this House should know so that they understand what they are doing when we pass this kind of legislation.

That young boy is guaranteed to be physically assaulted in that institution. That assault leaves indelible scars in the mind of that youngster forever. No matter what the system then attempts to do, let me tell you, Madam Speaker, that the indelible experience that that child had in the institution scars that person for life.

Recently we read about a 27-year-old who is a threat to society because that young man is a paedophile and there is no protection in our structures to ensure that the community is protected from such an offender. Once being a victim of that kind of crime, the victim turns into the offender more often than not. The state guarantees, because of the institutionalized structure and the experience, a supply of offenders. Having been victims leads to the offence.

I want to leave that aside because I only have about eight or nine more minutes. I want to talk about young women in our society and something that happens to young women who come into court that is not really understood by a large body of legislators.

Young offenders still can be charged with incorrigibility. Incorrigibility can cover range of behaviours that are unmanageable by society—a range of behaviours that does not lead to cheating on the stock market, a range of behaviours that does not lead to cheating on income tax, a range of behaviours that are snickered at by adults, but a range of behaviours by youngsters that are totally out of control that could not be applied as a measure of judgment to adults. Young girls, young women, are charged with incorrigibility by way of promiscuity. I have yet to hear of a young male who is charged with incorrigibility by way of promiscuity. It is a double standard in our society.

I want you to understand that quickly and clearly a male dominated society says to a young 13-year old or 14-year old girl that she may not be promiscuous, but that is not an attitude which is held in the case of a young boy.

That young girl, who is charged with incorrigibility by way of promiscuity, is institutionalized. She was institutionalized in my own province of British Columbia at one point in an institution called the Willingdon School for Girls—a young woman who is expressing severe emotional trauma in her own home situation or foster home situation, who knows of no way of dealing with it other than being a victim of crime, who has probably been sexually abused as a young child at the early age of four, five, or six in patterned behaviour that is indelibly imprinted on that child's mind and who assumes that is a normal pattern of behaviour that she must live through for the rest of her life.

Once placed in the institution she is not given access to the separate, individual, loving care that is necessary for any such child. Once placed in an institution she is grouped with other young women who have similar or more severe problems, and what appears to be an

abstract problem for this young woman becomes the norm in the group that she is in.

No consistent treatment pattern takes place. As a matter of fact the kind of learning pattern that takes place in such institutions, duplicated not only in Canada but right across North America, guarantees a supply of chronic offenders who have been scarred in youth in these institutions.

I said in an earlier speech that at one time 60 per cent of the female population of the Kingston Federal Penitentiary were graduates of the Willingdon School for Girls in British Columbia. When the institution was closed there was a dramatic drop in repeated patterns of behaviour because the pattern of behaviour was not reinforced in an institutionalized setting for which the community was paying.

What were the options? We sought and purchased, case by case, the kind of treatment plan that was essential for each one of these young women. That is no longer available. As a matter of fact in the 30 years I have been involved in public life, with a concern, essentially my own private driven concern about why I am in politics, we have actually gone back. We have actually made the situation worse, not better.

• (1720)

Little did I think that I would be in a situation in 1990 dealing with a bill that again is a cosmetic to dampen political fears. It is a knee-jerk reaction to public outcries against violent crimes.

It is not a first step, as my colleague who is a Liberal member said. It is a continuous misstep of legislation that is often implemented on a knee-jerk basis without any sense of history, any sense of proportion, or any sense of what is happening to these young people. They are not rich. They are not middle class. They are poor children, essentially neglected and dropped into the institutions of our society, whether it be foster homes or the other kinds of institutions we have.

What we experience here in this country is minuscule compared to our neighbour to the south. But we have not learned, nor have they.

I know my time is almost up, but I want to say that we are culpable as politicians. We are the ones who are in effect the wrong ones. We are the ones who are making the mistake. We have an opportunity and a responsibility to protect our total society. The only way to protect our total society is to ensure that our children are protected—the criminal element and the victim. We turn the criminal element into a guaranteed supplier of violence. We turn the victim into a repeat pattern of that behaviour. None of this legislation deals with that.

Simply said, it does not take a genius to figure out when a child is in trouble. Any neighbourhood has parents who sit down at a table and say: "If somebody does not do something for Suzy or Johnny soon, they will be in trouble". Those parents are right. They are in trouble. This bill does nothing to stop that. This bill does nothing for treatment, nothing to protect the community, nothing for services to the victim. It guarantees a constant supply of adult criminals coming through this kind of system.

Ms. Lynn Hunter (Saanich—Gulf Islands): Madam Speaker, I think the House has been treated this afternoon to two very good speeches, one by the hon. member for Burnaby—Kingsway and the other by my esteemed colleague from Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca. Both of them have a fundamental understanding of the problem.

I know that our society, especially now, seems to be reaching out increasingly for simple solutions to very complex problems. I guess that is a human way to deal with a problem. You want the quick answer. There is no quick answer.

This bill is an attempt at a quick answer. What young offenders need is love and understanding. As a mother of two teenagers, it offends me that this is the government's response to the woes of young people in Canada.

I want to ask the hon. member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, with his vast experience in corrections and his esteemed reputation in the political field, if he would expand on the links between poverty and crime among young offenders.

Mr. Barrett: Madam Speaker, I want to say at the outset that I appreciate the hon. member's comments. I want to suggest to this House that nobody has a monopoly on what the answers are. I can repeat that the consistent answers have been wrong most of the time.

There is a distinct link between young people who end up in courts and the fact that they have very little financial backing. A wealthy person is not able to prevent a child from having aberrant behaviour but is able to mobilize the best possible services to protect their child

when that child is confronted with the legal consequences of his or her actions.

In other words, if an upper middle class or an upper class child has committed an offence that warrants prosecution under legislation such as this, that child goes into court with the best possible back-up services of lawyers, psychologists and those people in the medical profession, the psychiatrists who claim to have some answers about child behaviour.

That array of service is not available to a poor child. That array of service is not even available, I regret to say, to a child who is a ward of the state, albeit in some provinces there is an effort to maintain a modicum of protection for that child who has been through perhaps 16, 17, or 18 different foster homes by the age of 12, 13, or 14.

That is the past of the individual child who is the ward of the state and appears in court. It is not unusual to have some children having been in 12, 13, or 14 different foster homes, not knowing one consistent set of parents. Let us extrapolate the situation to what my colleague said about the indigenous people. Let us look exactly at what we have attempted to do to those children who come into trouble with the law and our method of dealing with it.

We ignore the indigenous people's own inherited culture. We immediately take those children out of the only social experience they have. It may be one that we as Europeans make an abstract judgment about. Because it is a different culture and because it does not match our culture, we snatch the child. That was the exact word I heard as a young social worker. We "snatched" children from indigenous people. They are poor. Is my time up, Madam Speaker?

Madam Deputy Speaker: This being the period for questions and comments, I saw that other members seemed to be looking forward to asking questions.

Mr. Barrett: Madam Speaker, it will be my fault that I lose my whole 10 minutes, but I will go on with my train of thought.

An indigenous child is immediately extracted from the only culture that it knows, dumped into ours, brought into the courtroom, and dealt with either as a foster child or a ward of the state. If you expect that child to have a chance as my colleague asks on the basis of fairness, forget it.

It is not a story that I have made up. The statistics given by my colleague are absolute proof of what is going on for young women and indigenous children. They do not have a chance if they are poor and they appear in juvenile court in this country.

Granted, there are judges in juvenile courts who cry out for better services, who sit in judgment of these children and go on record day after day proclaiming their horror and shock at the absence of services for children. Those proclamations fall on deaf ears of legislators who have heard the tale of woe and respond only by this foolish legislation that is being presented now.

It is not the fault of the courts. Most people who work in the system understand exactly what is wrong and have said so in testimony to agencies and to committee, all to be ignored, and ignored again in this legislation.

What can I say? A rational, thoughtful, prudent government would gently pull the bill back and say that there is no excuse now to say that there will be parallel accords to this bill. There is no excuse now to say that at some future date we will deal with these problems. There is no excuse to suggest that this is a placebo. The reality is that we should have the whole package now. If we save one child it is worth the whole package, but we are not doing it and that is why we are opposed to this bill.

Mr. Steve Butland (Sault Ste. Marie): Madam Speaker, I congratulate my colleague for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca for the usual passion which he brings to this House and his personal experiences which make the debate much more meaningful to everyone who sits in the House. I notice that a lot of people stop and listen for that reason, myself included. I have a great deal of experience as well with native children in the educational system and even though I participated on a daily basis with that kind of circumstance, I am still appalled and somewhat amazed that those kinds of statistics are staggering even to one who was involved in the situation.

• (1730)

My friend used the term "knee-jerk" reaction. My concern is that when the whole system is broken, I do not think you can tinker with it. I suggest that perhaps two years from now there will be a further tinkering to this system when, in fact, the entire system has to be

reworked. It is like repairing an old vehicle, eventually there is a time when you must scrap the vehicle and start with a new one.

My question to my friend is, should all of the legislation be reviewed and rather than tinkering with the system, just change the whole process?

Mr. Barrett: I do not have all the answers. I do know that the current vehicle is the wrong vehicle and it is very expensive. If one wanted to make the case purely on money, throw out the current system. The money we spend to house a child in an institution ranges between $40,000 to $60,000 a year. We should spend that kind of money on preventive services for the children who are destined for trouble. A quick change would be to integrate preventive services into a day care program, into kindergartens and into grade schools.

Just as the health community is talking about AIDS education for children who are pre-teens, we can surely move into behaviour problems in pre-teens within the education system. The scourge of AIDS is forcing us to rethink our whole approach to education. I am not suggesting we see a similar scourge, but surely the consequences of neglecting our children and leading to the kind of patchwork of services that guarantee an adult population in our prisons should have the same dramatic scrutiny as the problem of AIDS.

I have some answers and suggestions. Mine may not be correct, but surely to goodness the one common thread that runs through all of our experience in this field is that the earlier you get to the child and his or her parent or parents and deal with the problems quickly, the less chance there is of that child growing up to be the menace to the community that he or she may be.

One last comment in that regard. When my colleague suggests, as the bill has, a provision to release people after five years or 10 years, it sounds humanitarian, but in many instances we wait until the end of the parole period before we release someone because their behaviour in the institution does not warrant it. I just want to address the logic of that for a moment.

The well behaved offender who is released early is not the person we are concerned about; it is the ill behaved offender who is not released because his or her behaviour in the institution is not conforming who we should worry about. If we are concerned about society, it is that offender who needs a supervised period in the community. To wait for sentence to be finished because the parole board says we cannot take the risk means that we are dumping high-risk people into the community and with no services whatsoever.

There is a whole range of recommendations, I would like to suggest to my colleague. All of this has been heard by parliamentary committees since 1936. It is all on the record of this Chamber and of parliamentary committees since 1936. I think the first one was the Archambault commission. It is all on record, all there, all documented, and all universally ignored.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The period for questions and comments has now expired. Resuming debate, the hon. member for Victoria.

Mr. John Brewin (Victoria): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise to speak to this bill as the assistant justice critic for the New Democratic Party and a member of the Standing Committee on Justice and the Solicitor General. I will oppose the bill on second reading, as will the New Democrats in Parliament.

It is interesting and discouraging to me that it is clear that the Liberals will be supporting this bill. It is a bill which completely fails to deal with both the public concern and the reality of problems with young offenders, created in part by the Young Offenders Act. It completely fails to deal with the difficulties in this area.

It is of some interest and concern to me as well, if I can say in a preliminary way without breaching the rules of this House, to see the lack of interest in this bill on the government side and on the Liberal side in this House. I note that the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice is in the House, but the tradition in this House has been for cabinet ministers themselves to attend, particularly the important second reading stage, a tradition which—I have not yet suggested there is an absence in the House—

Mr. Nicholson: On a point of order, Madam Speaker.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I do not think that a point of order by the hon. parliamentary secretary will be necessary.

The hon. member for Victoria started by stating that he knew what should normally be done in this House and then proceeded to do exactly the opposite. I think it would be better for the hon. member to continue with debate. The hon. member for Victoria.

Mr. Brewin: I appreciate the implied admonition Madam Speaker, and perhaps I can simply say that the tradition of having ministers here is a valuable tradition and is one which I know this House fully respects.

The public is concerned about young offenders and that concern in part has been generated by a few examples of horrible crimes committed by young offenders and for which the public sees insufficient sentences handed down. Those few cases have led to a strong feeling amongst the public that the law is "too lenient". This attitude has been reinforced by such organizations as the Canadian Police Association, which has expressed itself in forceful terms.

I have the communication from the Canadian Police Association dated October 3, 1989, which reports on the resolutions adopted at the Canadian Police Association convention in 1989. One of the resolutions specifically dealt with young offenders. Again, the Canadian Police Association was speaking to an entirely legitimate concern; it is the conclusion that has been misunderstood by the government. The resolution reads as follows:

> WHEREAS the Canadian Police Association, representing 32,000 police officers across Canada, believes that the Canadian people are not well served by some of the current provisions of the Young Offenders Act, particularly in the areas of transfer and sentencing of young offenders charged with murder, and other serious offences,
>
> AND WHEREAS a consultation paper dealing with possible amendments to the Young Offenders Act has been circulated by the Department of Justice,
>
> BE IT RESOLVED that the Canadian Police Association make representation to the Government of Canada to have the Young Offenders Act amended to better protect the people of Canada from violent young offenders.

The Canadian Police Association goes on to complain in another resolution about what it sees as the watering down of the mandatory 25-year sentence for murder. It, in fact, reaffirms its support for what it is pleased to call "the supreme penalty", i.e. the death penalty.

• (1740)

The fundamental error that the Canadian Police Association makes is to make the assumption that the law itself is the cause of the problems and, second, that amendments to the law can "better protect people from violent young offenders". It is disappointing to me that the police officers of Canada, as represented at least by their association, have not offered to the government the kind of lessons and experience that I know that police officers of the grass roots understand, which is that the causes of crime and particularly the cause of young offenders crime is far more complicated than is represented by the mere suggestion that amendments to the Young Offenders Act is going to help one way or the other.

The causes of crime by young people is at one level complex and difficult and is individual to each case; and at another level is a symptom of the illness in our society and our failure as a Parliament to require the government to show comprehensive leadership in the whole area of justice and social equity in our country.

Individuals who commit crimes, whatever age, have some responsibility for those acts. It is important as the parliamentary committee now known as the Daubney committee from the last Parliament noted, that offenders begin to understand the responsibility they have for their acts and take responsibility not only for their acts but for their lives.

Even more important is that the government and society generally must understand the responsibility that we have for the conditions which create crime. This is at both a macro and micro level. First, at the macro level, it is absolutely clear from study after study, from the experience of Canadians in all walks of life from police to clergy to teachers, as my friend from Sault Ste. Marie expressed, that poverty, child abuse, social injustice creates a climate that will invariably lead to crime.

Beyond that, we provide no services at the community level to isolate the particular cases at an early age that will lead to a "life of crime". We provide no services when first the signs and symptoms of social dislocation and difficulty appear. The services in regard to parental alcoholism are abysmal in this country. Family counselling, adequate housing, proper community development programs at the grass roots level, good community

policing, are all hit and miss programs. This country and the government has consistently and persistently failed to address these issues.

As a result, invariably young people even by age six, seven and eight are beginning to show the signs of the pain and agony in their lives which eventually is expressed in violence against others in society.

Then we get to the time when the crimes of the young people become so serious that they come to the attention of the police and the police are left with no services and no system for responding and for heading off the increased problem.

We come to the situation where the criminal justice system, a system which the last Parliament invented, makes the problem even worse. We have the evidence of those who have been working with the Young Offenders Act over the last number of years that we have ended up with even more young people in custody.

The objective of the act was to reduce the number of people in custody in order that we could, hopefully, divert young people from more serious crimes and create a safer and more secure society. Now we have shifted to the point where there has been, after the first five years of life of the Young Offenders Act, even more young people in our jails, even more young people into those schools of crime, which is something no one in this country wants to see. The government, when pressed with the evidence of the complete failure of its work, tries to patch together a minimal solution.

There is one virtue in the bill before the House, but it does not proceed nearly far enough. The virtue is that it makes it slightly easier for a judge to conclude that he or she should keep the young offender in the young offender system rather than transfer the young offender to adult court when it comes to a very serious crime.

Under the Young Offenders Act as it is presently set up, a judge would be faced with a decision; a minimum sentence which he sees as too short, but if he agrees to the transfer to adult court, he is then faced with a sentence which he sees as too long, that is, a minimum 25-year sentence.

The flexibility that our system generally provides judges to come up with a punishment that not only fits the crime, but fits the circumstances of society and of the individual young offender is not in the law as it now stands. The one virtue of this bill is that it increases the minimum sentence from three to five years and reduces for young offenders transferred to adult court the minimum down to ten years.

As I suggest, the bill simply does not go far enough, nor does it deal in any comprehensive way with the real problems. It does not offer any leadership in this area. It has led me to wonder sometimes whether the problem is as much with the government directly or with the advice it is getting from the Department of Justice. Within the narrow scope of the government's particular response, the bill does deal with some of the issues. But the larger mandate given to the Department of Justice for coming up with a response to the rising incidence of young crime in this country is a complete, abject and utter failure, and nothing is more clear about the failure than the government's bill that is now before the House.

As has already been noted, the bill is opposed by organizations from across the country. None are more thorough and precise in this area than the Canadian Council on Children and Youth. This organization has prepared a paper which is 26 pages in length. I will not bore the House by reading the full 26 pages, but let me at least read the conclusion which states:

> —dispositional patterns in the youth courts must be carefully monitored. Of particular concern has been the increase in the use of custody and the apparent disparities in dispositional practices. It may in the future be necessary to consider further substantive legislative changes, or amendments to the Act's Declaration of Principle or the creation of sentencing guidelines, in order to ensure that custody is not used inappropriately or excessively.
>
> More fundamentally, it must be appreciated that the law is a blunt social tool, and can only have a limited effect on a complex problem like youthful criminality. The public is understandably concerned about the issue of violence, in particular among young persons. However, legislation, or changes to legislation, can only have a limited impact on offence patterns of adolescents.
>
> Significant changes in offence patterns are likely to require significant social changes. There have to be improvements in our youth corrections system as well. This is largely a provincial responsibility but the federal government can play a role.
>
> More fundamentally, our mental health, education and welfare systems must be made more responsive to the needs of youth; we need improvements in how we deal with such problems as drug and alcohol

abuse, adolescents with learning disabilities, and visible minority youth, and with the integration of young persons into the labour force. Most basically, we must have a society that values its youth and recognizes their need for a nurturing environment.

• (1750)

Anyone who has spent any time in association with the criminal justice system and reviewing the working of the criminal justice system in the country will know that, once a young person has found himself or herself within the criminal justice system before the courts under the Young Offenders Act, the system has already failed.

We also know that once a young person is before the young offenders system, nothing in the legislation we already have will help, and nothing in the bill before the House will remedy the deficiencies in the act.

It is important that this bill go back for further consideration; that the House take a comprehensive look at the problems of youthful crime; and that, instead of offering further despair, we begin to offer the leadership of hope so that finally the pain of crime in this area can be eradicated.

Madam Deputy Speaker: On questions or comments, the hon. member for Sault Ste. Marie.

Mr. Steve Butland (Sault Ste. Marie): Madam Speaker, I congratulate my seat-mate. It is indeed an honour to sit beside him when he can come up with that kind of factual, practical, sensible, and yet emotional oratory.

He talked about societal problems. Again, I refer to my own setting in school. As a principal of an elementary school for the last 10 years or so, I spent most of my time, unashamedly so, in counselling. I do not use the term "guidance counsellor" because that always connotes preparing people for their vocation in life. The counselling was to assist young people in adjusting to the life-style they were dealt which in many, many cases was very difficult.

My hon. friend used the word "preventative" on at least one occasion. I want to use it several times. We use the word "prevention" in medicine and say that it will save us money. If we expend funds in fire prevention, that will decrease the cost of actually fighting fires. We talk about dental hygiene and the prevention of tooth decay. Even the dentists who can profit from bad teeth support this.

Yet, one has to wonder why we do not spend more money in crime prevention. It seems to be a very sensible and practical way of dealing with a very serious problem. Could the member elaborate on that concept of expending more funds before rather than after which, in fact, would be cost-saving?

Mr. Brewin: Madam Speaker, I appreciate the question. It is interesting for me particularly, because in the City of Victoria we have a program which has been noted right across the country in this precise area. That is a community policing program.

The City of Victoria Police Department, a few years ago, with the assistance of the Solicitor General's department, established a program of neighbourhood police stations which in a way is old hat. It is perhaps what the police used to do very well and it is taking that old idea and readapting into a modern urban setting.

Even in establishing the local police station there was a good deal of community consultation and preparation for that. Community committees were established and the community was asked to participate in the work of the neighbourhood police station. Much of the work was focused on the idea of the prevention of crime. I should add that there is also the need to deal with the prevention of the perception of crime. We now have five neighbourhood police stations in Victoria. So far all of them have appeared to be very successful in not only reducing the incidence of crime in the area, and particularly among young people, but also the perception of crime.

Surveys have shown that older people have the greatest fear that they may be subject to crime, and at the same time the surveys show that it is in fact young people who are the greatest victims of crime. Part of that is because crime in our urban society invariably happens at night, frequently associated with abuse of alcohol and drugs. It is quite a different pattern than one watches on television, and I think many of us get our images of crime as much from television and from the media as we do from the reality.

When one asks the police what is their busiest time of day, they will state that it is between 11 at night and four or five in the morning. Therefore, the work of the prevention of crime begins with the bringing into focus a real understanding of what crime is all about.

The government could do so much more than it has done in this area. It has given some support to some work in this area, but persistently when they get around to announcing what they are going to do, they have great press conferences, they produce wonderful books, they announce that the RCMP is going to get some extra people to go around and arrest some more people, and then they come up with flimsy bills like this that do not come close to addressing the heart of the problem, and they have shown no national leadership.

Even in the United States, the federal government has shown greater leadership in trying to develop effective and sensible programs for the prevention of crime. In Britain, if it is possible to imagine it, Margaret Thatcher has shown, finally, some understanding about the causes of crime and has given some assistance to some very good crime prevention programs at the local level.

My colleagues say that they cannot believe it. It is true. At least I am told it is true and my sources are impeccable in this area.

I see there is a minute or two left. I do not know whether my friends from any part of the House have further questions, but I will conclude in time for them to ask them if they do.

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Kingsway): Madam Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague for an excellent speech, a very comprehensive speech. I know that many of my colleagues from other parts of the country also want to participate in the debate on this important legislation, and over the coming weeks and months we look forward to having those views expressed on this important legislation.

I wanted to draw to the attention of my colleague the fact that the acting police chief in Edmonton, Alberta, has stated that the changes which are proposed by the government in the area of the Young Offenders Act are only a distraction and will not make a significant impact on the problem of teen crime. My colleague referred to the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police and I wanted to draw to his attention the fact that at least one chief of police has said that this bill is not the way to go, that instead we should be looking at more counselling and more preventive programs.

I am pleased to draw that to the attention of my colleague and also to note the fine work that has been done in the city of Victoria in the area of crime prevention, as well as in the municipality of Burnaby which has an excellent young offenders advisory group. Under the progressive leadership of Mayor Copeland and the council there, and the progressive leadership of the mayor of Victoria, certainly we can do a great deal in the area of crime prevention, particularly involving young people.

I see it is six o'clock and I will draw my remarks to a close.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Do I understand that the hon. member wants me to call it six o'clock? The House is not ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: No.

Madam Deputy Speaker: It being 6 p.m., this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 11 a.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

The House adjourned at 6 p.m.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, May 31, 1990

The House met at 11 a.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1110)

[*English*]

PETITIONS

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to several petitions.

[*Editor's Note: See today's Votes and Proceedings.*]

* * *

ORDER IN COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS

TABLING OF REVISION AND REFERENCE

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, while I am on my feet, I am pleased to table, in both official languages, a number of Order in Council appointments which were made by the government.

Pursuant to the provisions of Standing Order 110(1), these are deemed referred to the appropriate standing committees, a list of which is attached.

* * *

INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION

PRESENTATION OF REPORT OF ALL-PARTY DELEGATION TO INTERPARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE ON GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Lee Clark (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the all-party delegation which attended the Interparliamentary Conference on Global Environment held in Washington April 29 to May 2.

* * *

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

STRIKING—FORTY-THIRD REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

Mr. Jim Hawkes (Calgary West): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present the forty-third report of the Striking Committee.

BILL S-10—REPORT OF LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Mr. Gilbert Parent (Welland—St. Catharines—Thorold): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the report of the legislative committee on Bill S-10, an act respecting the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants, with amendments.

BILL C-26—REPORT OF LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Mr. Geoff Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek—Assiniboia): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present the report of the legislative committee on Bill C-26, an act to amend the Railway Act (grain and flour subsidies), as amended, known as the at and east legislation. In doing so, I would especially like to thank members on all sides who served on this committee for the interest and co-operation they showed, and especially to Mrs. Sirpaul, the clerk, and her capable staff.

[*Editor's Note: See today's Votes and Proceedings.*]

* * *

CROWN CORPORATIONS DISSOLUTION OR TRANSFER AUTHORIZATION ACT

MEASURE TO ENACT

Hon. Gerald S. Merrithew (for Minister of State (Privatization and Regulatory Affairs)) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-73, an act to provide for the dissolution or transfer of certain Crown corporations and to amend certain acts in consequence thereof.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Shall the hon. member have leave to introduce the bill?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to, bill read the first time and ordered to be printed.

* * *

PETITIONS

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure, indeed an honour, to present petitions pursuant to Standing Order 36 on three different topics.

The first topic deals with the goods and services tax. The petitioners from Kamloops and Chase, British Columbia are totally distressed with the government's continued determination to proceed with this 7 per cent goods and services tax and are calling upon the Liberals in the Senate to stop it.

Mr. Milliken: That is not what the petition states.

Mr. Riis: Actually, it is not what the petition says, Mr. Speaker, but it is what they are thinking. If I can be so bold to presume what the petitioners are actually hoping for, it is that the Liberal senators who dominate the Senate will vote it down this afternoon and end this threat.

VIA RAIL

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, on another issue, petitioners from Kamloops are calling upon the government to re-invest in passenger rail service. They have looked around the world and they see that most countries our size have a first-rate passenger rail service.

They are asking the Canadian government to do what everybody else is doing: investing in passenger rail service as opposed to reducing commitments and investments in passenger rail service.

CHILD POVERTY

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, petitioners from Kamloops, British Columbia point out their concern regarding increasing child poverty in Canada and the increasing number of children living in poverty.

They are asking the government to consider supporting a comprehensive bill of rights for children as a way of eliminating poverty among young people in our country.

[*Translation*]

FISHERIES

Mr. Fernand Robichaud (Beauséjour): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour for me to present here in this House a petition that was presented to me at a public meeting in Shédiac attended by several hundred people, mainly from the fishing industry. They came from every community, from Baie-Sainte-Anne, Escuminac, all the fishing communities of Kent County, from Westmorland County, even as far as Cape Tormentine.

The petitioners humbly state that the present crisis in the fishing industry requires every one of us to help all the fishermen and all the working people in this industry which is vital for our economic survival.

For these reasons, Mr. Speaker, the petitioners humbly ask the government to present a recovery plan for this industry in co-operation with all concerned.

[*English*]

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, I have the duty to table a petition that follows the example of several thousand Canadians who are protesting strongly against the Conservative government's proposal to impose upon Canadians a further tax on the goods and services that they purchase starting January 1.

These Canadians—and there are hundreds of signatures in this petition—would like to state without a doubt their strong objection to the imposition of this unprecedented tax. The petitioners would also like to state that in their opinion it is an unjustified grab from the pockets of Canadians which will hit them not only with a higher tax load but with higher inflation, higher interest rates, and higher unemployment.

The undersigned humbly pray and call upon Parliament to reject the proposed goods and services tax.

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, like the hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier, I am pleased to table a petition signed by many, many Canadians who are also opposed to the government's

proposal to introduce a goods and services tax and impose it on Canadians.

The petitioners indicate that they are concerned this tax will be hidden from Canadians and applied to virtually everything that Canadians purchase. It will create an onerous burden on small businesses across Canada. They are appalled, frankly, that the government would even consider such a tax, particularly after its ducking the issue during the last campaign and refusing to disclose the details of the tax before the campaign was launched.

They call upon Parliament to reject this unfair and inequitable tax.

• (1120)

Mr. Ross Harvey (Edmonton East): Mr. Speaker, lest the Minister of Finance and the Minister of National Revenue believe that they are somehow slipping from the acme of the attentions and concerns of the citizens of Edmonton and indeed Alberta, I would like to present today a petition signed by 1,221 people, mostly Edmontonians, which notes that the Minister of Finance's proposed goods and services tax is an unfair form of taxation because of its lack of regard for the taxpayers' ability to pay. It notes as well that the government has not addressed the unfair taxation system currently in place.

The petitioners call upon—and this is an interesting point—Parliament to reject the proposed goods and services tax. As we all know Parliament includes the Senate, so I interpret this to mean that the petitioners as well wish the Liberal majority in the Senate to kill the bill. In fact they want the Liberals to put their Senate majority where their mouth is.

Mr. Fred J. Mifflin (Bonavista—Trinity—Conception): Mr. Speaker, it is my honour and pleasure to rise, in accordance with Standing Order 36, to present a petition with 570 signatures.

In the last eight months I have presented 15,000 signatures from my riding, and I am still getting them in. I have run out of my own, so I am using some from our deputy Whip, the hon. member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell.

This petition contains 570 signatures. It notes that Canadian families with incomes of around $15,000 spend 92 per cent of their income on current consumption, while families earning $50,000 or more spend only 50 per cent on consumption. More than anybody else, they are concerned about the extra 7 per cent that they are going to have to pay if this bill goes to its finality.

They are very concerned about the effect it will have on them and on small businesses with that kind of income range. They humbly beg and pray, as my hon. friend says, for Parliament to cease and desist and not to pass this bill.

VETERANS AFFAIRS

Mr. Jim Jordan (Leeds—Grenville): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present petitions today from Legionnaires, both men and women, in Portland, Merrickville, Lansdowne, Rockport, Elgin, Toledo, Athens, Jasper and other communities in Leeds and Grenville, objecting to the cuts that the government has proposed to veterans services, particularly in the way of housekeeping costs for vets and additional charges for long-term care.

These vets are calling upon the government to reverse these budget cuts. They would like the government to remember them in a more positive way, instead of in the negative, twisted way which this government is seemingly determined to do.

CANADA POST CORPORATION

Mr. Neil Young (Beaches—Woodbine): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition that has been forwarded to me from residents of the constituency of Etobicoke Centre, and some 581 people have signed this petition.

The undersigned petitioners are opposed to the closing of the Canada postal outlet previously located at the Grenview Home Hardware at 2918 Bloor Street West in the city of Etobicoke. The petitioners humbly pray and call upon Parliament to enact a law opening a postal outlet in the vicinity of Bloor Street West, east of Montgomery Road and west of Prince Edward Drive.

LOW-LEVEL FLIGHTS

Mr. Ray Funk (Prince Albert—Churchill River): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure and duty to present petitions under Standing Order 36.

The first of these petitions calls upon the Government of Canada to support Canada's aboriginal people in the traditional use of their lands. It calls on Canada to seek new initiatives for peace through common security and

disarmament, rather than NATO–NORAD participation in deep strike attack capability building.

It calls on Canada to redirect NATO–NORAD funding toward enabling Canada's aboriginal peoples to regain control of their lands and livelihood.

The petitioners call on Parliament to oppose the establishment of a proposed tactical fighter and weapons training base at Goose Bay. I am sure they are happy that the base will not be built. Nevertheless, they would like to see the end of all low-level flight training.

NORTHERN BENEFITS

Mr. Ray Funk (Prince Albert—Churchill River): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition signed by residents of La Ronge, Saskatchewan, calling on Parliament, and particularly the Minister of Finance, to reject the report of the task force on northern tax benefits, which eliminated 85 per cent of the communities in Canada from enjoying the benefits available to them under northern tax benefits, to recognize the high cost of living in northern and isolated communities, and to develop a fair and equitable tax benefits program for the north to enable those people to enjoy an adequate standard of living and develop their community.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Ray Funk (Prince Albert—Churchill River): Mr. Speaker, the third petition which I have the honour of presenting was signed by people from Shellbrook, Leask, and surrounding communities. It is particularly appropriate today when a report is out today saying that illiteracy remains a serious problem in our country.

The petitioners call on the government, particularly Parliament, not to consider, through the goods and services tax, the taxing of books, the printed word. In fact they say that the uninhibited dissemination of the printed word is a cornerstone of democracy, culture and education and that this would be negatively affected by the GST.

Therefore they call on the Liberal Senate to reject the GST and certainly to reject any tax on reading materials.

[*Translation*]

TAX BENEFITS FOR NORTHERN AND ISOLATED AREAS

Mr. Guy Saint-Julien (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I am today tabling a petition from Chibougamau, in the riding of Roberval, further to the recommendations of the Task Force on Tax Benefits for Northern and Isolated Areas.

The signers of this petition reject the conclusions of the Task Force on Tax Benefits for Northern and Isolated Areas and ask that Chibougamau be recognized as an isolated area under the present tax benefit regime.

* * *

[*English*]

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

(Questions answered orally are indicated by an asterisk.)

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, the following questions will be answered today: Nos. 244, 280, and 284.

[*Text*]

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE TO INDIAN PEOPLE

Question No. 244—**Mr. Taylor:**

For each of the years 1986, 1987, 1988 and 1989, for programs providing economic development assistance to Indian people (a) what amount of money was paid out (i) in total (ii) in Saskatchewan (b) was any part of the total paid out for projects originating in and operating on reserves and, if so (i) in total (ii) in Saskatchewan, what part?

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): I am informed as follows:

Insofar as Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency is concerned:

Following is the report showing expenditures relating to projects that are identified as originating in or operating on reserves based on the legal status of the applicant. ACOA's records do not identify the aboriginal status of applicants as individual and therefore there are no projects identified as being with Indians apart from Band Councils.

INDIAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE FROM JANUARY 1, 1986 TO DECEMBER 31, 1989

INDIAN BAND COUNCIL

CALENDAR YEAR	NO. PROJECTS	ASSISTANCE AMOUNT
1989	1	14,000
Total for Indian Band Council	1	14,000

Insofar as the Department of Employment and Immigration is concerned:

a) Expenditures through the Canadian Jobs Strategy were estimated to be:

i) In total ($ millions)

1986–87	1987–88	1988–89	1989–90
$145.5	$127.1	$120.7	$137.8

ii) In Saskatchewan ($ millions)

1986–87	1987–88	1988–89	1989–90
$18.7	$19.1	$15.8	$20.9

b) When capturing date on CJS projects and activities, EIC does not track activities occurring on, or coordinated from, Indian Reserves.

Insofar as the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development is concerned:

Total expenditures (including salaries and overhead) to provide economic development assistance to Indians, Inuit and Innu is as follows:

(a) FISCAL YEAR	(i) TOTAL	(ii) SASKATCHEWAN
1985–86	$83,738,616	$9,549,405
1986–87	88,818,820	10,633,593
1987–88	80,099,671	9,310,129
1988–89	79,049,262	8,896,423
1989–90 *	78,333,600	9,051,100

* Budget rather than expenditures.

b) (i) and (ii) Departmental records do not indicate wether the projects originated in and operated on–reserve or off–reserve.

Insofar as the Department of Industry, Science and Technology is concerned:

(a) & (b) All programs administered by DIST, regardless of their focus on Aboriginal People, do not discriminate between Status Indians, Métis or Inuit. The programs can also include assistance to non–aboriginal persons provided the benefits flow to aboriginal people. Other programs administered by DIST could also contribute economic assistance to status Indians but data in these cases are not available.

(a) FISCAL YEAR	(i) TOTAL	(ii) SASKATCHEWAN
1986–87	$72,890,283	$13,264,867
1987–88	72,285,632	7,315,198
1988–89	92,701,990	17,568,120
1989–90	67,554,999	10,415,026

NOTE: The figures provided above are for Aboriginal People only.

Insofar as the Department of Western Economic Diversification is concerned:

The department does not have the information requested.

The Western Diversification Program is open to all western Canadian business enterprises and viable commercial projects. The four western provinces are treated as a single geographic region, with the same guidelines applying equally throughout the area. Consequently, the department does not have information which explicitly sets out what portion of its funds have been accessed in the manner requested.

PAYING CONTRACTORS FOR TREE PLANTING

Question No. 280—**Mr. Gardiner:**

In the summer of 1989, did officials of Forestry Canada state that there were administrative problems in paying contractors for tree planting, and, if so, have any steps been taken taken to correct these problems and, if so, what steps?

The Hon. Frank Oberle (Minister of Forestry): During the summer of 1989, the British Columbia Employment Standards Branch (Prince George office) received a number of complaints from tree planters. These complaints reflected an abnormal occurrence, due to the dissolution of a company in June 1989.

In 1989, Forestry Canada officials (Pacific and Yukon Region) investigated issues regarding tree planting administration under the Canada–British Columbia Forest Resource Development Agreement (FRDA).

It would be very difficult to relate the complaints generated by the dissolution of a company directly to administrative practices under the Canada–British Columbia FRDA. It was determined that administrative problems did not exist under the BC FRDA and, therefore, no changes were made to the administrative process.

Although the implementation of cost-shared programs under the FRDA and their adherence to the employment standards is within the jurisdiction of the provincial government, the federal government has advocated that the working and safety conditions of silviculture workers be improved.

The FRDA created much employment for silviculture workers in 1989, generating an estimated 14,000 person-days of employment to plant some 19 million seedlings on 7,000 hectares in the Prince George Region. However, with the exception of the one company which failed, the proportion of complaints to the Employment Standards Branch does not appear to be unusual.

CF ESTABLISHMENT/STRENGTH

Question No. 284—**Mr. Manley:**

As of December 31, 1989, for each rank from private to general (including naval equivalents), what is (a) the establishment (b) the actual strength of the Canadian Armed Forces?

The Hon. William Hunter McKnight (Minister of National Defence): See attached documents.

MILITARY STRENGTH
BY RANK
ESTABLISHMENT AND ACTUAL
EFFECTIVE DATE 31 DEC 89

RANK	ACTUAL *	ESTABLISHMENT	NOTE
GEN	1	1	
LGEN	7	8	
MGEN	32	32	
BGEN	82	84	
COL	366	361	
LCOL	1,123	1,159	
MAJ	3,537	3,833	
SUB-TOTAL	5,148	5,478	
CAPT	6,942	6,622	
CAPT/LT		2,813	1
LT	1,460	65	
SUB-TOTAL	8,402	9,500	
2LT	167		2
OCDT	214		2
SUB-TOTAL	381		
OFFICER-TOTAL	13,931	14,978	
BASIC TRAINING LIST		2,258	
SUBSIDIZED UNIVERSITY TRAINING LIST		2,226	
CWO	921	895	
MWO	2,480	2,450	
WO	4,979	5,038	
SGT	10,277	10,739	
MCPL	11,933	12,677	
SUB-TOTAL	30,590	31,799	
CPL	20,032	10,098	
CPL/PTE		22,953	1
PTE	11,528		
SUB-TOTAL	31,560	33,051	
NCM-TOTAL	62,150	64,850	
BASIC TRAINING LIST		6,145	
SUBSIDIZED UNIVERSITY TRAINING LIST		6	

NOTE 1: These established positions require either one of two ranks.

NOTE 2: There are no positions that specify this rank.

* The "actual" figures do not include those members who are on retirement leave or on the medical patient holding list. The members in these categories do not normally return to active service. Also excluded are those on basic and university training.

[*English*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The questions enumerated by the parliamentary secretary have been answered.

* * *

STARRED QUESTION

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, would you be so kind as to call Starred Question No. 253?

Because of the length of the response I would ask that this question be made an Order for Return and this return would be tabled immediately.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is it the pleasure of the House that Starred Question No. 253 be made for Order for Return?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[*Text*]

MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Question No. 253—**Mr. Edmonston:**

Since July 1, 1987, have any Ministers of the Crown made speeches promoting the Meech Lake Accord and, if so, in each case (a) which Minister (b) on what date (c) before which audience?

Return tabled.

[*English*]

Mr. Cooper: Mr. Speaker, I ask that the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Shall the remaining questions be allowed to stand?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Supply

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*Translation*]

SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY, S. O. 81—EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Hon. André Ouellet (Papineau—Saint-Michel) moved:

That this Chamber, recognizing the historical events taking place in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, regretting the lack of clear policy by the government in defining a new Canadian role in response to these events, noting the failure to address the serious issues of trade, commercial relations, Arctic security and agriculture agreements, and the confusion between the Minister of National Defence and Secretary of State on NATO, calls upon the government through open parliamentary consultations to develop independent, effective policy initiatives in foreign policy and trade to meet these new conditions.

He said: Mr. Speaker, today the Official Opposition takes this opportunity to present a motion of censure because we regret it has now become common practice to develop Canada's foreign policy on the sly, often without any public consultation, a policy that also seems more inclined to take its cue from our neighbours to the south, reflecting American interests instead of representing a genuinely Canadian position.

I may remind hon. members of the first meeting in Quebec City between Mr. Reagan and Mr. Mulroney, when our Prime Minister launched the initiative for negotiations on the free trade agreement with the United States, without prior consultation with the Canadian public. Worse, Canadians were constantly kept in the dark about developments in the course of these negotiations with the Americans, allegedly because we could not reveal our strategy and objectives to our economic partners.

• (1130)

The Americans knew exactly where they were going and had no qualms about saying so publicly, even tabling their action plan in the U.S. Congress. In fact, they were very successful, since they got us to abolish the Foreign Investment Review Agency, for their sake. We passed legislation that was favourable to their big drug companies. They obtained the deregulation of the transportation industry, which we now realize is heavily weighted in favour of American truckers and American railway companies. They obtained a guarantee from Canada that the U.S. could always count on access to our natural resources. Finally, they obtained the gradual phasing–

out of all subsidy programs for Canadian companies and farmers. That is what they wanted and that is what they got. Unfortunately, we cannot say the picture is as rosy on our side. According to the Prime Minister, our main goal was to have guaranteed access to the U.S. market.

That was not achieved since we are still subject to retaliatory measures by the U.S. Congress. Now there is talk about a United States–Mexico–Canada free trade agreement, and it seems that negotiations will be starting very soon between the Americans and the Mexicans, our government also wants to get involved. Here again, there were no prior consultations, not even with our parliamentary committee, and certainly not with the Canadian public. In any case, the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre will expand on this question later on in the debate today, when he will also mention other negative aspects of Canada's international trade policies.

I may recall, Mr. Speaker, that our Prime Minister decided that Canada would become a member of the Organization of American States, following his first meeting with President Bush. This decision took everybody by surprise. No one expected it, not even officials at the Department of External Affairs, who did not see this as a priority and who were not and still are not ready to tackle this new priority since they lack the budgets and staff to deal with the new responsibilities tossed their way by the Prime Minister, *en route* to Costa Rica.

What the Liberal Party of Canada said at the time is unfortunately, still true today. The Liberal Party feels that Canada's membership should have been subject to the following conditions: First, membership should not be a substitute for a valid policy in the region. The Mulroney government should make a formal commitment, through concrete action, to enhancing Canada's presence in Latin America and the Caribbean, both in the form of financial and human resources. Second, the government should start by formulating a set of priorities and principles to guide the activities of Canadian representatives at the OAS and in the region. For example, strongly promote respect for human rights and closely monitor situations that might lead to violations of these rights; provide effective aid, taking account of respect for human rights and the environment; increase efforts to solve the debt crisis, especially by restoring to their former level contributions to the Inter-American Development Bank and the Caribbean Development Bank; clearly state Canada's point of view on the settlement of conflicts in the region and promote the democratization of institutions and governments.

I must say that the government has not done much so far to meet these conditions.

Finally, the Minister of External Affairs, in a speech he gave at Humber College in Toronto on the weekend, just set forth Canada's new policy on Europe. Again, Mr. Speaker, there was no public consultation and the Standing Committee on External Affairs and International Trade was not consulted either.

That is quite insulting, because since last September, the members of this committee have been dealing with the new situation in Europe following the political events in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe and especially with the emergence of the single market in Europe in 1992. We held hundreds of meetings and heard dozens of witnesses representing the opinions of Canadian and foreign experts on this subject. We have returned from a trip to observe and study the Soviet Union and East and West Germany and we are preparing to publish the results of our work in the coming days.

Now the minister, before this report of the Standing Committee on External Affairs and International Trade is made public, tells us his new policy and rejects outright all these suggestions that may have been useful to him. I understand his not wanting the ideas and opinions of opposition members, but I remind him that over half a dozen members of his own party worked with us on these recommendations; they are being treated quite cavalierly and incorrectly by the minister.

In any event, Mr. Speaker, I must say that I read the minister's speech and that I find it incredibly trite in some respects.

Having reminded us that, at Montreal's McGill University on February 5, he announced his intention to re-examine our European policy with a view to defining Canada's interests in that part of the world and implementing a strategy to serve these interests, he now states solemnly that, since trade accounts for 30 per cent of our GNP, the unification of the Western European market is of the utmost importance for Canadian employment and prosperity and that the huge untapped markets of Eastern Europe may also prove to be very promising in the long term.

Mr. Speaker, he did not really have to wait nearly four months to say that. Besides, I would suggest that his conclusions concerning NATO are unduly conservative.

Acknowledging as he does, that it is only natural that NATO should play a more political role which would mirror Europe's new reality and its declining military mission, and that NATO must seek security through arms control with as much energy as it sought security through military deployment, the minister concludes by saying that a strong military mandate for NATO is still valid and that the presence of Canadian and American troops in Europe remains essential.

As I see it, Mr. Speaker, our commitment towards Europe does not necessarily call for our military presence over there and, in that respect, the government will have to take a much more enlightened approach.

• (1140)

Speaking objectively, I must say the minister's proposals for the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe are interesting and certainly deserve to be vigorously promoted by Canada.

However, the minister also made a vague reference to a CSCE assembly of parliamentarians. I would have preferred to hear more about the European Council. I wish the minister would announce that Canada will apply for membership in the European Council and I that he will work on making the European Council the parliamentary wing of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe.

The minister also said solemnly: "Our interests in Europe are real, contemporary and imperative". Well said, but I may remind him there is a lack of resources. His department has been asked to scale down, and the Minister of Finance is putting tremendous pressure on his department to reduce spending. I think he may be biting off more than he can chew. How can the minister expect his diplomats to be everywhere at once? After all, they are only human.

The minister has just given us a major action plan for ensuring our future presence in Europe. I am afraid those objectives will not be met if we treat Europe the same way we treated the fourteen bilateral agreements signed by Mr. Mulroney in Moscow last November.

I think it is clear their operations are on hold, and I deplore the government's total lack of initiative and failure to do any follow-up on these issues. The Liberal Party of Canada issued a press release on the occasion of President Gorbachev's visit to Ottawa, and I would like to quote a few paragraphs:

> The Liberals feel that Canada can be of invaluable assistance in supporting President Gorbachev's efforts to reorganize the Soviet economy, provide for a more democratic political system and revitalize Soviet society.
>
> Our diplomatic presence in that country is a tangible symbol of Canada's commitment in this respect. However, this presence is not equal to the task. We are sorry to see that the Government of Canada has yet to open a new consulate in Kiev, and we deplore the fact that there is no consulate in Leningrad.
>
> We want to ask the Conservative Government to provide for a significant increase in the number of diplomats posted to Moscow. The present staff of fewer than 20 is not adequate, considering the very demanding aspects of Canadian-Soviet relations, and the impression is given that Canadian-Soviet relations are not a priority with the Conservative Governent.
>
> The Liberals feel this is an intolerable situation that should be corrected as soon as possible.
>
> In 1984, the previous Liberal government, under the Right Hon. Pierre Elliott Trudeau, signed an unprecedented agreement for scientific co-operation in the Arctic with the Soviet Union. The Liberals are happy to see that further agreements on co-operation in the Arctic were signed when the Prime Minister visited Moscow last November.
>
> As we said earlier, however, we are disappointed because implementation of these agreements is lagging, and we urge the minister to take steps to advance this dossier. We also regret that the Mulroney government is reluctant to engage in serious talks with the Soviet Union on security in the Arctic and arms limitation.
>
> Since 1988, we have proposed a multilateral arms limitation system for the Arctic, and as Liberals, we once again ask the Mulroney government to respond to Soviet indications of interest in arms limitation in the Arctic.
>
> Liberal Parliamentarians who recently visited the USSR were quite concerned when they learned that that country was planning to re-locate its nuclear test field in the Arctic as of 1995.
>
> We strongly urge President Gorbachev to publically refute entertaiming such a notion which we feel would jeopardize the Arctic's already fragile environment and which is certainly not consistent with the statements he has made himself on the opportunity to demilitarize the Arctic and to sign a general nuclear test ban treaty.

I suggest this is one of the main items in our relations with the USSR and I ask the Minister to make every effort to convince Soviet leaders to change their mind.

To conclude, Mr. Speaker, may I say that our foreign policy as usual is an after-the-fact policy. We react to US iniatives or of necessity to major political changes. Our foreign policy is totally unimaginative. Canada is no longer at the forefront of the international political

scene. We no longer influence the events; we simply react to them.

What is true of our foreign policy is also true in the areas of national defence and international development.

I need not tell you that we no longer have a defence policy. The White Paper tabled by the Minister of Defence is no longer relevant. It is just a pile of paper which the government has simply thrown into the waste basket. But it has done nothing to develop a new defence policy for Canada.

It is also true of the White Paper on international development which has never been implemented by this Tory government. Our international commitments to the Third World are nothing to be proud of and fall short of the proverbial generosity of Canadians.

In a little while, my colleague the hon. member for Northumberland will discuss in greater detail how this government has sold out the various groups of Canadians operating in under-developed countries and how two-faced the Tories have been in connection with the most blatant violations of human rights by several governments which are recipients of Canadian foreign aid.

Mr. Speaker, Canada is a member of the UN Security Council. Regretfully, it uses its position on the council with extreme caution. So much so that we can rightfully wonder if the government realizes that we have a major role to play and that we have the responsibility to present the Security Council with original, independent and somewhat liberal initiatives. That is what this government should do and is not doing.

That is why we have moved today this motion blaming the government.

[*English*]

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to discuss foreign policy in the House, although I confess to some puzzlement of both the timing and the content of the motion and indeed, some of the references of my good friend, the spokesman for the Liberal party.

The motion was about Europe. He spent a good part of his time talking about the United States. My colleague from Etobicoke—Lakeshore suggested perhaps we should send him a map. Obviously, relations with the United States are important, but I want to make a point to my good friend. The world is larger than the United States. This government has focused our foreign policy on the recognition that, as important as our relationship might be with our neighbour, we have a larger world in which we have to work. That has been a motive of our policy.

• (1150)

This motion alleges a lack of "effective policy initiatives in foreign policy". Yet, in just the last seven days, Canada has welcomed the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who came specifically to express his appreciation of Canada's contribution to that most central of the world's organizations. The vice-president of the European communities was here as part of a deliberate process of high level meetings between the Community and Canada, initiated by the government. Also we hosted the first visit to Canada in 19 years by a leader of the Soviet Union.

The world is changing dramatically—in the Soviet Union, in Europe, in South Africa, in Central America, in Cambodia, in Mexico, in Latin America at large—and Canada is pursuing an active, effective and distinctively Canadian foreign policy on each of those fronts. We will welcome suggestions from other parties as to other initiatives we should consider, but we do that against the background of a foreign policy which I am proud to defend anywhere in Canada, or the world.

Let me deal briefly with the reference to parliamentary consultations. I think governments traditionally make too little use of members of Parliament in foreign policy, and we have tried to change that practice. We will consider any serious proposals members might make as to how the role can be enlarged. I have just received my invitation from the standing committee to go before it to discuss the results of its deliberations. I actually look forward to doing that.

I have to note, Mr. Speaker, last week when I went before the committee, the hon. member was asking me why I was late in announcing my policy. Today, he asks me why I announced it so early. Also, I want to indicate an area in which he and I are solidly in agreement. He tells me that the diplomats in my department are overworked. They are overworked, but they are hardy

people with great imagination, ingenuity and dedication to the country.

We believe, even in this period of limited resources, we have the capacities to be effective on a wide variety of fronts. If the hon. member is suggesting that the Liberal party has a list of issues from which Canada should back away, I would be prepared to look at that list but not, I must say, with a great deal of sympathy.

It was in the spirit of consultation with parliamentarians that the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources and I met this morning with colleagues who had just returned from a visit to AECL facilities in Romania. As I said, I have accepted enthusiastically to meet members of the standing committee to discuss their recent trip to the Soviet Union. I can report to the House that last week the standing committee asked me if there could be increased contact between Canadian and Soviet parliamentarians to discuss Arctic matters.

I made that proposal to Mr. Shevardnadze on Tuesday, and he agreed immediately. This will augment the very active co-operation that is already in place including, in part as a result of discussions in the standing committee, a discussion of the implications, environmental and otherwise, of the shifting of a greater degree of Soviet nuclear testing into Arctic regions. I am prepared to act with similar dispatch on other practical proposals that colleagues might make.

Five central issues were discussed in the meetings by the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister and myself with President Gorbachev, Mr. Shevardnadze and the Soviet Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers, Mr. Maslukov.

First, was the high priority both countries assigned to enlarging our co-operation as neighbours and as nations sharing a widening range of common interests. The mutual priority is demonstrated by the fact that in the last seven months the Prime Minister and Mr. Gorbachev have held two sets of long, personal, face-to-face discussions. Mr. Shevardnadze has visited Canada for consultations twice in this period; in February and again in May. I have accepted his invitation to return to Moscow this fall to maintain that momentum.

Second, Canada affirmed our strong support of the profound economic and political reforms in the Soviet Union and discussed practical ways in which Canada can help in changing COCOM rules, in helping boost Soviet integration into the world economic system by more joint ventures to add to the 35 that have already been signed between Canadians and Soviets, by attractive arrangements to encourage immediate delivery of Canadian agricultural products and by the discussion of new agreements regarding fisheries, tourism, health and potentially, educational exchanges.

Third, we made the case that it contributes to stability throughout Europe to have a united Germany that is actively involved in institutions like NATO and the European Community. But we heard and we understand the case, that the Soviets need to see evidence of changes in NATO before they will believe that institution is adapting to the new realities of Europe. As the Prime Minister said yesterday, Canada will work to ensure that Article 2 of NATO, the political article originally proposed by Canada, becomes much more central to NATO.

Fourth, we discussed in detail measures which Canada and the Soviet Union agree to strengthen the process and the relevance of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. Our two nations are on the outer ends of Europe. We have a special interest and we have a common interest in developing strong institutions that define and unite a large Europe from Vladivostok to Vancouver Island.

Finally, the Prime Minister and I both raised the serious situation in the Baltic states, and repeated our expectation that there would not be a crackdown, and that the issues whose sensitivity everyone acknowledges, will be resolved by negotiation. I welcomed Mr. Shevardnadze's assurance that the Soviet Union intends to seek political solutions to disagreements, whether those relate to matters they consider to be internal or external.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, 1989 was a year of revolution in Europe, and 1990 marks the beginning of reconstruction. New societies and new institutions must be built now, and that is just starting.

The 1989 revolution produced fundamental repercussions on all of the European continent and North America as well. Indeed, by its language, family and historical ties, our continent is a reflection of Europe

across the Atlantic. That is why our government has undertaken a review of our policy concerning Europe.

Canada's interest for Europe is not motivated solely by historical reasons, nostalgia or the desire to be charitable. What is at stake is not only the prosperity of Europe, but ours as well.

However, our ways of pursuing those interests must change radically in order to reflect the new security environment which is emerging, the ever-increasing authority and unity of Western Europe as well as Canada's unique assets.

The link between us and Europe has been our contribution to the North Atlantic Alliance. That contribution involved stationing in Germany thousands of Canadian servicemen and women who have risk their lives daily in the name of freedom.

Our military contribution is bound to decrease.

The organization whose primary role has been to protect us against potential agression has to re-examine its role when such an agression becomes less likely. Under those circumstances, it is only natural for NATO to take on a more political role reflecting the new realities of Europe and a waning military one.

Canada fully supports such a change. It serves Canadian interests.

[*English*]

NATO must review urgently and comprehensively all aspects of its nuclear and conventional strategy. It makes little sense to retain those short-range nuclear weapons based in Europe whose only target can be our new friends in Poland, in Czechoslovakia, and in East Germany. It makes little sense to maintain a military strategy which is based on a scenario of a surprise attack across a front which no longer exists and where surprise is no longer possible. It makes little sense to continue to retain in Europe the largest peacetime deployment of military force in the history of the world.

This is not to deny the continuing requirement for prudence and for military stability at this time of historic change. The possibility of instability is there and Soviet military capacities remain substantial. Therefore, a strong military mandate for NATO continues to be valid and the North American commitment to Europe, represented by the presence of Canadian and American troops there is crucial as we strive for strategic stability at significantly lower levels of military force.

• (1200)

It is important that NATO become even more actively engaged in the dynamic new security dialogue.

In the field of arms controls and disarmament, NATO should develop an enhanced capacity and role in confidence-building and verification activities. Dedicated multinational forces on the ground might be deployed for this purpose. NATO should also look to the establishment of a verification centre to co-ordinate those activities.

In addition, NATO should move away from a rigid forward defence to a much more flexible approach involving mobile units, possibly including forces of a multinational nature.

NATO is of enduring value. But it has its limitations, a function of its mandate and its membership. There are other institutions whose role must be enhanced and transformed.

Central among those is the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. Its membership is comprehensive, encompassing the nations of Europe, North America and the Soviet Union. Its mandate extends across the board.

The role of the CSCE must now be expanded so that it becomes the drawing-board for the new European architecture. As a complement to NATO, the CSCE can become a true instrument of co-operative security, one which would supplement deterrence with reassurance.

Until now, the CSCE has lacked the institutional framework now required for effective and ongoing co-operation and confidence-building.

Canada believes that continuing political direction from the highest level is required. Canada proposes that the CSCE should meet annually at the level of Foreign Ministers and every two years at the level of heads of government. This political body could serve as the beginnings of a council for European co-operation, a future permanent forum for dialogue on pan-European questions.

The CSCE should develop a forum to reflect the increasingly democratic character of its membership. Therefore, we also proposed the establishment of a CSCE assembly where parliamentary delegations from

member states would meet on a regular basis to discuss issues of common concern.

In the security area, the CSCE will have a role in mandating a further round of conventional forces reduction talks. These talks should be conducted among all 35 members of the CSCE, rather than solely the members of NATO and the Warsaw treaty organizations.

The CSCE should also increase its role in verification and confidence-building, and in crisis prevention and conflict resolution. This could involve the creation of a mechanism to facilitate dialogue, to conduct fact-finding investigations if required and to recommend a strategy to resolve crises, whether it be mediation, arbitration or even peacekeeping. If the crisis develops into conflict, the CSCE should initiate mediation activities. These activities could be supported by a permanent institute for the peaceful settlement of disputes which could provide very valuable expertise.

Beyond the security field, the CSCE should build upon the other principles contained in the Helsinki Agreements. The essential structures of democracy should become a common commitment of CSCE members, including the right to free elections and the rule of law. Pluralism should also be legitimized throughout the CSCE process, as should the rights of minorities, freedom of religion and a prohibition on hate propaganda.

In the economic dimension, the CSCE may also have a valuable role in the future, building on the tremendous success of the recent Bonn Economic Conference. It was a success, by the way, because of the participation of a wide range of Canadians, including prominently those from the private sector, who made an important contribution. It should not duplicate existing and effective economic institutions. But there is room for growth in encouraging co-operation and dialogue. I believe a permanent CSCE forum for economic dialogue, supplementing the emerging work in the OECD, is worth very serious consideration.

NATO and the CSCE are complementary institutions in building the new Europe. But there is another institution, the European Community, which is central to Europe's future identity and prosperity.

The European Community is now a welcome and fundamental pillar of the international system. A uniting Europe is an engine of prosperity and a trigger to enhanced trade. Increasing co-operation in the political field and, eventually, the security fields will ensure European consensus and co-ordination in ways which can only enhance international stability.

But, Mr. Speaker, a wall dividing Europe cannot be supplanted by a wall around Europe. Two impermeable blocs cannot be replaced by one new bloc which, whether in trade or security or political matters, is less open to dialogue and co-operation than it is today. The new Europe must be an open Europe, open to the west and open to the east.

Of course, Canada is not a member of the European Community. But we are a trading nation. We have a profound interest in the questions of foreign policy which are increasingly the subject of European political co-operation.

It is for this reason that Canada is now proposing a new, more intense relationship between Canada and the European Community. We are proposing regular meetings between the Prime Minister of Canada and the President of the European Council. These should be supplemented by regular in-depth discussions between the Canadian Foreign Minister and the Foreign Minister of each incoming presidency. There should also be regular meetings between experts on issues of common concern. In addition, we propose that there be an exchange of priorities at the beginning of each presidency which would set the agenda for the upcoming period.

Finally, I was very attracted by the proposal made by West German Minister Hans Dietrich Genscher for an EEC-North American declaration which would confirm shared principles and interests in openness and enhanced co-operation. Mr. Genscher made that proposal when he was recently here in Ottawa. Certainly, a broad reaffirmation of the trans-Atlantic relationship would, in our judgment, be useful.

In trade, the challenge for Canada is acute. The government has already announced its Europe 1992 strategy to help Canadian industry prepare for the opportunity and the demands which the single European

market will present to all traders. However, I also believe there may be virtue at the conclusion of the Uruguay Round of trade negotiations in examining the desirability of a formalized, open trading agreement between Canada and the European Community, perhaps including the United States—or indeed other members of the OECD. We think that would be something worth considering at the end of the Uruguay Round.

A new direction for NATO, an expanded role for the CSCE and an intensified relationship with the European Economic Community—those are the institutional pillars of our new policy toward Europe.

But our policy toward Europe hinges, as does the future of the new Europe itself, on the continued success of the reforms now under way in the Soviet Union and in eastern Europe. Those reforms have a long way to go before promise becomes reality.

That, Sir, if I may say, is part of the reason that it was so important that the public reaction that was evident in the streets of this capital city when Mr. Gorbachev was here sent a message of encouragement and support from the ordinary people of Canada to a man who is undertaking extraordinary and extraordinarily difficult reforms.

When you think of it, the task of simultaneously constructing democracy and an open-market economy, and doing it from the ground up is unprecedented. The west has an abiding interest in seeing the east succeed. That is why Canada has actively supported Soviet integration into the western economic system. That is why the Prime Minister has proposed and other leaders have accepted that the chairman of each Summit meeting will debrief Mr. Gorbachev. That is why we have helped them achieve observer status in the GATT, and why we are looking at other ways in which they can become part of the international economic system. That is why Mr. Shevardnadze thanked me yesterday for Canada's support for Soviet membership in the new European Bank and our support for their observer status in the GATT. That is why, last year, we established a program to assist Poland and Hungary in their efforts at economic reform.

It is time for the international effort, focusing in the first instance on Poland and Hungary, to expand to include the other new democracies emerging from the European revolution of 1989. In the weeks ahead, the 24 countries which co-ordinated the program for Hungary and Poland will meet to broaden that effort to include these other countries. Canada will support that initiative. We will announce our own expanded national program in the short term. Canada is also participating fully in the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

• (1210)

Finally, we have established a Task Force on Central and Eastern Europe which will elaborate the details of our expanded assistance program, administer that program and co-ordinate private and public sector activities. This task force has begun an intensive series of consultations with Canadian groups and individuals, encouraging them to participate financially and in practical, concrete ways—and asking them for their advice on initiatives we might undertake.

Assistance to eastern Europe is not a matter of dumping large amounts of money into the hands of these new governments. What is more important and more effective is the provision of expertise, the training of managers, the training of decision-makers, the teaching of the tools of democracy and the encouragement of private sector investment in specific projects and enterprises.

In this task Canada has an asset available to no other nation. We have our multicultural community. One in ten Canadians is of Soviet or eastern European ancestry. They are a business asset. They are a trading asset for Canada. They know the customs. They know the decision-makers. They know the systems. They know the languages.

We want these Canadians to exercise their natural advantages, to tell us how we can help and how we can do what we do better—and to pursue this opportunity of a lifetime.

The policy I have outlined today addresses a Europe in transition. The policy itself must also evolve with the region it addresses. I look forward to the opportunity to discuss with members of the standing committee their specific proposals as to how that evolution should occur.

Europe is not static, and neither will Canadian policy be static.

Engagement with the new Europe is not a luxury for Canada; it is a necessity for Canada. Canada will be there, as we must, for our own sake, for our own security and for our own prosperity.

[*Translation*]

Hon. André Ouellet (Papineau—Saint-Michel): Mr. Speaker, I think the minister has realized by now that we wanted to give him an opportunity to make the same speech here in the House of Commons that he made on the weekend at Humber College in Toronto. I am pleased to see that he took advantage of today's debate to go over the main component of the policy Canada is developing on the new situation in Europe. I believe it is absolutely essential to put this document before a public forum across this country. I also want to thank the minister for agreeing to continue the dialogue with members of the parliamentary committee who have been discussing what Canada's future policy should be *vis-à-vis* the new Europe.

I would like to ask a short question about the conversations the Secretary of State for External Affairs had with his Soviet counterpart, Mr. Shevardnadze. Did the minister raise the issue of current severe shortage of medical supplies in Lithuania? And could the minister tell us whether the Soviet authorities are prepared to let Canada ship drugs, hypodermics and all kinds of medical equipment that seem to be in very short supply at the present time?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I raised this matter with Mr. Shevardnadze. I said we had reports here in Canada that there was a problem about Canada being able to end medical supplies. I aked Mr. Shevardnadze to give some indication whether Canadians who want to send medical supplies to hospital in the Soviet Union, in Lithuania or elsewhere, would be free to do so. There will, of course, be the usual limitation such as tariffs and things like that, but there will be no unusual obtacles.

Interestingly, Mr. Shevardnadze added there might be other instances where Canadians might wish to send certain items to help certain groups in the Soviet community. He said that if there was a problem, he hoped we could discuss these directly, and he gave me his word that he would be willing to deal with such problems. I think Mr. Shevardnadze's answer was very encouraging, and I believe this is an indication of their determination to have an open and mutually beneficial relationhip between Canada and the Soviet Union.

[*English*]

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona): I have a question on this matter, Mr. Speaker.

The minister repeated the assertion that he has received from Mr. Shevardnadze on a number of occasions that there will be no crackdown.

The point I would like to have the minister respond to is: At what point does a blockade become just another form of a crackdown? It is one thing not to hit people over the head or employ military force, but if at some point they cannot heat their homes, refrigerate their food; if diabetics cannot get insulin; if people who need operations cannot have them, particularly if they are life-saving operations; and if there is a threat of infection, indeed even of epidemic proportion, then this surely must be called a crackdown of a different sort.

I would encourage the government to be as forceful as possible in saying that we, as a country, are not accepting the view that just because there is no military crackdown nothing unacceptable has happened.

I know that the government has protested the blockade, et cetera. I am just saying that it does become a bit strange after a while to be accepting their assurances about a crackdown while, at the same time, knowing what is going on.

I have been in communication with the Minister of Health in Lithuania and with another Lithuanian official from the health department who was here this week. The situation is becoming critical. No one has died yet as a result of these shortages, but this will happen if the blockade is not lifted or if it is not selectively lifted.

If the Soviets want to impress upon the Lithuanians their dependence on Soviet oil, that is one thing, but to create a situation in which diabetics cannot even get proper medication, proper needles, et cetera, is another thing altogether. It is bringing into disrepute the Soviet position with respect to its not wanting to do anything unacceptable in Lithuania.

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question. I know the hon. member in phrasing it, is concerned both to encourage satisfactory development in Lithuania and allow the Soviet Union to maintain the process of reform, something which he so actively supports.

I would make three comments. I agree absolutely that what we are seeking are undertakings of substance, not of semantics.

I cannot answer the question he poses as to when a crackdown becomes a crackdown, but the comments that I made were in the spirit of his question in the House.

Second, I regard it as quite significant that when I raised with Mr. Shevardnadze the concern that had been expressed to me about medical supplies, he said, quite clearly, that there would be no problem with Canadians sending to hospitals, anywhere in the Soviet Union medical supplies where needed. Naturally, I intend to follow that.

As I said to my colleague for Papineau—Saint-Michel, I was also encouraged by the fact that he then went a step further. He said that in the nature of a problem of this kind between the Soviet Union and Lithuania there are going to be other concerns that arise in a country like ours. He gave me his undertaking that he would work personally with me, when those matters were drawn to our attention, first, to see if we could agree that they are serious and, second, if they were, to try to resolve those kinds of obstacles.

Finally, the third point I would like to make on this issue is simply an impression that I have received. It is an impression that I think also reflects some of the public comments of Prime Minister Prunskiene after her meetings with Mr. Gorbachev. I think there is a profound agreement between the leaders of Lithuania and of the Soviet Union on the importance of the reforms the Gorbachev regime has undertaken. Mrs. Prunskiene is among their most active supporters. There is a recognition of a very real dilemma.

• (1220)

My impression—and I can only give it as an impression from the comments I had from the discussions the Prime Minister had with Mr. Gorbachev—is that the Soviets are looking here for some time in which this can be resolved. I found it interesting that yesterday at the airport Mr. Gorbachev made reference to the situation in Caledonia and the fact that that was a situation which evolved over a decade, that it did not evolve in 40 minutes or in a day. I think it is important that we seek further assurances that that is indeed the perspective in which they are approaching the evolution of Lithuania, but if it is, I think that is a far more hopeful sign than others we thought we had seen in recent days.

I hope that we can all maintain as close a co-operation on this issue as we have.

Mr. Joe Comuzzi (Thunder Bay—Nipigon): Mr. Speaker, I want to compliment the Secretary of State for External Affairs for stating his policy in a clear and concise manner in the House.

I would just like to ask what transpired in the discussions over the last few days with our friends from the Soviet Union with respect to grain sales and the grain contracts that will be forthcoming in July, I think it is, of this year. They are so important to the area the minister represents. They are so important to the St. Lawrence Seaway which is a vital transportation link in this country, and they are so important to the ports of Thunder Bay which are perennial winners in these contracts with our friends from the Soviet Union.

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): Mr. Speaker, the Deputy Prime Minister and I and a number of officials had the opportunity yesterday for about two hours to hold very extensive discussions with Mr. Shevardnadze and with Mr. Maslukov, who is the Soviet Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers and intimately involved in their new economic programs, to discuss what they are trying to achieve, what obstacles they see, and how we might help.

As it would not surprise the hon. member, the Deputy Prime Minister, in his capacity as Minister of Agriculture, raised very vigorously the possibility of Canada looking at reasonable credit terms that could stretch over time that would allow the immediate sale of not simply Canadian wheat but potentially Canadian flour and Canadian vegetable oils that could be delivered more quickly to the Soviet Union, particularly to take account of some of the problems they are encountering as a result of the immediate public reaction to reforms that they have introduced.

Senior officials of the Soviet Department of Agriculture are being sent from Moscow and Washington to Ottawa to carry on those discussions under the direction of the Canadian Minister of Agriculture.

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity today to speak to this particular motion. It gives us a rare opportunity to talk at length about Canadian foreign policy in the House. In that respect I would like to begin by commenting on some of the claims made about consultation with members of Parliament or the lack thereof when it comes to the making of foreign policy.

I feel that the minister himself has had an intention, only partially realized, to bring members of Parliament more into the debate on foreign policy and also to take the House more seriously than some previous ministers of foreign policy we have known who tended not to make statements in the House in the way this minister has.

The fact remains that the external affairs committee, and Parliament in general, were seriously and justly aggrieved by the way in which the policy with respect to joining the OAS was arrived at, basically by executive decision with no parliamentary consultation whatsoever. I think what complaints we have as parliamentarians and as an external affairs committee come largely out of that experience and the knowledge that we are confronting a government which has the capacity simply to make a major foreign policy decision just like that, without ever even coming to ask us what we think about it at all. That remains an outstanding grievance.

The member for Papineau—Saint-Michel spoke in his earlier comments about the free trade agreement and other things that are not particularly relevant to the motion. I cannot resist reminding him that the preliminary discussions about the free trade agreement with the American ambassador at the time took place under the auspices of a Liberal government and that one of the main consultative processes with respect to the Canadian economy was headed up by a royal commission appointed by the Liberal government. The person who headed that up was a very prominent Liberal who ignored all the advice that the Liberal party came later to accept, allegedly, and recommended a free trade agreement with the United States. The culpability of the Official Opposition in what it now laments should not go unremarked.

Mr. Milliken: Utter gibberish.

Mr. Blaikie: I touched a nerve there, Mr. Speaker.

The part of the motion that I would like to address myself to first, has to do with a confusion in government policy that I think I have been a part of and may even be partly responsible for in terms of the questions I have asked in the House. That has to do with the confusion between what the Secretary of State for External Affairs appears to be saying about certain kinds of nuclear weapons in Europe and what the Minister of National Defence has said to me in the House just recently about the same matter.

Going from memory with respect to the minister's speech last Saturday, and he repeated it again today, he said: "Does it make much sense any more to have these short-range nuclear weapons which can only be aimed at the peoples of the new democracies in eastern Europe?"

This is a claim and a question shared by a lot of parliamentarians, including myself and many Canadians. It seems to me that when that kind of question is raised in the House we would be much more confident that what the Secretary of State for External Affairs says reflects government policy if the Minister of National Defence did not pour cold water on the idea and instead said something like "Yes, this is something that we see the logic of and we are considering" and so on, instead of giving us the standard NATO line about the mix of weapons that has kept the peace for 45 years, et cetera. You know the lines as well as anyone else.

What we are trying to establish here is whether this is now something that the government is seriously considering? It seems to me that the government, in doing so, could address some of the concerns that the minister has raised here today and some of the concerns that the Prime Minister raised in his speech yesterday in the presence of Mr. Gorbachev, when he spoke about the Soviet Union's security concerns and particularly the nature of and the future of NATO.

One of the ways in which the west, in this case, with some Canadian leadership could demonstrate to the Soviet Union that NATO is on its way either to becoming something else or on its way out, whatever the case may be, would be to make a decision, in this case a Canadian

decision, not to be a part of testing these particular kinds of weapons.

We are talking here not only of the kinds of testing that has gone on so far, cruise missile testing and advanced cruise testing, but also the question of requests that may come in the future if NATO does not change its nature. I am referring now to the tactical air to surface missile and other potentially modernized nuclear weapons that may come into force to replace the ground-based missiles, both the Lance and its successor, which have been cancelled.

By doing that the minister could not only remove a thorn in his side with respect to public opinion and do something for which a lot of people would praise him. He could also give the appropriate signal to the Soviet Union. He could deal both with Canadian public opinion, which is not going to sustain support for NATO if there are not important signals about how NATO is changing its role, and also send an important signal also to the Soviet Union.

• (1230)

I say this also with respect to the question of forward defence which the minister also mentioned, because forward defence, as I understand it, is wrapped up in the whole question of low-level flight training in Labrador. We are at the point where we are no longer debating the location of a new NATO training base in Goose Bay, but the fact remains that all kinds of low-level flights will continue through the existing contracts with various NATO countries to do their low-level flight training there.

A lot of the training that goes on there has to do with the forward defence strategy of NATO. If this is a strategy that the government thinks ought to be phased out or abandoned as a result of the need for changes in NATO's posture, then it could also, it seems to me, show some leadership on this and not just wait until NATO says that they do not want to do this anymore. Canada should be in a position to say that this is something that we do not want to be a part of anymore because we have made the decision that the appropriate signals need to be sent to the Soviet Union and we want the low-level flight training that exists in Labrador over Innu territory to stop now.

Also, Mr. Speaker, with respect to NATO I would like to address the question of Germany in NATO. I listened carefully to what the minister had to say and it seems to me again that the signal that needs to be sent with respect to NATO is that NATO, to the extent that it continues to exist, exists in transition. That is why I was concerned when the minister said that NATO is of enduring value. I do not think any institution is of enduring value, except the church. Nothing else is of enduring value this side of the eschaton. So we should talk about NATO to the extent to which it ought to endure for particular purposes until such time as it can be absorbed into the new security architecture of Europe of which the minister spoke.

In that respect I do not accept the analysis that the CSCE and NATO are complementary institutions. I would have preferred to have heard the minister talking about the CSCE being one of the fora in which we will discover or create or agree upon the new architecture into which NATO will finally be absorbed and eventually disappear as we now know it.

It is a mistake to keep talking about NATO as a complementary or enduring institution without setting it in the context of a process by which you see it evolving into something else or evolving out of existence, because we do not even have the Warsaw Pact anymore, for all intents and purposes.

I would like to refer back to Germany, Mr. Speaker. As I have said before in the House, I think it is a mistake to discuss Germany by asking whether it should be neutral or whether it should it be part of NATO, because both of these ways of speaking about Germany assume a divided Europe. They are both captive to cold war language and cold war thinking in the sense that neutrality means being neutral between some opposite poles. This is what the language of neutrality assumes.

I think this is something that the Soviets have to think about too. It assumes the continuation of some form of polarization in Europe for a long time to come. To talk about Germany in NATO also assumes that same bipolarity. So both these ways of speaking are captive to post-war language. We are looking for post post-war language.

This, again, raises the whole debate about NATO, and about having a Germany in NATO. I accept the argument that it is in everyone's interest not to have a Germany sort of freelancing it economically and politically in Europe. We need to talk about the

institutionalization of the new Germany within a wider European context. I do not think that can be done within NATO itself unless we are talking about a radically different NATO, or a NATO that is on its way to becoming something altogether different, a NATO that is on its way to being absorbed into some other common security structure for Europe, whether it is Vaclav Havel's European peace order or Gorbachev's common European home from the Urals to the Atlantic or, as the minister has now said, from Vancouver to Vladivostok.

I think this is the way we need to be thinking about the future of security arrangements in Europe. I hope that this is what the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for External Affairs have in mind and had in mind yesterday when they were reputed to be trying to find a way to satisfy the Soviet Union's security concerns *vis-à-vis* a Germany in NATO. That can only happen if the NATO we are talking about is fundamentally different in its military and political posture than it is now.

One of the ways in which that posture could be changed significantly would be to accept the recommendations that I have just made with respect to short range nuclear weapons and with respect to forward defence, recommendations which are not out of sync with what the minister appears to be thinking himself. I would hope that at some point the government would be able to make that kind of decision.

The Soviet Union's security concerns are deeply rooted in the psyche in the Soviet people. One of the things that I think struck all members of the External Affairs Committee—and I heard the Prime Minister refer yesterday in his speech to the way it affected him—was when we visited a cemetery in Leningrad where 600,000 people are buried, just in one cemetery. This is only a fraction of the people who were killed in the siege of Leningrad and these people are buried in mass graves of 50 to a grave.

One of the first things the young couples who have just been married in the Soviet Union do is to come to the monument and place flowers. That is not something you notice Canadian couples doing at the cenotaphs across the nation. One can pick up how rooted in the whole Soviet consciousness is the reality of war and the fear of war. I take them seriously when they say they do not want war because I think they know a lot about it. It is not something that we always appreciate here in Canada.

I just have one final comment on this whole NATO issue. We are now looking for a win-win situation in Europe. We do not want a situation in which there is an expanded NATO that keeps its aggressive political and military posture. We do not want an eastern and central Europe that is in a political security vacuum, so to speak, or incorporated in some way into the western community, with an isolated Soviet Union feeling that it has lost its buffer zone between the Soviet Union and Europe. That would result in a situation in which the Soviets lose not only what they won in the war, but become isolated politically, militarily and economically in the sense that the economic reforms are very difficult and will continue to be very difficult. They will be even more difficult if the west, particularly Europe, takes the wrong attitude toward the Soviet Union and simply says that now that there is a united Germany and Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and everybody is coming back into fold, to hell with the Soviets, let them stew in their own juices.

This is an attitude which we noted some people had when we were in Europe. It is a very dangerous attitude to say that we should let a country which has tens of thousands of nuclear weapons stew in its own juices. I do not want to see a country with that kind of military hardware in chaos, whether that chaos is provoked by economic adversity, ethnic rivalry or whatever the case may be. I do not think that would be in anyone's interest.

• (1240)

On the other hand, I think we need to see some of the events in the Soviet Union in a more positive way than they are sometimes portrayed in the media. For instance, just the other day when Boris Yeltsin was elected as head of the Russian Federation the news said that Mr. Gorbachev's "enemy" had been elected. This is Mr. Gorbachev's political opponent. If we are going to accept that we increasingly have democractization and political pluralism in the Soviet Union, we need to begin to speak of political events in the Soviet Union in a way that is much more comparable to the way we speak of events here, and not overly dramatize the fact that people in the Soviet Union do not agree with each other. In case anybody has not noticed, Canadians have not had a particularly great time agreeing with each other either in

the last little while. So again, there is a need to change the way we perceive events in the Soviet Union.

I would like to say a word about the Arctic. We were all concerned to hear when we were there that nuclear testing was being shifted from Kazakhstan to a place called, I think, Severnaya Zemlya in the Arctic. We were even more disturbed to learn, after having looked into it, that tests have gone on there before, for something like 15 years until 1963, and most of them atmospheric tests.

This raises the whole question of a comprehensive test ban and the need for Canada to get much more on board than it has been with the nations of the world that are trying to get a conference together through the auspices of the partial test ban treaty to get a comprehensive test ban treaty. Without that, people will be testing to the north of us and testing to the south of us. We will be party to the accumulation of radioactivity on the planet for no good reason, as far as I am concerned.

I would urge the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for External Affairs to use this new knowledge of what is going on in the Arctic to urge the Americans as well as the Soviets, because the Americans did not respond to the Soviet moratorium on testing when it was in place, to reconsider their views with respect to testing.

Also, naval arms control is an element of the arms race which so far has been neglected. It has not been completely left out of speeches but it has been neglected as far as any real political and international effort is concerned. I met with someone from Greenpeace just yesterday and I know that this is going to become more and more a focus of the peace movement in Canada, and rightfully so. I think that the minister can properly respond to this by using every opportunity that he gets to get naval arms control on to the arms control agenda. If we succeed in doing everything else and have the ocean teeming with submarines which are hard to verify and hard to detect but full of multiple nuclear warheads, we have not exactly increased the safety of the planet.

I see you making funny movements, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The funny movement is that your time has more than expired. I will have to ask for unanimous consent to allow the hon. member extra time. Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Blaikie: I will just wrap things up, and you know how quickly I wrap things up, Mr. Speaker, right to the point.

The question of the peace dividend has been addressed by many people. We have to seize the opportunity in Europe and elsewhere to turn this new era for international co-operation and common security into a way of diverting massive resources which have been consumed for decades now in the building up of arms to the cause of saving the environment and to the cause of bringing the Third World out of the debt ridden and other negative economic circumstances in which it finds itself.

We need to liberate those resources which have so far been captive to the arms race, not because it is a luxury, to use the words of the Secretary of State for External Affairs, but because it is a necessity. It is the only way that, as the human community, we are going to climb out of this hole that we have dug ourselves into over the last 40 years through the arms race, through environmental degradation, and through a global economic system that continues to disadvantage the Third World. We can either climb out of this hole or it can become our grave.

Governments, and particularly Secretaries of State for External Affairs, have tremendous responsibilities, but Canadian Secretaries of State for External Affairs have even more responsibility. Because of the reputation that Canada has in the world and because of the stature we have, we need not to just be peacekeepers, but peacemakers in the final analysis.

I think this new time in which we find ourself in history is an opportunity for Canada to really break out of the mould we have been in, to seize some elements of our tradition that are worthy in terms of external affairs, and to really get about the business of saying the things that need to be said about the way the world has to be changed and of helping those things to happen to the fullest extent possible. If that means being at odds with our friends or with anyone else in the world, then so be it, that is something we do for the sake of the future.

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I will make three very brief comments if I might. First, on the comprehensive test ban, I agree with the aspirations of the hon. member. Our disagreement with respect to the conference is whether or not that conference would be productive or counterproductive. But despite our reservation about that, we will be present at the conference and our representatives, and our ambassador will be there with

instructions to do everything Canada can to make it constructive.

Second, I want to assure the member and the House that not only is the government considering the evolution of SNF policy to which I referred, but so is NATO as a whole. It was discussed at the recent meetings at Kananaskis in Canada. It was discussed at the meetings my colleague, the Minister of National Defence, attended in Brussels last week and it will be on the agenda in Turnberry, Scotland, for a NATO meeting on Wednesday of next week.

We will take part in those discussions, not by removing Canada from the alliance consensus, but rather by trying to shape and affect that alliance consensus. I repeat that I understand precisely what the hon. member is saying about Soviet attitudes. He said it eloquently and effectively. They need to have proof that the changes we are talking about in NATO are happening in fact. I think an opportunity for that to occur is the summit of NATO leaders that has been scheduled for early July in London. Certainly, the Prime Minister and our government are looking to that summit to try to give evidence of some of those kinds of changes.

Finally, on the question of the future of NATO, we believe very strongly and we talk deliberately about the two institutions being complementary. We think that NATO will be necessary and important for as far ahead as we can see. I do not want to get into discussions with a theologian about what is enduring and what is not. I would be interested and look forward to the opportunity to carry on discussions with the hon. member about that issue.

The point I would make is that obviously institutions can force and shape events, but it is very important that institutions not get so far ahead of events that they lose their effectiveness or that actions which are taken designed to be constructive have the opposite effect.

• (1250)

Mr. Blaikie: Mr. Speaker, just to expand on the point I was trying to make about NATO's behaviour and posture, I think the minister in his remarks reflected that for the longest time we were wondering in the west whether the changes in the Soviet Union were real. I think everyone has come to accept that they are real. I think that the Soviet Union is in a similar position, only they are not quite at the point where they can believe that the changes in the attitude of the west toward them is real. I am suggesting to the minister ways in which we can convince them of this.

The minister uses the familiar argument that Canada wants to shape policy, et cetera, and not act on its own. The point that I would make in return is, why can the government not at least go so far as to say that it thinks that the testing and deployment of these particular weapons would be wrong and it is the Canadian goal to persuade our NATO partners that it is. Other NATO countries have done this over the years. They have taken positions. They may not win the argument, but they have made it clear to their own public what their position is. The public is much more ready to understand failure to persuade others than failure to take a position.

I say this with respect to the need for a continuing Canadian role in Europe. I accept the minister's analysis on that in so far as it is a claim that Canada cannot afford not to be related to Europe. I have this concern as a result of the increasing Americanization of Canada's relationships through the OAS, through the free trade agreement, et cetera.

I would like to see Canada maintain a relationship with Europe in order to balance some of the other foreign policy measures that the government itself has taken. But leaving that aside for a minute, continuing Canadian public support for a Canadian role in the new Europe is only going to exist to the extent that the Canadian public feels that that involvement in Europe is different from and goes beyond the old involvement. Right now I am sure that if you took a poll on whether we should take Canadian troops out of Europe and on policies such as those, they would get a lot of support.

If the minister is looking for continued public support for a Canadian role in Europe, he has to demonstrate to the Canadian public that our role is fundamentally different than what it has been up to this point. I do not think he has done that yet.

[*Translation*]

Hon. André Ouellet (Papineau—Saint-Michel): Mr. Speaker, I think that my colleague and friend from the New Democratic Party raised an extremely important point concerning the future role, indeed the very existence, of NATO. If we follow the line of reasoning used by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, it seems obvious to me that NATO existed and had a military rationale when we faced an enemy; if, to use the minister's own terms, the Poles, Czechs, Hungarians and East Germans are now our friends and no longer a threat to us, the fundamental question we must now ask is whether we should continue to pretend or think that the Russians are still our enemies. In light of the Conservative government's initiatives, of the Prime Minister's visit to the Soviet Union, of the signing of 14 agreements, of President Gorbachev's visit here, I think that we should not consider the Soviets to be our enemies.

The basic issue is what NATO's present and future role should be. I know that the members of NATO insist that all alliance members act together in a co-ordinated fashion. The minister's reply to the question and comments of my New Democratic colleague was that the Canadian government did not want to isolate itself from its NATO partners. Again, I think that is a very conservative position. The government should have the courage to stand out and break new ground very clearly. I make these comments in light of Mr. Gorbachev's statements yesterday when he made a stern warning about a unified Germany. President Gorbachev warned the western allies that excessive pressure to bring a reunified Germany into NATO could compromise the new East-West relationship. NATO is certainly a major military and psychological barrier to the new friendly relations between East and West.

I would like the hon. member to say what he thinks the Canadian government's new attitude should be to these new developments in Eastern Europe in particular.

[*English*]

Mr. Blaikie: Mr. Speaker, I think in many respects I answered that question throughout the course of my speech. The Canadian position should be one of seizing new opportunities to have an independent policy within the limits that the government sees for itself in terms of its own policy obviously.

I do not accept the view that it can be a matter of policy never to disagree or never to take an independent position. The government might take independent positions that I do not even agree with, but I do not think it can be a policy not to have an independent position and to always only take the positions that when one takes totally in concert with others and totally behind closed doors, so to speak.

I think the minister has moved in that direction with the speech he gave on Saturday. I hope this is a sign of things to come. In the meantime, he has a problem with the Minister of National Defence, who does not seem to have cottoned on to this way of thinking. I would hope that very soon we will hear the government speaking with one voice and that one voice will be speaking in the new direction of the new thinking of the Secretary of State for External Affairs and not the standard old NATO routine that we still get from the Minister of Defence.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): It being one o'clock, I do now leave the chair until two o'clock this day.

At 1 p.m. the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S. O. 31

[*Translation*]

TRIBUTE TO THE HON. MEMBER FOR OUTREMONT

Mrs. Marie Gibeau: Mr. Speaker, I am rising today to pay tribute to our colleague, the hon. member for Outremont, who was presented this morning with the 1990 Annual Merit Award of the Professional Corporation of Psychologists of Quebec for his "outstanding contribution to the development of psychology".

[*English*]

To mark the outstanding leadership of the member for Outremont in the field of industrial organizational psychology in the province of Quebec, as well as his numerous initiatives and accomplishments, which have contributed to the emulation of his colleagues' vocation

and just as his dissemination has added prestige to the profession and enhanced the image of the psychologist, the administrators of the Corporation of Professional Psychologists of Quebec adopted to award him the 1990 annual merit prize.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, all of us in this House are proud of our colleague and congratulate him on this well-deserved award. You are a credit to our profession as parliamentarians.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

* * *

[*English*]

WORLD NO-TOBACCO DAY

Ms. Lynn Hunter (Saanich—Gulf Islands): Mr. Speaker, today we celebrate World No-Tobacco Day. Tobacco is the leading cause of preventable disease in the world today. The World Health Organization estimates that if present tobacco use trends continue, 150 million children alive today will eventually die of tobacco induced diseases.

The theme of World No-Tobacco Day this year is "Growing Up Without Tobacco". It is essential that our children be protected from the detrimental effects of tobacco on their health. The vast majority of smokers in Canada started smoking in their teens. If we can prevent young people from starting to smoke, then one day we can eliminate tobacco from our society altogether.

The tobacco industry is attempting to encourage smoking by young people by packaging cigarettes in smaller and cheaper "kiddy packs", and most recently by developing a new type of do-it-yourself cigarette that, through a federal tax loophole, is taxed at a lower rate.

I urge the federal government to protect our young people by prohibiting the sale of tobacco to minors and by introducing measures to control vending machines which give children easy access to this deadly drug.

Our children's health and lives are more important than the profits of the tobacco industry.

S. O. 31

WORLD NO-TOBACCO DAY

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, the World Health Organization has designated May 31 as World Wide Day Without Tobacco. This year WHO is focusing on the threat to the health of children and youth and has chosen "Growing Up Without Tobacco" as the slogan for the day.

A quote from *Travel Through the Interior Parts of North America* in 1789 is indeed appropriate:

> They are seldom or ever found without a pipe in their mouths, a habit which they acquire in their very infancy. I was very much surprised upon going into one of their houses, in which there was a large family, mostly boys, to find that from the youngest up to the father, they all smoked; nay, one of three years old had a pipe in his mouth.

We have come a long way since 1789 in terms of health care and health promotion, but we still battle the health effects of tobacco smoking, even in 1990.

According to a U.S. study,"over 25 per cent of high school seniors, whoever smoked, had their first cigarette by Grade 6, over 57 per cent had their first cigarette by Grade 8 and 94 per cent had their first cigarette by Grade 11".

In 1988, "more than 35,000 Canadians died prematurely from diseases caused by tobacco". I would hope that the No-Tobacco Day will help raise the consciousness of our young people as it is much easier to not start smoking than it is to quit smoking.

* * *

MUSEUMS

Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the people of Parrsboro and Cumberland County I want to recognize the efforts of the minister for culture, the Minister of Communications, the President of the Treasury Board and the Minister of Public Works who have arrived at a cost-sharing formula to provide the federal portion of funding for the fossil museum project in Parrsboro, Nova Scotia.

In conjunction with ACOA these three federal departments will provide federal funding to allow the project to proceed which, in turn, will be the foundation of a tourist industry. It will eliminate the need to send our unique fossils to the United States for research and it will provide employment in an area of limited opportunity. In

my view, this will be the best investment the federal government ever made.

* * *

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Len Taylor (The Battlefords—Meadow Lake): Mr. Speaker, I am concerned about the Canadian tourism industry and about the effect this government's policies, especially the pending goods and services tax, are having on the industry.

On May 28, in the consumer and corporate affairs committee a representative of the tourism industry of Canada said the industry will be heavily damaged by the implementation of the GST. Prices for hotels, restaurants, entertainment and sporting activities as well as tour packages will be forced up, causing fewer international travellers to choose Canada as a destination and pushing Canadians who want to travel on their holidays into the lower-priced U.S. tourism market.

He also said the industry was estimating a reduction of more than 25,000 tourism related jobs by 1993 because of the GST.

Mr. Speaker, since tourism means so much to the future of Canadian regional economies, like the one I represent in northwest Saskatchewan, I call on the government to scrap immediately the GST and provide the leadership and the support requested by those in this vital and potentially vibrant industry.

* * *

CANADIAN FIREFIGHTERS

Mr. Patrick Boyer (Etobicoke–Lakeshore): Mr. Speaker, drawing a line to determine eligibility is always difficult, but in the case of Canadian firefighters the disqualification of those who retired before August 29, 1985, from receiving the Exemplary Service Medal seems particularly unfair.

Creation of this medal was highly appropriate yet efforts to "grandfather" those who retired before 1985 has so far met no positive response from Government House. As a result some firefighters refuse to wear their medals, others have even returned theirs.

For this reason I have just tabled a motion, seconded by 20 other Progressive Conservative MPs and supported by many more, seeking the opinion of this House that the Governor General amend the regulations so firefighters with exemplary service who retired before 1985 may also be awarded such decorations.

* * *

BELL NORTHERN RESEARCH

Mrs. Beryl Gaffney (Nepean): Mr. Speaker, congratulations are in order for Bell Northern Research. BNR recently completed a $30 million optoelectronics laboratory. This is one of the most advanced in the world and largest in Canada.

Construction of a $100 million laboratory expansion at Bell Northern Research's world headquarters in Nepean begins this summer. The facility will bring together some 4,400 BNR staff and will create a critical mass of research and development expertise unparalleled in the corporation's history.

BNR is already the world leader in several different areas, including the design and development of advanced telecommunications systems, microelectronics, photonics, digital systems and software. Four of the main product lines of the parent company, Northern Telecom, are number one world-wide and others are rising fast.

I am proud to say that BNR is located in Nepean and I am sure all Canadians are doubly proud of BNR's commitment to continued global product leadership through cost-efficient, market-focused research and development.

* * *

[*Translation*]

RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Mr. Guy Saint-Julien (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, on May 28, the Prime Minister signed, on behalf of the Government of Canada, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in the presence of the UN Secretary General.

This convention was adopted by the UN General Assembly on November 20, 1989 after 10 years of preparation. It represents major progress in the protection of children's rights since it contains a number of general essential provisions which guarantee that their basic needs and interests will be addressed. It also

provides for the protection of children in particularly difficult circumstances.

By signing the convention after actively participating in its development, Canada is confirming its support for this global cause.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Prime Minister of Canada as well as the provinces and territories for supporting the ratification of this Convention by Canada.

* * *

• (1410)

[*English*]

THE ECONOMY

Ms. Catherine Callbeck (Malpeque): Mr. Speaker, residents of Canada's smallest province would like to add their voices to those of the 72 per cent of Canadians who oppose this government's high interest rate policy.

Even at the best of times when interest rates are low, the Prince Edward Island economy is not all that strong and annual growth is unsteady. If you take away a major employer, like CFB Summerside, the economy really gets hurt. Add high interest rates and the situation could very well become critical. Farmers, fishermen, small business people and all Islanders, in one way or another, are affected by the hefty increase in the price of money which this government has allowed to take place.

I urge the government, on behalf of all Islanders who oppose this high interest rate policy, to see the financial and human toll its actions are taking and to finally act in this country's national interest.

* * *

WORLD NO-TOBACCO DAY

Mrs. Edna Anderson (Simcoe Centre): Mr. Speaker, today is World No-Tobacco Day, a day organized by the World Health Organization to promote the idea of a world free from tobacco use.

Canada has been exceptionally active in instituting and implementing a national strategy to reduce tobacco use. As a result of this program, which includes increased taxes and implementation of two significant pieces of legislation, the Tobacco Products Control Act and the Non-Smokers' Health Act, tobacco consumption in Canada has declined by 6.8 per cent in 1989 and by over 20 per cent during the first third of 1990.

The former Minister of National Health and Welfare, the Hon. Jake Epp, is to be awarded the Award of Excellence for exceptional leadership in creating a tobacco-free Canada by the Canadian Council on Smoking and Health.

On World No-Tobacco Day, Canada can rightfully claim its place as a world leader in the control of tobacco use.

* * *

CORE AREA INITIATIVES PROGRAMS

Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, I am disappointed in the member for Portage—Interlake. He condemned the Core Area Initiatives Programs without really knowing a great deal about them. If he had stopped to study them, he would realize that there are programs there to improve the educational and career aspects of natives, multicultural and multiracial groups, young children, senior and elementary students with literacy problems. These programs will be cut unless this initiative is renewed. This is going to be cut during the International Year of Literacy which I find completely appalling.

[*Translation*]

How very hypocritical, cutting programs this year! And the attack against the weakest and most destitute Canadians goes on. These programs should be re-instated immediately.

* * *

[*English*]

CORPORATE TAXATION

Mr. John R. Rodriguez (Nickel Belt): Mr. Speaker, the corporate welfare bum of the week features this week a two-time nominee, Alcan Aluminum Limited. Alcan paid only $39 million in federal taxes in 1987 after profits of $433 million and received a $6 million tax credit on $270 million in profits in 1986.

The second nominee is Goodyear Canada which got a tax credit of $1.4 million on $11 million in 1988.

The third nominee is Fletcher Challenge Finance which paid no tax in 1988 on profits of $24 million.

Now, for the winner. The envelope, please. And the winner is Alcan Aluminum. Alcan chief executive officer, David Culver, who led the corporate sector to fight for the free trade deal, made $1.4 million in 1988. Alcan found plenty of money to get the trade deal and to pay Mr. Culver, but not to pay its fair share of federal taxes. This makes Alcan the corporate welfare bum of the week.

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport): Mr. Speaker, according to the latest Gallup poll, 54 per cent of Canadians are willing to pay a $100 income tax surcharge to help protect the environment.

This is good news for it indicates that there is a high level of public concern. The bad news is that the government might try to exploit the public's concern by levying an unnecessary green tax.

If the government had considered the environment in the tax reform process, there would be no need even to contemplate an environmental surcharge. Instead of the regressive GST, Canada should have a progressive tax system to encourage green consumption and production and to cut pollution.

It is not easy to be green, but so far the government has not even tried. When will the Minister of Finance see the green light?

* * *

COMMENTS BY MEMBER

Mr. Brian Tobin (Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte): Mr. Speaker, the statements made recently by the member for Saint-Maurice regarding the premier and the people of Newfoundland were unfortunate. I will not repeat the words here. It would serve no useful purpose.

Indeed, there is no place for that kind of language in a great national debate. The words were spoken with emotion and with anger. I want to say that the member for Saint-Maurice has demonstrated today the courage and decency required to apologize to the premier and the people of Newfoundland for those remarks.

I have known the member as a colleague on the transport committee for six years. I know the remarks he made were out of character for him, and I accept his apology.

With the national debate that will be ongoing in the days ahead, it is understanding and sensitivity that we must demonstrate for each other and to each other, not emotion and anger.

I hope the quick apology by the member for Saint-Maurice and the quickly accepted apology by the premier and I believe the people of Newfoundland for those words are an example to the nation and in particular the first ministers as they begin their important deliberations this weekend and in the days ahead.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[*English*]

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Acting Prime Minister.

Today, the Minister of National Revenue unveiled a totally new proposal for collecting the GST from certain small businesses. In doing so the minister in effect admitted that the government's original proposal was an administrative nightmare for small business. In fact it was totally unworkable, but this proposal today does not really change any of that.

Under this plan the government wants to collect GST of up to 1.75 per cent from some grocery and convenience stores on all their sales. How can the government continue to say it is not taxing food when it wants to collect from some grocery and convenience stores a flat rate GST on all their sales including basic groceries?

Hon. Pierre Blais (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Minister of State (Agriculture)): Mr. Speaker, I think the Leader of the Opposition should read carefully the documents that were presented this morning by the Minister of National Revenue.

There is no way that food will be taxed, as the hon. member said. The fact of the matter is that some stores have only a proportion, from 25 per cent to 50 per cent, of food. We worked very hard to bring together figures and data to make sure we can help 800,000 small businesses to work in a better way with the GST. I think it

is good news for small businesses. We have consulted those businesses and they are onside with us.

• (1420)

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, what the Minister of National Revenue said outside the House and what the minister just said in the House is still not good news for consumers, because you will notice the minister did not say categorically that food would not be taxed. There is nothing in the proposal today to prevent any retailer covered by it from marking up all the inventory on his shelves by an amount equal to the GST that will be collected.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, the government now tells us it intends to tax all goods sold in certain grocery and convenience stores, including foodstuffs.

So I am asking the minister whether he is prepared to admit that this new project is tantamount to slapping a tax on food?

Hon. Pierre Blais (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Minister of State (Agriculture)): Absolutely not, Mr. Speaker.

This is nothing more than a simplified process which has long been known to apply to stores whose sales do not exceed $500,000—

Mr. Fontana: What a bunch of bull! How can you believe what you say?

Mr. Blais: I wish my colleague would let me conclude my remarks. I was saying they will be able—

Mr. Fontana: Stop throwing bull and we might listen to you.

Mr. Blais: Because the government did listen to small businesses from coast to coast. We listened to small businesses telling us they had to have a simpler process to calculate the tax. Mr. Speaker, this simplified process will apply to stores where a given percentage of goods are subject to the 7 per cent tax.

In light of the surveys we made and the figures we have, we know it is possible to make it easier for these businesses to pay the taxes they collect to the government.

I might add that my colleague, the Minister of National Revenue, is meeting with the Retail Council of Canada in Toronto. They are quite satisfied and approve of this measure taken by the government, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, again the minister has failed to even mention the Canadian consumer.

[*English*]

The proposal of the Minister of National Revenue today will not make the GST any easier for Canadians generally. They will still have to pay 7 per cent more on just about everything they buy.

What is worse is that businesses opting for the new scheme are being told by the Minister of National Revenue that they will not have to show the GST on their sales receipts or anywhere.

What happened to the government's commitment to visibility? Why is the government even ceasing to try to have the tax visible? Why is the government proposing a band-aid solution for an unfair tax that even major surgery cannot save? Why will the government not scrap this tax and go back to the drawing-board?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Pierre Blais (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Minister of State (Agriculture)): Mr. Speaker, what is particularly visible right now is the hypocrisy of the opposition parties who refuse to admit that the 13.5 per cent tax which has been levied for years was invisible.

Canadians are now beginning to appreciate this government measure which has rallied the support of the Retail Council of Canada and the Consumers' Association of Canada, Mr. Speaker. The consumer can see that the government is acting in the interest of all Canadians and that the opposition parties are behaving like hypocrites.

Mr. Alfonso Gagliano (Saint-Léonard): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister.

The Minister of National Revenue has just admitted today that the GST is an administrative nightmare and that the government will be unable to collect it. How will convenience stores decide which GST rate is to apply to basic foodstuffs whether it is 1.75 per cent or 1 per cent?

Why does the government continue to make life difficult for the people who are creating most jobs in Canada?

Hon. Pierre Blais (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Minister of State (Agriculture)): Mr. Speaker, the measure which the government announced this morning was developed following consultations with small businesses across Canada. Far from being a nightmare, it is a dream. If my hon. friend took the time the check the documents which were distributed to all hon. members and which are now in his office, he would realize that it is meant to make computation a lot simpler. Mr. Speaker, it had been understood since last August that, following these consultations, we would take into account the representations made by the retail industry, and this is exactly what we are doing now.

By filing a simplified form, small businesses will find it a lot easier to submit a report every three months on the tax collected and send the money to the government.

It is a very simple process which the hon. member should be able to grasp.

[*English*]

Mr. Alfonso Gagliano (Saint-Léonard): Mr. Speaker, when the Minister of Finance announced the GST he said that it was very important that the new tax be simple.

If the GST is a simple tax, why did the Minister of National Revenue today announce a flat tax rate method to remit the GST? Why does the government not listen to John Bulloch, President of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business who said: "Scrap the GST"?

Hon. Pierre Blais (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs) and Minister of State (Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I would like to provide some figures. It will be very easy for small businesses with sales less than $500,000. If they have more than 50 per cent of their sales—

Mr. Gagliano: Who will calculate the 50 per cent?

Mr. Blais: If the member would allow me to answer, it is very—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: When questions are asked, answers are expected and answers have to be allowed. The hon. minister.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Blais: Mr. Speaker, I realize that for a government which never knew how to administer public finances, the difference between 25 per cent and 50 per cent in food sales may be difficult to understand. These people never knew the very basics of government administration. They find it difficult to understand. To conclude, may I say that small businesses told us what they wanted. We have responded today, and the Retail Council of Canada agrees and is most satisfied with the measure taken today.

* * *

[*English*]

TRADE

Ms. Dawn Black (New Westminster—Burnaby): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister.

On March 19, the Prime Minister said in a speech to Commonwealth Caribbean leaders that he was keenly interested in the possibility of establishing a textile outward processing facility.

According to press reports today the Prime Minister continues to take a personal interest in giving away Canadian jobs in our textile industry—these are women's jobs, immigrant women's jobs—to other countries.

Will the Deputy Prime Minister today reassure these women that their jobs will not be given away, will not be sacrificed on the altar of the Prime Minister's trade agenda?

Hon. John McDermid (Minister of State (Privatization and Regulatory Affairs)): Mr. Speaker, absolutely, we can make that commitment. I might say that the recent report of the Canadian International Trade Tribunal which came down on tariffs on textiles in fact has helped the garment industry or will help the garment industry as those tariffs are brought down to a lower level. That was one of the major considerations taken into that report.

The answer is: yes, we will assure that the garment industry remains viable in Canada and that those much needed jobs are there.

Ms. Dawn Black (New Westminster—Burnaby): Mr. Speaker, the minister's response leaves me rather confused because it was only on March 19 that the Prime Minister made these remarks.

Many of these women are very proud of their jobs, and the Prime Minister does seem willing to give them away to other countries. If the Prime Minister has his way the alternative will be lower paying jobs, less satisfying jobs, or no jobs at all for these very vulnerable women.

How can the minister profess to be working for the best interests of immigrant women and yet, they are the first ones on the first line of attack when this government wants to give jobs away out of the Canadian market into the foreign market?

• (1430)

Hon. John McDermid (Minister of State (Privatization and Regulatory Affairs)): Mr. Speaker, first of all, the hon. member is basing her question on a newspaper article which I read today which does not name any federal official or say where the report is coming from, so to comment on something on like that would be foolish.

The Prime Minister of this country, in 1984, promised jobs, jobs, jobs. There have been 1,600,000 new jobs created in this country in that period of time, 60 per cent of which went to women, and 85 per cent of which are full time. That is performance.

Mr. David Barrett (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca): Mr. Speaker, is the minister denying that the federal government is now preparing terms of reference for a formal study into a system similar to the controversial U.S. system of shipping parts for assembly plants in the Maquiladora related to the garment industry? Is the minister denying that such a study is being prepared by this government?

Hon. John McDermid (Minister of State (Privatization and Regulatory Affairs)): Mr. Speaker, I am personally not aware of any study of this sort, no.

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, it may very well be true that the hon. minister is not aware of it, but surely somebody in the government can give us an answer, and perhaps I can direct my question to the Deputy Prime Minister.

Can he confirm that the government, on the instructions of the Prime Minister, is preparing a reference to the International Trade Tribunal that would recommend a form of Maquiladora system which would in effect shift the jobs in the garment industry to the low wage jobs in the Caribbean specifically in the sewing area, but keeping the cutting jobs for males in that industry here in Canada.

Can we get some verification, some establishment of what is the government's position and what it intends to do about this problem. Let us get some answers on the table.

Hon. John McDermid (Minister of State (Privatization and Regulatory Affairs)): Mr. Speaker, if such a paper is being prepared, it would be referred to the Canadian International Trade Tribunal which would hold public hearings and give Canadians input into any discussions that were going on, if that was being undertaken at this time. Canadians from all walks of life, including the garment industry, would have ample opportunity to make representation on it, like they did when they studied the tariff schedules on textiles here in Canada.

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, I simply want to say to the minister that he does not understand. This kind of proposal is creating enormous uncertainty for 120,000 workers in the garment industry in Canada, in particular when one considers that there is a real gender split between those women, mainly immigrant women, who work in the sewing part of the business, and those who work in the cutting part of business.

We simply want to know to end the uncertainty. Is the government proposing that kind of deal to set up a Maquiladora system in the Caribbean? If so, is it going to consult with the unions and the workers involved to give them some assurance that their jobs will not be lost and that they will not be thrown on the scrap heap like the government has thrown so many other workers under the FTA.

Hon. John McDermid (Minister of State (Privatization and Regulatory Affairs)): Mr. Speaker, we know the hon. member is still fighting the FTA. He lost that battle, but is still fighting that one.

Let me answer him directly by saying, yes. All those people would be given an opportunity to comment and make representation if such a proposal came forward. Absolutely, they would be given the opportunity.

* * *

[*Translation*]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Hon. André Ouellet (Papineau—Saint-Michel): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State for External Affairs. Yesterday, President Gorbachev warned the Western Allies that excessive pressure to have a reunified Germany join NATO could seriously jeopardize the new East-West relations. I suggest that Canada should be sensitive to the Soviet position and try to present a new and original Western counter-proposal. The minister is certainly aware that Messrs. Genscher and Mitterand have both drawn different scenarios.

Could the minister tell the House what he thinks of them and whether he is now convinced of the need to develop a new compromise which is not exactly what the West has been proposing since the discussions started concerning a reunified Germany?

[*English*]

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I think there is no question that there is very evident concern on the part of the Soviet Union, the people and the Government of the Soviet Union, with regard to some of the external implications of the unification of Germany.

As the Prime Minister said yesterday in his remarks at the luncheon with Mr. Gorbachev, it is important that those sensitivities be understood and be responded to.

It is our considered view, that an important step toward resolving that question would be for NATO to take actions that demonstrated that the reform in NATO that we have been talking about is in fact being achieved. That path is being pursued and was pursued by colleague the Minister of National Defence and his colleagues during recent meetings both in Kananaskis in Canada and in Brussels. They were discussed yesterday by Mr. Gorbachev and the Prime Minister. They were discussed today in the debate provoked by the hon. member's motion.

We believe that those kind of actions, if they are reflected in the summit meeting on NATO in early July in London, can make it more possible for the concerns of the Soviet Union, which we understand, to be met.

[*Translation*]

Hon. André Ouellet (Papineau—Saint-Michel): Mr. Speaker, I have another question for the minister on another aspect of the discussions between President Gorbachev and the Prime Minister of Canada. It concerns Lithuania.

Yesterday, President Gorbachev said that the USSR would solve the Lithuanian crisis in its own way, which did not exclude the strictest measures. Does this mean that the Canadian government asked the Soviets to lift the economic blockade which, as we know, was decreed over a month ago? Might the President have rejected this suggestion?

[*English*]

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, there are two comments that I can make that may be helpful on this question.

Both the Prime Minister and I raised very directly the question of the approach of the Soviet Union to Lithuania and indeed to the Baltic States.

Mr. Shevardnadze said to me, as I reported earlier to the House, that it was the intention of the Soviet Union to resolve all disagreements by political means, whether those were disagreements concerning matters they regarded as internal or external. That was a comment made in the context of the discussion of Lithuania.

I raised with Mr. Shevardnadze the question as to whether or not there was a blockade particularly of medical supplies. He said he thought there was no blockade but he gave me the understanding that if Canadians wanted to send medical supplies to any hospital anywhere in the Soviet Union, including in Lithuania, there would be no unusual obstacles put in the path.

He went on to say, and I appreciated it particularly, that if other concerns of this kind regarding commodities other than medical supplies arose that he thought the quickest way to deal with them would be for himself and myself to establish an arrangement by which I would

bring those concerns directly to his attention and he would try to have them resolved.

* * *

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Howard McCurdy (Windsor—St. Clair): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister.

The Toronto Better Business Bureau, supported by the Vancouver Better Business Bureau, have said that the Government of Canada is using radio advertising to hawk its GST which they describe as false and misleading and of a kind that would not be tolerated in private enterprise.

When is this government going to stop behaving like a snake-oil salesman, withdraw these ads and be honest with the Canadian people?

Hon. John McDermid (Minister of State (Privatization and Regulatory Affairs)): Mr. Speaker, I read Mr. Paul Tuz's letter and accusations with great interest. It is obvious, after reading what he has written, that he does not understand the manufacturers' sales tax that we have in this country today, how it operates, and how people in the service industry are paying that tax and passing it on to the consumer. There is a manufacturers' sales tax in the service industry.

What we are saying in our newspaper advertising and our radio advertising, which is not misleading, is that we are replacing the manufacturers' sales tax with a federal sales tax. We are replacing one with the other. It is not a new tax.

• (1440)

Mr. Howard McCurdy (Windsor—St. Clair): Mr. Speaker, this minister is no more likely to fool me than the rest of Canada when he says that there is no new tax, no additional tax.

I want to know who would buy a used car from a government that says a new tax is not a new tax, that new revenues are not new revenues, that new taxables are not new taxables? When is the government going to come clean and give the true story to the Canadian people, at least not try to fool them?

Hon. John McDermid (Minister of State (Privatization and Regulatory Affairs)): Mr. Speaker, unlike the New Democratic Party, the Conservative Party will never nationalize the auto industry, so they will not have to buy used cars from us. They would from the NDP though, that is for sure.

Mrs. Diane Marleau (Sudbury): Mr. Speaker, two weeks ago we rose in the House and we asked the government to withdraw its misleading radio advertisements on the GST.

My question is directed to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. Today, the Better Business Bureaus in Toronto and Vancouver, are also asking that the government withdraw these ads, calling these ads offensive and inaccurate. They have now sent a letter to the CRTC asking that they take action to have an extremely misleading advertisement removed from the Canadian airwaves.

Will the minister take action and withdraw these offensive and inaccurate ads?

Hon. John McDermid (Minister of State (Privatization and Regulatory Affairs)): Once again the Liberals have been scooped by the NDP. But the answer is no, we will not withdraw those ads because they are accurate, we stand behind them, we are prepared to give accurate information to the Canadian public, and that is what we are doing.

Mrs. Diane Marleau (Sudbury): Mr. Speaker, I do not know about scoops, but I stood here two weeks ago and asked the same question.

The minister does not listen, the government does not listen to Canadians. Why are Canadians forced to pay millions and millions of dollars for misleading and offensive GST propaganda?

Hon. John McDermid (Minister of State (Privatization and Regulatory Affairs)): First, it is not misleading. Second, the Canadian people have indicated to us loud and clear that they want information.

We get about 7,000 calls a day on the line asking for information on the GST and we are prepared to give it to them. No, we are not going to withdraw the ads at all. As a matter of fact, we are going to continue to accurately inform the Canadian public on the GST. Somebody has to tell the truth.

[*Translation*]

IMMIGRATION

Mr. Mark Assad (Gatineau—La Lièvre): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Employment and Immigration, perhaps I could put my question to the Minister of External Affairs, since he had the personnel in Cyprus increased. For the first time, Christian, Moslem and Lebanese religious leaders representing a dozen denominations, Mr. Speaker, are joining together, which is unprecedented, to plead for the refugees. I therefore ask the minister whether it would be possible to reconsider re-establishing the special Lebanese program, which was interrupted in 1987, and to increase the staff at the immigration bureau in Cyprus.

Hon. Marcel Danis (Minister of State (Youth), Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question. I would answer him, though, that Canada is the only country to have taken special measures to help its citizens bring their relatives from Lebanon. We are the only country. Since these measures took effect, more than 18,000 Lebanese have arrived in Canada.

Compared to other countries, Canada provides the most services to meet the needs of Lebanese arriving in Cyprus. Up to March 22, 1990, visa officers in Cyprus had issued 6,041 immigrant visas, 709 visitor visas and 195 ministerial permits.

I think that Immigration Canada has done an excellent job, under the circumstances.

Mr. Mark Assad (Gatineau—La Lièvre): Mr. Speaker, I raised the matter because somewhere, someone is not doing his job. There is a serious problem, and people are starting to protest. That is why we have raised the issue. Religious leaders have also asked the government to stop deporting Lebanese nationals to the United States. I therefore want to ask the minister whether he could respond to a request by religious leaders for a meeting with the Minister of Employment and Immigration to settle this matter, which is merely a question of providing a humanitarian solution.

Hon. Marcel Danis (Minister of State (Youth), Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House): Mr. Speaker, I can inform the hon. member that, in the absence of the Minister of Employment and Immigration, I will take note of his question and transmit it to the minister. I am sure she will answer the hon. member's question as soon as possible.

* * *

PRESENCE IN THE GALLERY

Mr. Speaker: I welcome this opportunity to draw the attention of the House to the presence in our gallery of the Hon. Denis Rocan, Speaker of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

* * *

[*English*]

INQUIRY OF THE MINISTRY

Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister. The Deputy Prime Minister is aware that the Ontario Minister of Culture and Communications, Christine Hart, was forced to resign yesterday because of the influence involved by Cantel Rogers in her campaign for her nomination.

In view of the fact that those same companies have targeted federal Cabinet ministers in their election giving at the last federal election, can the Deputy Prime Minister answer whether or not the government will have an inquiry into the pattern of giving by those companies?

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

[*Translation*]

Hon. Marcel Masse (Minister of Communications): Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out, first of all, that in the preamble to the hon. member's question, his facts do not reflect the situation as reported in the press. There were people representing a number of companies active in the communications industry. Second, I can assure the hon. member that any questions from the industry are first dealt with by the CRTC, and that Unitel's request will be the subject of a broad public debate in this country. I can assure the hon. member that the govern-

ment tends to observe the full integrity of the public process initiated by this Parliament.

[*English*]

Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill): Mr. Speaker, the government has overruled federal tribunals in the past.

Mr. Andre: Make a charge!

Mr. Murphy: My question to the Deputy Prime Minister is the following. Does the government approve of a selective pattern of giving of money to cabinet ministers which—

Some hon. members: Order!

Mr. Speaker: I am not quite sure where the second question of the hon. member is going to lead us. I would ask the hon. member to be very careful that he is not straying into that difficult area of using a preamble in place of a charge. I know the hon. member knows of what I speak. I would ask him to be careful in putting the question.

Mr. Murphy: Mr. Speaker, I have been trying to be careful in asking this question. It is very difficult with the unwarranted heckling from the other side. My question is this, does the government—

Mr. Speaker: I have heard a lot of heckling on both sides of this place and much of it unwarranted. I thought I had interrupted to assist the hon. member. The hon. member will put his question.

Mr. Murphy: Mr. Speaker, I can guarantee that I did not consider your reaction and response part of the heckling.

My question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister. I want to point out what has happened. Rogers, for example, gives one-third of its total giving to the Conservative party directly to the campaigns of cabinet ministers. That is selective giving.

Will the government investigate this pattern of selective giving to people who obviously have a strong influence on government decisions which affect those companies directly?

• (1450)

Mr. Speaker: The question is close, but I will allow it. The hon. minister will respond.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Marcel Masse (Minister of Communications): Mr. Speaker, legislation was passed by this Parliament in both areas. We have the Canada Elections Act and provisions dealing with donations and how Canadians can contribute to the democratic process of this country through their political parties. This Parliament has also passed legislation concerning telecommunications and the conduct of public hearings. If the hon. member has any charges to make in this respect, he should be specific and do so at the appropriate venue.

* * *

[*English*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Russell MacLellan (Cape Breton—The Sydneys): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister. On Monday, the Minister of the Environment said that there would be a full environmental review of the proposed Point Aconi power station by the Federal Environmental Assessment Review office.

He said that he was doing this because he received the go-ahead from the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, but the department states that it has not recommended one way or another about this public review to the minister. So, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans could not have given this approval.

Has there been a recommendation? Has there been a request to carry out this study? Is the government asking for the study? Yes or no.

Mr. Lee Clark (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, on Monday the Acting Minister of the Environment indicated that the EAR process would apply to Point Aconi.

As the hon. member knows, that is a three-step process. First, there is the initial screening which determines whether or not the relevant department would do an initial assessment. Second, the initial assessment having been done, a recommendation is made to the Minister of the Environment.

We are now at a stage, as I think most members in the House know, where the initial assessment is being completed by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. When that process is completed, there will be a recommendation one way or another to the Minister of the Environment with respect to whether or not the full

independent panel should be struck and public hearings held.

On Monday, the Minister of the Environment made it very clear in his statement that he made no reference whatsoever to the need for a full independent panel and public hearings. What he did indicate and make perfectly clear—although, apparently, not well understood by those who were present—is that the EAR process is currently being applied.

Mr. Russell MacLellan (Cape Breton—The Sydneys): Mr. Speaker, the government cannot even say whether or not it has made a decision. Fisheries and Oceans knows what it wants to do. It has the technology to go ahead with the recommendation.

My supplementary is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister. Will he not agree that in Cape Breton a project that employs 200 people and safeguards another 1,000 jobs is important? Will he also not agree that this question is time sensitive because the site preparation has already started? Will he not undertake right now, if there are environmental concerns, to call a public review to save time so that we do not lose this very important project?

Mr. Lee Clark (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, I find the hon. member's comments somewhat interesting. Not too long ago in the House one of his colleagues seemed to be pushing for this process to be applied. Indeed, we went ahead and we have done that.

Mr. MacLellan: You don't even know what you have done.

Mr. Clark (Brandon—Souris): If the hon. member will listen carefully, there is a three-step process. We are now nearing the end of the second step in that process. Whether or not the third step is applied will depend upon the recommendation which is made to the Minister of the Environment. That recommendation can not yet be made because the initial assessment has not yet been completed.

* * *

TRADE

Mr. Joe Fontana (London East): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister for International Trade, my question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister.

Recently, a U.S. beer company launched a trade action claiming Canadian provincial liquor laws are protectionist. We have already lost one GATT dispute over this matter and we are now obligated to remove those interprovincial barriers.

At the meeting with the U.S. trade representative, Carla Hills, the Minister for International Trade said that the company had a "good case against Canada and we should observe our trade obligations".

Will the minister convince Carla Hills to drop this action because the provinces are in the midst of negotiating such an agreement?

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Industry, Science and Technology): Mr. Speaker, right now we are trying to work with the industry. We will consult with the provinces and the industry.

As a matter of fact, there is a meeting today between my officials and the provincial officials to try to find a way to deal with that issue. Second, a task force official has set out a plan which will address our international obligations. Third, a report on the outcome of the negotiations is expected by the end of June this year.

I think my hon. friend understands that the government wants to work with the provinces to deal with the problem of barriers, particularly in that industry, between the provinces and to do the best to give a better chance to Canadian companies.

Mr. Joe Fontana (London East): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the same minister.

Ministry officials met with provincial representatives yesterday and, in fact, tabled a report which the liquor boards and the provincial trade ministries are looking at.

Could the minister table that report today in the House? Second, if the agreement with the provinces is so crucial, why has the government not proposed an adjustment assistance package to cushion the potential loss of thousands of jobs that would follow the removal of these interprovincial barriers?

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Industry, Science and Technology): Mr. Speaker, first, I will not table a report I am unaware of.

Second, my friend proposed that we intervene immediately with labour adjustment programs and so on. There is a dynamic approach between the provinces and the federal government at that level. When we deal with the provinces in a sector of their jurisdiction we have to do so the way we do presently. In particular, we have international obligations under the GATT rules and the prov-

inces have to make the decision themselves to abolish the problems in controls they have between themselves.

We prefer that approach and I am sure my friend understands that is the best way to respect the jurisdiction of the provinces.

* * *

ROMANIA

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona): Mr. Speaker, my question is for either the Secretary of State for External Affairs or the Minister of Energy. I understand that, by now, members of cabinet may have had an opportunity to speak with the members of Parliament who went to Romania and concerned themselves with the reactor site in Romania.

Is the government now prepared to announce that it will be initiating an inquiry into the entire history of AECL's involvement at that site and its amazing ability not to notice the terrible things that were going on there?

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, my colleague, the Secretary of State for External Affairs, and I had the opportunity to meet with the member for Burnaby—Kingsway and the member for Winnipeg North Centre. We listened to them. We covered a number of the issues that have been in the public domain relating to the history of the project, safety factors, the publicity surrounding a possible EDC application, and, as well, working conditions at the plant.

They gave us a number of suggestions. The Secretary of State for External Affairs and I took those recommendations. We will examine them and, when decisions are made, we will announce those later.

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona): Mr. Speaker, concern has increased in the last 24 hours as a result of the earthquake which occurred in Romania. We have read that the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre was assured by AECL officials recently that Romania was not in any kind of earthquake zone, and there was nothing to worry about. The fact of the matter is that AECL has been deliberately blind and stupid for years, whatever serves their need to market nuclear reactors, and it is about time we had an inquiry into that particular Crown corporation. The situation in Romania points up exactly how deliberately blind and stupid they have been for years. We want an inquiry, and we want it now.

• (1500)

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, as I said, the Secretary of State for External Affairs and I met with the two members.

Mr. Blaikie: It didn't happen then.

Mr. Epp: But did you understand? They were moderate, they gave good points of view. This is an hon. member who is respected in the House but keeps making charges which are unfounded.

First, back in the latter part of the 1970s when an agreement was to be signed between the government of the day and the Romanians, one of the questions that the government of the day put forward through AECL concerned seismic studies and the earthquake zones. There was an earthquake in Romania in 1986 which did not affect Cernavoda. But, the point that also has to be made; is AECL biased and should there be an independent report? In fact, there was an independent report done at that time which also backed the work of the government of the day.

Mr. Blaikie: It didn't happen then.

Mr. Epp: Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member had as many brains as he has heat, he would probably be smart. I am simply saying to him—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Has the hon. minister concluded his remarks?

Mr. Epp: I am saying to him that there was an independent pier review done in respect to seismology and with respect to the earthquake situation. The hon. member should go back to what was done in the latter 1970s and not make charges which simply are not true.

* * *

[*Translation*]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

WEEKLY STATEMENT

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, it is customary on Thursday for the opposition to ask the government the traditional question about the business of the House for the coming week. I wonder if the Leader of the Government could tell us what bills he

intends to bring before the House tomorrow and next week.

[*English*]

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, tomorrow it is my intention to call Bill C-54, the joinder of counts. I would like to designate Monday, June 4, as an allotted day. Tuesday, I hope to call report stage of Bill C-26, the Railway Act amendments. At this point it would be my intention to designate Wednesday, June 6 as an allotted day, but the formal designation should follow soon. Thursday of next week I will be calling the second reading of Bill C-54, having to do with Hibernia.

Mr. Speaker, while I am on my feet, may I also say that there have been discussions among the parties, and I think you will find an agreement to move to Statements by Ministers with the usual understanding that whatever time is taken up by statements and responses will be added to the normal day which is an allotted day. I believe there is unanimous consent for that.

Mr. Speaker: Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*English*]

MEECH LAKE ACCORD

FIRST MINISTERS' CONFERENCE

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, my discussions, and those of Senator Murray, with the premiers over the past week or so have made progress in narrowing the issues that divide us on the Meech Lake Accord.

Those contacts with the premiers demonstrate, of course, that crucial differences remain. However, all believe that a meeting of First Ministers is now necessary. I do not want to underestimate the divergences on the remaining issues. They are there and they are serious. But what is in dispute is extremely modest when compared with what is really at stake. What is really at stake is Canada.

[*Translation*]

While I do not want to underestimate the divergences on the remaining issues, what is in dispute is modest when compared with what is really at stake.

What is really at stake is Canada.

[*English*]

Failure would compromise our capacity for living together in unity and diminish our capacity to maintain the kinds of prosperity that Canadians have enjoyed over so many decades. It would waste an opportunity to close a chapter in our constitutional history with the full partnership of all the provinces in our Confederation, including the assent of those provinces who were partners when Confederation began.

It would curtail opportunities for constitutional change, in such important areas as Senate reform and aboriginal rights, for the foreseeable future. I believe it would send a very damaging signal about Canada to the international community with consequences for our national well-being.

[*Translation*]

Ratification of the accord, on the other hand, would mean that we could turn the page of constitutional reform and get on with other unfinished business also of great importance to Canadians.

It would allow us to build together on a solid foundation of national unity.

[*English*]

It would send a signal of stability to the international community, ending the consternation in many parts of the world about what is going on in Canada. It would end the puzzlement why anyone in such a respected nation would fail to appreciate the value of its strength and prosperity to the world community. People across the world are genuinely troubled about why anyone would fail to understand the magnificence of this great country, Canada.

Elsewhere, political repression, poverty, famine, natural disasters, not arcane constitutional debates are the stuff of national turmoil. Canadians are looking to their First Ministers for leadership and action now.

[*Translation*]

Elsewhere, as I was just saying, political repression, poverty, famine and natural disasters, not arcane constitutional debates, however important, are the stuff of national turmoil.

Canadians are looking to their First Ministers for leadership and action now.

Canadians are looking not for fine words but for common sense and responsibility.

[*English*]

Canadians are looking not for constitutional niceties but for common sense and responsibility. As Premier Ghiz, leader of Canada's smallest province said: "Canadians are saying, 'Save Canada. Make it work'." I believe when Premier Ghiz said: "Save Canada. Make it work," he was speaking for millions of Canadians who want Canada to make it work.

If there is the political will to break the impasse, surely there is a constitutional way. I am inviting First Ministers to a working dinner on Sunday evening to find out if sufficient political will truly exists. If our discussions go well, we will continue at a First Ministers' Conference to begin the next morning. Our dinner will take place on June 3, three years to the day, I believe, when I, along with 10 premiers representing four different political parties, signed the Meech Lake Accord. That same accord was overwhelmingly endorsed by all three parties in the House of Commons on two different occasions.

• (1510)

I give Canadians my commitment, and I know I speak on behalf of all members of the House of Commons, to make every effort to produce an agreement. Once we have that agreement I give my commitment to Canadians to persevere on outstanding constitutional issues such as Senate reform and aboriginal rights, so important to so many Canadians across the country.

This country will not realize its unparalleled promise until all Canadians believe that their Constitution affirms their rights and reflects their values. That is why Quebec's voluntary endorsement of the existing constitution will make it a vibrant document of unity and hope for Canada and the future.

[*Translation*]

It is a golden opportunity! Since Quebec has affirmed its faith in a united Canada, it is a golden opportunity for Canada to find in its heart and soul the ability to say yes to Quebec; it is time to build a completely unified country once and for all.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

[*English*]

Mr. Mulroney: Mr. Speaker, we have inherited a great land built on the tolerance, vision and labour of generations of Canadians before us. Many of the members on all sides of this House of Commons are sons and daughters of immigrants. When the Leader of the Opposition rose in this House on another occasion he made a most moving address about his own personal experience. I thought as I listened to him that day a few months ago what a magnificent and splendid country this is, where in all parts of this country and all parts of this House, in one generation alone, the children of immigrants have risen to positions of great authority, making it clear to all the world that this is truly, in the very best sense of the word, a civilization that represents the fundamentals of a genuine democracy.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Mulroney: And so we have inherited a very great land, a truly great land, all of us in this House of Commons, members from British Columbia to Newfoundland and Labrador. It is now our responsibility to turn Canada over to our children and eventually our grandchildren undamaged and undiminished, and to bequeath them a nation that stands proudly united before history and before all humanity as one of the world's privileged lands, blessed as it always has been, our Canada, by the hand of God.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, we of the Official Opposition have been calling for a First Ministers' Conference as a way of breaking and finding a solution to the constitutional impasse for some time.

It has been our belief that it should have been called by the Prime Minister before now and that he should not have waited until today to call a First Ministers' Conference.

I know that the Prime Minister has been concerned about the risk if there is such a meeting and it is not a success. But, Mr. Speaker, there are also risks, perhaps even greater risks, if such a meeting is not held at all.

The provincial premiers themselves have been calling for such a meeting for some days now, perhaps the strongest argument why the Prime Minister should not have waited until today to make his announcement.

The Prime Minister today said that he is "inviting First Ministers to a working dinner on Sunday evening to find out if sufficient political will truly exists". He went on to say: "If our discussions go well, we will continue at a First Ministers' Conference to begin the next morning."

Mr. Speaker, this is certainly a step in the right direction and a step that we welcome. It is, in a sense, more than simply a step, because for the first time since Premier McKenna proposed a companion resolution, the Prime Minister is agreeing that there should be a dialogue involving the Prime Minister and all the provincial premiers around the same table. This kind of dialogue involving all the First Ministers and giving all of them an equal opportunity to discuss this matter, a matter crucial for the future of our country, is what has been missing until now.

I must say that I have some concern that there is a firm commitment from the Prime Minister so far only to a working dinner. I think Canadians would have got more reassurance from his announcement and would have preferred if it was a firm commitment for a First Ministers' Conference as well.

There are important questions to deal with: Senate reform, aboriginal rights, the rights of language minorities, the rights of multicultural groups and others.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, we co-operated with government members on the Charest Committee because the Liberals wanted to resolve the constitutional deadlock, and it is our earnest wish that the discussions with the Premiers will be a success, a success that will benefit all of Canada.

[*English*]

We want to see steps as a result of the discussions announced today, and Canadians want to see steps as a result of these discussions that will confirm the future of our country.

Mr. Speaker, Canadians generally should recognize, and I think most of them do, that the success we have had as a country is substantial compared to most of the other countries of the world. Canadians generally want this success to continue and to increase.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, we want this success to extend to these discussions, for the future of our country and all Canadians.

[*English*]

We are concerned about the future of our country. We must work together to ensure it continues strong and prosperous for ourselves and future generations.

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton—Melville): Mr. Speaker, we, too, welcome the announcement by the Prime Minister that there be a meeting of First Ministers. I think that this is the time to set aside our normal partisan concerns and wish all the First Ministers well when they meet here Sunday.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Nystrom: We hope that the accord does not die quietly at the dinner table and, if there is a new deal, that the Prime Minister will inform and involve the Canadian people in as much and as reasonable a way as possible throughout the process.

The issue at stake is the unity of this country and the winner, in the end, must be Canada. This could be the most important meeting that the First Ministers of this country have ever held in their 123 year history of Canada and we must set aside partisan concerns to make sure there is an agreement.

I suppose I only have two messages at this time, Mr. Speaker. One is to the premiers. I realize the premiers are premiers of their own provinces from different parts of this country but all premiers must never forget that first and foremost they are Canadians and the interests of Canada must come first.

• (1520)

Second, I say to the Prime Minister of Canada that the Prime Minister must be the Prime Minister. He must be the one who leads and speaks out for all of Canada. The Prime Minister must be the one, on behalf of all of us, who rises to the occasion to find the accommodation.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, to Quebecers it is important that the rest of Canada accents Quebec as part of Canada, while acknowledging that Quebec is different and that it has a special place within our country as a distinct society.

Mr. Speaker, it is now time to put the interests of our country ahead of the interests of the parties in this House.

[*English*]

Finally, in addition to the five important proposals from Quebec that all parties in the House endorse and have endorsed on more than one occasion, it is also important, as the Prime Minister said, that we address the other concerns of equally tremendous importance. The concerns of aboriginal rights, the concerns of the multiracial people and those of multicultural background in the country, the concerns of northern Canadians to make them a full partner within Canada and the concern in many parts of the country for real and genuine reform of the other place, the Senate, must also be addressed. As well, we must address the concern of having constitutional change evolve in a really democratic and open process. Many people complained in the past that that was not there.

There are many other concerns to address such as the ongoing concerns of minority groups and women in the country. I, along with everybody else in the country, hope for success on the weekend. We welcome the fact that there will be a First Ministers' meeting, and we hope that, when the agreement comes—I say when it comes, and I am sure it will come—it will be an agreement that will unite Canadians, bind them together and make us proud of our Constitution and country.

[*Translation*]

I wish the federal and provincial First Ministers good luck!

[*English*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I wish to inform the House that because of the ministerial statement, Government Orders will be extended by 15 minutes. Therefore, Private Members' hour will begin at 6.15 p.m. Orders of the day.

Mr. Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, I believe the House leader has a point of order he wants to raise.

Mr. Speaker: I will hear the hon. member on a point of order in a moment.

* * *

[*Translation*]

HOUSE OF COMMONS

RESIGNATION OF HON. MEMBER FOR SAINT-MAURICE AS ACTING SPEAKER

Mr. Speaker: Unfortunately, it is my duty to make the following statement to my colleagues in the House of Commons. I have received a message from the hon. member for Saint-Maurice (Mr. Pronovost), who has submitted his resignation as Acting Speaker.

[*English*]

There were remarks made earlier this afternoon by the hon. member from Newfoundland concerning certain remarks made by the hon. member for Saint-Maurice. The hon. member for Saint Maurice said to me that, under the circumstances, he felt the importance of the position of Speakership was such that, despite the apology he made and which was generously remarked upon earlier today, he has submitted his resignation.

I know that all hon. members will know that he has taken this decision in the interests of this place and our country and while we may very well regret the event, we can, I think say that we admire his decision under a situation of some considerable stress.

I have nothing further to add and I am quite sure that at the appropriate time certain announcements will be made to find a replacement.

[*Translation*]

Again, I very much regret having to make a statement like this, but I well know that all hon. members understand the situation exactly and also, probably—

[*English*]

—take the decision that has been made in the very best spirit and tradition—

[*Translation*]

in keeping with the great tradition of the House of Commons and of our country.

[*English*]

Mr. Friesen: Mr. Speaker, I did hear the Deputy Speaker say he was moving to Orders of the Day and I wondered if we had passed beyond Routine Proceedings because I did have a Private Member's Bill to table.

Mr. Speaker: I would say to the hon. member that I do not think the consent is there.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY, S. O. 81—EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Ouellet.

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, while every member of this House is likely focused on the great debate going on inside our boundaries about questions that both unify us and divide us, there is a big world out there which is also going through its own volatility and incredible forces of change and development.

[*Translation*]

Like all other members of this House, I hope that we will have a meeting next Sunday to unify the country and especially to consider the interests of all the regions and to find a way to solve the problems in the country.

At the same time, Mr. Speaker, we have a very important opportunity to establish a new international role.

[*English*]

The purpose of the very important proposal put forward by my colleague, the member for Papineau, is to bring to the attention of this House many of those issues. The world impinges upon Canada, perhaps to a far greater degree than ever before in our history. The real test is how do we respond. What is our answer? What direction do we take and what kind of—to use an over-worked word—vision do we have about the role we will play in this rapidly changing world where the earthquake of revolution takes place every single day of the week.

I would like to stop for a moment to share an experience that some members of the committee had when we were travelling in eastern Europe and the Soviet Union a few short weeks ago.

We had the privilege of being in Berlin on May Day, a remarkable day. The wall had come down and thousands of people were walking back and forth. During the course of conversation a young woman who was our translator was talking about the incredible change that had gone on three or four months ago when the secret police and the police dogs had been guarding the boundaries. All of a sudden there was a Woodstock atmosphere where there was beer, sausages, and rock bands playing on the streets.

• (1530)

This young woman who had been a participant and was an active member of the crowd that gathered around the church last November 9, which was the spark that brought down the dictatorship in East Germany, said something very important that I do not think I will ever forget. In talking to her about what she would be doing, and she knew we were politicians from Canada, she said: "Please don't take away from us what we won at the church that day. Don't usurp the kind of achievement and the change that we want to bring about".

What she was talking about was the end of military alliances, the end the confrontation, the end of conventional cold war thinking and actions which have so dominated this world for the past 40 years. It was interesting to note that that heartfelt cry made by that young woman was repeated the next day by the newly appointed Minister of State for Foreign Affairs in the East German Government, a young man by my standards. He said that it was time to get rid of the old, conventional ways of thinking. He saw the unification of Germany as a way of breaking out of the Warsaw-NATO kind of confrontation that had been around for so long. He said: "We must apply our energy and our thoughts to what is new. How do we bring about a new synthesis in Europe to respond to this?"

When I was watching the news last night I was thinking about the faces of the people of Ottawa gathering

around Mr. Gorbachev as he walked up and down the streets. In effect the people of this city, perhaps on behalf of all Canadians, were saying the same kind of thing. There was hope in those faces. They were not simply attracted to Mr. Gorbachev because he is a celebrity. I think they also saw him as a symbol of real change. They saw him as someone who in his own right and in his own country, had initiated an incredible revolution of thought and action. They were reaching out with those hands, not just to the man but to what he represented.

The debate that we have to focus on today concerns how we can ensure that those hopes and expectations of that young woman in East Berlin and of the people of Ottawa are not usurped, not taken away. The response of the politicians, the diplomats, the officials, the bureaucrats, and the people in power with authority must be to understand that kind of undercurrent, that strong willingness of hope and expectation is running around and is oftentimes in danger of being kidnapped by those who have vested interests in keeping things the way they are.

The contrast to that reaching out of the people on the streets of Ottawa was the results of what we saw in the discussions between our leaders and those of the Soviets which once again was in cold war language. Our people say: "We want NATO". Mr. Gorbachev says: "We cannot get into NATO". All of a sudden we were pulling back, were retreating from the impulse and incredible momentum that had been started on the streets of eastern Europe, aided and abetted by policies. I think of the progress that has been made in reducing arms and looking toward new accommodations which is in danger of regressing. It is in danger of being pulled back by those who have power and authority.

I address these remarks to the members of this House because I think we all share the hope that that will not take place but understand the threat that is there.

I want to address for a moment the question put forward in my colleague's motion about the incoherence and the sense of confusion that sometimes exist in our own government. I do not blame a government for being caught unawares by these changes. Goodness gracious, no one pretends that they have omniscient wisdom about what was going to take place, but I think we can honestly say that we expect a little more than what we received.

On the one hand, we had the Minister of National Defence as part of a NATO meeting out in Alberta a couple of weeks ago endorsing the concept of maintaining nuclear weapons in NATO and saying that that is the way it is going to be. On the other hand, last Saturday night the Secretary of State for External Affairs was saying: "Maybe we shouldn't do that". Who do we believe? Which minister is speaking for the government? It is hard to determine.

When questions were asked in the House by the member for Papineau—Saint-Michel, the House Leader and others, we could not get a clear answer. They did not seem to know who was speaking for the country.

That is not uncommon, but this is too critical a situation in which to play the normal kind of political games. Surely, it is up to members on this side of the House, and I would say to members of the Conservative caucus, to say: "That's not good enough. That doesn't meet the expectations of the millions of people around this country who want something different".

I point out to you as well, Mr. Speaker, the other kinds of issues that have emerged recently. Look at the opportunity that we have had as a country to start building some bridges. What is clear in the debate so far, the debate we have heard in eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, is that we cannot presume that we can maintain our way of doing things, our structures, our alliances and say to the Soviet Union: "Sorry, you lost the game". This is not some kind of football match where there are winners and losers. We have to find a way of some common interest.

I suppose one thing that is most vivid in my memory of my trip to the Soviet Union is how deep the feeling is about the impact of the Second World War and the deep need for security. Part of the whole movement in eastern Europe for the past 40 years has been how to defend themselves against a reoccurrence of the Second World War. For a moment we have to put ourselves in the shoes of the Soviets to say: "How do they gain that security when they see a unified Germany joining NATO with the presence of nuclear weapons on their soil? How can we give them a sense that it is not happening all over again?" I know it may be irrational and emotional, but the fact of the matter is that it is real. It is not good

enough for our leaders to say: "Sorry, that is the way it is going to be".

We are making a plea, as the member for Papineau—Saint-Michel said this morning, to look at this thing in a new light, to have a sense of new understanding of what is going on.

There is a need for a new architecture of political structures around the world, but particularly in eastern Europe. I take at face value Mr. Gorbachev's proposal that he wants a home that stretches from the Soviet Union right to North America. It is clear that we need structure to make that happen and it is not in place.

I accept with some credit the proposals put forward by the government that perhaps NATO can only be a transition phase. That is good, but let us go one step beyond and say that it will be a transition to something that will represent a larger scale collective security organization covering the Soviet Union, eastern and western Europe, and North America, where we share collective security and not where we are divided by it. I think that is the statement that the Soviets are waiting to hear from western leaders. We must add our voice in our own councils of the NATO Alliances, the OECDs, the summit meetings, and so on.

Canadians have a particular opportunity, not that we are going to be the major players. When we start to look at how to put the building blocks of that new structure together there are ways of doing it. We have seen it in front of us.

Surely, one of the most critical areas of concern that we share with the Soviets, the Americans, and many European countries is our Arctic. In 1987 President Gorbachev issued the Murmansk declaration stating that we should have some kind of treaty for the Arctic. When we were in the Soviet Union we had a response from people saying that we could have that. Members of the Arctic Institute in Leningrad said that there should be a denuclearized treaty for the Arctic. There is some common ground to build upon.

However, Mr. Gorbachev has come and gone from Ottawa with no mention of that proposal. No significant steps were taken toward negotiations or discussions on that very significant initiative.

Mr. Milliken: What did they discuss?

Mr. Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): Well, that is part of the problem.

We know that Ottawa is famous for its hospitality and its restful, calm, tranquil atmosphere. It is a wonderful place to get rid of jet lag, but when you have the President of the Soviet Union here you expect more than a good night's rest.

I would say that here was an opportunity to demonstrate our interest and willingness to build some bridges, to put together new building blocks that would have helped on the security issue and one that would have helped us. I am not talking about being altruistic with the Soviets. Goodness knows that our security interests are directly in the Arctic. That is where U.S. and Russian submarines are playing tag all the time and where we need some kind of arrangement.

• (1540)

I see by today's *The Financial Post* that my view is shared by Allan Fotheringham who says that great minds think alike.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): I say that with tongue in cheek, Mr. Speaker.

The fact of the matter is that we have a real interest in developing these building blocks. In the area of the economy there is an enormous opportunity to develop a whole set of relationships in the Soviet Union, a country desperate for transfers of technology, trade, and investment. The expectations of that country were raised during the last prime ministerial visit by the signing of a number of agreements. Almost a year later, nothing has been done. We have not lived up to those agreements.

Some of the problems are those of the Soviets and many of the problems are our own. The fact of the matter is that we can say without any contradiction that our ability to meet the demands emerging in the Soviet for building a new set of relationships is not being met.

I will tell you one of the reasons why. Let us just take a look at one simple statistic. The Department of External Affairs has 30 posts in western Europe, but just six in eastern Europe, including the Soviet Union. How do we expect to begin to manage a whole new set of relationships, economically, culturally and politically, when we are totally understaffed, under-resourced and do not have the capacity to do it? Claims may be made for budget or restraint reasons, but how can we argue for budget reasons that we are maintaining a corporal's guard in the fastest changing, most dynamic area in the world when everyday we are losing all kinds of opportunities?

Let me give one example. I was sitting at a Kiwanis club dinner a week ago with the president of a lumber firm in Manitoba who talked about trying to negotiate a lumber agreement between the Soviets and Canada. They would use a barter system to bring certain kinds of wood into Canada that are not available here. We know in western Canada that we have to start purchasing more from the Soviets in order to maintain the balance because of our grain trade where we have by far the greatest surplus on the trade side.

As he said that getting somebody to help him to work through the red tape and to get the front-end logistics in place was just not possible. He has given up. It is a small example, but I am sure members in this House can repeat the example a hundredfold from their own ridings. We are simply not equipped to meet the demand. We are simply not there in the numbers or in the capacity that we need to respond to those kinds of changes.

I would like to point out another area where we are not providing the leadership in that building block. We have heard in the House today and in the last couple of weeks about the growing problem dealing with nuclear energy. In our country, the Soviet Union, and eastern Europe peaceful uses of nuclear energy is one of the most important areas of common concern.

What would happen if we proposed that there be a common agency which would look after standards, investment, safety and health problems between the Soviet Union and Canada? In part, we would help them with the enormous clean-up problems they have with Chernobyl. We would deal with the problems of the Candu in Romania. We could all of a sudden, I am sure, find some common ground. We could find an area where we can share common interests. It would be the kind of agency that would give us a working relationship in a new area but one vital to our economies and our inter-relationships. We could establish once again a new kind of foundation, putting another block in place that would lead to the new structures and architecture that would bring together the east, the west, and North America.

I think back to when I was still going to university. I read about the theory of Jean Monet in starting the European Common Market. He said that it should be started with functional agencies and then you build from functional agencies into some kind of political agencies to the point where they now have the European Common Market. They started that way. They had the steel authority. Then they started working on transportation and coal. The thesis was that this was a way to get to know one another, to establish some common lines of communication and interest. From that you start to build up the super-structure.

Are we not in a similar condition today? Are we not as Canadians, in a position to take those initiatives where there is such a direct and close common interest between the two?

That is what I think the member for Papineau—Saint-Michel means in his motion when he says that we need a coherent policy. We need some direction. We need some creative thinking in this area.

In particular, we need it in terms of our own domestic opportunities. One of the great assets we have as Canadians is that we have a population built upon many Canadians whose origins are in eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. I think of my own city of Winnipeg where we have a Ukrainian Canadian community of great strength and vitality, as well as Poles and Russians and Germans and all the rest. They understand the culture and the language and have relatives in their home land. There is an enormous sort of criss-cross of connections, people who are anxious at the present moment to go back to the homeland, to go back to where their relatives are to establish commercial or business relationships.

In speaking to many of them they say that they do not know who to talk to, they do not know where to go. Even if the Prime Minister was to designate one member of the cabinet and say: "You are responsible for the Soviet Union. You bring together private business. You bring together the regions. You bring together the cultural groups".

Let us talk about language training in Canada. Let us talk about new transportation links into the Soviet Union. Let us talk about how we get some investment guarantees, whatever it is that will provide some kind of focal point for all those groups to come together. We have this incredible resource in our own country that will give us an enormous sort of outreach into the Soviet Union and eastern Europe and we are not utilizing it.

Many of them are doing it individually, but many are being frustrated because they will arrive in Kiev and all of sudden say: "Who do I talk to?" It is clear to us from our own examination that one cannot find answers immediately in the Soviet Union. There are a lot of complications. Many smaller businesses do not have the front-end capacity to do it. That is where the Government of Canada comes in.

When we spoke to the West Germans about the commercial side they told us that when the Soviets sit down and talk about providing credit of a billion dollars on a big project, the West Germans say that in return they want some understanding that there will be no red tape. They get their business done that way. You need somebody who has got that eye on the sparrow, who knows where they are going with that kind of direction.

We are suggesting in this motion that we have not tapped into that well of Canadian interest, those resources, and have not even drawn upon members of Parliament in terms of an open consultation. The member for Papineau—Saint-Michel said very properly this morning that it is a certain insult to this House that the Secretary of State for External Affairs started to announce a policy when he knows full well that the Standing Committee on External Affairs and International Trade has been working on one for close to a year and he has not had the courtesy to wait a couple of weeks to see what it is going to say.

What is the point? Why have 14 members of Parliament spend almost a year working at this and then rush ahead to the finish line? It is not a competition. We are not in a race with the Secretary of State. We are not out there to win the red ribbon. We want to help. The fact of the matter is that it creates enormous complication by doing that.

What we are trying to condemn the government or tell it to get its act together. It must understand that this is one of the most important moments in our history. If we do not do it right we are going to find ourselves isolated. We are going to find ourselves pushed out of Europe. We are going to find ourselves without the connecting links into the Soviet Union. We will not have the kind of influence that we should have.

Without proper action we will not be able to build upon the assets that we have, which includes a good reputation, a population in Canada that is ready and willing and has the attributes based upon their own culture and language to help. This is simply because we have not focused on the problem. We do not have a policy. We do not have a direction. We are not mobilizing the resources of this House and all the people within it to try to bring together a common front. This is not an issue that necessarily divides us as parties. We are all interested in recognizing this enormous challenge and at the same time the opportunity it represents. We are all here to help, but it is the government that has the responsibility to provide the ability for that help and that co-operation to be targeted at this very important part of the world.

• (1550)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): On questions or comments, the hon. member for Cape Breton Highlands—Canso.

I would just like the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre to know that I appreciate him taking all the time in the House that he would like, but there are other colleagues of his who also would like to speak.

Mr. Francis G. LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso): Mr. Speaker, I just want to echo that sentiment. I was fascinated by the hon. member's remarks.

Having heard him before on international questions, particularly Canadian foreign policy questions, he is one who could be allowed to extemporize even longer than the allotted 20 minutes.

I would like to give him an opportunity to embellish on some of his remarks, particularly in light of his recent visit to the Soviet Union. I would like him to comment upon the reaction of Soviets there to what I consider to be the rather timid response of the Canadian government to the events which are taking place there and, principally, the fact that so little has happened since the Prime Minister's visit to the Soviet Union last November. There appears to be, at least from here, a lack of initiative on the part of the Canadian government in taking advantage of opportunities to co-operate with the Soviets and eastern European countries in furthering the major reforms which they have courageously embarked upon.

I would just like to ask my colleague if he could say a little bit about the reaction he received when he was in the Soviet Union concerning Canada's role and how we can be more supportive.

Mr. Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for the question.

Their reaction in some cases was puzzlement. There had been an enormous sense of optimism built around the trip last year of the Prime Minister, followed by the Speaker of the House, which I think established a set of relationships and expectations. Agreements were signed. As I say, almost a year later we are waiting for some delivery. There is a feeling of disappointment that many of these kinds of developments have not taken place.

I do not say this to be critical, because I think there is a problem on both sides. They are afraid of being caught up in a kind of diplomatic minuet that oftentimes takes place.

As people from the Arctic Institute said, there was an Arctic environmental agreement signed. The scientists were in agreement. But it seems that somehow the officials got in the way and nothing has been done in this crucial area.

Here we have, as we discovered, the prospect of the Soviet Union initiating nuclear tests in the Arctic. This is an area about which there should be a very major outcry. Because there is no commission in place—we have not even appointed the commissioners yet to make it work—the forum has been lost. We have not had the opportunity to create the very essential dialogue that is needed.

I would also like to comment, if I may, on the agricultural area. We were asked, again during the visit of the Prime Minister, and proposals were put on the table, that we help set up a series of model farms in the Soviet Union using Canadian technology, fertilizers and methodologies as a way of demonstrating a new way of productivity in the agricultural area. Land was being offered. The invitation was there. Yet we did not take them up on it. Now the Dutch and the Italians are doing it and we are not in the marketplace. We asked why. They said: "Well, we did not have the resources to bring it together. We did not have the capacity to do it".

Again, I want to express as a western Canadian that when we say we do not have the resources, I must think of the enormous resources we have in my own City of Winnipeg to have brought that kind of thing to fruition. Somehow it fell in a hole. It just did not materialize. It is those kinds of disappointments that are there which I think are creating wonderment as to whether we are really as serious as our statements claim.

I would have to speak of my own personal disappointment with what has transpired in the last 24 hours. I think the occasion of Mr. Gorbachev's visit here was an opportunity to pin some of these things down, to clear away some of the brush, to get away from some of the red tape and to pin-point some of these problems, whether on the Arctic treaty, nuclear testing, or on commercial agreements. Yet we did not seem to come out with very much.

As I have not seen anything in the papers, I do not even think we got a commitment on a new agreement on wheat, which has been a kind of bedrock of our relationship with the Soviet Union for the last 20 years.

It is those kinds of things that we are concerned about which show a lack of energy, a lack of focus and a lack of direction.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Questions and comments are now terminated. Debate.

Mr. Patrick Boyer (Parliamentary Secretary to Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I am glad we are having this thorough airing today of Canadian foreign policy in central and eastern Europe. The hon. member's motion which has brought us into this, is predicated on the allegation that there is a lack of initiative and some confusion. I would like to pick up on that in my remarks and refute it with some of the evidence of what has been going on.

Before getting into that I would like to say that just as this debate is timely, following on the heels of the visit by both Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev and Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, last Saturday in the Etobicoke—Lakeshore constituency which I represent, we had a one-day policy forum on Canadian policy in central and eastern Europe. It was an opportunity for an exchange of views and information, participated in by well over 400 Canadians, many of whom have been not only to the Soviet Union but in Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and so on, actively engaged in education, in trade, in cultural activities, in business opportunities and so on.

It was there that the Secretary of State for External Affairs made the remarks that he did, outlining some very important new directions in Canadian foreign policy in that area, the burden of which he carried through on in his remarks here this morning to the House.

I would like to elaborate on some of the points which the Secretary of State for External Affairs made in the general framework by giving some specifics. If foreign policy exists, it is not only in general principles and broad terms but it does come to earth in specific applications. That is what I would like to talk about. In so doing I would like to indicate that Canada is moving in a new and uncharted area with some foreign policy successes.

I think that the speech given by the hon. member for Winnipeg Transcona, typically for him, was both informed and informing. He took a very thoughtful and balanced approach on this.

I know that the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre said that we should approach these issues beyond party lines and try to work together. I think that is the important spirit.

I heard the member for Papineau—Saint-Michel talking this morning about a lack of initiatives, yet in the same sentence he mentioned that the Prime Minister had signed a major accord in Moscow last November. The hon. member from Winnipeg said that a year has passed since that was signed, while in fact it is only half a year. I heard the member for Papineau—Saint-Michel talking about a lack of initiative and lamenting that Canada has no consulate in Leningrad and in the same sentence he talked about the opening of a Canadian consulate in Kiev, I really think—

Mr. Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): It's not open yet.

Mr. Boyer: No, it is underway.

Mr. Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): They told us 1992.

Mr. Boyer: The fact is that all these initiatives are taking place. Canada is supporting a new and active working relationship with the reformist central and eastern European countries. We are assisting, along with other western countries, in the process of revitalizing this region. It is a very hard task because they themselves have a lot to sort out. They are in transition. I think that anyone who is honest with himself would not be so critical about the Canadian response as to look for it as having no contradictions and as being completely developed even while the situation there is still developing. We should be open, frank, and non-partisan in this area, and recognize that we are in a world of change and that Canada is responding in that area.

• (1600)

At the economic summit in Paris last July, Canada joined with the other nations in the G-7 in supporting the reforms in Poland and Hungary and in pledging to support the transformation of those economies in a durable manner with both economic assistance and other means. This is something on which we have followed through in a positive way.

The opposition asks about initiatives. Here is some Canadian action. We have created a $42 million assistance package for Poland and Hungary. This package was announced last November and it has three major elements to it.

First, $12 million has been spent in emergency food aid. This food was not just purchased in Canada and taken to Poland. More important, it was sold there and the equivalent of $6 to $8 million in Polish zloty was earned for a jointly-administered counterpart fund that is today funding developments in rural parts of Poland. That is very important.

A second element was the $20 million revolving short-term export credit insurance that was established for Poland. There has been no lack of initiative at all.

A third element is the clear initiative of putting in place $10 million over five years for economic development.

I will give you six or eight examples of Canadian foreign policy success to show what we are doing to help with economic development. Four hundred and fifty thousand dollars has gone to the International Management Centre in Budapest to create the Canada Fund which supports management training. In fact, the dean of that school will be a Canadian. This is beyond the stage of putting money into countries, money which is in short supply here. That, moreover, is not what they need. They need, want, and are seeking from us assistance in such things as management training and restructuring of government. There is one very positive example of an initiative in that area.

Second, two contracts with the Canadian Executive Services Overseas are now providing 41 volunteer professionals in both Hungary and Poland who will work as industrial and business consultants. That is another positive initiative along the same theme.

Third, a Canadian company is doing an evaluation study of possible new and upgraded edible oil processing plants in Poland.

A fourth initiative is a $2 million training program for Polish farmers in livestock and farm management. This is really a creative initiative. This summer over 100 Polish farmers will be coming to Canada for intensive courses at a training institute. They will get practical experience on Canadian farms.

A fifth example of an initiative is the $1 million program of support for the Warsaw Agricultural University and three associated institutes involved in training and research for Polish agriculture.

The sixth example in just this one element is the assistance in establishing the English-French Language Training Centre. Its curriculum focuses on language proficiency but also on the principles, in the course of

that, of representative government, democratic processes, local administration, and human rights.

I can go on, Mr. Speaker. There are a lot of these initiatives. There is a grant to York University School of Business Administration to establish a nine-week course for 40 middle managers this summer. Again, that will include attachment to a Canadian firm for practical experience. There is funding for a Canadian expert who will serve as an advisor on privatization to the Government of Poland.

How can anyone sincerely say that there is a lack of initiative? These are very good examples of Canadian foreign policy success, the kind of things that our country is sought out for and appreciated for in the councils of the nations. Canada does not go to other countries with a blueprint of how they should run themselves. We go and work co-operatively with them. They know what their needs are and we have practical experience and technical assistance, as well as financial aid, that can be supportive of what they are doing. We support what they are doing because for years we have sought it, we have urged it, and we have worked for it. In this transformation, we are seeing countries going from totalitarian regimes to democratic regimes, from communist one-party states to pluralistic multi-party states, from the command economy to the market economy, and from harsh militarism and cold war division to a new era of exchange, dialogue, and common security. That is the transition and it is a transition in which Canada is playing an important role as a partner.

We have assisted the central and east European countries in becoming integrated into western markets. We are actively encouraging Canadian trade and investment. Last Saturday, at the Etobicoke—Lakeshore conference on eastern Europe, a number of examples were given of Canadians who are over there doing just these things.

The member for Winnipeg South Centre lamented the difficulty of dealing with bureaucracies. That is a very real problem and no one is underestimating that. It takes a lot of time to place a phone call, let alone to get governmental decisions. But these are things that, in the more traditional areas of trade promotion, we are continuing to pursue very actively. These are positive initiatives.

The Secretary of State for External Affairs hosted a series of joint venture and investment seminars on Poland. He held them in Montreal, Toronto, and Calgary in January of this year, following through on the arrangements made in November in Moscow when he and the Prime Minister were there. There is no lack of action and no lack of initiative, but a methodical, consistent effort to move on in this era of transition.

The department is getting very practical in this area. It has produced a very useful booklet. I do not know how many members who are criticizing the government for lack of initiative have read it. It is called: *A Guide to Business Opportunities in Poland*. This is exactly the kind of thing that the former minister did not hear when the Secretary of State for External Affairs spoke. He is not hearing it now because, where there is no willingness to hear, there will be nothing heard.

Canadians are actively pursuing opportunities in eastern Europe, whether it be through education, new economic activity, business opportunities, supporting democratic reforms, or working within NATO and other organizations for military climate change. Those people do know. We have passed beyond rhetoric to bringing in an new order here.

We have signed or are signing double taxation and foreign investment protection agreements with countries in eastern and central Europe in order to promote further Canadian investment. The negotiation and signing of those treaties is a response. That is a Canadian initiative.

So, let us not hear any more from those who are timid in their evaluation of Canadian effort. There is nothing wrong with what we are doing, other than our perpetual Canadian capacity to sell ourselves short and to see the glass as being half empty instead of half full.

We have extended the general preferential tariff status to countries like Poland, Hungary, and Romania to help them get better access to the Canadian market. These are initiatives. This is positive action by the government facing the new realities in central and eastern Europe.

The Minister of Finance and the Secretary of State for External Affairs held meetings with 35 Canadian business leaders at the end of April, continuing the process of implementation and carrying through, in order to signal our government's intention to expand the program in this area. That is what we are doing.

The member said there is no way that Canadian effort is being co-ordinated. Has he not heard of the formation of the task force on central and east Europe? It is not sitting at External Affairs over in the Lester B. Pearson Building on Sussex Drive, but right here in downtown Ottawa where other departments can be readily involved in its activities and where Canadians from across the country and foreign visitors who are here can deal with it. This is a great effort to bring together, in a concerted way, the initiatives that we are taking.

• (1610)

At the meeting at the end of April, it was agreed that the Canadian government should concentrate on technical assistance and management training, exactly the things I have been mentioning. It was also agreed that we should take a prudent approach at this time and avoid committing large sums of money. Rather, we should facilitate a program that will develop all kinds of connections and linkages between Canadians and the people in those countries, not just government to government, but individual to individual and organization to organization.

The work of the York University Professor Michel Chevalier in developing twinnings between Canadian community colleges and regions in eastern Europe and the U.S.S.R. is very important for the technical training of people. The Fund for Democracy, developed by a number of people of Czechoslovak background who are now Canadians, has gathered from the private sector across the country funds, supplies, and teachers who are in Czechoslovakia teaching the English language.

Last Saturday at the conference in Etobicoke—Lakeshore, one of the organizers of that Fund for Democracy explained that over $7 million in goods and services have already been made available in Czechoslovakia. It is not only the governments but many other organizations that are developing this entire network. That is the strength of relations at many levels between sovereign countries. The network we are weaving together is fundamental and it is certainly a good example of the many initiatives which our government is taking. It is a positive response. For once let us, as Canadians, start to celebrate some of the successes of our foreign policy.

I am not sure how much time I have left, Mr. Speaker, but I have been informed that the parliamentary secretary would like to raise a point of order at this time. I will yield the floor to him.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*English*]

HOUSE OF COMMONS

SUPPLY PERIOD—EXTENSION OF SITTING HOURS

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, having listened to the hon. member's comments, I am sure that the House would be happy to give him quite a bit more time. He has made very interesting remarks. I apologize for interrupting him with this point of order.

Mr. Speaker, I believe you will find unanimous consent for the following three motions as there, have been discussions among the three parties. I move:

That the number of allotted days for the Supply period ending on June 30, 1990, be reduced by one.

I also move:

That Monday, June 4, 1990, be designated an allotted day; and Wednesday, June 6, 1990, be designated as the last allotted day for the current Supply period, on which day the provisions of Standing Order 81(16) shall apply.

I move further:

That, effective Thursday, June 7, 1990, and for the subsequent nine sitting days in the month of June, 1990, the House sit the following hours:

Mondays from 1 o'clock p.m. to 10 o'clock p.m.;

Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11 o'clock a.m. to 10 o'clock p.m.;

Wednesdays from 2 o'clock p.m. to 10 o'clock p.m.;

Fridays, from 10 o'clock a.m. to 3 o'clock p.m.;

Provided that

on such Tuesdays and Thursdays the House will not sit from 1 o'clock p.m. to 2 o'clock p.m., unless Ministers' Statements and replies to them have extended the morning sitting; and

on Wednesday, June 13, 1990, at 5 o'clock p.m. the House adjourn any debate then underway and then the House stand adjourned until 11 o'clock a.m. on Thursday, June 14, 1990; and

following adoption of this Order, a motion pursuant to Standing Order 27(1) and (2) not be receivable.

Further, Mr. Speaker, there has been agreement among the three parties that there will be no quorum calls or dilatory motions between 6 p.m. and 8 p.m. on any of the days that the House is sitting those extended hours.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The hon. member for Kingston and the Islands.

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, the motions that the parliamentary secretary has just presented to the House are indeed agreed to by all parties.

I want to say on behalf of the Official Opposition that, notwithstanding the excessive use of closure and time allocation throughout this Parliament we have, for the last several weeks, witnessed very considerable co-operation on the part of both this party and the New Democratic Party in assisting the government with its legislative program. Indeed, that co-operation has been shown throughout the Parliament. In spite of that co-operation we have been met with closure and time allocation time and again.

I am delighted to see that the government has changed its ways and has apparently given up on this abuse of our rules and is now proposing a series of proposals for hours of sitting which will effectively wrap up the business of the session, we anticipate, by June 20.

I want to thank the parliamentary secretary for his co-operation in the negotiations that we have carried on together and say that we are pleased that we have been able to achieve agreement on these motions. I know all members will be delighted with the results of the changes and that we can get the business wrapped up in a timely way.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands on the same point of order.

Ms. Lynn Hunter (Saanich—Gulf Islands): Mr. Speaker, I will be very brief. For the viewing audience, I think what the previous speaker meant was, we agree. And we also agree.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I do not think there is any necessity for another shot, but I will listen to the hon. member on the same point of order.

Mr. Milliken: Mr. Speaker, I would not take a shot at the hon. member. I wanted to confirm the agreement in respect of the dilatory motions and quorum calls between 6 and 8 p.m. on the days when the extended sittings are held and the fact that there will be none permitted.

I do not disagree with what the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands has just said. Indeed, I hope that my comments indicated our agreement. I thank the parliamentary secretary for his efforts in this regard.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The House has heard the terms of the motions. Does the hon. parliamentary secretary have unanimous agreement to move the motions?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motions?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Motions agreed to.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY, S. O. 81—EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Ouellet.

Mr. William Scott (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Veterans Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the previous speaker to comment on any political changes that may have taken place over the past year or several months leading up to it.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): We are going to questions and comments now because the hon. parliamentary secretary's 20 minutes have terminated. The hon. member for Victoria—Haliburton has just asked him a question.

Mr. Boyer: Mr. Speaker, you have put such clarity into our proceedings at this juncture that no one could be misguided as to where we are.

In answering the question from the member for Victoria—Haliburton, I would like to say that it is very important that we do look at the political changes as well as the economic changes. It is a fundamental part of Canadian foreign policy that we see political rights and economic changes as being very closely linked.

Just a year ago in China, for example, after a decade of economic change but a failure to have the political change and the individual rights going along with it, there was a real problem because reform and progress cannot march on one leg, it must march on the two together.

In the political changes as well as the economic changes, Canada has been quite actively participating in central and eastern Europe. We are developing a political co-operation program that will ensure that the democratic gains can be sustained in this period of turbulence and radical transformation in a lot of these countries where there have not been free elections for half a century or more.

We are looking at the judiciary, law reform, elections, human rights and the media. Again, these are areas where Canada can provide some specific technical information, assistance and support. Other areas include co-operation on financial planning, health services, environmental concerns—which is desperately needed—and telecommunications, another area of great Canadian strength.

• (1620)

Beyond that there are a lot of really specific detailed initiatives that we have taken to see that Canada is in there and working where it counts, supporting those countries which need the help and responding to their requests. The $40,000 which has gone to Radio-Canada International for equipment and training for the radio networks in Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland would be one example. Another would be disposable syringes and further medical supplies to meet the immediate health requirements of Romania. We provided over $500,000 worth of that. Elections Canada provided over $200,000 of financial assistance to Czechoslovakia for the holding of their free elections.

The member for Victoria—Haliburton would also appreciate knowing that we have done little things like providing a $7,000 computer in Bulgaria to help them run their election. We even provided the paper for it. These things may seem pretty trivial when we are talking about some of the global changes, but in fact that is once again where Canadians come through; with the specifics on time, in place and where they are needed. That was the same reasoning that led us to put $10,000 worth of books in the main library at Bucharest University to help replace a lot of the collection that had been destroyed by fire during their revolution in December.

There are programs of training and information exchange on parliamentary procedures. This is something of interest again to all members of Parliament. The Speaker of the House of Commons has been having interns from some of these countries come here to observe the procedures and methods that we follow. The first of these programs was with Poland in March of this year. Our Speaker is currently arranging to have a group from Czechoslovakia following their election on June 8.

These are further examples of the positive initiatives that cause me to say with pride that, yes, Canada is responding in a way that is consistent with the long-standing foreign policy of this country to help other countries help themselves.

Again, we do not have a blueprint of how others should run themselves. We are happy to work with them and provide real support to go beyond nostalgia to a new order.

Mrs. Christine Stewart (Northumberland): Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary secretary has just given us, I would say, a puffed up list of things that the government has been doing. He has addressed particularly the situation in eastern European countries and almost totally neglected in his litany what Canada might be doing in the Soviet Union.

He criticizes us on this side of the House for talking about a glass being half empty rather than half full, saying that we were taking a negative perspective of things. I have returned from the Soviet Union and the feeling there that was expressed to us was that the half glass has evaporated.

I wonder, just as a beginning point, what this government is considering doing with our diplomatic presence in the Soviet Union. Obviously to be more of a presence to the Soviet Union and to help them we must have more of a presence within the country and exhibit in that way our commitment to a relationship with the Soviet Union.

It was most unfortunate that when the President of the Soviet Union, President Gorbachev, was here, he did not address this House. I wonder if he felt that he did not know what to address. His comment when our Prime Minister was there was, "What kept you? Why weren't you here before?" The sense there is that there is a lack of communication, there is a lack of commitment. We have made overtures but they have resulted in nothing. I do not know what the parliamentary secretary would have to respond to that.

Mr. Boyer: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member talks about lack of communication following two days of discussions between our Prime Minister and our Secretary of State for External Affairs with President Gorbachev and Foreign Secretary Shevardnadze here in our capital. I do not know what she wants in the way of communication that would surpass that. That is at the highest level but it reflects that there is, throughout the system, an awful lot of discussion and dialogue taking place that two years ago no one even contemplated.

The business council between Canada and the U.S.S.R. was specifically created by our government's initiative not to see the Canadian government doing everything there but to put in place a framework where Canadian business people and entrepreneurs could themselves move into that situation. Just as they have found abysmal failure in the Soviet Union and eastern Europe with state directed economies, we have long recognized the importance of the market economy and having our entrepreneurs there. So our government is creating the framework for Canadians to be in there.

The list of specific examples that I was able to give could have gone on but we all speak under time limits here. If she thinks that is a puffed up account, then I am really going to listen with great interest to the substance of her speech which the House will be hearing in a few moments, because I really do lament that someone would look at the specific examples that I have given of Canadian public servants, Canadian business people and educators who are over there. They are travelling as well as the member to the Soviet Union and to places in eastern and central Europe. They are doing a great deal. A lot of them spoke with the eloquence of practical action about the things that they are doing.

To answer the final point of her intervention on diplomatic representation, Canada is very well served by our representatives at our embassy in Moscow. We are looking to expand that with the full service of the consulate in Kiev. The progress in opening that has not been as rapid as any of us would have wanted and we are redoubling our efforts on that.

Mr. Speaker, perhaps nothing better demonstrates to any of us how difficult it really is to move on the ground in some of these countries than the amount of time it has taken to open the consulate. We are committed to doing that. It will happen, there is no doubt about that, but it is not the same as opening a business office in Vancouver. We are dealing with a very different set up and arrangement on the ground. There are a lot of problems that any Canadian would not think would even be a surprise. There are real problems and we are working to overcome them.

I hope that members of the Canadian Parliament would find it in their hearts to be encouraging and supportive so that the real progress is recognized. Let us have more ideas about the next steps to take rather than lamenting the good steps that have already been taken.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The hon. member for Erie on a very short question or comment.

Mr. Girve Fretz (Erie): Mr. Speaker, I want to pose a question to the parliamentary secretary. Our government has been admonished by not only this Liberal member but by the member for Winnipeg South Centre. I want to deal specifically with agriculture initiatives. The member for Winnipeg South Centre indicated that the Dutch were into one of the countries and had a model program going there.

Will the parliamentary secretary give the House a bit of detail on how many farmers will benefit from the initiative that our government is taking. How many farmers will benefit from that program and about how many Canadian dollars are being spent on those kinds of agricultural initiatives?

Mr. Boyer: Mr. Speaker, the question sounded specific enough but the answer, I am afraid, has to be fairly general because we are talking about initiatives in a lot of different countries. For example, a number of Polish farmers will be coming to Canada this year for training, the cost of that being absorbed by the Government of Canada. There is obviously some economic benefit from that. I think that is almost secondary to the training and experience those farmers will get.

• (1630)

If you look at it the other way, what we have been sending to Poland in terms of food aid, while there is a specific figure in the amount of $12 million, the money spent here on such things as pork, canola seed, oil, wheat has gone to the market.

The Minister of State for Grains and Oilseeds is currently leading a delegation of industry representatives to Moscow and Geneva to discuss these issues. He will be looking at the terms of grain sales agreements between Canada and the Soviet Union. The member for Winnipeg South Centre dismissed any government action. In fact, here is a trade mission on its way to deal exactly with what the Secretary of State reported progress on this morning.

The existing agreement calls for a minimum purchase of 25 million tonnes of Canadian wheat and feed grains over a five-year period. It can be seen from that alone that there is significant continuing activity.

Not only the Minister of State for Grains and Oilseeds, but the Minister of Agriculture was in Poland some weeks ago—and with a name like Mazankowski, I think we are all proud to have our agriculture minister go to Poland—when it was announced that Canada would be sending food aid in the amount of $72 million through the stabilization program for Poland.

There are a lot more details and I am glad to have a chance to provide a few of them. The story is a good one. My plea is a simple one. There are successes in Canadian foreign policy in this area and it is high time we all recognized that fact.

Mrs. Christine Stewart (Northumberland): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to stand today to speak to the motion of our party before the House.

I want to address the events taking place in eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. I regret the lack of clear policy by the government in defining a new Canadian role in response to events there.

I want to confine my remarks to defining the new Canadian role in response to events taking place in eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

I begin my comments this afternoon by stating that, with other members of the external affairs committee, having studied Canada's relation to east Europe and the Soviet Union, I am particularly concerned with Third World affairs, but very interested in the changing role of Canada in the world *vis-à-vis* east Europe and the Soviet Union. I came away from meetings on my recent trip to the Soviet Union and the Germanys with the sense that the world is wondering what Canada is doing.

Although many Canadians are not that aware of it, the world knows what is going on in Canada. Very often throughout our questioning of newly elected deputies in the Soviet Union and East Germany, many of the questions that we had about unity, disunity, coming together, falling apart, in some instances came back to haunt us. The east Europeans said "Well, what are you doing in Canada?" Canada is the country that is supposed to be exemplar in the world, that brings together so many cultures and religions and has lived harmoniously. They know what is happening here. They look to us for an example. I hope in the coming days we will not prove them wrong.

Besides wondering what is happening within our country, there is a sense of wonderment beyond that. There is a sense that Canada has lost its prestige in the international world, that Canada is becoming marginalized, that Canada is a spectator rather than an actor in what is happening on the world stage, that Canada is not being as creative, visionary and responsive to changing circumstances as it could be. These facts I listen to and watch. I believe that there is quite a bit of truth to them. It is very important for Canada to define a new role in response to events that are occurring around this world, particularly in east Europe, the Soviet Union and with the unification of the Germanys. We are lagging behind and must do more to show our commitment to the change that is occurring and to help to ensure that that change is for the benefit of all of the people of those countries and regions of the world.

I would like to quote from the speech by the Secretary of State for External Affairs that was alluded to by my colleagues earlier. I think it brings to us as Canadians many points with which I can agree. There does seem to be a lack of coherence in government policies addressing many of the points that he raises.

In his speech in Toronto of last Saturday, he said: "Virtually no other nation possesses the web of intense personal connections to eastern and central Europe which we have in Canada. That gives us a special interest and a special capacity in helping those societies become prosperous and free."

After visiting the Soviet Union, you realize just how much we share in common with the Soviet Union with it being a multicultural, multi-ethnic, a country of many diverse religions such as we have in Canada. Through their lack of freedom, however, they have not had the opportunities to express the tolerance that we have in Canada. We are a diverse society. For example, Canada has the largest Ukrainian population outside the Soviet Union.

This week we met with Armenian Canadians. We have some Canadian citizens who understand the culture and the language that is represented by the many republics in the Soviet Union. Canada should take advantage of these characteristics and promote relations in as many diverse ways as possible. This is something that Cana-

dians we do not recognize and are not taking full advantage of.

"Canada's stake in Europe should not be taken for granted", our Secretary of State for External Affairs went on to say. This is certainly the truth but what we are doing in actuality would not suggest the veracity of this statement. As said before, there is a feeling in the Soviet Union and the Germanys that Canada is sitting back and waiting to see what is going to happen before taking sufficient action.

The minister went on to say: "Canada's wishes will not necessarily determine Canada's role. Powerful new economic and political forces are at work, forces over which Canada has limited influence." Canada has the potential for much more influence in the situation in east Europe and the Soviet Union than we exhibit by our actions right now. Because of our characteristics and because of our training capacities in many areas, we can contribute.

I come back to some of the specific ways that the Soviet Union and the Germanys asked us to become involved; some of the ways that were expressed to us and some of the ways that seem obvious to us where Canada could improve its role. I go back to my critical remarks about our diplomatic presence in the Soviet Union. I raised this yesterday in the House in a standing order. I recognize that our embassy in Moscow has gone through difficult times with the recall of nine staff people who were well qualified.

• (1640)

With no more cost whatsoever involved, our government ought to make a commitment to putting personnel into our embassies who are fluent in Soviet languages, not just one Soviet language but Soviet languages. If we cannot communicate with people on the street, if we become isolated in our embassies and within the diplomatic community, we are going to be unable to influence change in the Soviet Union as is required.

Without language, without knowledge of Soviet culture and Soviet ways, we simply cannot succeed. When meeting with people in the Soviet Union, they spoke to us of the different ways in which they felt Canada could become involved. As one steps off the plane in the Soviet Union, the very first thing that confronts you is the environment.

It is interesting that the first words we heard President Gorbachev speak when he arrived in Canada was how clear our air was. He suggested that our Prime Minister ought to tax it. I was very happy to hear that our Prime Minister had no intention of doing that. But I found it very telling that that would be President Gorbachev's first perspective of our country. In reverse, my first impression after arriving in the Soviet Union was the awful environmental problem they have.

The very air one breathes is obviously polluted. In fact, we learned of the very few people we have in our embassy in Moscow, there are two adults who have been there a year and a half and have developed allergies. These people who never had allergies before. This speaks, from their point of view, of the dreadful situation of pollution that exists in that country.

Pollution is in the air and in the water. It is obvious it is there, but the impact of the environmental degradation is not really appreciated or studied. Certainly, the average person in the Soviet Union does not seem to be aware of the environmental degradation.

The main problem in the environment to which they allude with some regularity is the Chernobyl disaster and its massive negative impact on their society. However, even acknowledging the environmental disaster, there is a frustration on behalf of the Soviet people about dealing with the situation. In fact, the tendency appeared to us to be more one of wanting to ignore the problem and get on to other issues which were seen to be more significant.

My impression was that there was a lot that Canada could do to work with the Soviet Union to try to help those people overcome their environmental problems. At the same time, it would help us, as was mentioned by a previous speaker, to be more aware of our own environmental problems. Through co-operation, we could achieve a better environment for the whole world. As we all know, environment knows no borders. When one sees what is happening there and know that the same degradation can be affecting the quality of our life here, it behoves us to urgently address the situation.

We were specifically asked for assistance in agriculture. The thought was that the agricultural system in Canada is excellent. President Gorbachev visited Canada previously in his capacity as Minister of Agriculture and was very impressed with what we were doing. It was felt

that in the areas of food distribution and processing, we would have a lot to offer to the Soviet Union.

Having visited the market in Kiev, where one was beginning to see a slight move to the free market economy in terms of being able to sell excess produce, one realizes what a difficulty they had with food distribution. Some of the sellers in the market had travelled 6,000 kilometres by plane with lemons and oranges from the south to sell at 5, 7 or 10 roubles each. They were able to bring the fruit in suitcases by plane and make a profit. There were serious problems there. We were devastated to hear that the Soviet Union was contemplating nuclear testing in the north. It requested economic assistance and assistance with joint ventures.

The parliamentary secretary has talked about what is being supposedly supported in this country in terms of joint ventures in the private sector, but we know that there are many industries and businesses in the private sector in Canada that have tried unsuccessfully to negotiate business in the Soviet Union but have felt that Canada has not provided sufficient seed money or guarantees to make business possible. There is much more we can be doing in this way.

Human resource development is seen as a priority and a must particularly in management no matter what the business is, including agriculture, but there is the thought that management development should be linked to joint ventures so that the management training has discipline and focus to it.

We talked to many newly elected deputies who spoke to us of their bewilderment about Canada's role within their country, being aware of the fact that our Prime Minister had visited the country and had signed 14 agreements. They seem to have gone into limbo as far as they were concerned. The half glass of water had evaporated. They were asking us what had happened.

There is a definite lack of communication between this government and the governments of the Soviet Union. There is a lack of communication and a lack of consultation and certainly we in this House have felt that lack of communication and consultation as well in terms of eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

We hope that our study of the last year will have an impact on what our policies will be in the Soviet Union and eastern Europe, but there should be regular consultation and communication on a regular basis between parliamentarians and the Department of External Affairs.

One of the concerns I have is Canada's difficulty in defining a new role in response to the events there. We have within our own government conflicting views of what we should be doing. Recently we have noticed this conflict in regard to NATO. The Minister of National Defence responded to questions during Question Period of May 17 as follows:

> As a mix of deterrents in the defensive alliance, NATO, we have to maintain the mix that has been successful in keeping peace in Europe for 45 years.

That was the Minister of National Defence. Yet, we have the Secretary of State for External Affairs saying that NATO must review urgently and comprehensively all aspects of its nuclear and conventional strategy.

It makes little sense to retain nuclear weapons whose only target can be our new friends in Poland, Czechoslovakia, and East Germany. It makes little sense to retain a military strategy which is based on a scenario of a surprise attack across a front which no longer exists and where surprise is no longer possible. It makes little sense to continue to retain in Europe the largest peacetime deployment of military force in the history of the world.

We have conflict among the departments of this government in terms of defining our Canadian role in response to changing events in eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. We cannot possibly develop the proper policies when we have these conflicts that the government itself is not resolving. Certainly there is a lack of coherence in policies among departments. My studies in the area of international human rights have certainly highlighted this.

One of the issues that I would like to address briefly before leaving this subject is security and Canada's relationships with eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. We all realize that the military security risk has diminished tremendously with the new peace initiatives *glasnost* and hopefully *perestroika* in the Soviet Union and eastern Europe. However, we hope that with the diminishing of the military security risk east-west, there will be peace dividends deriving from this in a north-south direction.

The security issue is now north-south rather than east-west. The world must recognize that as much effort must be put into keeping peace in a north-south direction where it is not so much arms—but that is not out of the question—but poverty which is a security risk, the new greatest threat to our world, and environmental degradation which we are all so concerned about derives from poverty. There are many ways that Canada can define its role with changing events in eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. We must not be the lazy fat cat that sits back watching what is going on. Rather, I believe Canada can be the mouse that roared.

• (1650)

An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. We must act now to help move toward peace and security with changes in the Soviet Union and eastern Europe right now by doing everything we can to hasten that process.

Mr. Francis G. LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso): Mr. Speaker, I would like to compliment my colleague on an excellent address which covered many of the aspects of our relationship with the Soviet Union and eastern Europe.

It is clear that her recent visit to those countries has been a source of enrichment in terms of her understanding of the problems confronting them and how Canada can effectively contribute to their solution.

I would like to ask her to draw upon her experiences during her recent trip to comment on a few specific aspects, particularly in light of the comments during debate today, about the Canadian presence in the Soviet Union not keeping up with the new demands that have been placed upon it.

Based on her recent trip and her observations made in Moscow and other parts of the Soviet Union, what new demands are being placed on our diplomats and foreign service people in the Soviet Union? Where is the most urgent need for us to beef up our presence and facilitate the transition which is taking place in that country?

Mrs. Stewart: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question. Other than the environment being one of the first things that struck us on arrival in the Soviet Union, the second was that we had so little staff in our embassy there. We were very grateful for their gracious hosting of our group and for their great effort to make us comfortable and to make our meetings and visit profitable. I believe that happened.

However, we also felt that they were working under severe neglect and circumstances that could be corrected. It is very difficult to go into a situation such as exists in the Soviet Union and integrate oneself, make valuable contacts, and be able to negotiate with the people if one cannot speak the language and does not fully understand their culture.

We do know there was a diplomatic furore some months ago which caused some well qualified people in our embassy there to leave the country. I think that our Department of External Affairs should look at the qualifications of staff going to our embassies and consulates.

There is supposedly a consulate opening in Kiev. It has been delayed, but I have a sense from talking to people in the mission there that perhaps the necessary aggressive action was not being taken on the part of our government to push for the opening of that consulate.

It was also obvious that we needed a consulate in Leningrad, one of the chief economic regions of the Soviet Union. We heard earlier from another colleague of the general lack of consulates and embassies in east Europe and the Soviet Union.

There was the sense in West Germany that Canada could be doing a lot more in East Germany through West Germany. In that embassy we need a lot more Canadian facilitators who speak German and who speak languages of east European countries. We have those resources in our country because of our multicultural nature. Mr. Speaker, you know those resources are here. We should be capitalizing on them to augment and improve our way of relating and carrying on business in that part of the world.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The hon. member for Erie.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Girve Fretz (Erie): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the applause. It should encourage me to deliver a speech today that will be earth shattering, people moving, and whatever else goes with it.

I am grateful for the opportunity to address the House today on the very topical question of east Europe and our policies in defence, trade, and foreign affairs. I do not think any members of the House have been anything

short of captivated by the startling events which have swept through the Soviet Union and eastern Europe.

I listened fairly closely to the speeches delivered by the hon. member for Northumberland and the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre. Though I want to develop my speech today around defence issues primarily, I want to touch on a couple of economic issues.

I brought with me two or three news releases. This is something the House is already aware of. It is history, but I want to bring forward that these are initiatives that the government has taken. We have not been asleep at the switch:

> Minister Signs Protocol with the Soviet Union
>
> Ottawa, Sept. 11, 1989—

I am reading from the press release:

> —Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Agriculture, Don Mazankowski today officially concluded negotiations under the Fourth Canada-U.S.S.R. Mixed Agricultural Commission—in Moscow—the focus of the 1989 MAC was decidedly commercial—While we are anxious to transfer our technological expertise, our business community must take the lead in determining the conditions of the agreement.

Another one reads:

> Deputy Prime Minister to Lead Business Delegation to Poland
>
> Ottawa, March 27, 1990—Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Agriculture—will lead a delegation of senior Canadian business people on a trade and investment mission to Poland, April 4-7—
>
> "Our primary goal for this mission is to develop economic and trade co-operation—and to encourage a broader range of contacts—

Then the April 2, 1990 press release reads:

> Mayer to Discuss Trade Issues in Moscow and Geneva
>
> —Grains and Oilseeds Minister—Mayer is leading a delegation of industry representatives to Moscow and Geneva to discuss trade issues this week.
>
> Mr. Mayer will be in Moscow until April 4—

The conclusion of that page reads:

> Accompanying Mr. Mayer in the Soviet Union are Bill Reid of Canadian Bronze, Pat Shimbashi of Diamond S Products and Paul Klein of the Winchester Group.

This indicates to all of us that there have been economic initiatives by the government to see that there will be trade with what has been known as the Warsaw Pact countries. Initiatives are being taken. As a result of this there are and will be tremendous opportunities available to Canadians. I think it is important that we put that on the record today.

I want to read in part the opposition motion today which says that it regrets that there is a lack of clear policy by the government to address the serious issues of trade, commercial relations, and agricultural agreements. What utter nonsense for the opposition to make statements like that when we have the proof positive right here. The proof is in the pudding and we have it. We have been taking initiatives.

One is absolutely right if someone is going to ask: "Have you done all you can do?" Absolutely not. There is much more that can be done. That is a big piece of geography. We are looking at a population in eastern Europe that would give us a tremendous amount of opportunity for us to sell our products and sell our expertise. I know that as Canadians we are going to accept that challenge.

• (1700)

The member for Northumberland had charged us with not being responsible for filling the need for diplomatic officials in Russia and in some of the other countries. I think that is true, but we have not been asleep at the switch. I was pleased that she had the honesty to say that we have to bear in mind that some of these officials had to leave Russia. It is going to take time for us to fill those vacancies and I know we are going to follow through. We also need to put that in the context of the dramatic changes that have taken place in eastern Europe which have happened so quickly.

I would differ with the opposition motion not only in those initiatives that we have taken in agriculture and other commercial initiatives, but with the claim that the government has not been clear in setting out the impact of these momentous changes on Canadian policy.

I would submit that Canada, acting in concert with NATO allies, has been consistent and constructive in adapting our policies to those recent developments. The changes which have transformed eastern Europe and the Soviet Union just over this past 12 months have truly been startlingly.

In essence, the process of foreign and domestic policy reform in these countries will redraw the political landscape of Europe as we have known it since 1945, four and a half decades. There are new governments in Poland, East Germany, Hungary and Czechoslovakia. We have witnessed the fury of the Romanian revolution which deposed the Ceausescu regime.

Finally, there is the prospect of German reunification, possibly the most concrete sign that the cold war is fading into the annals of history. Far from being unsettled by these developments, Canada and the other alliance countries are encouraged by the spread of democracy and political independence to the eastern European countries. These recent developments have the potential to bring to fruition NATO's long standing goal of a more genuine and lasting peace on the European continent.

For the NATO countries, an essential part of this more stable peace lies in the speedy conclusion and implementation of an agreement on conventional forces in Europe currently under negotiation in Vienna, the so-called CFE agreement.

The impact of this agreement and its accompanying regime of intrusive verification on European security will indeed be enormous. Once implemented, the prospective CFE agreement will drastically reduce the possibility of surprise attack and large scale offensive action, something which has been a fundamental NATO arms control objective from the very beginning.

Although both sides have made much progress toward an agreement, some important issues remain to be settled and the NATO countries call on the Warsaw Pact nations to work with the alliance in resolving these remaining issues.

Canada also believes that the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe should play a much larger role in facilitating a more just and a more stable peace on the continent. As my colleague, the Secretary of State for External Affairs, noted in a speech at the University of Toronto last weekend: "The role of the CSCE must now be expanded so that it becomes a drawing board for the new European architecture. As a complement to NATO, the CSCE can become a true instrument of co-operative security, one which would supplement deterrence with reassurance". Similar sentiments on the role of the CSCE were expressed by the NATO defence ministers in their final communique of the recent Defence Planning Committee meeting in Brussels.

It is precisely because the events of the last 12 months have been so fundamental in their impact that we are able to contemplate these happy prospects. At the same time, we must be realistic about some of the dangers which still face us. There remain aspects of the European security environment which call for us to be both prudent and deliberate as we contemplate how we might change the structures of western security, structures which have served us so well over the past four decades.

First of all, it is important to remember that even after the implementation of a CFE agreement, the Soviet Union will retain the most powerful conventional and nuclear forces in Europe. We need to remind ourselves of that fact. This underlines the need for western countries to continue the type of successful collective defence arrangements that NATO has embodied for this past 40 years.

Certainly no one will lament the passing of the cold war, but drawing down the military stand-off in Europe will require a disciplined, co-ordinated effort on the part of the NATO countries so that at each stage of this process, the alliance can retain military forces which are adequate to its security requirements.

In the wake of the CFE agreement, some reduction in defence spending can be expected, and NATO recently decided that its long-standing goal of having alliance defence budgets grow at an annual rate of 3 per cent is no longer appropriate. However, although the precise levels will vary with national circumstances, the determining factor for the alliance countries will continue to be the ability to field forces which are adequate to NATO's missions of deterrence and of defence. We should also remember that there will be substantial costs attached to the verification and to the implementation of the CFE treaty itself.

To return to the speech of the Secretary of State for External Affairs on May 26, I quote: "Twelve months does not invalidate the lessons of history. The possibility of instability is there and Soviet military capabilities

remain substantial. Therefore, a strong military mandate for NATO continues to be valid and the North American commitment to Europe represented by the presence of Canadian and American troops there is crucial as we strive for strategic stability at significantly lower levels of military force".

Beyond the need to maintain a stable military balance in Europe, it is important for us to remain aware that rapid and fundamental change, the sort that we are witnessing today in Europe, can be an inherently unstable process. To ensure that the changing nature of European politics remains on a peaceful path, NATO can and indeed should remain a cornerstone of European security, providing a body where some difficult western security issues, from arms control to German unification, can be dealt with in a co-ordinated fashion.

In summary, the alliance has committed itself to seizing the current opportunities to further its long-standing goal of a more stable peace in Europe, one where military forces are required only to prevent war and to ensure self-defence. NATO will retain its general principles of deterrence and defence, but will do so with the lowest possible force levels and a strategy which is appropriate to the new circumstances.

Thus, when representatives from the alliance countries convened the recent nuclear planning group meeting at Kananaskis, Alberta, they reaffirmed NATO's need to base its security on an appropriate mix of nuclear and conventional forces. I must emphasize that throughout the troubled history of East-West relations, nuclear weapons have provided a very powerful inhibition to military conflict, and in my view, the alliance is correct to retain nuclear weapons as an integral part of its deterrent posture for the foreseeable future.

At the same time, however, the alliance agreed that the recent developments in Eastern Europe, coupled with the improving prospects for conventional arms control, suggested a diminishing need for NATO to field short-range nuclear forces. Consonant with this perception, Canada and the other alliance countries welcomed the Bush administration's decision to terminate the modernization of nuclear artillery shells deployed in Europe as well as the development of the follow-on-to-Lance missile.

• (1710)

The nuclear planning group communique welcomed the accelerated timetable for negotiations to reduce land-based short-range nuclear missile systems deployed in Europe, which should commence after the signing of the CFE agreement. As the Soviet Union enjoys a substantial superiority in these systems, NATO reiterated its call for the Soviet Union to carry out substantial reductions in these systems.

At the recent defence planning committee meeting in Brussels, the NATO defence ministers noted that the radical changes in Eastern Europe made it essential that the alliance review its broader military strategy. This review will assess what NATO's defence posture should be in terms of force levels and operational doctrines.

In their final communiqué the defence ministers went on to say the following:

> The alliance is entering a new decade in which it will face unprecedented change and opportunity. In the midst of change, the need for an established and reliable system of collective security will remain undiminished. We shall therefore hold fast to the basic principle of war prevention through deterrence and defence. In adapting our defence efforts to meet the needs of a changing world, we shall ensure that the levels, structures, and operational concepts of our armed forces continue to evolve in a positive and constructive way.

The alliance has already begun to move in this direction. This year's NATO summit, to be held in early July, will consider NATO's role in the transformed Europe of the 1990s. At a more concrete level, the alliance has taken a number of steps which will lower the peacetime readiness of its forces, including changes in its training programs and significant cuts in the size and number of military exercises. Quite apart from the confidence-building effect these measures will have, they will also reduce the impact of NATO's military forces on the public, benefit the quality of life, and protect the environment. I think hon. members will agree that these are important components of the much discussed peace dividend.

To my mind, Mr. Speaker, this demonstrates that the alliance is adapting with both prudence and with vision to the sweeping changes in Eastern Europe and the uncertain future of European security. In responding to these new developments, NATO does not simply seek to jettison the past for the sake of public relations. Instead, the alliance seeks to adapt its existing policies, those which have provided for the successful management of western security for the past 40 years, in ways which will

allow it to contribute to the forging of a more stable and a more lasting peace. Canada, we are proud to say, has been an integral part of this process and fully supports these recent NATO initiatives.

In conclusion, I want to emphasize that, contrary to the erroneous suggestions of some observers, there is no disagreement between the Minister of National Defence and the Secretary of State for External Affairs on these issues. Canada will continue to play an active role in the alliance as it adjusts to a changing Europe, and every attempt will be made to harmonize Canada's contribution to NATO with the events in Europe and the defence policy review currently under way.

Mrs. Christine Stewart (Northumberland): Mr. Speaker, it was hard to believe in some instances that we were together on a trip to the Soviet Union and the united Germanys because the way we approach the issue is so different.

My esteemed colleague referred so often to Canada's role in the alliance as if there was to be no change there. Yet what we heard about was the new *glasnost*, the desire for *perestroika*, the desire for changes did not include the emphasis on military security and new alliances.

I would like to ask my colleague if he does not agree that our emphasis should be on trade, commercial relations, Arctic security, agricultural agreements, and the many issues that we talked about when we were overseas. We talked about the need for parliamentary exchanges and that even parliamentarians could learn from each other. In particular, new deputies in the Soviet Union were making this request.

It seemed to me that security in the world today derives from civil, political, social, and economic rights and does not come from the end of a gun. Could my esteemed colleague respond to my reflections?

Mr. Fretz: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to respond to the hon. member for Northumberland. Perhaps our differences are not so pronounced after all, for I agree with much of what she has said. We need to consider civil rights and we need to have parliamentary exchanges. That is a tremendous way to acquire an education, to learn to meet people's needs, and to understand each other. That is so very important.

Glasnost is occurring. We are now able to see into countries of which we had only a wee glimpse before. Now the doors and windows are opening. I agree with her on all those comments.

Perhaps where we may have some disagreement is that I believe we, as a government and in NATO, know that the U.S.S.R. is still the world's strongest military nation and has this means at its disposal.

History has proven over the last four and a half decades that we have had the preservation of peace in Europe because NATO has been there and we have been strong. We want that peace to continue. Yet, we know that the amount of military forces there will start to diminish. Those numbers will decrease and we welcome that. However, for us immediately to dissolve NATO—and I am not sure that is what the hon. member is suggesting—would not be an honourable or wise course for us to take.

[*Translation*]

Hon. André Ouellet (Papineau—Saint-Michel): Mr. Speaker, I have a very short question for the hon. member who just spoke and who obviously spoke on behalf of the government. He and I went to the Soviet Union and Germany, and I think he saw for himself how limited the resources of the Department of External Affairs really were. I would like to ask him why, considering increased demand in Soviet Union, our staff, which is barely twenty strong, has not been increased. There was some talk of reassigning certain postings in Western Europe to Eastern Europe. I don't think that is enough, and it's not the right way to proceed. We need additional staff. If Europe 92 is important to the Conservative government, the people who are already there should be left in place, and transfers to Eastern Europe should involve people from headquarters at External Affairs here in Ottawa, if we are to respond to these new demands and obligations.

The hon. member and I also went to Berlin, and we all know that the new dynamics at work in Germany will require particular attention. A number of Western countries have already increased their diplomatic commercial contingent in Berlin.

• (1720)

Unfortunately, Canada has done nothing so far. The number of Canadian representatives posted in Berlin to deal with our needs is still the same as it was several months ago. We are still treating Berlin as an exclusively military mission. I fail to understand this government's failure to respond energetically to new obligations and new trade opportunities for Canada in Eastern Europe and especially in Germany, via Berlin. Could the hon. member give us some good news in this respect or will he at least make a commitment to join me in urging the minister to increase our diplomatic staff in eastern Europe as soon as possible?

[*English*]

Mr. Fretz: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to respond to the hon. member for Papineau—Saint-Michel. He has raised some very important and vital issues that our government and Parliament need to address.

Regarding limited staffing, he is absolutely right but, as I indicated to someone else, we need to put that in context. When we look at the events which have unfolded in eastern Europe so quickly in the past 12 months, surely we are not going to be able to respond that quickly to all those changes. The hon. member is aware that some of the diplomatic corps and staff had to leave the U.S.S.R., but that should also be put that on the record as well.

There is no doubt that 1992 is an important year. The possibilities for trade in Europe will be unlike anything we have ever seen before. We as a government need to do everything we can assist people involved in business and people who want to travel. We need do everything we can to see that we get our share of that huge market.

The hon. member mentioned East Germany. It is absolutely going to be a dynamic market for the investment of other countries. We know that. East Germany is going to flourish very quickly because of the reunification and what will take place on July 2 regarding their fiscal agreements.

The returns will be much faster in East Germany. We need to make Canadian business people aware of the tremendous opportunities. In fact, the Germans told us to come into Germany and invest and the returns will be fast.

It is not so in the rest of eastern Europe. The returns there will be much slower. They will be perhaps 10, 15, or 20 years for the returns on investments.

Having been there, I certainly accept the challenge of the hon. member for Papineau—Saint-Michel to make my wishes known to the responsible ministers that we have more people in Europe. We need them. In that regard, I agree with him.

Ms. Lynn Hunter (Saanich—Gulf Islands): Mr. Speaker, I am going to use this opportunity to speak on foreign policy—a too infrequent opportunity in the House to focus on this topic of major concern to our country and to the world—to make a plea for a more coherent foreign policy, and also a plea that Canada take a more activist, internationalist role.

At least the last portion of this debate has focused on our relations with eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Of course, that is where all the action has been in the last year. There have been unbelievable developments in that area. But what we have to remember—and this is why I want to talk about the coherence of foreign policy—is that we have gone way beyond our ability to compartmentalize the world. When events happen as they have done in the Soviet Union and in eastern Europe the implications are global. Canada has an absolutely pivotal role in affecting those events and the implications that flow from them.

Canada has a reputation second to none on the international front. Canada has disproportionate influence because of that reputation. There are some, and I consider myself among them, who think that reputation is more as a result of history than as a result of action, at least in the last decade.

As someone who has been active in international development and interested in international affairs for a long time, I feel a good deal of frustration that Canada does not use the influence she has.

I remind the House that Canada is a member of the Commonwealth; the Francophonie; the G-7, the most powerful countries in the world, and has a seat on the UN Security tCouncil. We are the only country in the world that has those kinds of links. We are unique. We are a very humble country, in spite of all this, and I think too humble. We use our influence to too little effect.

On this Liberal opposition day, I hope that my contribution to this debate will be to urge Canada to be more activist and more coherent in the development of foreign policy.

Canada should be using its role as a bridge between the developed world and the developing world. As someone who has had the opportunity to travel more in the developing world than in the developed world, I can tell you that Canada has a glowing reputation. I agree with what the Prime Minister said today in his address to the House on the crisis that is confronting us, that the rest of the world looks in amazement that we cannot sort out our own problems.

If we could just step outside ourselves and look at Canada through the eyes of someone from Sudan, Brazil, or El Salvador, the pride that we would feel in what we have achieved would be a motivation to solve our current impasse. But I digress.

Canada should be using its role much more effectively as that bridge between the developed world and the developing world. This is really a global village. When one talks about security and environmental issues, we are in this together and Canada, with its reputation, should be using all those seats, in the Commonwealth, the Francophonie, and the G–7, to a much greater effect.

Our Minister of Finance sits on one of the major councils, the International Monetary Fund. As someone who is on the subcommittee on international debt, I know the kind of influence the International Monetary Fund has in international development and in foreign policy. Foreign policy cannot be distinguished from economic policy or from trade policy. They are all together. That is why I plead for coherence.

We need a vision of what Canada is and of what the world can achieve. This is what I see lacking in Canada now, a lack of vision and direction in foreign policy. It is a tragic loss of opportunity, not just for Canada, but for the world. Canada should be using that role to become not just a peacekeeper. We have a very good reputation in that role. There are many people from my constituency who have served with the armed forces with great distinction in a peacekeeping role; Cyprus is one example. I am not trying to denigrate that role in any way when I say that, but we should be extending ourselves beyond peacekeeping to peacemaking.

• (1730)

With all the influence that I know Canada has, this is what we should be doing, peacemaking. We talk about the peace dividend or the sort of economic benefits that will naturally flow from the decreasing tensions, from the lowering of the walls and from the growing sense of trust. Mr. Gorbachev just left our country yesterday and it was like a love–in with him.

We should be using that greater sense of trust to achieve the economic benefits, the peace dividend. What should we do with that peace dividend? We should be developing environmental policy, not just for Canada—of course we should be doing it in Canada—but we should be looking globally to see what we can do internationally because we are a shrinking world.

One trillion dollars per year is spent on arms. That amount defies the imagination. I know it is an awful lot of money. Stephen Lewis, the distinguished former UN ambassador has pointed out that 5 per cent of that trillion, or $50 billion, would permit doubling all health care expenditures for the four billion people of the developing world. We could provide universal immunization for the six deadly preventable diseases for every single infant on the face of this earth.

We talk about environmental degradation and over–population. We know the causes of those. It is because people do not have choices. Canada has the ability to contribute to the expansion of those choices for people. We know that population growth and the reasons behind it is, first of all, you have to improve the status of women. Women have to be given choices over the size and spacing of their children. That is a rather ironic thing to say, considering what this House did just this week regarding the choice for women.

It is also the environmental degradation that accrues from over–population. There are nearly six billion people on this planet and projections for population growth are quite horrific. In Canada, we think that we have limitless places to go, and we do, but we do only on the understanding that the environment stays as it is. I also sit on the environment committee and I can assure you the environment is not staying as it is, it is going down the slippery slope very quickly. The advent of global warming is a crisis. The oceans are rising. This will mean

that there is going to be millions of environmental refugees, at a time of burgeoning population growth.

I do not want to be too catastrophic in my descriptions, but we are facing a real crisis. Canada, with its reputation in the Commonwealth, in the Francophonie and in the G-7, should be taking a more activist role. The finance minister and the International Monetary Fund also should be taking a more activist role because people in the developing world have no choice. The reason that their choices are limited is because we, in the developed countries, are not allowing them the choices. We are insisting that because they have this debt, they should pay it. I know I have some friends in the gallery from the banking community. They know, and I know, because I used to work in the banking community myself, that it takes two to make a loan. It takes two to make a bad loan. When a bad loan is made it is not just the debtor who pays, the creditor has to take responsibility as well.

We in the north are partly responsible to the south for our actions. The international debt crisis is not just a Third World problem, it is our problem. It is a world problem and we are all suffering from it. It is not just economic policy, foreign policy, trade policy, finance policy, they all have to be interlinked. I urge this government to have a coherent policy, to have a vision of the world and our place in it and where we can go.

The kind of peace dividend we should consider is one which would help stop the destruction from arms expenditures, the $1 trillion a year in arms expenditures. A number of those dollars go to finance wars in the developing world. Of the 22 million human beings—nearly the population of Canada—killed in warfare since 1945 have died in regional conflicts, many of them in the Third World. This is why Canada has a role.

When Stephen Lewis, our former ambassador to the UN travelled across Canada, he spoke passionately about the importance of the United Nations in a peacekeeping and a peace-generating role. We have to shore up the UN and our international reputation could be used to great effect in that way.

We have a seat on the Security Council. We sought that seat, we bargained for that seat. When I was at the UN last fall many representatives of developing countries spoke to me about their hopes that Canada will use that seat to voice their concerns on the Security Council. They voted for Canada to be on the Security Council. They did so out of a sense of hope because they know that Canada can act as the bridge between the developed and the developing world.

We can do it with overseas development assistance which still is not up to what we promised, .7 per cent of the GNP.

We can take a more activist role in the international debt crisis. We can use Canada's role to a greater effect on the environment. We can be strong in the international fora which our represents attend. We will be listened to and respected. We are not a bit player on the world stage, we are a major player. We have to use that reputation to a much greater effect.

In conclusion, there are few things we can do. We can increase overseas development assistance, use Canada's reputation to solve the international debt crisis, and concern ourselves with the environmental degradation of our world. We can use our reputation and technical abilities to that end and use Canada as a peacemaker rather than a peacekeeper.

• (1740)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Marcel Prud'homme (Saint-Denis): Mr. Speaker, it is always difficult to get this Parliament, and I am not blaming anyone in particular, to have a wide-ranging debate on international affairs. I have noticed that members seem to be somewhat reluctant to show a concern for international problems, as if these were not important to their constituents. That is why I want to say to young Canadians who are listening to us today that in a country like Canada, any federal member of Parliament who is worth his salt should be concerned about the international situation. After all, isn't that what federal members are for?

[*English*]

Our esteemed colleague said that we should be more active in an international role. I wish we had, as members of Parliament of Canada, an international activist group of people. I assure her that I will buy the first membership card.

Mr. Gorbachev came to Canada in 1983. I had the honour to chair the first meeting on foreign affairs and national defence with Mr. Gorbachev. I say things today that may sound unusual but I had to twist many arms, in

a friendly way of course, to make members attend that meeting. It turned out to be one of the most successful meetings to have ever taken place. In my view, it was because of the personality of Mr. Gorbachev. Yet, at that time, so many people tried to block that meeting. I am not mentioning any party in particular or any individual.

I had a close friendship with the Soviet ambassador, Mr. Yakovlev for ten years in Canada. In the early 1970s, people were afraid to be afraid, security services were afraid to see you too often with people who were not considered to be too kosher. I say this to please my friend, the Minister of State for Multiculturalism and Citizenship. But, some members at that time dared to be different in foreign affairs.

I rejoice today when I see what is taking place between east and west. I rejoice at what I see taking place in South Africa, even though I believe officially, at the risk of being embarrassed, that we should now reach out to the Government of South Africa, to encourage them before this becomes an explosion of hate; hate between white, hate between black, and hate between black and white. That is what I predict could happen. The time has come for all parliamentarians who dare to reach out even though some say it may not be the right time.

[*Translation*]

This Saturday, I will speak at Lafontaine Park in Montreal, together with a number of people we French Canadians in the Quebec Liberal Party do not meet very often. The will include Mr. Larose of the CSN, Ms. Harel, a member for the Parti Québécois, Pauline Julien and several others. There are going to be quite a few speeches. Mine will be about a subject that is rarely mentioned in Parliament. I see my hon. friend to whom I referred earlier, and I can look him straight in the eye and tell him that as far as I am concerned, in the past 25 years one of the last powder kegs remaining on this planet is the terrible situation in the Middle East. However, when a member of Parliament admits to concerns of this kind, you know how they are treated in this country. I say this publicly and with regret, because I believe that if the State of Israel exists, it has a right to be secure. But I also think that if we have the kind of vision the hon. member for the NDP mentioned earlier, we must consider what the threats are to this state's security. What can threaten its security is a refusal to seek solutions to the incredible problem of the Palestinian community—I am not going to get controversial today—of those Palestinians who are a living unit.

Oh, these feelings of hate that keep getting worse! Hate between Israelis—I mentioned earlier the hate between Blacks and hate between Whites in South Africa, and hate between Blacks and Whites—well, I have seen this happening for a long time. I have said it so many times, and sometimes I feel as though I am the only one who realizes that it is these long standing feelings of hatred that have caused the whole tragedy that is Lebanon.

I knew Lebanon when it was a paradise on earth. However, and I am getting to my question, they didn't want to deal with the problem at the time, and today, there seems to be the same reluctance to resolve this problem of hostility between the State of Israel and the Arab countries and between Israel and the Palestinians, and now between Israelis and between people who live in Israel.

I wonder why Canadians are so afraid to react. I could go on for hours on this subject. I would like to ask the hon. member whether with all her importants concerns—

[*English*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I would hope that the hon. member would put his question. If there is no one else who wants to ask a question, I will allow the member a supplementary.

Mr. Prud'homme: In all the preoccupations that you have expressed, of which I am well aware, is that part of the world also one of your preoccupations when you tell us that we should be more active in international affairs?

Ms. Hunter: Mr. Speaker, I think the events of today absolutely demonstrate what I was saying. There is too little opportunity to speak about foreign policy. What happens is that we try to lump it all together, and I am as guilty of that as anyone else.

What we have to do in this country is realize that we are living in an evolving world. I am not just talking about foreign policies. I am talking about words as well and redefining what security means. What does security mean? It does not mean more armaments in Palestine and Lebanon. It is not making them more secure. It does not mean more armaments for South Africa or southern

Africa. That is for certain. It does not make any of us feel more secure.

I do not want to get too cerebral here, but we are talking about a way of looking at ourselves as world citizens, just as we have managed with the Charest report to put aside partisan interests. On a world scale, we should be able to put aside national interests when we are talking about the environment or peace. I think we are capable of getting there. There is hope—I am an optimistic person—that is out there with respect to the events of last year, extending through this year. It shows what we are capable of. In Canada, we should be using our position to more greatly affect bringing that kind of world vision to fruition.

Mrs. Christine Stewart (Northumberland): Mr. Speaker, I will try to make this short.

I think my colleague will agree, but I want her to comment. One of our concerns with the détente occurring in the east-west and the lessening of the military threat is the transfer of arms trade from east-west to north-south. There has been far too much of the arms trade north-south. I am wondering if she is equally concerned about the change, our government not specifically addressing it but suggesting that our own arms industry should be converting to peaceful measures, such as technology for the environment.

Second, when she referred to coherence in policy with the government, one of my major concerns—I still get questions about this—was the specific situation of our Prime Minister going to the Caribbean and forgiving Caribbean debt. There seemed to be no coherence on the government side when that was done because it has caused so much negative opinion in this country against foreign aid. I wonder if the hon. member could comment on that.

• (1750)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Succinctly, in two minutes.

Ms. Hunter: Mr. Speaker, it is a very complex question for two minutes, but I will do my best.

I absolutely agree with the hon. member for Northumberland. think that the reaction to the ARMX exhibit last year in Ottawa is really instructive to the government about what Canadians are willing to tolerate. We are not willing to tolerate militarization and economic development through military might. ARMX was an absolute anachronism. We are not willing to be part of that little game with the arms traders. It is not a little game, it is a rather large game.

Regarding the forgiveness of debt, this is what I was trying to address in the body of my speech. When you talk about forgiveness of debt, it cannot just be giving alms to the poor. It is not like that, as I pointed out. It takes two to make a debt and irresponsibility on our part and irresponsibility on the part of the other. It takes two. We are not giving charity. The kind of assistance that we should be giving is helping people to develop themselves. That is why, in my final few moments, I would like to make another plea for coherence in foreign policy. It is not evident yet, but I am still hoping.

Mr. Mark Assad (Gatineau—La Lièvre): Mr. Speaker, before I begin, I would like you to know that some of my colleagues would also like to say a few words. Do I understand that this debate will end at 6.15 precisely?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Yes. If nobody is going to ask you any questions or comments, then I think we could get two speakers in, if you want to split your time. You have 22 minutes. Govern yourself accordingly.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Assad: Mr. Speaker, when I saw today that the House would consider an opposition motion by the hon. member for Papineau—Saint-Michel and discuss some of the world's serious problems, I read the motion and I said to myself that the first spot that comes to my mind is the Middle East.

I agree there have been important events in eastern Europe, with all these unexpected changes that have suddenly revolutionized the political face of Europe, in a way we have not seen for over 50 years. But as the hon. member for Saint-Denis pointed out, if there is any spot that is like a volcano—

Mr. Prud'homme: A powder keg.

Mr. Assad: —a powder keg about to explode, it is certainly the Middle East. Anyone who is at all concerned about human rights and humanitarian considerations and who looks at what is happening in the Middle

East finds it very difficult to accept what is going on down there.

I will just give a few examples. Mr. Speaker, Canadians who are listening to us, especially, as the hon. member said earlier, young Canadians, should have an interest in these issues because we are living in a rapidly shrinking world. As members of a federal Parliament, we have a duty to look at what is happening on the international scene because if we believe in human rights, in the rights and freedoms of the individual, we cannot ignore, in fact we must be on the alert for violations of those rights. I will give you an example, and I must say that this particular situation is an extremely difficult one and that it is regrettable that so many people in this country prefer to ignore it. They refuse to fact the facts.

[*English*]

Mr. Speaker, look at occupied Gaza and what has happened over the years, how Lebanon has been torn apart by the Syrian and Israeli armies inside its territory which they cannot seem to get rid of. There have been many years of occupation. Who have been the victims? The Palestinians.

Everybody expresses concern and sympathy for the Palestinians, and yet this goes on to no end. There are violations that we have not seen since the Second World War. For example, there have been school closures in the occupied territories which are illegal under the Geneva Convention. The Palestinians in the occupied territories have not been in school now for 30 months. That is one of the worst violations.

There has been demolition and sealing of homes, and over 1,400 curfews that lasted weeks where 600,000 people were confined 24 hours a day, five days a week.

Dr. Israel Schack of Israel, a most outstanding scholar, a man who survived the Warsaw ghettos and the concentration camps was in Canada last week. This man has the courage to bring up the violations of his government. He spoke of the uprooting of olive and citrus trees which the Palestinians need to survive. Since the *intifada* started, 180,000 trees have been deliberately uprooted by Israeli forces. That is unbelievable. Can you imagine ripping up by the roots the livelihood of a people?

Is there anything more precious in the Middle East than water? The day will come when water will be more important than oil. It is already a cherished commodity in the Middle East. Yet there is illegal use of resources of occupied territories, forbidden under the Geneva Convention. The use of water by the Palestinians has been frozen at the 1967 level.

The 1988 water census shows that 1,100,000 Palestinians in the occupied territories were allowed to use 17 per cent of the total annual amount of the underground water and—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The hon. member for Erie on a point of order.

Mr. Fretz: Mr. Speaker, my point of order rests on whether or not the information that is being shared by the hon. member, which may be of interest to all of us, has anything to do with the motion that is before the House today. I question whether the topic he is discussing has anything to do with the motion and I suggest that he be brought to order.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): My understanding is that it is a matter of foreign policy but I am sure the hon. member will be getting closer to the motion as he carries on with his speech.

Mr. Assad: Mr. Speaker, it concerns general foreign policy and –I am sure that if the hon. member knew the facts of what is going on in the occupied country, as a decent human being who believes in humanitarian rights, he would be one of those protesting this violation against human rights.

Mr. Fretz: What has it got to do with Canada's foreign policy?

Mr. Assad: That's your narrow view of things in the world. Continue with your attitude and you will see where it will lead us.

Under international law and the Geneva Convention confiscation of land is prevented by an occupying power. Yet, 54 per cent of the west bank has been confiscated, and 40 per cent of the Gaza land has been confiscated. There have been 900 Palestinian casualties, more than 200 of which were children, and 80,000 injuries.

• (1800)

As some members have said, Canada's role has a disproportionate influence in the world regardless that we have a population of only some 27 million. We can influence certain events. We can appeal to other countries on humanitarian grounds to protect peoples under occupied territories who are suffering, are being de-

prived of their livelihoods, and are under strenuous conditions.

I am hoping that in the weeks and months to come the Liberal party will be more active in the House during Question Period concerning international affairs and this situation.

We are all aware of eastern Europe and what has been developing there. There is no problem. They do not have armies of occupation in their territories.

What we need here from the Canadian government is a persistent demand to the authorities in Israel that we are aware of the violations of human rights, that we are aware that there are Palestinians who are suffering difficult times, and that we feel that our Canadian government should intervene.

I am sure that all Canadians would like to know the facts about what is going on in the Middle East. It is a very volatile situation. As long as these atrocities continue and as long as this situation is permitted, what can we expect? Do we expect that the Palestinians are going to come out of this after thousands are dead and say: "Well, those are the fortunes of war"?

There is going to be vengeance and that is what we want to avoid. We want this country to intervene to make sure that this comes to an end, to make sure that they are forced to sit down with the Palestinians and give them their rightful place in the Middle East.

This is a subject about which we could go on for hours. It is regrettable that we have to raise a subject that is so important for world peace and for the nations that are occupying those territories, be it in Lebanon, and for the Palestinians—

Mr. Prud'homme: And to be interrupted.

Mr. Assad: Yes, to be interrupted by somebody who is supposed to know better.

Nevertheless, the time has come. We have to look at the facts and at reality and point out to the world who are the guilty parties.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Francis G. LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be able to address this House, although briefly, on such an important question as Canada's foreign policy, especially as it concerns the countries of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

Since I have long had a keen interest in this subject, I am sorry that I cannot go into it as deeply as it deserves. Since I was elected to this House, Mr. Speaker, I tell you that in the world today and especially in Canada, our relations with other countries and especially with such an important one as the Soviet Union, as shown by Mr. Gorbachev's visit among us yesterday and the day before, will interest me even more, among my other concerns. I am grateful for the privilege to be able to talk about it briefly today, at least for starters.

[*English*]

I will make a few brief, general remarks which will be more impressionistic than factual in their content about the subject before us today.

The first remark has to do with leadership. I would like to contrast the style of leadership which has emerged in the events that have been taking place in eastern Europe and the Soviet Union with the style of leadership which has been manifested in the reaction to those events in the west. I believe they are telling for us as Canadians and for those living in the western industrialized world as to the kind of way in which we are going to have to react diplomatically to circumstances and to events which will be taking place in the years ahead.

It has been said that the revolution taking place in the Soviet Union has been a revolution from the top down. Clearly there is no doubt that what has captured the imagination of the world has been the style of leadership manifested by Mr. Gorbachev and others who have emerged in the Soviet Union during these last several months to transform the economy, the society, and, indeed, the entire world by the events which have taken place there.

What has characterized the leadership as we have seen of Mr. Gorbachev, which is so much in contrast to traditional diplomacy, has been his willingness to forgo the established patterns of the past, to take amazing political risks, to move forward on all fronts, and to be prepared to risk all, knowing that the transformation of his society really had to take place all at once. We have seen that Mr. Gorbachev has been working feverishly. He has captured our imagination by his ability to do

something which no one else has been willing to do. He has been carried forward by events.

I think that is one characteristic which has been manifested in the nature of situation taking place in the Soviet Union. The force of his personal leadership, as well as those of others who have come forward throughout the Soviet Union from all walks of life, has propelled the events that we have seen.

Another aspect of the leadership in the Soviet Union and in eastern Europe is that it has come from unpredictable places. We all know that the origins of many of these events can be traced to the early 1980s in Poland. Who is the person who has been most identified with those events? A shipyard worker, Lech Walesa, who came from nowhere to guide and move the events in Poland through the difficult decade that emerged last year in the democratic reforms which have taken place in that country.

We have seen in the western press observing events in that country just how that particular personality has been transformed by the momentous changes in which he has been involved producing.

If we turn to Czechoslovakia we see that a playwright is now president of that country, someone who has been in exile and in prison for many years under the previous regime. The examples could be multiplied.

What this has shown is the fluid and totally new styles of leadership which the kinds of events taking place in Europe have demonstrated. What has been unfortunate is the cautious, timid reaction in the west. It is more serious than simply wanting to watch and see how the drama in eastern Europe is going to play itself out. It has been marked by an inability to comprehend the complexity of the events taking place in eastern Europe. Perhaps more than typical has been the reaction of Canada which has been so slow in responding to the events that have taken place.

• (1810)

The Prime Minister's visit last November is illustrative of that, if not merely for the fact that it took him so long to get there, a fact which was remarked upon by Mr. Gorbachev himself. He and this government have been so slow to respond to the initiatives which have taken place as a result of that visit.

We are only seeing now the Secretary of State for External Affairs finally coming to grips with charting Canadian foreign policy to react to those events. It is moving in a piecemeal, step by step fashion which does not do justice to the times in which we live. That is characteristic of the western response which has taken place to events in eastern Europe.

We know now that with the rapid integration of the world in which we live that we have to rethink completely our notions of diplomacy, reacting to external forces, participation, and leadership.

That is the basic message I want to bring here today. I realize this debate will go on far beyond this day which we in the Liberal opposition have initiated.

Canada has much to offer the Soviet Union and eastern Europe in this time of rapid change. We have many interests in common. There are ways in which we can be more pro-active and more aggressive in articulating abroad our interests, our concerns, and our willingness to participate in changing the planet toward a direction in which it is already going. These are ways which are consistent with the values that Canada has always stood for: the values of tolerance, democracy, freedom, enterprise, and a certain civility which is now starting to be manifested in these countries. It is something which is so long overdue.

I urge this government and all of us in this place to be willing to expand our horizons, to think in new ways, and to take a lead from some of the events which are taking place in these countries and from some of the leadership that is expressed there.

We should be more bold in our initiatives. Whether those initiatives be in terms of collective security, Arctic co-operation, new environmental concerns, or the new environmental imperatives which we now realize are the major issues confronting the planet in the future, we must be prepared to rethink our approaches in a dramatic way. We must be prepared to take our lead from what is taking place in eastern Europe, particularly with the leadership that has been coming out of those countries.

That is my message for our debate today. I would urge the government to be more assertive and daring in its approach to foreign policy as this policy review is being designed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): It being 6.15 p.m., it is my duty to inform the House that pursuant to Standing Order 81(17), proceedings on the motion have expired.

[*Translation*]

The House will now deal with Private Members' Business as listed on today's Order Paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS—PUBLIC BILLS

[*Translation*]

CANADA LABOUR CODE

MEASURE TO AMEND

Mr. Louis Plamondon (Richelieu) moved that Bill C-201, an Act to amend the Canada Labour Code (scabs and essential services), be read the second time and referred to a legislative committee.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to start the debate on second reading of Bill C-201, an Act to amend the Canada Labour Code (scabs and essential services). The purpose of this bill is basically to prohibit Crown corporations from using the services of a person hired for the sole purpose of performing the duties of an employee who is on strike or locked out.

The bill was first tabled in 1987, but unfortunately was not among the winning numbers in the parliamentary lottery during our government's first term. That is why I had to table the bill again in April, 1989.

When the bill was first tabled, it was intended as a way to avoid a recurrence of strikes as problematic and painful for this government as the strikes by letter carriers and postal workers in the spring and summer of 1986. You will recall that at the time, the Canada Post Corporation resorted to hiring scabs right across Canada, mostly young unemployed Canadians, to replace its employees who were legally on strike. This had the effect of worsening the dispute and led to increasingly tragic scenes of violence.

We saw innocent youths enduring insults for the sake of working under terrible conditions for a higher salary than regular employees. It was certainly not an edifying sight to see the lowest paid workers in our society fighting each other for the sake of a temporary job. These scenes, reminiscent of the 30s and the Depression, are completely out of place in the 90s.

Although it has now been nearly three years since these unhappy events took place, I think that now, more than ever before, the federal government desperately needs an instrument that encourages negotiation instead of confrontation. At a time when the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms is being held high as an example, we have a duty as a government to put an end to situations that are an affront to human dignity and human rights.

The endless dispute at Voyageur, a federally-regulated transportation company but not subject to the Quebec Labour Code or Quebec anti-scab legislation, recently provided us with one more reason to acquire as soon as possible a flexible yet effective instrument for limiting disputes. This particular dispute was settled not long ago, but it went on for more than two years.

This Canadian antiscab legislation stems basically from Clause 97(a) of Bill 45 to amend the Labour Code which was introduced by Pierre-Marc Johnson, the then-Quebec Minister of Labour, on July 29, 1977.

If I may, Mr. Speaker, I should like to summarize some of the arguments in favour of these antiscab provisions about which so much was written about 13 years ago.

These provisions were meant to eliminate one of the major bones of construction in some labour disputes and one of the most apparent sources of frustration and violence during work stoppages. The history of Canadian Labour disputes shows that the systematic imbalance of the parties quickly results in frustration for one of the parties, even both, and ends up in verbal or physical abuse.iolence.

Since the Labour Code granted the right to strike, was it not normal to expect this right to imply the protection of the jobs with which it is associated?

Of course, a small minority of employers use scabs. But to tolerate the backward behaviour of this minority would mean in fact a denial of the basic right to strike.

• (1820)

The data obtained between 1972 and 1980 by the *Centre de recherche et de statistiques sur le marché du travail* and which can be found in the report entitled *Les briseurs de grève et le Code du travail* which this Quebec organization published in March 1982, clearly demon-

strate that the implementation of the Quebec antiscab legislation had a deterrent effect on employers.

Between 1972 and 1977, fewer than 3 per cent of the disputes in Quebec had seen the hiring of scabs. Bill 45 caused this proportion to fall by half to less than 2 per cent. The data concerning these disputes indicate that among these remaining 2 per cent, employers were mostly ignorant of the legislation and rarely acting in bad faith.

Among federal institutions, it is mostly Canada Post which used scabs over the past ten years. In addition to lowering for long periods of time the level of postal services which the Canadian people had every right to expect, these strikes were a major traumatic experience for Canadians. For a great many senior citizens and people living alone, their mail carrier provides more than a simple service, he is a friend, a witness of better or worste times, a smile which brightens their daily routine. Several of them felt that, when a scab was delivering their mail it was a betrayal of their mail carrier! And yet, waiting for their cheques for some of them might often have been the only adventure in their lives!

Upon reflection, I feel that it would be advisable to extend the application of this future federal antiscab legislation not only to Crown corporations, but to all federally incorporated businesses. This might prevent the deterioration of disputes, as in the case involving the Voyageur Transport Company in Montreal or the Hudson Bay's a few years ago.

It is well known that the Quebec law not only limited the number of conflicts involving strike-breakers but also appreciably reduced the average length of strikes involving scabs. The above-mentioned report points out that since Bill 45 took effect in Quebec, the average duration of these conflicts has fallen from 171 to 111 days, a decrease of 35 per cent, which is quite considerable.

This law has also reduced the number of man-days lost as a result of work stoppages and thus the impact on workers' jobs.

The shorter a conflict, the less likely it is to be violent and lead to a strained atmosphere unsuitable for solving conflicts. When the employees go back to work, the climate will therefore be more serene and thus help operations resume more quickly.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that Bill C-201 is in no way meant to prevent the provision of essential services or to prevent companies from continuing operations, but rather to make these essential services more humane.

This bill will not prevent employers from trying to run their business with management personnel or non-striking employees or from calling police or security agencies to protect their property and facilitate access for managers and other employees to the premises.

However, any employer who violates a federal anti-scab law would be liable to a fine of $20,000 to $100,000 per day, while employer representatives who agree to use strike-breakers could be fined from $10,000 to $50,000.

Some might fear that under such a law, some companies would have only two choices: to close down or to accept the union's demands. The Quebec experience shows that this argument is invalid, since those companies that closed following legal strikes did so not because they did not call upon strike-breakers but for many other reasons.

I think that our government, just like the Quebec government in 1977, should give labour relations in federal institutions a new orientation. Despite the fears of some, the purpose is not to favour one party over the other, but rather to eliminate as best we can, with the means at our disposal, those things most likely to cause conflict and tension in labour-management relations.

Mr. Speaker, these provisions are meant to protect those who are out on the street to legitimately exercise their right to strike. They protect the dignity of our workers, but their main purpose is to try and put an end to the sorry spectacle of companies who would hire other workers to replace those who are exercising their legal rights.

By restoring a certain balance between the parties and by obliging them to pursue their negotiations in a calmer atmosphere, the government is playing a leading role in changing attitudes.

Too many employers have been negligent about maintaining this balance during negotiations, an attitude that has not worked out to their advantage.

After all, for an employer the purpose of collective bargaining is to know in advance under what rules and criteria his company will operate during the next two or three years. A collective agreement means that for two or three years, the employer has the assurance he will be able to operate without any problems extraneous to the production process that will prevent his company from functioning properly. Employers who failed to accept these elementary rules of the game have found to their sorrow this has been counter-productive.

At a time of increasing references to new agreements between management and employees, to co-operative management and participation by all workers in company operations—at a time when the emphasis is on the need for providing mechanisms for permanent negotiations; at a time when we try to get everyone more and more involved as employees and as citizens aware of the national issues, I think it is urgent to stop this medieval, outdated procedure of resorting to use of scabs.

In the recent debate on national issues like free trade, the deficit or the new goods and services tax, this government has tried to involve all citizens in a public consultation process so that all Canadians will participate in Canada's economic renewal.

It is with this attitude in mind that we should consider the need for federal anti-scab legislation. If we want Canadian workers to have confidence in their government, we must be able to preserve the most precious attribute they have: their dignity. The right to strike was acquired over the years thanks to the courage of many workers and to their faith in human dignity. It was acquired after bitter struggles, won at great personal cost. It is this fundamental right that is challenged by the use of scabs. By allowing this to happen, the government is indirectly undermining the workers' right to strike. The hiring of scabs in some disputes might jeopardize the right to strike, because a party refuses to accept the rules of the game and tilts in its favour the normal balance of power.

I do not think that the government wishes to rewrite history. Quite the contrary, our government wants to move forward, toward creativity, technology, and well-designed and more modern management methods.

Far from ruining the good relations between the parties, this bill is meant to re-establish order and strike again a new balance between them.

The parties are responsible for this balance and the success or failure of the bargaining process will hinge on the way they use it.

As I was saying earlier, most strikes and lock-outs end up in service agreements, without the employers using scabs. In a sense, this antiscab bill is more provocative than coercitive.

The purpose of this bill is also to prevent situations from deteriorating and striking workers from breaking material and causing injuries out of frustration.

As I said, the idea is not to go to war against employers, but to impose humane and reasonable conditions during disputes, to create tools to make it possible for striking workers to calm negotiate during strikes and lock-outs without fear of losing their jobs to scabs.

• (1830)

What is important is for the duration of disputes to be restricted so as not to unduly penalize the public, the workers and the corporation. Statistics show that all disputes in which scabs were used lasted a very long time, much too long, Mr. Speaker.

I hope that the House will be interested in this bill and that most members will support it on second reading.

[*English*]

Mr. W.C. Scott (Victoria—Haliburton) Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to speak today on Bill C-201, introduced for the consideration of the House by the hon. member for Richelieu. The bill is a detailed account that reflects the concerns of the hon. member in dealing with an important subject with both economic and social ramifications.

The bill before the House proposes a number of changes to the Canada Labour Code, Part I, Industrial Relations. Its over-all objective is two-fold. First, it seeks to prohibit the hiring of persons to replace the employees of a Crown corporation who are on strike or are locked out. Second, the bill proposes changes intended to ensure that essential services are maintained

in the event of a strike or lock-out in Crown corporations.

I share the sentiments of many members of the House who hold the view that good industrial relations is an essential element of our economic and social fabric and that it can make a meaningful contribution to our economic performance. The preamble to the Canada Labour Code, Part I, Industrial Relations, makes reference to the significance of good industrial relations practices to the economy. It indicates a commitment by Parliament:

> —to support labour and management in their co-operative efforts to develop good relations and constructive collective bargaining practices, and deems the development of good industrial relations to be in the best interests of Canada in ensuring a just share of the fruits of progress to all.

The preamble to the code makes clear that there is not only an economic significance to industrial relations but, also, that there is a larger impact that extends to the common good of Canadian society. This is declared in the first paragraph of the preamble which affirms that:

> There is a long tradition in Canada of labour legislation and policy designed for the promotion of the common well-being through the encouragement of free collective bargaining and the constructive settlement of disputes.

One of the important elements of the bill before us is the fact that it proposes to make changes to some important industrial relations practices in several industries under the Canada Labour Code, but only to Crown corporations. We must appreciate that the spectrum of industries under the jurisdiction of the code is very broad in scope and covers a wide range of economic and industrial activity.

The range of industries covered by the code's jurisdiction encompasses the different modes of interprovincial and international transportation, including railways, airlines, trucks, and bus transport. Encompassed, as well, are the telephone, telegraph, and cable systems; shipping; longshoring; broadcasting; banking; pipelines; ferries; tunnels and bridges; primary fishing; and most Crown corporations. Also included are certain undertakings that have been declared by Parliament to be for the general advantage of Canada, including grain elevators, uranium mining and processing, and flour and feed mills.

This is not to suggest that we should want to see the measures before us applied to all federal jurisdiction industries. On the contrary, measures proposed in the bill present a number of practical difficulties that require the scrutiny of members of the House. But I have to question, in light of the wide range of industries under the code, why Crown corporations should be singled out for special treatment.

I feel certain that significant inequities would arise in the application of our labour relations laws as they apply to industries under the Canada Labour Code if the bill now before us were to be adopted. For example, labour relations at Canadian National Railways and VIA Rail fall under the jurisdiction of the Canada Labour Code and would be encompassed under Bill C-201.

Canadian Pacific Railways is also under the code, but it is not a Crown corporation and would not be covered by the bill. As a consequence, the provisions of the bill would have us accept the view that railway operations under Canadian National are essential while those under Canadian Pacific are not essential.

The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation is another example. It is also a Crown corporation, as we know, with labour relations under the jurisdiction of the Canada Labour Code. Collective bargaining at the CBC would be affected by the proposals included in the bill. Limits would be placed on collective bargaining at the CBC that would not be felt in negotiations at the CTV Network, the Global Television Network, Télémetropole Inc. and other radio and television broadcasting companies under the jurisdiction of the Code that are not Crown corporations.

Miners working for the Cape Breton Development Corporation are under the Canada Labour Code and would be affected by Bill C-201, but workers in similar jobs in the mining industry working for Denison Mines or Rio Algom Mines would bargain under different collective bargaining laws if the bill were adopted. Workers in one company would be treated differently from workers doing similar work in another company in the same industry.

I would submit for the consideration of hon. members that the bill contains an element of arbitrariness in its coverage and that this would create an inequity in the application of the laws governing collective bargaining

among workers and employees in the federal jurisdiction under the Canada Labour Code.

Another factor I believe should be considered in this regard is the fact that collective bargaining can take place on an industry-wide basis involving one union representing employees working in two or more companies. The most important example that comes to mind would be Canadian National Railway and the Canadian Pacific Railway.

These two companies have frequently bargained on a joint basis in past negotiations with nine unions represented by the Associated Railway Unions. Although the approach to bargaining in the railway industry can vary from one round of bargaining to the next, the decision by CN and CP and the union to bargain jointly in this case was in all likelihood taken by the parties in the interest of reaching a collective agreement in the most expeditious manner possible.

The provisions of Bill of C-201, however, would change the framework within which collective agreements negotiations take place and, in doing so, could adversely affect the conditions for determining the most expeditious approach to collective agreement negotiations.

I suggest that we should not want to interfere with the options and the flexibility of the collective bargaining process now available to the parties through the provisions of the Canada Labour Code.

I would like to conclude my remarks by saying that I appreciate the efforts taken by the hon. member in preparing and introducing this bill, and acknowledge the serious attention that he has given to the matter. However, there remains some practical difficulties which will require careful consideration.

Mr. Joe Comuzzi (Thunder Bay—Nipigon): Mr. Speaker, I was asked a short while ago by my colleagues on this side of the House to respond to Bill C-201 and to tell the mover and drafter of this bill our thoughts with respect to its implementation.

First, let me say that as we go through labour codes and legislation as they surround the rights of labour and employers in the country on the federal scale, we find very quickly that there is a great deal of legislation already in place. One wonders if perhaps the legislation that we are considering today is not duplicated in some other act, for example, the Canada Labour Code, in Sections 2, 4 or 5; the Public Service legislation; or other acts that respect and honour the rights of labour and corporations in the so-called conflicts that always seems to exist between employers and employee in the workforce. I want to compliment the member for having the foresight to bring it forward in this House. He stated that he commenced the movement of this bill in 1986 and for many reasons it did not get to the House. Just recently, in April of this year, he again won the lottery and has the opportunity now to speak to it.

• (1840)

The operative section is Clause 1. I will come back to that in just a moment. The other operative sections support Section 89 (1.1) right through to Section 90.6. Those and Clause 3 on page 4 of the bill are really the operative sections. Section 100 on to the end of the proposed changes that he is suggesting to the Canada Labour Code are the remedial or penalty sections in this bill. I will come back to section 89 in just a moment.

What is the purpose of the legislation? Obviously this is a bill which is, as it states, to prohibit the hiring of other employees during a strike to replace those employees who are on strike and, second, to ensure that essential services in this country are maintained during the course of a labour dispute. That is the purpose of the legislation and I will refer to that in just a moment or two. However, we do not talk about what is defined as an essential service.

What is this member really trying to do? What mischief is he trying to correct through the introduction of another section of the Labour Code? What is he attempting to make easier within the labour movement and within the structure of our labour-management agreements in this country?

Simply put, this piece of legislation, with which we on this side of the House do not disagree, refers to the problems that were caused in two incidents in the last year or year and a half. One was the post office strike of approximately a year ago. The post office mail carriers had decided to go on strike and the post office started to consider hiring outside people in order to fill the jobs of the letter carriers who were on strike.

The other piece of mischief which I think this bill is trying to correct is what we dealt with in this House in

December of this year when the Coast Guard went on strike, prohibited the shipment of grain and caused the closure of the St. Lawrence Seaway approximately 12 or 14 days before the end of the shipping season which prevented all of the grain from the port of Thunder Bay from moving down into the seaway and into the terminals at the downriver ports. As a result, it had to be shipped through the winter by rail at the expense of the St. Lawrence Seaway Authority. Those are the two incidents of mischief which I think prompted this legislation and which this legislation is designed to correct.

With respect to the Coast Guard strike, Bill C-49, which was passed a short while ago, has corrected that situation. As you will recall, that is back-to-work legislation that was put through this House some 10 or 12 days after the Coast Guard had gone on strike and which returned it to work.

Labour law in this country deals with applications for certification, the certification process itself, the designing and the making up of the bargaining unit and the right to a collective agreement. All of those processes are designed to be embodied in a dispute resolution mechanism that is designed to protect the rights of both the employer and the employee. The basis of that is that every right held by an employer is granted either through the act or through the negotiating process to the employees or the bargaining unit of the employees through the contractual process and then embodied in the collective agreement.

If we do not have the collective agreement in place, we know we do have in our legislation the right of the first contract. Once we have that in place we have another whole dispute resolution mechanism through the grievance procedure, the arbitration and the final award.

With all this legislation, we still have problems. The language of every act has to be so precise, because when it gets to the arbitration process, the whole course of an arbitration can be turned on the wording or interpretation of one section of the act.

If we have any question about this legislation before the House today, it is the imprecision of some of the wording in Bill C-201. I would like to refer to some of these imprecisions. We do not oppose the concept and philosophy of what our colleague is trying to pursue, but we do oppose some of the wording in this bill. We suggest that it should go back to a legislative committee for more in depth study and research.

Let me just draw to your attention one of the items that is missing out of the labour code, but which is embodied in the Public Service Staff Relations Act, and that is what we term as a designated employee. When we talk about a designated employee we mean that employee who is responsible for providing essential services within the Canada Labour Code. Section 78 of the code says: "Pursuant to this section the employees or classes of employees in the bargaining unit in this act referred to as designated employees whose duties consist in whole or in part of duties, the performance of which at any particular time, or after any specified period of time, is or will be necessary in the interest of the safety or security of the public."

In my opinion, that is something which should be embodied in the legislation so that we know what we are talking about through this proposed change, that is, what is an essential service. Section 89(1.1), the first part of this proposed legislation, tries to determine what an essential service is but falls a little short of that. Again, that is why I am suggesting that this act should go to a legislative committee for further study.

Another problem that I am having with the interpretation of this act is that it only refers to Crown corporations. As you stated when you were not occupying the chair, Mr. Speaker, and as I have said in my remarks, I suspect that if we pass this legislation or embody the change in the Canada Labour Code, there will be many other corporations put to a disadvantage.

I know my time is running short. Let me just make the point that the other agencies that would be put at a disadvantage would be the other departments of the government that are not Crown corporations, the other agencies that work within the government that are not Crown corporations and the other corporations which are affected by the Canada Labour Code. These include CTV, CPR Rail and so on. Those agencies would be put at a definite disadvantage if this act passes. Therefore, it should go back to the legislative committee for further study.

Mrs. Edna Anderson (Simcoe Centre): Mr. Speaker, I wish to offer some observations on the bill before us involving the maintenance of essential services and the prohibition of the hiring of replacement workers where Crown corporation employees are on strike or locked out.

The present bill provides that where the Governor in Council is of the opinion that a strike in a Crown corporation might endanger the public health or public safety, the Governor in Council may, by order, on the recommendations of the minister, require the maintenance of essential services in the case of a strike.

The concept of danger to public health or public safety can readily be seen to apply to such activities as health, fire and police services.

The Crown corporations that are covered by the Canada Labour Code, Part I, are primarily commercial enterprises, in contrast to the situation provincially. With most federal sector disputes, including those involving Crown corporations, the public consideration is mainly economic in nature.

• (1850)

The impact of work stoppages in such federal Crown corporations as Atomic Energy of Canada, Canadian National Railways, VIA Rail, Cape Breton Development Corporation or the St. Lawrence Seaway Authority would, of course, be evident in terms of the country's or a region's short and long-term economic interest.

The Canada Labour Code sets out a framework which provides mechanisms to minimize work disruptions in industries of national importance, both private and public. Federal undertakings under the code include interprovincial, international rail, road and pipeline transportation; shipping and longshoring; air transportation; telephone, telegraph and cable services; banking; broadcasting; most federal Crown corporations and certain industries declared to be to the general advantage of Canada.

As members of this House know, there have been times when it has been necessary to introduce special back-to-work legislation to end disputes in key areas of economic interest. Such action was taken as a last resort when it became clear that legislative efforts were necessary to provide for the continuation of services essential to the economy.

I will return to the issue of essentiality in a moment, but I would like to explore the implications of the bill proposed to amend the Canada Labour Code which would ban the hiring of replacement workers during strikes or lockouts.

The Canada Labour Code does not prohibit the use of replacement workers in the event of a work stoppage. However, the code does provide certain protective measures for employees affected by labour disputes. Workers engaged in legal strike action cannot be permanently replaced and have the right to return to their employment after a strike in preference to anyone hired to replace them. As well, the code prohibits an employer from disciplining an employee who refuses to perform the task of another who is engaged in a legal work stoppage.

Under the provisions of the Canada Labour Code, the parties are provided conciliation and mediation assistance as required and where appropriate in the interests of dispute resolution. They are encouraged to bargain in good faith and to assess their bargaining priorities in the light of their relative economic strengths and interests.

One of the features of collective bargaining under the code, for both private employers and Crown corporations, is the knowledge of employees and union negotiators, that in the event of a strike, the employer may continue to operate. Such knowledge has a restraining effect on the use of the strike weapon. In the same fashion, the employer seeks to avoid having to deal with disruptive effects of a strike.

It is fundamental to collective bargaining that the parties are encouraged to negotiate and compromise when the facts warrant. In this fashion, tests of economic strength are only used as a last resort. When the union is aware that the employer is not going to be able to maintain operations during a strike, the element of compromise is weakened. On the other hand, if the employer is insured of a minimum workforce, his need to compromise and make concessions is reduced. In effect, the relative power equation is distorted and the carefully balanced approach established under the code is undermined.

In the final analysis, what is at the root of this bill is the question of what in fact is an essential service in the context of the bill and what should the Parliament of Canada do when faced with an important disruption in its area of jurisdiction?

Parliament has adopted the Canada Labour Code which provides for free collective bargaining in federal jurisdiction industries. With this legislation comes the right to engage in legal work stoppages, be it strike or lockout activity. As already noted, the provisions of the Canada Labour Code, which regulate labour-manage-

ment relations in the federal sector, place great emphasis on the negotiated resolution of labour disputes. The right to strike or lockout is only acquired after meeting all the dispute resolution requirements of the code.

On those occasions where disputes having major economic importance for Canada cannot be resolved through the normal dispute resolution procedures, the government assesses the facts and circumstances and decides on an appropriate course of action. In the process of analysis, the competing interests of the parties and the public are weighed in the light of the over-all interest. This approach, I believe, is most appropriate for the scope of enterprises covered by the Canada Labour Code.

Mr. Stan J. Hovdebo (Saskatoon—Humboldt): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to speak on this bill. I want to congratulate the hon. member for Richelieu on it. It is a very precise bill. It deals with a number of issues about the effectiveness of the Canada Labour Code which have been of concern and in need of action for a long period of time.

I cannot agree with the previous speaker that the labour code has established a balance which is acceptable to both the employer and employee in all circumstances. It has a built-in structure which has allowed the less public of the corporations to take advantage of even the definition of essential services.

We are dealing with this bill now at second reading, which is to give it approval in principle. I must again congratulate the member for putting his finger on those items in this bill that do need some review and are of concern to negotiations between management and labour in many circumstances. The precision of the wording indicates a basic knowledge and understanding of the effects of the labour code, both positive and negative. Again, I congratulate the member for Richelieu for bringing this forward.

The main thrust of the bill is that it is anti-scab labour. It is against the opportunity of hiring scab labour. In other words, it does not allow the bringing in of strikebreakers. The implication of the previous speaker was that this was in place, but it is not in place. If an employer wants to use management to keep the operation going, that is well within the structure of the present code. The code has allowed the bringing in of strikebreakers under certain circumstances. This bill would limit that entirely, and that is the basic direction of the bill.

I cannot argue against that. I think it is a necessary change to the labour code and should be supported by all people in the House who have some concerns about the quality of labour and management relations. This bill would balance the power of the two groups a little more.

• (1900)

There is a second section to this bill with which I had some concern. The second section uses language which gives to the cabinet or the Governor in Council that which those of us who have worked near, with and beside, and in some cases against labour unions recognize as giving power which they have not had in the the past but would get under this bill. Consequently it would be less acceptable than it might have been without those changes in the wording.

I refer to sections 90.3 and 90.9. section 90.3 deals with the establishment of essential services. This is not too objectionable in that it does establish a negotiation process between the union and the employer before it gives power to the cabinet or the Governor in Council to take action.

Section 100 fractures the structure that we have known and accepted as the basic structure of the negotiation process. What it does is give to the cabinet the power to disallow a strike.

My point is if you certify a union, you accept its structure and its operations. It has the right to strike and it operates as a union in the negotiating process. The minister may suddenly say: "Under a particular circumstance this particular union will not be able to strike". All of us in this House have been brought back on occasion, working either for or against the passage of a bill to put people back to work. We passed one not too long, Bill C-49. That process has worked in the past. The reason for the back-to-work is brought forward publicly and discussed. That is an adequate process. Section 100, which gives this power to the Governor in Council under certain circumstances, is degrading the process of negotiation as far as the union and employer is concerned.

I appreciate the fact that this brings in a kind of anti-scab, anti-strikebreaker legislation. It deals effectively with the establishment of essential services. There is one concern which should be dealt with in a legislative committee, that is to allow cabinet power to eliminate the possibility of a strike under certain circumstances,

power which the cabinet does not now have. Therefore, I say that is an unacceptable approach.

I also have concern as to the breadth of it, the fact that it is limited under certain circumstances. This is the kind of anti-strikebreaker legislation which we think should be an across-the-board code and should be available as protection to employees in all kinds of industries.

• (1905)

I hope that when this bill passes second reading, it goes to a legislative committee that will look at the wording, the concern as far as power that the cabinet has with the wording and to give the unions and employers, the corporations, the ability to come before the committee and say: "Yes, we agree," or "No, we disagree with certain parts of it." We can then bring forth better legislation than we might otherwise.

Mr. Ken James (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, I rise to join the debate on the proposed legislation before us, Bill C-201, an act to amend the Canada Labour Code.

As has been discussed, this bill is targeted at federal Crown corporations which fall within the jurisdiction of the Code and provides for a prohibition on the hiring of replacement workers during work stoppage, and also that essential services would be maintained in the event of a work stoppage in a Crown corporation specifically.

The bill contains interesting proposals but also raises some questions. One question arising from the proposed legislation is that it seeks to change the current industrial relations system in existence under Part I of the Code at a time when the current procedures appear to be functioning quite well. I hope hon. members will not interpret the introduction of Bill C-201 as meaning that the present framework for collective bargaining under Part I is not working. In fact, figures from the federal jurisdiction indicate that the settlement rate for cases handled to the final stage without resort to work stoppage action remains above 90 per cent. In addition, the reliance on formal third party intervention in labour disputes at the conciliation commission level has decreased very dramatically over recent years, with only one case accorded such assistance during the 1989-90 fiscal year.

The figures I have quoted reflect a philosophy and a continuing commitment toward promoting a responsible and responsive bargaining framework. The policy is designed to encourage the parties, with their intimate knowledge of the issues in dispute, to resolve their own differences and conclude a mutually satisfactory collective agreement. As hon. members will appreciate, an agreement concluded by the parties themselves is much preferable to one forced upon them through arbitration or some other statutory means.

If I may for a moment, I would like to briefly review the provisions currently found within Part I of the Canada Labour Code. Part I of the Code establishes the framework for industrial relations and regulates the conduct of collective bargaining in the federal private sector. This jurisdiction covers the operations of enterprises that fall within the definition of a "federal work, undertaking or business" and includes interprovincial and international rail, road and pipeline transportation, air transportation, shipping, longshoring, grain handling, banking, broadcasting, and certain Crown corporations.

The Canada Labour Code requires that the conciliation process be exhausted before the legal right to strike or lockout can be exercised. Normally, this process involves the appointment of a conciliation officer, but it may also involve the additional efforts of a conciliation commissioner or conciliation board. Following the termination of conciliation and the acquisition of the right to strike or lockout, the minister may appoint a mediator to further assist the parties in negotiations.

As I indicated earlier in my remarks, the use of the more formal conciliation commissioner option has decreased in past years with an increasing onus being placed on the parties themselves to deal directly with the issues and not look to shift the responsibility for settlement to an outside third party. I understand that in those cases where a dispute is not settled at the conciliation officer stage and the repercussions of a work stoppage would have serious economic consequences, the situation is weighed carefully before a decision as to the appointment of additional assistants is taken.

• (1910)

It is however of interest to note that while the use of the commissioner option has decreased, the settlement rate without work stoppage in the federal jurisdiction has

remained in the 90 per cent range and the incidence of work stoppages has remained relatively stable.

An excellent example of this renewed reliance, which the Minister of Labour is placing on the parties to deal with the issues in dispute and arrive at acceptable compromises, was the most recent contract settlement involving the grain handlers in the port of Thunder Bay.

Negotiations between the Transportation and Communications International Union, Lodge 650, and Lakehead terminal elevators to renew the collective agreement which expired on January 31, 1988 received the assistance of a conciliation officer from Labour Canada over a 10–month period before the talks broke down.

After a careful assessment of the various factors involved in the negotiations and of the economic impact of a work stoppage at that point in time, a decision not to appoint a conciliation commissioner was taken. The parties were notified of the decision and some weeks later resumed direct negotiations. These proved successful and a tentative settlement was reached which was subsequently ratified by the union membership.

Another situation in which the onus was directed back to the parties to deal with matters in dispute arose in the 1989 negotiations between the Council of Marine Carriers and the Canadian Merchant Service Guild representing tow boat employees on the west coast. Again, the parties were initially assisted in their discussions by a conciliation officer over a four–month period.

However, bargaining broke off and the Minister of Labour was faced with a decision as to whether further assistance in the form of a conciliation commissioner should be provided. Following a thorough assessment of this situation, it was decided that a conciliation commissioner would not be appointed to the dispute. Instead, the assistance of a mediator from Labour Canada, fully versed in the issues in dispute, was provided to the parties and a tentative settlement was arrived at shortly thereafter in the mediation proceedings.

Another concern which I have about the proposed bill before us relates to what might be termed a piecemeal approach to dealing with legislative amendments to this very important code. Part I of the Labour Canada Code has proven over the years to be a fair and equitable statute in dealing with industrial relations in the federal jurisdiction and has like most federal legislation periodically undergone extensive review and evaluation.

What the hon. member is proposing through Bill C–21 deals with only one specific segment of the federal jurisdiction universe, namely Crown corporations, and with issues which are complex in nature such as essential services.

I would suggest that changes such as those proposed in the bill before us should be considered as part of the total review of Part I of the Canada Labour Code and not in isolation from the other provisions of the legislation. What we have here is a proposal from the hon. member to amend comprehensive labour relations legislation in order to deal with certain concerns specific to a particular segment of the total federal jurisdiction universe.

In dealing with the topic of replacement workers, I should point out that we should study this particular legislation to some extent before voting.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Scott (Victoria—Haliburton)): I wish to inform the member that his time has expired.

The time provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired. Pursuant to Standing Order 93, the order is dropped to the bottom of the list in order of precedence on the *Order Paper*.

It now being 7.15 p.m., this House stands adjourned until tomorrow morning at ten o'clock, pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

The House adjourned at 7.15 p.m.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, June 1, 1990

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

[*Translation*]

PRIVILEGE

HON. MEMBER FOR SAINT-MAURICE—APOLOGIES TO THE PEOPLE OF NEWFOUNDLAND

Mr. Denis Pronovost (Saint-Maurice): Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today on a question of privilege, and I regret having to do so, but it is also a matter where my honour as a member is at stake.

Wednesday I was interviewed by telephone on radio station CHLN in Trois-Rivières, and this interview subsequently raised a great deal of controversy.

My comments regarding the Premier of Newfoundland, Mr. Clyde Wells and the citizens of that province were excessive. Today, I wish to take this opportunity in the House to make a public withdrawal and offer my sincere apologies to the citizens of Newfoundland.

[*English*]

From time to time politicians try to find excuses when they make an error. I do not choose that way. I recognize today that I made a human error. That is why I apologize fully for what has been said.

I do not try to escape my responsibility as a member of Parliament. That is why I would conclude by saying that Canada does not need more oil on the fire. The time is for hope and optimism. I want to be a part of the solution, to find a new way in order to keep Canada united forever.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker: I want to thank my colleague for his statement.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

CRIMINAL CODE

MEASURE TO AMEND

Hon. William C. Winegard (for the Minister of Justice) moved that Bill C-54, an act to amend the Criminal Code (joinder of counts) be read the second time and referred to a legislative committee.

Mr. Rob Nicholson (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak on this short bill which repeals paragraph 230(d) of the Criminal Code and amends Section 589. As you know, Madam Speaker, Section 230 of the code now provides that culpable homicide is murder where a person causes the death of another while committing or attempting to commit one of a number of crimes such as treason, sabotage, hijacking, sexual assault, hostage taking, robbery, breaking and entering or arson.

• (1010)

Under paragraph (d) of Section 230, if a person uses a weapon or has it upon him or her at the time he or she commits or attempts to commit an offence, or at the time of flight after committing or attempting to commit the offence, and death is a consequence, it does not matter whether or not he or she meant to cause death or knew that death was likely to be caused to any other person. Very simply, the ordinary *mens rea* requirement need not be met.

We are quickly approaching the centenary of the adoption by this House of the Criminal Code of Canada. What are now paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) were a part of the original 1892 code. In 1947 paragraph (d) was included. At that time Senator Hayden said that the intention behind the amendment was to curb "the reckless disregard of life that seems to imbue to those who carry weapons when they embark on unlawful enterprises."

In 1982, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms came into force. Five years later, on December 3, 1987, the Supreme Court of Canada gave its reasons for decision in the case of Regina *v.* Vaillancourt. In that case, the accused challenged the constitutional validity of paragraph 230(d). Mr. Justice Antonio Lamer ruled in the Vaillancourt case that the presumption of innocence in paragraph 11(d) of the charter is infringed when an accused may be convicted despite the existence of a reasonable doubt as to the presence of an essential element of the offence. Justice Lamer found that where Parliament substituted proof of a different element, as was the case in paragraph 230(d), such substitution is constitutionally valid only upon proof beyond a reasonable doubt of the substituted element in lieu of proof of an essential element.

Speaking for the majority of the court, Mr. Justice Lamer held that an accused cannot be found guilty of murder absent proof beyond a reasonable doubt of at least objective foreseeability. Accordingly, a murder provision such as paragraph 230(d), which allows a conviction in the absence of proof beyond a reasonable doubt of at least that essential element infringes Sections 7 and 11(d) of the charter.

The Supreme Court also found that paragraph 230(d) could not be saved by Section 1 of the charter. The Vaillancourt case struck down, therefore, paragraph 230(d) of the Criminal Code. The bill now before us recognizes and responds to the decision of the Supreme Court of Canada by repealing this provision.

The unfortunate fact remains, however, that there are a significant number of cases of murder each year in which a victim is stabbed or shot or beaten to death during the course of the commission of another serious crime, such as sexual assault, robbery or break and enter. The present Section 589 of the Criminal Code presently prohibits the joinder of any other count to a count of murder.

For example, while a person may be charged with murder and also separately charged with sexual assault, the murder and the sexual assault cannot be tried together. As the murder charge must proceed first, and a conviction for murder results in a mandatory sentence of life imprisonment, a prosecution for the other offence does not take place unless there is an acquittal on the murder charge. A trial for murder usually takes a long time to prepare and conduct and there may be appeals. It is therefore not unusual for a murder case not to be disposed of for several years and it is only at this time that the trial for the related offence may be commenced. By that time, memories may have faded and witnesses may have died or their whereabouts may not be easily ascertained.

One amendment to Section 589 will provide that all offences arising out of the same incident may be tried together. As a result the fact finding process will be much improved and justice will be better served since the possibility of delays will be greatly diminished.

It will interest you to know, I am sure, that this amendment was proposed by the criminal law section of the Uniform Law Conference in 1988. As well, this recommendation received the support of a federal–provincial working group on homicide in its interim report in 1989. Furthermore, the Law Reform Commission of Canada also proposed that Section 589 be amended.

A second amendment proposed to Section 589 will permit the joinder to a charge of murder any other charge of an indictable offence if the accused agrees. This was also recommended by the federal–provincial working group on homicide.

By encouraging the joint trials of charges where an accused consents, the interests of justice as well as those of economy for both the state and the accused will be served.

It is our view that this bill respects the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Canadian Bill of Rights.

Finally, these proposals do not affect a judge's right under the general provisions of the Criminal Code to order separate trials for an accused.

In summary, by repealing Section 230(d) and by amending section 589 of the Criminal Code as is proposed, the justice system will be strengthened by reducing unnecessary delays in the administration of justice, modernizing the law in conformity with the decision of the Supreme Court of Canada, allowing for the giving of evidence while witnesses' memories are still fresh, reducing administrative trial costs, and helping to ensure that the constitutional rights of Canadians are safeguarded.

The federal government is committed to ensuring that Canadians are better served by the justice system. Bill C-54 is a part of that commitment. I ask the support of all members in the House in seeing that this bill is passed into law.

Mr. Derek Lee (Scarborough—Rouge River): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to debate second reading of the two proposed amendments to the Criminal Code.

I am moved to preface my remarks, following the eloquent statement made by the hon. member for Saint-Maurice, with the wish that every member in the House had an opportunity to express him or herself fully on the issue of national unity in these days. I will not be able to do it quite so eloquently as the member for Saint-Maurice, but I want to echo his words that all of us in this House care very deeply about the unity of our country and wish for the ultimate in success from the continuing negotiations in relation to the Meech Lake Accord.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Lee: To return to what must surely appear to be more mundane matters, Bill C-54, as proposed by the government, proposes two changes to the Criminal Code. They are seemingly minor in nature, but they deal with very important issues in relation to the criminal justice field.

This is not the first or the last time this House in this Parliament will attempt to reform the Criminal Code and criminal procedure laws on a patchwork basis. I for one am uncomfortable with the history that has given rise to that. I feel that it is an inefficient, unfortunate piecemeal way to approach an issue that has relevance for all of us. It was only a couple of months ago that we had to address the reform to the foolish old section which described the arson offence.

• (1020)

In committee this week a number of members dealt with a miscellaneous statute law amendment act which included other relatively minor amendments to the Criminal Code as well.

The current section 589 which states the ability of the court or the policing authority to join counts basically prohibits the joinder of any count charging murder to any other offence. This reflects a state of the law which goes back many years. To paraphrase the quotes of a professor at the University of Ottawa, this current state of the law "seems to violate the rule against absurdity".

The current state of the law has derived itself from a state of affairs many years ago when there were many more offences which called for the death penalty. I suppose, in a sense of British fairness, it was felt to be unkind and unfair to load an indictment with more than one offence when one of those offences could bring about the death penalty.

In any event, nowadays there are virtually no offences which call for a death penalty in this country. We believe we have the ability to deliver fairness in a better procedural way to our accused.

In a relatively recent, high profile case which occurred in the nation's capital, there was a murder offence and other offences committed at the same time. Those other offences involved unlawful confinement and assault and involved more than one accused. In that process, because of the state of the law the Crown could only proceed with the murder offence in one indictment. The factual circumstance giving rise to the charge involved a lot of people—authorities, civilians, military, and the like—and as a result it was extremely expensive to put together two trials: one for the murder and one for the other offences.

I believe it is important for the judicial system to respond to all offences committed. I do not think it is appropriate for the authorities to simply charge the indictment involving murder and walk away from all the other charges.

The amendment in the way it is worded now will permit joinder of the indictment charging murder with a non-murder offence where the non-murder offence arises out of the same factual circumstances. We have to address the issue of fairness because the issue of fairness was the reason for the old rule against joinder.

We have to point out two things: first, the law in relation to fairness dealing with an accused has developed considerably over the last few decades. The courts and the procedures by their nature lean toward fairness. There are principles of common law built right into the code which lean toward fairness to an accused. Also, we now have our charter. The accused in any circumstance

will still have access to the severance application procedure found in Section 591, subparagraph 3, of the code.

There is a wealth of case law developed, thanks to the perseverance of our legal profession. There are pages and pages of case law developed around the fairness principles permitting the severance of counts in any circumstance where it would be unduly unfair to an accused.

In summary, we want to support this amendment based on the principle that an accused should have a fair trial, where the procedures are both efficient and economic and where we avoid a multiplicity of trials and procedures. The taxpayers of the country have an equal interest in both efficiency and fairness—and I do not put priority on either one of those—but efficiency and fairness are what the citizens of Canada are entitled to. I believe the amendment proposed to section 589 does that.

The second portion of the bill repeals Section 230. I believe my colleague speaking for the government has adequately outlined the background of that repeal. It is based on a decision of the Supreme Court of Canada in the Vaillancourt case. I have very little to add to the comments of the hon. member who discussed it.

There were two events this week that highlight the significant need to pursue criminal procedure reform and reform in the area of corrections. One of the events occurred on Parliament Hill when a number of people who were or represented Victims of Violence appeared before the Standing Committee on Justice and the Solicitor General in relation to an issue surrounding the escape and the subsequent killings perpetrated by Daniel Gingras in the province of Alberta.

The second case is a current issue involving an individual in custody who is about to be released and in relation to whom the authorities state that he is predisposed to committing crimes of the same nature for which he has been imprisoned. He will be with us shortly, out on the street in society.

The taxpayers of the country do not care which jurisdiction is responsible for taking care of this kind of business. They do not care whether it is the federal government, the provincial government, the metropolitan government, the regional government, or the city. What they want to see is the justice system and correction system working for them; not for the bureaucrats, not for the politicians, not for the ministers, and not for the people who are incarcerated.

The justice system is there to work for society as a whole and that is what our citizens, our taxpayers, want to see. I believe our piecemeal approach to reforming the Criminal Code, the patchwork every two or three months of deleting or adding a section, is not the way to go. It is going to take five years to catch up to reality if we keep on this way.

I want to note in the area of reform that the government has not responded to the report of the Standing Committee on Justice and the Solicitor General on the areas of sentencing, detention, interim release, and the like.

After two years of study and intense effort by the committee with solid dedication on the part of its members, many of whom are still with us in this Parliament, the report was submitted in 1988. It has been two years since it was submitted. Ordinarily, for the benefit of the public who may be viewing the proceedings, a report submitted by a standing committee is to be responded to by the government within 150 days. As a result of the prorogation of Parliament and the election of 1988, the government was not obligated, strictly speaking under those procedures, to respond to that report.

• (1030)

However, the government has a moral obligation, to which it has admitted, to respond not only to all of that effort, but to the issues that are raised in that very comprehensive report. I know the government has stated to the committee that it will respond. Myself and the other members of the committee are, of course, anxiously awaiting that because the response to that report will in part determine the agenda of that standing committee for the next year or two or three.

We are anxious to proceed. The taxpayers and the citizens are anxious to proceed. They want to see movement. They do not want to see little pieces of reform here and there, the want to see the entire issue redressed because, I think they believe that the system is not being managed properly and in their interests at this time. There are cracks and there are loose ends. Some of those cracks and some of those loose ends result in further crime, violence, death and suffering for innocent victims.

In conclusion, I want to encourage the government to get on with comprehensive Criminal Code reform. The Minister of Justice has asked the committee to address recodification of the general part of the code. The committee is about to do that. I am very happy to be on the committee and to play a role in that. However, I want to light a fire under the government, I want the government to get on with it.

I want the government to take some courage from the progress and the co-operation shown on this side of the House and in committee. It can take courage from some of the successful efforts in Criminal Code reform that have occurred in jurisdictions outside of Canada. I want the government to put to use the efforts of the Law Reform Commission of Canada manifested in a proposed new draft code and dozens of other initiatives and working papers.

The work of the Law Reform Commission, in fact, seems to be forming the basis of a lot of the piecemeal reform we are addressing. We are going to end up with a patchwork quilt if we are not careful. I want to make sure that the government knows that we on this side of the House are prepared to address that and get on with the reform that is so badly needed.

To repeat my earlier remarks with reference to what has become known as the Daubney Report, the report of the standing committee, we want to see a response to that at the earliest possible date so that the Standing Committee on Justice and Solicitor General can get on with its efforts.

Mr. John Brewin (Victoria): Madam Speaker, perhaps I could join with my friend from Scarborough—Rouge River in taking this opportunity to speak to the issue that is before the country this weekend and to share his views of the fine statement by the member for Saint-Maurice. I am very pleased and proud of the statement he has made and I join with my friend in congratulating him for the position he has taken.

One of the privileges members of Parliament have is that we get a particularly unique perspective on this country. We are able to share very closely with members from all across Canada the human wealth of this country. We all send our heartfelt best wishes to the First Ministers for this weekend. I am sure that they will be able to come to some agreement, but I certainly urge them on their way.

We in this corner of the House will be opposing the bill before us on second reading. We particularly oppose on fundamental principle the second part of the two-part proposals here, the joinder of offences.

On the deletion of Section 230(d), our position is that it simply does not go far enough. If a bill does not go far enough, that is always a difficult position to be in. But in this case this represents the government's response to the Vaillancourt decision on constructive murder. We think that it is a fundamentally flawed response and one which should be rethought. Therefore we will oppose this bill on second reading.

The first part concerns constructive murder. First, it is important to review Section 230, which is the constructive murder section, which provides that someone who does not actually commit the crime of murder can still be convicted of murder through some association with the crime. The part which is being deleted is subsection (d) which provides that a person is subject to being convicted of murder if the accused used a weapon or had a weapon on his or her person while committing or attempting to commit the offence, or while fleeing the scene and death ensued as a consequence thereof.

The section also provides in effect for constructive murder in a number of other circumstances. It is those sections which will remain in the Criminal Code following this amendment to it. Our objection is to the failure of the government to remove the other sections.

I should first state the principle. I can do no better than to quote Mr. Justice Lamer of the Supreme Court of Canada who stated in the Vaillancourt case:

> I am presently of the view that it is a principle of fundamental justice that a conviction for murder cannot rest on anything less than proof beyond a reasonable doubt of subjective foreseeability.

That is a judge's way of saying that the crime of murder which carries with it the penalty of life imprisonment should only fall on a person who had a clear, formed intention themselves to commit the crime of murder. If someone with whom they are associated commits the crime of murder, even if they themselves are party to the criminal transaction that leads to murder, then they themselves should not be subject to a conviction for murder. They may well have committed

other very serious crimes and should stand trial for them. But, given the particular place of murder and the consequences of a conviction for murder, the law should very clearly provide that the individual so charged should have had himself or herself the clear intention to commit the crime.

This principle was supported by the Law Reform Commission and was really the principle behind the Supreme Court of Canada's decision in Vaillancourt. In its 1984 working paper entitled: "Homicide (Working Paper 33)", the commission stated on page 51:

> To treat an unintentional killer as though he intended to kill involves the criminal law in artificiality and fictions and in the injustice of not treating significantly different cases differently.
>
> We think that constructive murder should be abolished, that the rules contained in paragraph 212(c) and section 213 [now paragraph 229(d) and section 230[should have no place within our criminal law, and that killings where death is neither intended nor foreseen should be excluded from the category of "intentional" homicide whether or not they are brought about in furtherance of some other offence.

• (1040)

The commission went on to make the recommendation that flowed from that reasoning. The recommendation was that intentional homicide should apply only to killings done with actual intent to kill, and cases of constructive intent should be excluded from this category.

As the parliamentary secretary and the House will know, there are a number of cases already before the courts heading toward the Supreme Court of Canada which cast doubt on the constitutional validity of these other sections. It seems to me and to our party that the government would have been better advised to come to its conclusion as to the constitutionality of those provisions and to the principle underlying those provisions before it brought forward this bill. It is not just a question of constitutionality, but as well the principle underlying those sections in view of the comments made in the Supreme Court of Canada. If the government had done that, then, in my view, it would have reached the conclusion that all of Section 230 should have been repealed and perhaps a broader view of manslaughter taken.

I am indebted to the law firm of Rosen Fleming, in particular John Rosen of that firm, who has provided us with a very comprehensive review and critique of Bill C–54. I expect and hope that should this bill pass, despite my eloquence on the subject, that Mr. Rosen would be invited to appear before the legislative committee to give his views because they are very comprehensive and well thought through.

In the course of a written review given to us, which I believe he also made available to the Department of Justice, he noted, it seems to me, the incontrovertible point, that a person who participates in one of the enumerated offences but does not participate in the homicide may still be liable for murder, if he knew that it was a probable consequence of the commission of the common purpose that the principal would cause some bodily harm to the victim.

Given this fact, even if the principal did not have the intent to cause death or serious bodily harm that would be necessary to constitute murder under Section 229, then the accomplice could be convicted. The net effect of all that is, the less stringent requirements of Section 230 to prove murder against the perpetrator of homicide are further watered down as against the secondary party to the underlying offence, for example, the driver of the get–away–car or whatever. It is therefore, in our view, a wrong principle that murder should be the crime for which such an offence is characterized.

Let me move to the second part of the bill before the House, that is, the joinder of counts. I have not had the depth of experience as my friend from Scarborough—Rouge River has had in the criminal courts, but I do understand the proposition that when one is joining, as this bill does, various other offences to the count of murder, that conceivably adds to the prejudice that an accused for murder would suffer before the courts.

This point of view was captured in comments by the Law Reform Commission under another paper, Working Paper 55, published in 1987, entitled: "The Charge Document in Criminal Cases". It states as follows:

> [The] flat prohibition may be unfair to both sides.

That is the flat prohibition against the joinder of counts in a murder charge.

> The offences of manslaughter, attempted murder and criminal negligence causing death are often linked to an allegation of murder, but the present rule forecloses the possibility of joinder. We would relax the rule to permit joinder of this nature—Furthermore, we see no cause for objection to the joinder of any other charge capable of being

tried by a jury with that of murder, where the accused consents and the court is of the opinion that the interests of justice would thus be served.

Having gone that far, which is obviously the rationale for the bill, the Law Reform Commission went on however to make some cautionary comments to which the government apparently has not given any weight.

The commission notes that Section 518 of the Criminal Code regarding joinder of another charged with murder should be amended to allow the joinder of the crimes of manslaughter, attempted murder, or criminal negligence causing death. Furthermore, in the interest of justice, any juryable crime should be joined with the consent of the accused.

It is important to note that the commission limited the number of offences which could be joined. It therefore puts the commission's recommendation at variance with Bill C–54.

Bill C–54 makes no distinction between the offences of manslaughter, attempted murder, and criminal negligence and other offences that may be charged by a jury. Nor would it make joinder conditional upon the accused's consent in all cases involving offences triable by jury.

In fact, it can be argued, when one marries this section to other sections, that the change places the onus on the accused to persuade the court that there should be no joinder. In an already difficult situation, that adds to the burden placed on someone accused of murder. In all of the circumstances of the potential liability, this would seem to us to be unfair.

We suggest that the views of the Law Reform Commission should have been given greater weight by the government.

I would like to make some closing comments on related matters arising from the Vaillancourt matter. They have to do with those now in our penitentiaries and prisons who would not be there had the Vaillancourt decision been understood to be the law when they came to trial.

I understand that there are many people in jail in Canada who would not be in jail if the Vaillancourt principle had been understood and if, in fact, this bill were law. All this bill does is incorporate the decision of the Supreme Court of Canada as to what powers Parliament had.

The government, as far as I can understand it, has not responded to the injustice in that situation. Representations of various kinds have been made to the government that there should be a clear survey of those within our penitentiary system to find out who fits into that category and some effort made then to have them released, through pardon, clemency or some other system as is available.

I hope that in the course of this debate, in the discussion of this bill, or at the earliest opportunity, the government would indicate that it is prepared to act on this injustice. The government should not leave those in jail who would otherwise be released, and ought to be released, if the country is to have its proper sense of justice.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Question.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: On division.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and referred to a legislative committee.

• (1050)

Mr. Nicholson: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I think that if you canvass the House you will find unanimous consent to move directly to Private Members' Business.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The House has heard the suggestion made by the Parliamentary Secretary. Is there unanimous consent?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[*English*]

Mr. Nicholson: Madam Speaker, I think you will find unanimous consent to have Mr. Tétreault move the motion on Bill S–15, in place of Mr. Fontaine.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is there unanimous consent?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

[*Translation*]

ACT OF INCORPORATION OF DESJARDINS MUTUAL LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANY

MEASURE TO AMEND

Mr. Jacques Tétreault (for Mr. Fontaine) moved that Bill S-15, an Act to amend the Act of incorporation of Desjardins Mutual Life Assurance Company, as reported (without amendment) from the Standing Committee on Finance, be concurred in.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Jacques Tétreault (for Mr. Fontaine) moved that the bill be read the third time and do pass.

Motion agreed to and bill read the third time and passed.

[*English*]

Mr. Nicholson: Madam Speaker, I believe there is another Private Members' Bill that may be called for consideration, Bill S-10.

Madam Deputy Speaker: That bill can be brought before the House only with unanimous consent. Is there unanimous consent?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

* * *

CANADIAN INSTITUTE OF CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS ACT

MEASURE TO ENACT

Mr. Jacques Tétreault (for Mr. Dorin) moved that Bill S-10, an act respecting the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants, as amended, be concurred in, by unanimous consent.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Tétreault (for Mr. Dorin) moved that the bill be read a third time and passed.

Motion agreed to and bill read the third time and passed.

SITTING SUSPENDED

Mr. Nicholson: Madam Speaker, I think you will find that there is unanimous consent to suspend the sitting of the House until 11 a.m.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is there unanimous consent?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The sitting of the House is suspended until 11 a.m.

The sitting of the House was suspended at 10.54 a.m.

[*Translation*]

SITTING RESUMED

The House resumed at 11 a.m.

Madam Deputy Speaker: It being eleven o'clock, pursuant to Standing Order 30(5), the House will now proceed to Members' Statements pursuant to Standing Order 31.

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S. O. 31

[*Translation*]

FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

Mr. Guy Saint-Julien (Abitibi): Madam Speaker, in its May 1990 bulletin, the Royal Bank of Canada reviewed the impact of the free trade agreement since it came into force a little more than a year ago.

According to this review, supporters and opponents of the agreement tend to justify their respective positions by pointing to plant openings or closings, but in most cases, making the agreement alone responsible for recent reactions by large companies would be oversimplifying the issue.

In fact, companies develop strategies and plan their activities in terms of a large number of factors, including prospects for economic growth, inflation, interest rates, exchange rates, salaries, trade policies, technology and competition.

Madam Speaker, this thoroughly researched document indicates that during its initial year, the free trade agreement caused no dislocation of Canada's economy, as some would have us believe. On the contrary, a 2.8 per cent increase in exports to the United States was recorded during the first nine months of 1989.

[*English*]

GOVERNMENT ADVERTISING

Mr. Jim Jordan (Leeds—Grenville): Madam Speaker, Better Business Bureaus in Toronto and Vancouver have added their voices to the growing number of citizens and organizations objecting to the government's deceptive methods of promoting the GST.

In contradiction to what the ads are saying, most Canadians realize that the GST is, indeed, a new tax.

When is the government going to regard the GST for what it really is, a new additional tax that is going to have very devastating effects on the economy of Canada?

* * *

GREAT LAKES WATER QUALITY AGREEMENT

Mr. Ken Atkinson (St. Catharines): Madam Speaker, as part of its recently released biennial report on Great Lakes water quality, the International Joint Commission pointed out that progress has been mixed in reaching the goal of restoring and maintaining the environmental integrity of the Great Lakes.

The report calls upon the United States and Canada to commit a level of resources congruent with the admirable pledges each nation made in signing the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement.

As we proceed with *The Green Plan* consultations, I urge the government to keep the recommendation in mind and include these matters in the final document.

The report also calls on the parties to encourage others to accept their responsibilities to implement the agreement. These include state, provincial and local governments, as well as non-governmental organizations and individuals.

We must all work together to restore and maintain the Great Lakes, and ensure that we protect the health of all those who live in the Great Lakes basin.

* * *

HOUSING

Mrs. Christine Stewart (Northumberland): Madam Speaker, apparently the Conservative government is ridding itself of the responsibility of housing Canadians at a time when 1.2 million households across Canada are paying more than 30 per cent of their income for rent. My own riding of Northumberland has seen increasing numbers of people dependent upon food banks as a result of the high cost of shelter. Low income families often have little money left over for other necessities of life after the rent has been paid.

The cap on funding of the federal-provincial non-profit housing program has resulted in a serious reduction in the number of unit allocations available under the program, and is having a devastating impact on non-profit housing production across Canada.

I ask the government to heed the resolution passed by the city of Toronto and endorsed by the council of the town of Campbellford and other councils in my riding of Northumberland, urging a renewed commitment from the government to improve the availability of non-profit housing units. The councils further call on the federal government to reinstate full funding and the number of unit allocations under the federal provincial non-profit housing program, to index this funding, and to increase funding for the federal co-operative housing program to allow the production of at least 2,000 housing co-op units annually.

* * *

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Lyle Dean MacWilliam (Okanagan—Shuswap): Madam Speaker, although Canadians recognize that increased expenditure in scientific research and development is an investment in our future, federal expenditures on R and D are, embarrassingly, one of the lowest of all industrialized nations.

It is high time this government demonstrated its commitment to Canada's scientific community through a substantial increase in federal funding.

The government has a golden opportunity to do so through support of the proposed KAON project at the Tri-University Meson Facility at the University of British Columbia. The project is a world-class particle accelerator that would launch Canada into the frontiers of nuclear physics and allow Canadian scientists to explore the fundamental nature of matter. TRIUMF-KAON is science that will change the world.

It has been endorsed by leading scientists throughout the world as well as Canada's 10 premiers, and supported financially by the governments of British Columbia, the

United States, Japan, Korea, and members of the European Community.

The Canadian and international scientific community now await Canada's decision to help put it all together.

* * *

[*Translation*]

NATIONAL UNITY

Mr. Gabriel Desjardins (Témiscamingue): Madam Speaker, allow me today to point out the important initiative taken by the Prime Minister of Canada in calling together the First Ministers of the country for a working meeting on Sunday evening to break the present constitutional deadlock.

Madam Speaker, need I remind you, as well as my colleagues and all Canadians, of the serious issues at stake, namely, national unity and Quebec's place in the Canadian federation.

The Prime Minister said recently that he wanted Quebec to have a place in the sun and I am sure that a few days before the June 23 deadline, all the First Ministers in Canada will join together to say yes to Quebec.

In any event, whatever comes of these discussions, no one will be able to accuse the Prime Minister of not having tried everything, done everything up to the last ounce of his energy, for national reconciliation.

Therefore let us hope that this meeting, which has been called "the last chance", will elicit understanding and goodwill from the dissenting provinces so that an agreement may be reached for the greater good of Quebec and Canada.

* * *

[*English*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport): Madam Speaker, at the recently concluded Bergen Conference in Norway entitled "Action for a Common Future", Canada with 33 other nations agreed to accelerate progress on reducing the use and emission of hazardous substances that are toxic, persistent, and bio-accumulative.

The ultimate aim is to phase out uses which cannot be adequately controlled, and by 1993 to set timetables for such phasing out for the protection of human and ecological health.

In addition, it was agreed that disposal at sea, whether by dumping or incineration of wastes, should not be allowed unless such disposal poses no threat to the marine environment in accordance with the London dumping convention.

It is good that Canada supported this message. But how can this government be taken seriously on new international commitments when it refuses to ratify old ones.

Once again we urge the government to regain credibility and ratify the Law of the Sea. Forty-three nations have done so but 60 are needed to bring the law into force.

* * *

JUSTICE

Mr. Rob Nicholson (Niagara Falls): Madam Speaker, yesterday the Supreme Court of Canada upheld the law which makes it illegal to communicate, or appear to communicate, for the purposes of prostitution. I am pleased with this decision.

It sends a strong message that street solicitation for the purposes of prostitution is not to be tolerated. My very first statement in this House upon my election in 1984 was on this subject. It was an important concern to the people of Niagara Falls and I was pleased that our government brought in Bill C-49 which became law in 1985—no thanks to the NDP, I might add, who fought it all the way.

I can tell this House that this legislation has helped significantly. The street congestion, the noise, oral harassment of non-participants, and general detrimental effects on bystanders, especially children, made the bill necessary and yesterday's decision welcomed.

* * *

[*Translation*]

CLOTHING INDUSTRY

Hon. André Ouellet (Papineau—Saint-Michel): Madam Speaker, in March, the Canadian International Trade Tribunal recommended the gradual reduction of Canadian tariffs on overseas textile imports for the benefit of

Canadian consumers and the Canadian clothing industry.

I have had representations from three Canadian companies located in my Montreal riding, namely Robin International on Jarry Street, Majestic Industries on Jean Rivard Street and Daimor Limited on 19th Avenue, urging me to ask the Minister of Finance to accept the Tribunal's recommendations.

I am especially pleased to do so because I consider the present duties excessive. In fact, the customs paid by Canadian companies are 50 per cent higher than those of their American competitors.

The garment industry is important not only in my riding but also for Montreal and the province of Quebec. Some 65,000 people work in it. Therefore I strongly hope that the minister will protect this industry by implementing as soon as possible the duty reduction proposed by the Canadian International Trade Tribunal.

* * *

• (1110)

[*English*]

INTERNATIONAL LITERACY YEAR

Mr. Ray Funk (Prince Albert—Churchill River): Madam Speaker, the House will know that 1990 has been designated International Literacy Year. All members should be concerned about the results of the recent Statistics Canada study which revealed that approximately 38 per cent or 6.6 million Canadians, between the ages of 16 and 69, have difficulty with common reading tasks.

A Southam study a few years ago predicted that 100,000 illiterate Canadians are being identified each year. With the rapid pace of technological change taking place today and our reliance on a more information based society, literacy skills are becoming more and more important in the workplace. Only 2 per cent of occupations require no reading and writing.

A study by the Canadian business task force on literacy estimated the annual cost to Canadian society to be $10.7 billion. We know that illiteracy is linked to poverty, it is linked to high national school dropout rates and has marginalized workers into low-paying jobs with little chance for advancement. There are literacy groups across the country, staffed with volunteers battling this problem. They need help. More volunteers are always needed but literacy agencies need long-term core funding to—

Madam Deputy Speaker: I am sorry, the hon. member's time has expired.

* * *

FIRST MINISTERS' CONFERENCE

Mr. Blaine A. Thacker (Lethbridge): Madam Speaker, there are approximately 170 countries in the world, and the vast majority have several ethnic, religious and language groups. In many of these countries the political leadership has been unable to reconcile the differences, with the result that the countries and the citizens have never achieved their full potential. Indeed, many today are killing each other solely because of differences in religion, culture or political beliefs.

Canadians have these same differences, yet the political leadership has always been able to reconcile the differences with compromises which preserved Canada. As a result, we are a fabulously privileged people and are highly respected around the world. Indeed, millions of people want to join us in our exciting creation of a decent society.

The vast majority of Canadians ask the Prime Minister and premiers to reflect on the past compromises of past leaders, almost all of which involved personal hatred and ridicule from a part of the population, and to rise up to this crisis in our national life. It is time for generosity of spirit and the putting aside of partisan and personal interests in favour of a greater interest, the continuation of Canada as a whole.

* * *

TERRORISM

Mr. David Berger (Saint-Henri—Westmount): Madam Speaker, I am sure that every member of this House was deeply disturbed by the recent action of the mentally unstable individual in Israel and the reaction it provoked. There are still those forces willing to callously and diligently plan violent, cold-blooded attacks, such as the attempt this week by Palestinian terrorists to attack Israeli civilians on a beach in Tel Aviv. This was not the

action of a disturbed individual, but rather of an organized, armed terrorist unit, a constituent of the PLO.

Canada must condemn those who plan and organize such atrocities. We must tell them that their acceptance and respect in the western world is not merely based upon lip service to a renunciation of terror, but rather upon their deeds. Finally, we must hope once again that violence will not be the chosen response to tensions in the region, so that some movement toward peace can be achieved.

* * *

MANUFACTURERS' SALES TAX

Mrs. Edna Anderson (Simcoe Centre): Madam Speaker, today I rise to quote from *Hansard*, a member of Parliament who spoke in the House on May 26, 1926. He said:

> Mr. Chairman, under this item I wanted to bring a matter to the attention of the minister which I cannot see any way of doing otherwise. A couple of years ago the minister put a tax on dies, patterns and tools made in the manufacturer's own plant. These the manufacturer never invoices and never sells, but under the law tax is collected upon them. He gets his money out of the work produced by those dies, patterns and tools. Under the law a great many manufacturers are being made to pay the sales tax twice, once upon the equipment and again upon the goods therewith produced. Their competitors pay no such tax; you do not reach any of them in the United States, England or anywhere else with that tax. In short, you are putting a direct double tax upon the Canadian manufacturer. I do not know why it was done; I do not know how much the minister makes out of this tax, and I should like to get some information about it. It was first done in 1924.

Madam Speaker, this member of Parliament was my grandfather, the Hon. James D. Chaplin from Lincoln. The tax was bad then, the tax is bad now.

* * *

ABORIGINAL RIGHTS

Ms. Lynn Hunter (Saanich—Gulf Islands): Madam Speaker, yesterday's Supreme Court decision recognizing aboriginal fishing rights has been hailed as a major victory in the struggle for aboriginal rights.

The ruling allows native people's first claim to resources to be limited only if there is sufficient evidence of the need for conservation. This unanimous ruling shows that the aboriginal peoples have been right all along. The government has failed to listen to the native peoples of Canada on questions of title and treaty rights. I am hopeful the federal government will listen to the Supreme Court and immediately suspend enforcement of legislation which may curtail native rights.

This decision combined with the Huron Treaty ruling last week are indeed positive steps for our first peoples. Although the ruling is a significant advance, there are still many issues to be resolved before Canada's founding peoples are made equal partners in Confederation.

Today is a great day for Canada's first nations, but we have miles to go before we sleep. I urge the First Ministers to be mindful of this when they meet this weekend.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[*English*]

THE ECONOMY

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Acting Prime Minister.

Yesterday, Statistics Canada released a report that said that economic expansion is near zero. Ruth Getter, senior economist with the Toronto-Dominion Bank, linked this to high interest rates and said: "Overall, there are serious weaknesses in the economy and they're going to show up more in the coming months". I ask the Acting Prime Minister, when is the government going to realize that its economic policies have pushed the country to the brink of recession? When will it bring in policies to help us avoid a recession rather than pushing us into one?

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Madam Speaker, as Acting Minister of Finance—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Andre: —let me say that contrary to predictions by many, including the opposition, the real Gross Domestic Product continued to expand, albeit at a low rate. The monetary policy the government has been following is an

effort to control the rate of inflation, and we are encouraged by the recent decline in the CPI.

The reality is that there are still underlying inflationary pressures. Were the Bank of Canada to increase the money supply, which is the only way that short term interest rates could be brought down, that would contribute to these inflationary pressures, leading inevitably to higher interest rates in the future and a more serious economic difficulty for the country. That is not wise economic policy and that is why we are not following it.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, Canadians will be surprised and disappointed to hear that the government is pleased that we have had practically no economic growth. I repeat, Statistics Canada indicates that economic expansion is near zero. According to a poll released by the Conference Board of Canada yesterday, the confidence index of the business community is at its lowest level since this government came to power. I therefore want to ask the minister this question: Doesn't the government realize that the business community has lost confidence in its policies? When will the government introduce policies that will help avoid a recession instead of creating one?

[*English*]

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Madam Speaker, the policies we have been following consistently since 1984 have given Canada one of the best records of the western industrialized nations. They have increased our competitive position according to world economic fora from eleventh place to fourth, internationally.

To ensure that that kind of progress continues, it is necessary that we defeat the underlying inflationary pressures, particularly on the wage front. For example, we still have figures showing that wages are increasing much faster than the economy, particularly in the provincial administrative section where wage rates in March were going up at 9.2 per cent. That contrasts with the federal sector where they are going up at 4.2 per cent. Those kinds of demands on the economy which are not matched by productivity result in inflation. Feeding that inflation through relaxed monetary policy would be precisely the wrong thing to do for the long-term economic health of this country.

• (1120)

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, my final supplementary is for the same minister. I do not know why the minister does not realize that business in Canada has looked at this government's policies and said they are a failure. Isn't that what it means when the Conference Board of Canada said yesterday that its survey of businessmen shows that business confidence is now at a record low, compared to what it was some years ago.

Plants are closing all across this country. The Andrew Malcolm furniture company in Listowel is closing. Its president said that the government's free trade deal is a consideration. The Kelsey-Hayes plant in Windsor is laying off 241 employees indefinitely due to slumping sales to the auto industry.

Is it not time that this government brought in economic policies that will not drive this Canadian economy into a recession and will not help Canadian plants to close and workers to lose their jobs. Why will it not it reverse these harmful policies it has in place now, bring in policies that help plants to stay open and workers to keep their jobs?

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Madam Speaker, the artificial short-term measures are, as the hon. Leader of the Opposition seems to be suggesting, the kinds of things that lead to the horrendous difficulties Canada faced in 1981 and 1982, with enormously high interest rates, a stagflation which took the country several years to recover from, and left all kinds of economic corpses in its path. We do not want to see that happen again. Holding the line with the kind of responsible policies that we have been following is the proper route for Canada.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition talked about weaknesses in the auto sector. In fact, the figures to which he alluded in his opening question show that there was a surprising strength in the auto sector last month, contrary to what the hon. Leader of the Opposition just said.

Oral Questions

GOVERNMENT ADVERTISING

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Madam Speaker, my question is to the Minister of National Revenue. It concerns the $14 million advertising campaign to promote the much dreaded GST.

Yesterday, Mr. Paul Tuz, president of the Better Business Bureau of Metropolitan Toronto, in a letter addressed to the Canadian Radio and Television Commission, asked "to have the extremely misleading advertisement removed from the Canadian airwaves."

I now ask the $14 million man, will he do the right thing and remove the extremely misleading advertising from the airwaves right away?

Hon. Otto Jelinek (Minister of National Revenue): Madam Speaker, I must apologize for the loss of my voice but there was so much praise heaped on this government yesterday as a result of this simplified accounting that I have been overcome.

Further to what my colleague, the Minister responsible for Privatization, stated yesterday in this House on this matter, I simply want to add for the interest of the hon. member and all members in this House that the GST is not a new tax, even in the service sector. The service sector industry—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Jelinek: They ask a question and do not listen for the answer. The service industry pays federal tax on delivery vans. The barber pays federal tax on equipment such as clippers, electricity, hair spray or whatever. There is a federal sales tax that is going to be replaced by a much better tax.

What the hon. member and members opposite, and I suppose many Canadians do not realize is that every Canadian pays an average of $700 a year in federal sales tax. They don't even know it. I think that is unfair. When the GST comes into place, everyone will know exactly what they are paying.

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Madam Speaker, what the minister and government will not realize is that 80 per cent of Canadians are against the tax.

[*Translation*]

I would like to put my supplementary to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and it concerns the misleading propaganda used by the government to sell the GST. Mr. Tuz, President of the Better Business Bureau of Metropolitan Toronto, also said yesterday that if ads of this kind were used by the private sector, there would probably be charges of misleading advertising. Is the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs prepared to tell the House today that he will ask for an investigation of this practice of inserting misleading ads indulged in by his colleague, the Minister of National Revenue?

[*English*]

Hon. Otto Jelinek (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, we analyzed these ads very carefully prior to making them public, particularly after the Speaker's ruling some months ago about another ad of which the hon. member is well aware.

There is no need for an inquiry of any sort into the advertising. It is not misleading. The GST replaces an existing sales tax that is unfair, regressive and that does not allow our Canadian producers, manufacturers and exporters to compete internationally on a level playing field.

When the GST is implemented on January 1, 1991—which it will be—Canadians will realize that we will be better off as a result.

* * *

MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill): Madam Speaker, it was interesting to hear the Minister of National Revenue explain that his voice was tired from acknowledging praise for the GST.

My question is for the Acting Prime Minister. He knows the New Democratic Party has welcomed the First Ministers' Conference to resolve the impasse on Meech Lake. At the same time, because of the necessity of having the meeting behind closed doors and because of the nature of the constitutioned leadership across the country, it is limited to a small number of people.

We would like to know what steps the government is taking to make sure those groups that are concerned about what is happening with regard to Meech Lake,

aboriginal Canadians, women, residents of the Northwest Territories and the Yukon, are not left out of the last round of negotiations?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member and the House know, there have been extensive consultations, particularly over the last several months.

There was a companion resolution first proposed by the premier of New Brunswick. It was the subject of extensive public hearings by a very successful and representative committee of the House.

Also, the hon. member knows the situation has now reached a point where, while there has been a narrowing of differences, there are still very serious differences remaining. We believe these differences can only be resolved in a First Ministers' Conference.

As the Prime Minister said yesterday with, I believe, the general support of the House of Commons: "What is at issue here is Canada." I know the hon. member shares with me and other members in the House a determination that we resolve the Meech Lake Accord question on a basis agreeable to the 11 governments which brought that agreement into being. That is the process being followed now. There will be consultations that continue.

The hon. member knows his own leader and the Leader of the Official Opposition will be meeting the Prime Minister in 15 minutes for a personal briefing as to the status of the discussions as they are seen by the Prime Minister. I know the hon. member hopes, as the House does, that the process of discussions beginning Sunday night will be successful.

Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill): Madam Speaker, the right hon. Acting Prime Minister is correct that we do hope for successful discussions on Sunday and presumably on Monday as well.

I would like to ask the Acting Prime Minister whether or not there will be only representatives of 11 governments, or will the Prime Minister make a special effort to include the representatives and leadership from the Yukon and the Northwest Territories because their item is very important. They should be at the table when that is being discussed. Will they be invited?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, obviously one of the important questions that has to be resolved in the process of negotiations, which can be achieved if Meech Lake succeeds, has to do with questions relating to the future status of the Yukon and the Northwest Territories.

What has been convened to this point is a dinner on Sunday night. That is a dinner of heads of government. The Prime Minister naturally hopes that there will be discussions that night which make it possible for there to be a full-scale Conference of the First Ministers whose provinces signed the Meech Lake Accord after that dinner.

• (1130)

We cannot be sure what will occur at that dinner until the 11 First Ministers have had the opportunity to sit down together to share their evaluations of Canada and to share their views as to how the interests of Canada can best be achieved.

Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill): Madam Speaker, it is not only the 11 First Ministers; it is the whole nation that is concerned with what is going to happen.

Recognizing not everybody can be invited for dinner, the question is: Can we have the reassurances of this government that the leaders of the two territories will be involved in the discussions that relate specifically to them either on Sunday or on Monday? Will they be invited?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Madam Speaker, the question of participation at a First Ministers' Conference depends upon agreement of the First Ministers.

If the hon. member is asking me whether or not there will be the fullest possible involvement of the heads of Government of Yukon or the Northwest Territories, I can answer that in the affirmative. I am sure other governments would agree, but even if they did not, the Government of Canada would ensure that there was the fullest possible consultation with them.

If he is asking that at this late stage in the discussions a process that has been difficult enough with 11 First Ministers should contemplate the invitation to those discussions of the heads of the Governments of Yukon and the Northwest Territories, I think he would agree that that would be an unnecessary complication in the process.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): I assume that there is an interest here on the part of members of the New Democratic Party in achieving an agreement that will allow us to approve the Meech Lake Accord.

I do not like to see thumbs down by members of the opposition on a matter of this importance.

We are trying to proceed step by step toward an arrangement which will achieve constitutional agreement in the country and, by doing that, allow us to get on with other essential items on the nation's constitutional agenda. I hope that has the support of all members of this House of Commons.

* * *

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. John Manley (Ottawa South): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Acting Minister of Finance.

Yesterday, in bringing in his new quick method for accounting on the GST, the Minister of National Revenue effectively admitted that the GST was so complex that a new simplified method had to be found. In doing that they had to sacrifice the promise that the GST was going to be visible.

I would like to ask the government, through the Acting Minister of Finance, what other promises about tax reform are going to be given up on by this government by the time the GST is implemented?

Hon. Otto Jelinek (Minister of National Revenue): Madam Speaker, if the hon. member had followed the process for the preparation and implementation of the GST, he would know that I as the minister responsible for administering this tax have stated for well over a year that we will continue to work with the business community, particularly the small business community, to look for and add any new options that could reduce some of the complexities that exist, particularly for the mom and pop type of operations that do not have the resources to do any additional calculations.

I confirmed that fact in the Standing Committee on Finance not too many months ago and stated that I would be making an announcement in the not too distant future.

This announcement has been welcomed by most of the organizations across the country, including the Retail Council of Canada, the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, and others.

From the standpoint of being a hidden tax, let me confirm to this House what the technical paper and the bill outline. It is that in no way, shape or form is the GST going to be a hidden tax with or without the quick method or simplified accounting, as is the case with the existing federal sales tax.

Every Canadian will know exactly how much they are paying for every element of the purchase of their goods, whether it is groceries, if it is zero rated, or if it is taxable. The merchants can include the price in their products, but if they do so they will have to mark very carefully the fact that a GST of 7 per cent is included in that price so that the consumer will be made aware of it prior to the purchase.

Mr. John Manley (Ottawa South): We have the admission, Madam Speaker, that the amount of GST paid at the point of purchase will not be displayed to the consumer.

Having given up on visibility, as the minister has just admitted, and having admitted that it was too complex to administer the way it was originally proposed, will he now admit to the House that his department is incapable of implementing this tax as from January 1, 1991 and, if they push it through on that date, the only reason will be to hope that the people of Canada forget about it in time for the next election?

Hon. Otto Jelinek (Minister of National Revenue): Madam Speaker, it is very obvious that the hon. member does not understand business practices. I speak from experience as a businessman most of my life.

First, I refute completely the hon. member's suggestion that I admitted to the complexity of the tax. I can assure this House that there will be no bureaucratic nightmare once this tax is implemented. It is a hell of a lot less complicated than the federal sales tax which has 22,000 exemptions in it and confuses the bejeesus out of everybody right across the country.

Second, if I may correct the hon. member, I in no way admitted that the consumer will not know that there is a GST on the price of the product. Every store which includes the cost of the GST must mark on their shelves,

on their cash registers, and on their receipts if necessary, the fact that 7 per cent GST is added to the cost of that product. That is a great improvement on the federal sales tax.

* * *

TRANSPORT

Mr. Jerry Pickard (Essex—Kent): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport.

Again this week we learn of jobs leaving Canada for the United States because of unfair competition. Independent truckers recently blockaded Canadian borders demanding fairness in the trucking industry. This week in Windsor another blow was suffered by truckers with the announcement that the Canadian Transport Group is closing its Sprint operations in southwestern Ontario.

Does the minister realize the devastation that this government's inaction is causing? Will the minister immediately act to restore fairness for independent truckers and for the Canadian trucking industry?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Jean Corbeil (Minister of Labour and Minister of State (Transport)): Madam Speaker, the hon. member across the way is no doubt aware that the vast majority of the truckers' concerns are related to matters that come under provincial jurisdiction.

Nevertheless, the Minister of Transport was able to meet a large number of independent truckers earlier this week and discussed the matter with them. Certain aspects of their demands concern areas under federal jurisdiction. They agreed to have the Minister of Transport discuss the matter with the provincial ministers concerned, and this satisfied the truckers who attended this meeting.

[*English*]

Mr. Jerry Pickard (Essex—Kent): Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the Acting Prime Minister.

Competitiveness for Canadian business is not only a problem for truckers. During finance committee hearings in May we listened to businesses besieged with taxes, exporters grappling with an overvalued Canadian dollar, industry faltering with free trade, and literally every economic sector suffering from high interest rates.

Will the minister tell this House and Canadians that the government will listen and will stop these unfair initiatives in taxes, trade, and interest rates? Will he do this for Canadians?

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, of course we will listen to Canadians. Of course we have and will continue to act in the best interests of Canadians and the Canadian economy.

The hon. member's picture of doom and gloom is not evidenced by the figures on growth and the fact that CPI rates are coming down. As I indicated earlier, the policies this government has been following since 1984 have led to Canada leading the western world in terms of growth.

• (1140)

Every outside observer including the OECD and the International Monetary Fund that has looked at Canada's policies has pronounced itself well satisfied and said that we are following precisely the right policies.

What is a mystery to this country, of course, is what policies the Liberal party has on this subject.

* * *

EMPLOYMENT

Ms. Margaret Mitchell (Vancouver East): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Secretary of State for External Affairs.

The Department of External Affairs employs only 1.8 per cent visible minority employees compared to 6.4 per cent in the general workforce. Therefore, it has failed to enforce employment equity and to prevent internal discrimination against persons of colour.

I ask the minister to indicate what plan of action he has to counteract this kind of systemic discrimination or in fact racism. I would also ask him to show his commitment to employment equity by arranging alternate employment for Mr. Idris Ben-Tahir, a public employee of 27 years, whose health was affected by job stress and strong feelings of discrimination in the passport department.

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Madam Speaker, there are three comments I want to make.

The first is that I am very much concerned about the success with which my department has been able to respond to requirements that are in the nature of Canada with respect to visible minorities and also, if I may say so, with respect to the *de facto* equality of women in the department. I am discussing that matter with senior officials now. It is a question which I think the hon. member knows I take seriously myself, and I intend to have my department reflect that in all of its behaviour.

Second, the proportions she has cited while low are nonetheless an improvement. They are better than they were, and we intend to continue on that course.

Third, with respect to the particular case that she raised, I must say I am rather surprised that a particular case would be raised on the floor of the House of Commons. It is better for all concerned, including the individual in question, if matters of that kind are discussed directly.

I think the hon. member and others in the House know from their experience with me that if they raise questions of that kind with me privately, I will keep the question private and I will do everything that is possible within our system to ensure that justice is done to all concerned.

Mr. Howard McCurdy (Windsor—St. Clair): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Acting Prime Minister.

The two worst government departments with respect to hiring practices of visible minorities and natives are the Department of Justice and Correctional Service Canada. It is not irrelevant that two royal commissions have found that racial discrimination against visible minorities and natives is a serious question in the criminal justice system in this country.

Today, as an example of what results from the kind of employment pattern we have in those two departments, we have a guard in Kingston Penitentiary sporting one of those racist pins from Calgary, and the management has been unable to do anything about it. I wonder if this government will.

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Madam Speaker, the specific question that was raised by my friend from Windsor is new to this Question Period. I will look into the matter. The ministers responsible are not in the House at the moment, but I will look into it and I will have a response quickly.

With regard to the more general question, that was raised with the Minister of Justice the other day. She replied in the House of Commons with regard to the commitment of herself as minister and of her department to ensure that the statistics referred to by the hon. member change.

* * *

NEW HORIZONS

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of State for Seniors, the Minister of National Health and Welfare, or the President of the Treasury Board. In their collective absence perhaps I could direct it to the Acting Minister of Finance.

For the past several weeks we have been told that the New Horizons Program budget has been put on hold pending departmental review. Could the minister advise the House when this review will be completed, the money released, and whether or not the review's findings will be made public?

Hon. Marcel Danis (Minister of State (Youth) and Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons)): Madam Speaker, the hon. member is aware of our very strong commitment with regard to seniors in this country. The moneys that have been allocated in this year's budget are being spent as—

[*Translation*]

—as planned at the beginning of the fiscal year.

[*English*]

So, there has been no change.

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Madam Speaker, the answer of the minister surprises me in light of the difficulty that seniors groups across Canada have had in accessing these funds. They are told that the funds are frozen and will not be released.

I wonder, in light of the circumstances that it appears that in certain provinces there is no freeze and in others there is, would the minister undertake to ensure that any freeze there may be in place in all those provinces is lifted until a review is completed, so that the provinces and territories where there appears to be a freeze,

according to the seniors groups, will in fact receive their money immediately?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Marcel Danis (Minister of State (Youth), Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Madam Speaker, I would like to assure the hon. member that the money budgeted for the New Horizons Program is in fact being spent as planned so I do not see where he got his information. This year, we will have spent over $200 million since the program was launched so I do not see the basis for his questions. I can assure the hon. member that if there ever was a problem in some provinces, we would seriously look into it then.

* * *

[*English*]

LITERACY

Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, the federal government's National Literacy Secretariat has stated that Canada cannot eliminate illiteracy by simply teaching reading and writing. The government must attack the country's fundamental social problems, such as the growing number of poor in Canada.

They have identified approximately four million Canadians who are at risk and who could be added to the five million who are functionally illiterate now in this country and who cost the nation roughly $10 billion a year.

What is the government going to do to respond to these four million Canadians who are at risk, and how will it do that?

Hon. Gerry Weiner (Secretary of State of Canada and Minister of State (Multiculturalism and Citizenship)): Madam Speaker, it should be remembered that it was under this government's leadership and this Prime Minister that we brought forward a very important and impressive literacy initiative.

It gives me an opportunity to reflect on the very effective work of the National Literacy Secretariat, a small group of people who work in a dedicated fashion, and how they have been able to reach out across the country and build partnerships with every single province and territorial government in the country and with the people who have worked in the field for countless years, for tens of years and some for hundreds of years. The literacy movements of Canada are finding new partnerships in the voluntary sector and in the business community.

There are many solutions that have begun to show up. There is nothing like having more people come to the cause to eradicate what is indeed a very desperate problem for this nation.

Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (St. Boniface): Madam Speaker, since the minister wants to talk about the current initiative, let me ask him the following supplementary question.

[*Translation*]

There are now about five million functional illiterates in Canada and they cost the country over $10 billion. How many fewer functional illiterates will there be at the end of the literacy programs implemented by the government? Or is it only or mainly a political gesture or a public relations gesture? How many fewer will there be afterwards?

[*English*]

Hon. Gerry Weiner (Secretary of State of Canada and Minister of State (Multiculturalism and Citizenship)): Madam Speaker, the study that Statistics Canada brought out this week is a benchmark study because it gives us a continuum of the literary skills. It gives an individual a means of showing what progress he or she makes in terms of the acquisition of the reading skills that are so necessary to be able to function today.

[*Translation*]

Madam Speaker, I see the desire of all Canadians throughout the country to get involved, as I know the hon. member is himself. This year, which is International Literacy Year, I want to take part in all the activities. Every week, I will be involved at least two or three times with community groups and individuals like Peter Gzowski, who has done outstanding work, even made it his cause. Hundreds of thousands of dollars have been raised in this effort. As I said, this is a year to reflect and to show all Canadians how we would gain by eliminating this plague, this scourge that affects our country. We

already have plans for next year because we will not give up until illiteracy is beaten.

* * *

• (1150)

[*English*]

AGRICULTURE

Mr. Stan J. Hovdebo (Saskatoon—Humboldt): Madam Speaker, my question was for any one of the three ministers of agriculture, but since none of them are here I will direct it to the government bench generally.

The minister announced yesterday a payment to the farmers in Saskatchewan. There is still a bit of concern because the Saskatchewan government, which is only putting in $39 million, indicates that it does not know where that $39 million is going to come from.

Could anyone on the benches across indicate if this is going to slow up the payments to the farmers? When can they expect some assistance from this program?

Mr. Murray Cardiff (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Madam Speaker, I am not particularly aware of the problem the member is talking about. It was May 31 that that agreement between the federal government and the provincial government was announced. The federal contribution to the program is $238.3 million. The province is coming up with substantial amounts of money to match that program as well.

I am sure that the farmers of Saskatchewan must be very pleased because they are receiving the largest portion of that $500 million program and it has to be coming at a very appropriate time.

The province will be making the payments to the producers. How soon that is going to be, I do not know, but the program has to be developed for distribution of those funds.

Stan J. Hovdebo (Saskatoon—Humboldt): Madam Speaker, the program was announced as pre-seeding assistance to farmers so that they could have money for seeding. For 80-cent-per-acre assistance from the Saskatchewan government, the federal government has forced these farmers to wait for over two months.

Is there any reason the government did not put out this money and collect from the provincial governments later?

Mr. Murray Cardiff (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Madam Speaker, as I am sure the member knows well, it takes time to develop a program and deliver that program. As I said before, we will get that program out through the provinces post-haste.

* * *

[*Translation*]

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mrs. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Supply and Services. Bill C-21, an Act to amend the Unemployment Insurance Act and increase employee premiums, has not yet been passed by Parliament. Could the minister tell us by what right the deductions on paycheques of federal employees have been increased?

[*English*]

Hon. Paul Dick (Minister of Supply and Services): Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for the question and to inform hon. members that the deductions that are taken off employee paycheques are taken off in accordance with the regulations and the law that is in place right now. The new law she is talking about, of course, is being held up by her party in the Senate.

Mrs. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West): Madam Speaker, I wonder if the minister might wish to clarify his answer because we have been informed that the new premium rates were implemented as of January 1, 1990 for all federal government employees.

I ask again on what authorization those deductions are being taken off.

Hon. Paul Dick (Minister of Supply and Services): Madam Speaker, under the present law, a premium rate is announced every year. At present, the legal rate is $1.95. An adjustment was announced late last year by the hon. Minister of National Revenue, who made it clear that it was voluntary pending passage of C-21. The recommended rate is $2.25. We are making the deductions in accordance with the law and regulations in place now.

It would be very nice if the Senate would pass the bill which it is holding up so it would be much easier for more Canadians to get further training, and it would be better for the smooth running of that program.

* * *

EMPLOYMENT

Mr. David Berger (Saint-Henri—Westmount): Madam Speaker, my question is addressed to whoever is answering for the Minister of Justice.

On May 10, the principal of McGill University wrote to the Minister of Employment and Immigration to express his deep concern regarding the major reduction in funding for the Challenge '90 program. Last summer, 95 positions for students at McGill were funded. This summer, only 63 positions will be funded.

Will the minister restore funds to McGill and to other universities across Canada which have seen similar cuts in their funding and which mean far fewer opportunities for students this summer?

Hon. Marcel Danis (Minister of State (Youth) and Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Madam Speaker, the hon. member is well aware that the total funds for the Challenge '90 program have been increased from $198 million to $218 million. That is the first point.

The second point is that we have re-allocated within the total component of the Challenge program a certain amount from the SEED component to a Stay-in-School initiative to help high school students and to prevent drop-outs. Surely, these students are the most at risk in our society, and surely the hon. member would not be against that, would he?

Mr. David Berger (Saint-Henri—Westmount): Madam Speaker, I would ask the hon. minister to meet with the principal of McGill, with the faculty and students who were counting on this funding and who do not agree with his assessment of the situation. Perhaps he can explain to them how less means more.

Hon. Marcel Danis (Minister of State (Youth) and Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons)): Madam Speaker, I repeat that we have increased the amount for Challenge. The hon. member says we have decreased it. That is false. It has been increased from $198 million to $218 million.

If the hon. member wants to set up a meeting with Mr. Johnston of McGill University, I would be very pleased to accept, at his his invitation, any time.

* * *

SEX OFFENDERS

Mr. John Brewin (Victoria): Madam Speaker, I am glad of the opportunity of asking questions so that the Solicitor General will be able to acknowledge his presence here today.

Mr. Dick: Less than 10 per cent of the NDP is in the House.

Mr. Brewin: Thank you for your intervention.

My question is addressed to the ever present Solicitor General. The Solicitor General and the House will be aware of the increased renewed public concern with the complete failure of the administration of justice to deal with the problems of sex offenders in our society arising out of the Timothy Garland case. While it is acknowledged that this case does not directly come within federal jurisdiction, it does give me the opportunity to raise with the minister the report on the management and treatment of sex offenders which his department and he made public on March 8.

Can the minister tell the House what steps, if any, he is taking to implement the recommendations of a report about which, frankly, all we have heard so far is deafening silence?

Hon. Pierre H. Cadieux (Solicitor General of Canada): Madam Speaker, I appreciate the concern of my colleague to underline my presence in the House. I am usually around, as he knows.

Perhaps some of the functions of the Solicitor General require a low profile, but I will try to enhance my presence or be more vocal in the House, so that even my own colleagues know that I am around.

With respect to the very important issue which my hon. friend raises, and it is an important issue, my hon. friend knows that on March 8, 1990, I did release the report on the management and treatment of sex offenders. I indicated at that time that it would be part of the broader task force on mental health.

I understand that all those recommendations are before my senior officials right now. I intend to look at those recommendations as soon as they are given to me.

I can assure this House, as I indicated on March 8, 1990, that that is not a report that will be accumulating dust on shelves.

Mr. John Brewin (Victoria): Madam Speaker, while I appreciate the comments of the minister, there are a number of specific recommendations in that report which he could proceed with forthwith. The report makes it very clear that within Correctional Service Canada there are only 200 places in treatment programs for sex offenders and there are 1,400 sex offenders in our federal penitentiaries. Not only does the public safety require that immediate action begin in this area but so, too, the rights of sex offenders themselves. They desperately look for treatment when they are in our prisons.

• (1200)

Can the minister give us his personal assurance that he will proceed, right now, with some steps in this regard?

Hon. Pierre H. Cadieux (Solicitor General of Canada): Madam Speaker, the report was released on March 8. There is a comprehensive task force with respect to mental health of which this report is a part. Some measures are already in place and others will continue to be put in place.

I would like to pick up on one comment I heard this morning in the debate on a specific piece of legislation. Someone complained that we should not be proceeding with piecemeal legislation. We are looking at a comprehensive review here and will be dealing with it globally.

* * *

CORRECTIONS CANADA

Mr. George S. Rideout (Moncton): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Solicitor General.

The Privacy Commissioner has stated that he did not censor the Legère and Gingras reports and that he had no problem with their release. The Standing Committee on Justice and the Solicitor General has requested the production of the uncensored reports. There is a clear indication that there are major systemic and administrative problems at Corrections Canada and that a program of weed and feed is necessary there. In light of all this, is the minister prepared to produce these reports immediately and to undertake an independent and comprehensive review of Corrections Canada?

Hon. Pierre H. Cadieux (Solicitor General of Canada): Madam Speaker, again I want to thank another one of my colleagues for doing everything in his power to underline my presence in the House today.

With respect to the specific question of my hon. colleague, I believe he is referring to the Privacy Commissioner's presence before the justice committee earlier this week. I understand that the chairman of the Standing Committee on Justice and the Solicitor General will provide me with the specific motion some time next week. I am aware of the motion. I have also been made aware of the comments of the Privacy Commissioner.

I would ask my hon. colleague to check with the chairman of the justice committee who, I understand, has received a letter from the Privacy Commissioner clarifying quotes apparently taken out of context with respect to that specific report to which my hon. colleague refers.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*Translation*]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

PARLIAMENT OF CANADA ACT—TABLING OF FOURTH REPORT OF SPECIAL COMMITTEE

Hon. Marcel Danis (Minister of State (Youth), Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House): Madam Speaker, I have the honour to table the fourth report of the Special Committee on the Review of the Parliament of Canada Act. With leave of the House, I intend to move for concurrence in this report later this day.

I ask that the House dispense with reading of the report by the Clerk at the Table.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Does the minister have the consent of the House?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

[*English*]

STRIKING COMMITTEE—FORTY-FOURTH REPORT

Mr. Jim Hawkes (Calgary West): Madam Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the forty-fourth report of the Striking Committee.

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[*Translation*]

PARLIAMENT OF CANADA ACT

CONCURRENCE IN FOURTH REPORT OF SPECIAL COMMITTEE

Hon. Marcel Danis (Minister of State (Youth), Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House): Madam Speaker, with leave of the House, I move, seconded by Mr. Milliken and by Mr. Murphy, for Mr. Gauthier, that the fourth report of the Special Committee on the Review of the Parliament of Canada Act, tabled in the House today, be concurred in.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Does the minister have the unanimous consent of the House?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to.

* * *

[*English*]

PETITIONS

NORTHERN BENEFITS

Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill): Madam Speaker, I have a number of petitions to present today relating to the tax benefit for northern Canadians.

The petitions state that, whereas the residents of northern Canada need a real tax benefit to recognize the high cost of living and working in areas described as northern or isolated, and whereas the report of the Task Force on Northern Benefits was released Friday, October 27, 1989, and it fails to address the needs of these communities, the undersigned call upon Parliament to reject the recommendations of the report and to develop a fair and equitable tax benefit program which recognizes the financial needs of the people in northern and isolated areas.

I would like to point out that residents of the following communities in my riding of Churchill have signed this petition: The Pas, Grand Rapids, Snow Lake, Moose Lake, Cross Lake, Cormorant, Sherridon and Thompson. There are also the signatures of people from Winnipeg and other communities including Terrace, B.C., and, from Newfoundland, Carmanville, Aspen Cove, Main Point, Ladle Cove, Deadman's Bay, Templeman, Noggin Cove, Lumsden, Valleyfield, Musgrave Harbour, and also the community of Fredericton.

A number of communities obviously want the government finally to come up with a northern benefits package which benefits and helps the people who live in northern and isolated communities.

VETERANS AFFAIRS

Mr. Russell MacLellan (Cape Breton—The Sydneys): Madam Speaker, I have a petition certified as correct from the members and friends of the Ashby Branch 138 of the Royal Canadian Legion in Sydney.

There are almost 600 signatures on this petition and in part it states: "The government of Canada has introduced changes that will reduce homekeeping services to veterans and substantially increase the costs of long-term care. Whereas the veterans have already given service to this country and should not be targeted by those measures, the petitioners call upon Parliament to reject those budget measures which deprive veterans of proper services and increase their financial hardships.

The Minister of Veterans Affairs has made some movement away from this very Draconian position, but he has not gone nearly far enough. The position of the government is still grossly unfair to the veterans of the country.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise to present a petition on behalf of numerous Canadians who are opposed to the goods and services tax.

Canadians by the hundreds have taken the trouble to sign this petition. They indicate their displeasure with the unfairness of the government in introducing this tax on virtually everything they purchase. They object to the fact that this is replacing the manufacturers' sales tax. They object to the fact that the government has already introduced 31 tax increases before the imposition of this particularly wicked and hard tax and they call upon Parliament to reject the goods and services tax.

[*Translation*]

TAX BENEFITS FOR NORTHERN AND ISOLATED AREAS

Mr. Guy Saint-Julien (Abitibi): Madam Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I am tabling today a petition from Chibougamau in the riding of Roberval. Your petitioners reject the conclusions of the Task Force on Tax Benefits for Northern and Isolated Areas and ask that Chibougamau be recognized as an isolated area under the present tax benefit system.

[*English*]

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. John Brewin (Victoria): Madam Speaker, I have the honour to present petitions pursuant to Standing Order 36. These petitions all urge the government to reject the GST.

It is interesting that when petitions are taken in Victoria, being the tourist destination that it is, petitioners come from all across the country, particularly from British Columbia. There is still, and continues to be, widespread public opposition to the GST and I have the honour to present these petitions to the House to that effect.

MINORITY LANGUAGE RIGHTS

Mr. John Manley (Ottawa South): Madam Speaker, I have the honour of presenting a petition today that was organized by Mrs. Dorothy Macdonald of my riding, and signed by herself and many residents of the Ottawa area.

They petition Parliament to promote tolerance by acting to uphold the right to freedom of expression of the French-speaking minority in Ontario, and to uphold the right to freedom of expression of the English-speaking minority in Quebec.

• (1210)

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Ms. Margaret Mitchell (Vancouver East): Madam Speaker, once again I have the honour to present a petition with many signatures in both Chinese and English showing how strongly people from the Chinese Canadian community in British Columbia and merchants in Chinatown itself feel. It states: "The 7 per cent goods and services tax will hurt small businesses, costs will go up, incomes will go down and it will be an accounting nightmare. The tax will also hurt consumers as prices of thousands of items and services go up."

"Therefore, the undersigned petitioners call upon Parliament and the Government of Canada to withdraw the goods and services tax." I only wish I could say it in Chinese as well.

Mr. Jerry Pickard (Essex—Kent): Madam Speaker, I have a couple of petitions here today asking the government to reconsider its position with regard to the goods and services tax.

One petition in particular emphasizes the negative effects this tax will have on young athletes in sports organizations, something very vital to young Canadians. They are asking the government to take the unfair, unnecessary tax and reconsider its passage.

SOCIAL PROGRAMS

Mrs. Christine Stewart (Northumberland): Madam Speaker, I have the honour to present two petitions today.

One is from seniors in the Trenton area of my riding who object to the government's policy of clawing back old age pensions. They ask the government to reconsider its policy with regard to this and reinstate old age security at its full value.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mrs. Christine Stewart (Northumberland): Madam Speaker, as well, I have the honour to present a petition from people across the country who are concerned about the goods and services tax to be introduced in January, 1991.

The petitioners find it an unfair and additional tax which makes the burden of taxation in the country absolutely impossible. They ask the government to reconsider and withdraw the legislation.

LOW-LEVEL FLIGHTS

Mr. Ray Funk (Prince Albert—Churchill River): Madam Speaker, I have the honour and privilege to present two petitions pursuant to Standing Order 36.

The first petition is signed by over 200 people from different parts of Alberta, as well as from people in the Hamilton area of Ontario. It calls on the government to end low-level flying in Canada. These people object to low-level flights disrupting the hunting and traditional ways of the Inuit and other native people in Canada.

They are happy that the low-level flight training centre at Goose Bay has been cancelled. Nevertheless, flights are still escalating, and these people would like to see an end to it.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Ray Funk (Prince Albert—Churchill River): The second petition I have is signed by people in my constituency from La Ronge, Stanley Mission, Ile à la Crosse and other northern communities.

Like 80 per cent of Canadians, these people object to the imposition of the goods and services tax. They point out that it has a particularly negative impact on northerners who have already a much higher cost of living and pay much more for their goods and services.

Therefore, the petitioners call on Parliament, and in this case I presume members of the Liberal caucus who sit in the other place and have the power to do so, to bring an end to the goods and services tax.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Westminster—Burnaby on a point of order.

Ms. Black: Madam Speaker, I ask if it is possible to receive unanimous consent from the House to revert to Introduction of Private Members' Bills because I have a bill that I want to introduce.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The House has heard the motion as presented by the hon. member. Is there unanimous consent?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

* * *

DAY OF NATIONAL MOURNING ACT

MEASURE TO ENACT

Ms. Dawn Black (New Westminster—Burnaby) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-306, an act respecting a day of national mourning.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Shall the hon. member have leave to introduce the bill?

Some0z Hon. Members: Agreed.

Ms. Black: Madam Speaker, I thank you and members of the House for agreeing to revert to Introduction of Private Members' Bills.

I rise today to introduce my private members' bill that would commemorate December 6 as a national day of mourning in memory of the 14 young women who were massacred in Montreal.

I envision this day of mourning also to be a day of action. Every day of the year, small committed groups of women carry the entire load for helping survivors of violence and educating the public.

I want to see the public at large become involved in working to stop violence against women, and I believe that this day of mourning could be a focal point for that kind of action.

I really do believe that this bill can obtain all party support and I certainly do hope that that is the case.

Motion agreed to, bill read the first time and ordered to be printed.

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QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Rob Nicholson (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Madam Speaker, I ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Shall all questions be allowed to stand?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Nicholson: Madam Speaker, I think you will find there is unanimous consent in the House to call it three o'clock.

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Would there really be unanimous consent to call it three o'clock? I think even the Pages agree.

It being three o'clock p.m., the House stands adjourned until Monday at one o'clock p.m., according to Standing Order 24(1).

The House adjourned at 12.17 p.m.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, June 4, 1990

The House met at 1 p.m.

Prayers

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS—BILLS

[*English*]

FRUIT, VEGETABLES AND HONEY ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

Ms. Lynn Hunter (Saanich—Gulf Islands) moved that Bill C-222, an act to amend the Fruit, Vegetables and Honey Act (country of origin), be read the second time and referred to a legislative committee.

She said: Mr. Speaker, I want to begin debate on Bill C-222 by explaining to the House and to the viewing public the kind of tortuous process that a private members' bill goes through.

This bill was first put on the Order Paper over four years ago by the hon. Jim Manly, since retired, who was the member of Parliament for the then riding of Cowichan—Malahat—The Islands, portions of which are now in my riding of Saanich—Gulf Islands. It has been on the Order Paper for four years, and it has only now been drawn. For the people out there who wonder about the haste or the speed of government, they have cause to wonder.

The intent of Bill C-222, an act to amend the Fruit, Vegetables and Honey Act (country of origin), was to address what I consider a major flaw or an omission in that act that countries of origin be made clear.

My amendment is that no person shall sell or offer for sale any produce unless the country of origin is shown clearly and legibly on the produce or the packaging thereof or on a sign placed near the produce.

• (1310)

Not only is the private member's bill a tortuous process, but the way this bill has come forth is also somewhat tortured. Until the end of last week we did not know whether the Fruit, Vegetables and Honey Act actually existed or whether it had been repealed. There was conflicting opinion as to whether or not it existed. Just 10 minutes or 15 minutes ago the Clerk of the House of Commons approached me in the corridor and assured me that yes the bill that I was seeking to amend did exist. Therefore I do not have a procedural hurdle to go over.

I ask the indulgence of the House and of the viewing public because this is complex but it is important for people to understand the route of bills through all devices of the House and how we get to where we are.

Right now the Fruit, Vegetables and Honey Act, first passed in 1935, is in effect but on February 15, 1990 the government tabled the Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act and referred the bill to that act. It has been put in a hopper. It is a house cleaning measure. It knows that it has the Canada Agricultural Products Act passed in August 1988, but as a means of trying to house clean the statutes the government has put the Fruit, Vegetables and Honey Act in the Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act.

The intention was to repeal the Fruit, Vegetables and Honey Act and to give force of the bill to the Canada Agricultural Products Act. This is why there is confusion and this is why the Clerk of the House was good enough to confirm with me that there is a bill which I am now attempting to amend.

There were a number of people in the House who were asking me whether or not I was going to ask for unanimous consent to withdraw this bill, but I felt it was important to speak on it to let people know the kind of Byzantine structures that exist here. What I want in this bill, that is that no person shall sell or offer for sale any produce unless the country of origin is clearly or legibly shown, is important.

Canadian consumers want to know the country of origin of the produce they buy for a variety of reasons. I will get into those a little later. The state of flux that I refer to on the whole mess that we are dealing with will be absolutely gripping television. People will be sitting on the edge of their chairs for the rest of this hour making sure they know all they want to know about fruits, vegetables and honey.

Obviously the country of origin was a concern of the government. The new Canada Agricultural Products Act under Section 32(i) provided for a way of looking at country of origin, but it is far too weak for my liking. It says:

> 32.(i) providing for systems to ascertain the places of origin or destination of agricultural products;

We can see that the language is not quite as clear as what I have proposed in Bill C–222. I think it is in need of clarification because there is a lot of confusion not just about the country of origin but also about the kind of regulations which attend that.

There is lack of clarity regarding regulations. First, as to fines in the original Fruit, Vegetables and Honey Act, there is provision for fines of up to $50 for violations of the act. That must really scare people away. Firms like Loblaws or Save–On–Foods in my riding must be really scared of a $50 fine if they do not label certain products. There is also confusion about the kinds of produce subject to the labelling requirement.

In the regulations there are 27 listed products, whereas the Minister's office states there are 29. We are talking about products available both in Canada and elsewhere, such as apples, apricots, asparagus, beets, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cantaloup, greenhouse tomatoes, and so on. There are 27 products listed in the regulations and 29 according to the minister's office. Therefore Bill C–222 makes it clear that it is important for people to know the country of origin.

My former colleague, Jim Manly, was motivated to introduce this bill over four years ago for three very important reasons; health, politics and the environment. I am not trying to say there are artificial divisions between those three but I use them as categories for reasons which will become apparent.

Concerned Canadians want to know where their food is coming from. If they participate in a boycott of a product or country, it is important for them to be aware of its origin. If a store carried Chilean grapes labelled when the Chilean regime was particularly repressive people could opt not to purchase those grapes.

Political boycotts of products can only be successful if such products are clearly identified. The present set–up appears to be *ad hoc* at best. There are only 29 fruits and vegetables now required to be labelled. The 29 are all products which are also grown in Canada. Bill C–222 is an effort to broaden that list.

I want to go back for a moment to grapes. Grapes are an important example because it was not just Chilean grapes that people wanted to boycott, it was also California grapes. This is where the health and environmental questions come in. I think the grape example embodied all three reasons why naming country of origin is important.

Consumers are bombarded with information with respect to the harmful effects of pesticides and chemicals. In Tulare County in California, the heart of the grape–growing region, over five million pounds of toxic pesticides are used annually. It is estimated that this is only one–third of the annual amount used as growers are only required to register certain pesticides. Companies do have an obligation to ensure the safety of the products they produce, but, unfortunately, this is not always the case. I think history has confirmed that we cannot always depend on an agri–food company to give us all the information we require.

I want to give some startling statistics regarding the whole grape question. Since 1986 in the community of Earlimart, California, five children have been diagnosed with cancer. In McFarland, California, 14 children have been so diagnosed. State medical officials claim that these figures represent a percentage per capita which is 12 times higher than national standards. What is interesting about these sad cases of childhood cancer is that the parents of all of these children worked in the vineyards. Several of the mothers of these children were working in the vineyards while they were pregnant.

• (1320)

We have some rather horrific statistics and data to back up the concerns. Five compounds, captain, pyre-

thrum, methylbromide, dinoseb and phosdrin, have been targeted for immediate ban. All of them are still being used in Canada. Many of these compounds are carcinogenic and have been identified as being particularly harmful to children when they are still in the womb. Also, pesticide residue is likely to show up in 20 per cent of the California grapes coming on to the Canadian market.

Consumers do require more information when they are buying products. One thinks of the five million pounds of toxic pesticides that are used annually in the California grape market, which only represents those pesticides required to be registered. Canadians should be aware that this is happening and this is the intention of Bill C-222.

I like to buy Canadian produce if I have an option. Obviously, if I want to buy a mango or a papaya, the likelihood of finding a Canadian product like that is rather remote. In wintertime we enjoy eating Granny Smith apples. I would like to know whether or not they are coming from a country such as New Zealand, which I would like to support for a whole range of issues, or whether they are coming from a repressive country.

New Zealand has an admirable record on many things, particularly its anti-nuclear stand. As a consumer, I would like to use whatever impetus I have to boost its economy. If it means buying a bag of Granny Smith apples, so be it. That is my way of supporting that kind of political development in New Zealand. The intent of the bill is to be able to show support for a country as well as to boycott one. If I want to purchase produce from New Zealand, I can do that. If I want to avoid purchasing goods from Romania, I can do that as well.

This bill is very timely. I know the Committee on Justice and the Solicitor General is examining what to do with the Fruits, Vegetables and Honey Act in light of the Canada Agricultural Products Act. I urge my colleagues in the House to send a message to those people who are reviewing this legislation that the indication of country of origin is important.

I urge support of this bill for the political reasons I have outlined, so people can boycott or support certain brands of politics. I urge its support for environmental reasons, to show concern for the kind of pesticides used and concern for the health of the workers involved in the growing of produce. This is something that is concurrent with Canadian values.

Also, regarding environmental concerns, as a world we know we are one. The degradation of agricultural land by overuse and misuse of pesticides does not only hurt the area that is involved, it hurts us all because there is a decreasing amount of arable land. The more land goes down to the devastation of agricultural degradation, the less arable land we have. In conclusion, I urge the House to support Bill C-222 so that Canadian consumers can see clearly the produce they are purchasing and where it comes from, so they can make informed judgements when they are purchasing fruit, vegetables and honey.

Mr. Murray Cardiff (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, first I would like to say that the government believes that all Canadians should have the right to information about the food they buy, including the geographic origins of fresh produce.

The bill before us today recognizes that right and attempts to enforce it. The problem is that this legislation is not necessary. Laws and regulations requiring country of origin declarations for fresh fruits and vegetables are already in force.

Bill C-222 attempts to amend the Fruit, Vegetables and Honey Act, first passed in 1935. This bill proposes to amend that act which prohibits the sale of fruits and vegetables unless their country of origin is shown on their container or on a sign nearby.

The Fruit, Vegetables and Honey Act was amended in 1942 to prohibit imports of produce which the importer purchased later than 24 hours after shipment from the point of production. Not only did this promote a more efficient use of rail cars during the war years, but it also effectively controlled the consignment selling of fresh fruits and vegetables in this country.

When the Canada Agricultural Products Standards Act, the CAPS act, was introduced in 1955, it consolidated a number of existing acts, including the Fruit, Vegetables and Honey Act. However, the import provisions contained in regulations pertaining to consignment selling, Sections 56 and 57 as they were commonly called, were not consolidated but remained under the original act.

For over 40 years these regulations controlled imports on as consignment basis. In other words, imports could only enter Canada under a prior-purchase agreement.

However, in January 1983, the Standing Joint Committee for the Scrutiny of Regulations examined the Fruit, Vegetables and Honey Act. It ruled that the act did not have the enabling authority to regulate consignment selling.

During the following five years there was no attempt to enforce the regulations. During the summer of 1987, it quickly became apparent that Canada's fresh fruit and vegetable markets were vulnerable to surplus products from abroad. These surplus products are sold on consignment and can be sold at depressed prices, in direct competition with Canadian production and pre-purchased imports.

Without controls on consignment selling, produce can be imported without firm purchase agreements. Distressed or spoiled produce can enter the market, causing price disruptions in a market that is already price-sensitive.

In order to assist the Canadian horticultural industry, amendments to the CAPS act were brought before this House in June, 1988. With widespread industry support and all-party agreement, a new act, the Canada Agricultural Products Act, CAP act, received swift passage.

Statutory authority for regulations to control consignment selling of fresh fruits and vegetables was restored. Swift passage of the bill was important to the entire agri-food industry. However, it was especially crucial to Canada's horticulture sector. The Canadian Horticultural Council and the Canadian Produce Marketing Association considered the new CAP act essential to continued orderly marketing of their products.

Two years ago the remaining two sections of the fruit, vegetables and honey regulations made pursuant to the Fruit, Vegetables and Honey Act were entirely replaced by the Canadian Agricultural Products Act. The regulations were recently revoked and the Fruit, Vegetables and Honey Act is in the process of being repealed through the Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Program.

There are 14 different regulations made pursuant to the CAP Act. The fresh fruit and vegetable regulations relate to the marketing of agricultural products in import, export and interprovincial trade, provide for national standards and grades of agricultural products and for their inspection and grading.

Marketing is defined in the act as, among other things, the preparation and advertising of agricultural products. Preparation in turn is defined as including processing, slaughtering, storing, inspecting, grading, packaging, assembling, pricing, marking and labelling.

• (1330)

Similar authority to regulate the marking and labelling of agriculture products was contained in the Canada Agricultural Products Standards Act and was the authority under which country of origin labelling requirements were written into the regulations.

The CAP Act, however, as I previously reported, replaced the CAPS Act and indicated the government's desire to regulate specifically country of origin labelling when it provided in paragraph (1) of Section 32 the authority for the Governor in Council to make regulations that provide for systems to ascertain the places of origin or destination of agricultural products.

Specifically, it is paragraph 38(1)(F) of the fresh fruit and vegetable regulations which requires a country of origin declaration on shipping containers for bulk produce, and paragraph 38(2)(B) for consumer-sized prepackaged products. The fresh fruit and vegetable regulations made under the new CAP Act prohibit the import and interprovincial trade of 29 fresh fruit and vegetables grown in Canada, if the country of origin is not declared on the packages.

We are, however, expanding this labelling requirement. Within the next few months, through a regulatory amendment to the fresh fruit and vegetables regulations, the country of origin labelling regulation will be extended to all fresh fruits and vegetables. This regulatory amendment is one of a series being processed by the government to bring about greater uniformity in the regulation of all commodities regulated under the CAP Act.

Following the final promulgation of the amendment, the country of origin regulation will apply to all types of fresh fruits and vegetables, nuts, and edible fungi. This amendment will not only bring country of origin labelling

to all these products, but it will also permit inspectors to examine, analyse and take regulatory action as required.

This will ensure that imported food products are safe, wholesome and free of contaminants for the Canadian consumer. This is something that Canadians have come to expect from their government, and we have committed ourselves to this endeavour.

In addition to the Canada Agricultural Products Act, many provincial laws regulate the sale of fresh fruits and vegetables at the retail level and call for country of origin labelling. For example, Sections 12, 13 and 14 of the Ontario Farm Products Grades and Sales Act and regulations state that there must be a declaration of country of origin on all fresh fruits and vegetables sold in bulk at the retail level. Sections 18, 19, 21 and 22 of the Quebec regulations contain the same requirements. There is also Section 7 of the Fruit and Vegetable Sales Act, Regulation 222/84 in Manitoba; Section 7 of the B.C. fruit and vegetable regulations; as well as Section 11 of the Natural Products Grades Act, Regulations 81-56, are administered by the province of New Brunswick.

We do not disagree with the idea of Bill C-222. Canadians should be informed about where their fresh produce is grown. But the fact is we do not need to amend this legislation. The right of Canadians to know is already fully protected by existing federal and provincial laws and regulations.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Eugène Bellemare (Carleton—Gloucester): Mr. Speaker, as assistant critic for Consumer and Corporate Affairs, I am pleased to speak on this bill, since I am extremely interested in regulations on labelling.

[*English*]

Bill C-222 is a Private Members' Bill to amend the Fruit, Vegetables and Honey Act of 1936. The act does not provide for the country of origin, something that is extremely important for Canadian consumers. The Canadian consumer is now extremely learned.

[*Translation*]

He knows what he wants, he knows his product. Canadians today are aware of chemicals, they know about pesticides and they would like to know what there is or what was used that could affect the fruit, vegetables and honey sold.

The proposal—

[*English*]

The bill proposes:

> No person shall sell or offer for sale any produce unless the country of origin is shown clearly and legibly on the produce or the packaging thereof or on a sign placed near the produce.

[*Translation*]

I find this proposal very reasonable. It refers to legislation—

[*English*]

—a law which is soon to be repealed, the Fruit, Vegetables and Honey Act, which does not talk of the country of origin as far as labelling is concerned.

In the case of there being no grade established, there is tropical fruit, for example, which comes into the country ungraded and, therefore, unregulated.

As the member who spoke before me said, there was an act passed in 1986 called the Canada Agricultural Products Standards Act, but this particular act does not cover ungraded produce. For example, Canadian apples are regulated and graded. If apples come from outside the country, they would be similarly graded. But there is produce that comes from other countries, is not grown in Canada, and does not need to be graded. Therefore, it is not marked as to the country of origin.

I would also like to refer to the basic labelling requirements under the Food and Drugs Act and the Consumer Packaging and Labelling Act. While country of origin is required on such items as clothing, it is not required for food. Food is extremely important for the Canadian consumer. We are not any longer the consumer of the 1930s. The consumer of the 1990s is extremely literate and aware of the affects of pesticides and chemicals in food or on food. As a very literate consumer community, we want to know what is in the food, what has touched the food, and where the food comes from. It is a reasonable amendment to ask that the country of origin be included.

Perhaps the member should have added to the labelling requirements the question of meat. One million pounds of beef comes into the country in carcass or package form that is not graded. It is not marked as to the country of origin. This has resulted in the destruction

of our beef industry in Ontario, causing the closure of six packing plants last year.

I have in my hand a well-illustrated brochure put out by Canada Packers Incorporated. It shows two pictures of striploin. It states:

> The striploin in picture #1 came from a carcass similar to this.
>
> It graded Canada Grade A. To receive that Grade from the Federal Government grader, it had to meet these specifications.
>
> a) Youthful—Youthful carcasses mean tender meat. Notice the smooth shiny bone texture. A sure sign of youthfulness. Tenderness is the #1 quality criteria by which consumers judge your meat.
>
> b) A minimum fat cover of not less than 4mm and not more than 19mm—a certain amount of fat coverage is necessary to ensure good quality beef.
>
> c) Meat that is firm—to provide a pleasant texture for the consumer.

On the other side of this brochure it states:

> The striploin in picture #2 came from a carcass similar to this—

That refers to the first picture on the front of the brochure.

> Notice the porous hard texture of the bone. This animal was not youthful—the meat would look fine, but generally be tough to eat.
>
> This cow carcass in Canada would grade D or may not be graded at all.
>
> In the U.S. the carcass would often become "No Roll" boxed beef.
>
> Consider these facts!
>
> 1) There are no government quality standards for "No Roll". The packer can use whatever he wants including cows!
>
> 2) Over one million lbs. of "No Roll" product is ending up in Canadian establishments like yours every week!
>
> 3) Consumer studies prove that on average only one in ten unhappy customers complain to their restaurant or store, however they do tell numerous friends and associates.

• (1340)

I am thankful to Canada Packers for informing the consumer community. I wish that the Canadian government would respect Canadian consumers as much and publicize the differences between these meats.

[*Translation*]

So, Mr. Speaker, I note that it is necessary to indicate what country a certain product or meat comes from. I would also mention that I would even have added "meats" to the amendment.

The NDP member mentioned other reasons, political, working conditions, etc. I would simply say that we have many new Canadians here; of course, we also have many Canadians who might want to encourage buying products from some countries and maybe also discourage buying certain products, but all Canadians would have a choice if they knew the country of origin because it was indicated.

In conclusion, I sincerely and strongly support this motion to indicate the country of origin on the label of all products sold in Canada.

[*English*]

Mr. Felix Holtmann (Portage—Interlake): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be able to participate in the debate on Bill C-222 which was presented by the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands.

I have always had a very keen interest in food production. Certainly, the consumers of the country would want to know that their health interests are protected by the rules and regulations imposed by the government. I can tell you, Sir, that there are probably not too many other countries that have the standards that Canada has.

My association with exporting products has been one that has certainly made me proud to be a Canadian. We have set some of the very best standards in the world, not only in terms of what we import but also in terms of what we export. I can assure hon. members that the government needs take no direction from the other side of the House with respect to the things it has done to continue that tremendous tradition.

Let us just look at a few ideas that were put forward here this afternoon. My colleague, the Parliamentary Secretary, brought forward the fact that we are repealing the old act that was in place and replacing it by the Canada Agricultural Products Act. Even while we are sitting, activities are taking place to improve the quality and the standards that we have set with respect to goods and food products from other countries.

As a matter of fact, if the hon. member had done her research, she would have considered the fact that in the next 12 months, according to the new act, all fresh fruit and vegetables sold in Canada will require a country of origin declaration. That is the thrust of her bill. Had she looked at that, we would not have had to detain the House for a whole hour on a Private Members' bill that is totally redundant, in effect, because its concerns are being looked after.

The government did not sit back and do nothing, as was often the case in the past. It has taken measures that are strengthening the consumers' concerns with respect to the importation of foodstuffs.

We brought forward—

Ms. Hunter: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I just want to point out that the hon. member is talking about regulations. The intent of my bill is to place such a measure in the act itself so that the Parliament of Canada would be responsible. The regulations may do that. It is important that consumers be given that protection in the body of the act itself, something with which I think the whole House agrees.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Scott (Hamilton—Wentworth): With respect, I should tell the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands that she has had her time during this hour. She is now bringing up a matter for debate.

I will turn again to the hon. member for Portage—Interlake.

Mr. Holtmann: Mr. Speaker, I do not intend to enter into a direct debate. I am here to inform Canadians and this House about this bill. Although I think most people will agree it has some credibility in terms of the hon. member's desire to show that she is concerned, and she illustrates that it in the form of a bill, all too often the New Democrats throw everything including the kitchen sink into a private members' bill and hope something gets drawn. Often, they do not do their research. In fact she should have withdrawn this particular piece of legislation. Yet here we are discussing it.

Ms. Hunter: So says you!

Mr. Holtmann: So says the whole side of this House, because we know that this government has taken very concrete steps and measures that have improved quality controls.

If the hon. member would look at the actions we have taken with respect to some of the chemicals used in this country, she would see that we withdrew Alachlor. This probably was not in the best interests of farmers, but we as a government felt that its withdrawal was necessary to protect consumers. If we are doing it here in Canada, we certainly would not want it to be used anywhere else. We do import goods and products from elsewhere. The Department of Health is very much up on the concerns in these situations.

Under this particular legislation we are looking at trade marking grade names to make Canada's inspection system even more effective and credible. The new act will benefit the consumer by ensuring consistent quality of safe agricultural products.

In the past, the Government of Canada did not have the right to go to foreign countries to look at their processing centres to investigate and to ensure that their products were handled in a correct and hygienic fashion and packaged correctly. Under this act, that is now possible. Consequently, the consumer can be reassured that this government is not sitting on its laurels, but is looking at matters of deeper interest and concern, of which the hon. member obviously was not aware. Had she done a little more investigation as to what the Canada Agricultural Products Act is doing she would have seen that within the next 12 months all fruits and vegetables will be identified by their country of origin. It seems to me that is pretty strong wording. It is a pretty strong commitment by this government. I am sure the member would want to applaud that particular action.

Could it have happened sooner? I suspect that may be a case in point. The fact is that it is moving right along, and I think Canadians ought to know that.

The legislation opens up to us the establishments where products are being prepared. We can now see for ourselves whether the places from where we buy our food abroad meet our manufacturing and sanitation standards.

In fact, this is not just taking place with fruit and vegetables. It is also taking place in the slaughterhouses of South America from where we may be bringing in meat supplies, as well as in the United States and

Europe. We go right in there and they have to meet our standards. In most cases I suspect our standards are far higher than in those countries. Consequently, we have the right to restrict product coming from those particular areas.

Let me talk about the violations. The law has been strengthened in terms of the penalty. It is interesting to note that anyone who abuses Canada's law with respect to the issues we have talked about face a penalty which has gone from $2,000, an insignificant amount, to $100,000, which strengthens the fact that we mean business. Who knows, maybe that is not high enough yet. But it is certainly a tremendous improvement over what we have had in the past.

• (1350)

The CAP act also gives us the authority to regulate consignment sales of fresh fruit and vegetables. As I have said, the CAP act is addressing the food safety concerns of Canadians. At the same time it is helping the country's fruit and vegetable industry. Because we do have high standards and because Canadians do want quality products, Canadian standards are the ones we use with respect to what we import.

As the hon. member knows, these producers are vulnerable to surplus products sold on consignment. Without controls on consignment selling, produce can be imported without firm purchase agreements and spoiled products can enter the market.

The controls that we have put into place are there to assure Canadian consumers that this government has acted in the best interests of safety and health standards. Clearly, we have to be vigilant at all times because we are a large importer of fruit and vegetables due to our climatic conditions.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Scott (Hamilton—Wentworth)): I thank the hon. member for Portage—Interlake, who came in just under time. To take us to the top of the clock I recognize the hon. member for Red Deer.

Mr. Doug Fee (Red Deer): Mr. Speaker, I find it very ironic that the House is debating amendments to the bill before us. As was mentioned by the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands, the justice committee is also considering the fruit, vegetables and honey act. It was referred by this House to that committee in February. The committee is not trying to amend it. It is trying to repeal it.

The bill before us today is not necessary. As was mentioned earlier, this debate is not exactly gripping television drama. Given the problems faced by our country these days, we should be putting our time to a lot more productive use.

The fact is that the amendments found in this bill are redundant. They are already covered in the Canada Agricultural Products Act. That is why proposals have been made to repeal the Fruit, Vegetables and Honey Act through the Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Program.

The Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Program was established about 15 years ago in 1975. Since then five acts have been enacted.

This program permits minor amendments to be made to a number of federal statutes without having to wait for the particular statutes to be opened up for more substantial changes. This program is a means of correcting anomalies, inconsistencies, archaisms and errors in federal statutes. Enactments that have expired, lapsed or ceased to have effect can also be repealed through the program.

Anyone may propose amendments for possible inclusion in a set of proposals. However, most of the current proposals come from government departments or agencies.

The legislation section of the Department of Justice is responsible for receiving and reviewing proposals. As well, it prepared a document entitled "Proposals to Correct Certain Anomalies, Inconsistencies, Archaisms and Errors in the Statutes of Canada" to deal with other matters of a non-controversial and uncomplicated nature therein and to repeal certain provisions thereof that have expired or lapsed or otherwise ceased to have effect.

This document is tabled by the Minister of Justice in the House of Commons and referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and Solicitor General. The proposals are also tabled in the Senate and referred to its Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs.

Consideration of the proposals by these committees has always been thorough and conducted on a non-partisan basis. I would like to emphasize that if any member

of one of the committees objects for any reason to a proposal the proposal will be dropped.

After the committees prepare their reports a miscellaneous statute law amendment bill is prepared. This bill contains only the proposals which are unanimously approved by both committees. Historically, the bills have been passed quickly, given the usual understanding that they will receive all three readings in each House without debate.

The discussion of these proposals is usually completely uncontroversial and a routine process. This is partially due to the fact that there are strict criteria for the types of proposals that the committee will consider. For example, the proposal must not be controversial, involve the spending of public funds, prejudiciously affect the rights of persons, create a new offence or subject a new class of persons to an existing offence.

Essentially, the proposals under the Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act represent an attempt at legislative housekeeping. Members from all parties are in agreement with the process.

Last February when the former justice minister stood in this House to table a proposal, the member for York Centre, a member of the Official Opposition, commented on the useful nature of the process. Because I notice he is listening very intently I will quote him accurately from page 8349 of *Hansard* of February 15 where he is reported to have said:

> I consider it a very useful device for achieving necessary changes in the laws of Canada of a non-controversial nature and also reflecting legal advice and second thoughts about certain clauses of the legislation. I have always regretted that the miscellaneous amending process is not used more openly and more generously than it is.

After that hon. member spoke, the hon. member for Burnaby—Kingsway representing the New Democratic Party stood up to agree that his party was also in favour of the proposed process. He indicated that it could be extended and used successfully to eliminate sexist language from legislation.

This year the justice committee is considering some 75 different acts that have been proposed. Up for repeal, for example, is the Trade Marks Act, overseen by the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. Paragraphs 45(4)(A) to (C) of this act were excluded from the Revised Statutes of Canada, 1985 because they deal with the renewal of the registration of trade marks that were registered under various predecessor acts of the Trade Marks Act. These paragraphs require that registration of a trade mark under the predecessor acts be renewed under the Trade Marks Act not later than July 1, 1979.

Once renewed under the Trade Marks Act, the registration of a trade mark is subject to renewal within a period of 15 years after the last renewal. As the renewal of the registration of trade marks is now governed entirely by the Trade Marks Act, there is no need to retain these transitional provisions, which are now spent.

Another statute up for repeal under the current proposals is the Fruit, Vegetables and Honey Act. This act meets all the criteria for consideration under the Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Program. It is not controversial. It does not involve the spending of public funds. It does not prejudicially affect the rights of persons. It does not create a new offence.

In fact, the Fruit, Vegetables and Honey Act does not do anything anymore. It has been replaced by the regulations made under the Canada Agricultural Products Act. Therefore it is not necessary to pass these amendments.

Mrs. Edna Anderson (Simcoe Centre): Mr. Speaker, the bill we are debating today unnecessarily proposes to legislate the declaration of country of origin for fresh fruit and vegetables. This requirement already exists in the Canada Agricultural Products Act.

As members of the House may know, Canadian fruit and vegetable producers are protected in other ways.

During the drafting of the free trade agreement, this government negotiated special measures to help Canadian fruit and vegetable producers compete. The free trade agreement provides for the elimination of all tariffs between Canada and the United States by 1998. In view of the sensitivity of the horticultural industry to import competition, tariffs on fresh fruit and vegetables are being eliminated in 10 equal stages.

A special safeguard provision was negotiated at Canada's request to protect fresh fruit and vegetable producers from abnormally depressed prices. Article 702 of the free trade agreement allows both Canada and the United States to impose temporary or snap-back duties

in addition to any applicable FTA customs duty up to the most favoured nation rate of duty in effect.

Certain conditions must be met before the mechanism can be triggered. Import prices must, for five consecutive working days, be below an historical average and planted acreage must not have risen above—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Scott (Hamilton—Wentworth)): I regret to interrupt the hon. member for Simcoe Centre. However, it now being 2 p.m. the House will proceed to Statements by Members pursuant to Standing Order 31.

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S. O. 31

[*Translation*]

ENVIRONMENT WEEK

Mr. Maurice Tremblay (Lotbinière): Mr. Speaker, this week is Environment Week, and more than 500 community events will be organized across the country.

My region is one of those that pioneered recycling in this country. Selective garbage collection, recycling at source and many local initiatives have made Bois-Francs and the riding of Lotbinière leaders in protecting the environment. Involving residents, elected members of government and local leaders is essential to save our planet and meet the environmental challenge.

The Green Plan tabled by this government is intended to meet the most pressing needs of Canadians. It is meant as an instrument for permanent change, to protect our environment and our heritage. It will also help Canadians make wise decisions relating to the environment.

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[*English*]

MARK STRAND, U.S. POET LAUREATE

Mr. Joe McGuire (Egmont): Mr. Speaker, during the past week a former Canadian and former Prince Edward Islander, Mr. Mark Strand, was named Poet Laureate of the United States of America. Born in Summerside, P. E. I., Mr. Strand lived the early part of his life there before moving to the eastern United States.

The inspiration for much of his early work came during his youth spent in Prince Edward Island and from summer visits he made to Prince Edward Island and other parts of the Maritimes with his parents.

Mr. Strand holds degrees from Antioch College, Yale University and the University of Iowa. In addition to his long and distinguished career as a poet and short story writer, Mr. Strand has held teaching positions at a number of prestigious American universities, including Yale, Columbia, Princeton and Harvard. At present he is Professor of English at the University of Utah.

His work has brought him recognition and awards from the American Academy and Institution of Arts and Letters and the Academy of American Poets. He has also been a Fulbright scholar, a Rockefeller fellow, a Guggenheim fellow and a MacArthur fellow.

Mr. Speaker, it is with pride that we recognize the contributions of this former Islander to the world of literature and we congratulate him in his recent appointment as U.S. Poet Laureate.

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GUATEMALA

Ms. Lynn Hunter (Saanich—Gulf Islands): Mr. Speaker, human rights abuses in Guatemala are once again on the rise. Allegations of corruption and misuse of development funds raises grave concerns about this government's decision to renew bilateral aid to Guatemala.

The militarization of Guatemalan society extends to army control of economic growth and planning. Development projects must fit into the army's counter-insurgency plans and the need for a cheap labour force for export crop production.

Amnesty International reports that humanitarian workers, trade unionists, clergy and academics have faced an escalation of abductions, disappearances and killings over the last three years. Increased activity of the notorious death squads further demonstrates that the current government has failed to break the military stranglehold on power in Guatemala.

Resumption of Canadian bilateral aid to Guatemala at a time when human rights violations are rampant is counter to stated Canadian policy. We must find a way to assist the oppressed without giving legitimacy to a corrupt and vicious regime.

CHARACTERS INCORPORATED

Mr. J. W. Bud Bird (Fredericton—York—Sunbury): Mr. Speaker, in New Brunswick we have many wonderful ways to express our feelings for our province and our country. One of the most inspiring and entertaining expressions is being delivered these days by a group of young performers called Characters Incorporated.

This singing and dancing group of students from high school and university classrooms in Fredericton has for the past years been proclaiming, in both official languages, the joys of being Canadians. They are truly *les jeunes ambassadeurs du Nouveau-Brunswick*.

Characters Incorporated attained national stature when they stole the show at the 1989 Jeux Canada Games in Saskatoon. This year, in fact this month, they embark on the international stage representing Canada in Czechoslovakia and in Holland. In July they will perform at Walt Disney World in Florida. I ask this House to wish them well in the weeks ahead, and before this year is over I hope to recruit the help of many honourable colleagues to bring Characters Incorporated to Ottawa where we all may witness their moving expressions of pride, joy and love for our great nation.

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ENVIRONMENT WEEK

Mr. Rex Crawford (Kent): Mr. Speaker, this week is Environment Week. During the past year, we watched public concerns and demands for action escalate. When we look to the government for leadership on environmental legislation, we are told to wait.

The government has stated over and over again that it will show leadership on the environment, but Canada is far behind other countries. When will this government focus on Canada's environment?

Canada needs to take firm action on the clean up of the Great Lakes and toxic waste dump sites, air and water quality and chemical spills. It's lack of regulation and enforcement, not cost, has been the major reason for these environmental problems.

The environment embodies many issues such as public health and safety. The threat is real. People are demanding action.

We need strong federal regulations, national standards and a change of focus now. Previous legislation has been reactive. Canada must now adopt a proactive environmental policy. As the theme of Environment Week states: "It's in our hands."

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[*Translation*]

ENVIRONMENT WEEK

Mr. Guy Saint-Julien (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, Canadian Environment Week started yesterday, a reminder that more than ever before, the environment is our business. This year, the emphasis is on increasing public awareness of everyone's ability to contribute, in the course of their daily lives, towards improving the environment. Considering the astronomical quantities of waste we throw in the garbage and down the drain, there is certainly room for improvement.

In my riding, Louise Boyer of the Amos Standing Committee on Environmental Protection is one of those people who stopped to think how their way of life was aggravating environmental problems, and who are now trying to do something about it. This week, her project will be to show the people of Amos how to separate their garbage into vegetable waste and dry matter, and thus add composting to the recycling operations of Contrex, a local company.

Mr. Speaker, we must realize that the environment is an integral part of our lives and that we are each responsible for protecting that environment.

* * *

[*English*]

FINANCE

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Mr. Speaker, once again the Mulroney government has stalled the long promised financial reform legislation; this time until fall or more likely next year.

This is the same government that gave the giant U.S. corporation, American Express, licence to become a bank in Canada and do the kind of business our own

Canadian banks, under Canadian laws, are not permitted to do. At that time, our banks were promised that legislation would be forthcoming very soon to make things even.

The Conservative government's stalling tactics tell our banks to go outside the laws of Canada and engage in business not previously allowed. Financial reform in Canada is to be achieved by Canada's banks deregulating themselves, or through the provinces.

This is shear incompetence on the part of the government and shows it has no more business running a corner grocery store than it does running a government.

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LIBERAL CONVENTION

Mr. Felix Holtmann (Portage—Interlake): Mr. Speaker, not to be outdone by the NDP micro-electronics geniuses, the Liberal party will allow hidden microphones at the Calgary leadership convention.

But, there is a catch.

At the Liberal leadership convention, if you are wearing a hidden microphone, you must wear a special hidden microphone wearer badge identifying that you are wearing a hidden microphone.

That all sounds reasonable enough.

Potential hidden microphone wearers are not being told what the hidden microphone wearer badge will look like for fear of phoney hidden microphone wearer badges appearing all over the convention floor.

Mr. Speaker, can you imagine a cacophony of Liberal conventioneers in Calgary trying to separate the phoney hidden microphone badge wearers from the real hidden microphone badge wearers?

The job would be just as confusing as trying to choose from among the hidden messages being handed out by the Liberal leadership candidates on the ballot.

It is all enough to make the member for Regina—Qu'Appelle wonder whatever happened to free speech.

* * *

CHINA

Ms. Albina Guarnieri (Mississauga East): Mr. Speaker, it has been a year since the world witnessed the horror of the massacre at Tiananmen Square, and the news of the latest wave of repression in China is a cause of tremendous sadness for us all.

It is a great shame that while the rest of the world is celebrating the joyous outbreak of democracy that these changes are not being mirrored in China. All of us remember watching the faces of the student protesters and listening to their optimistic opinions on the future of their country.

• (1410)

These were not the voices of violence or subversion as the government tried to portray them. These were the voices of young people who in their desire for change showed themselves to be the truest patriots of all.

The courage of the demonstrators in the face of guns and tanks sends a strong signal to all repressive regimes that the spirit of man's desire for freedom can never be broken.

Mr. Speaker, Canada should demonstrate its solidarity with the victims of Tiananmen by continuing to pressure the Chinese Government to right the wrongs of 1989.

We must keep the memory of Tiananmen alive.

* * *

CEREBRAL PALSY

Mr. Doug Fee (Red Deer): Mr. Speaker, last week I received a letter and a summary of a survey that was conducted by the Cerebral Palsy Association of Alberta. The letter emphasized concerns that those who are physically challenged have about employment and independent living.

I found the survey to be both encouraging and discouraging. It is discouraging in that it expressed the frustrations and the challenges facing those inflicted with cerebral palsy; they expressed loneliness, isolation and frustration with the limited opportunities that are available to them.

It was also encouraging in that almost all respondents expressed a desire to be more independent and asked for the opportunity to work and to contribute. This survey complements the kit that was distributed to all members of Parliament last week by the Secretary of State promoting June 10 to June 16 as National Access Awareness Week.

As the minister said members of Parliament are in a unique position to make a difference, but we have to understand the problems, and I thank Mr. Keith Branall for helping me understand.

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CHINA

Mr. Rey Pagtakhan (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, a year ago today the world witnessed the massacre in Beijing's Tiananmen Square when the Chinese government turned against its own people, opening fire on the best of its own youth. Civilians were slain because they dared to stand up for political reform, for increased funding for education, for open dialogue and for personal dignity.

In response the Chinese government ordered the students machine gunned and tanks were allowed to run over innocent citizens.

That event still horrifies us in memory. Families still search for their loved ones.

I therefore urge the government, as Canada marks the first anniversary of that tragic day, to continue with the policy it boldly took then. The Chinese martyrs found courage then to take a public stand. Today, Chinese pro-democracy citizens continue to do so.

Canada cannot do less. Canada cannot turn a blind eye to what it has seen and to its own democratic principles. Appeasement in the name of trade is a betrayal of democracy. Let us by our action continue to give the Chinese people hope that they may conquer fear and persist in their struggle for democracy.

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NATIONAL CHESS COMPETITION

Mr. Jim Hawkes (Calgary West): Mr. Speaker, several months ago over 10,000 students across Canada entered a national chess competition to help raise money for projects in the Third World. This year the funds will go to Sister Mona Kelly, a nurse from New Brunswick, to help disadvantaged children in Brazil.

On the Victoria Day weekend in May, the winners from each province played off and national champions were declared:. Grade 1—Andrew Ho of Vancouver, B.C.; Grade 2—Lefong Hua of St. Laurent, Quebec; Grade 3—Erez Davy of Windsor, Ontario; Grade 4 -Jonathan Beer of Madoc, Ontario; Grade 5—Anthony Castillo of Longueuil, Quebec; Grade 6—Jean-François Gratton of Laval, Quebec; Grade 7—Radu Butan of Toronto, Ontario; Grade 8 -Alexandre Marcil of Longueuil, Quebec; Grade 9—Martin Glass of Westmount, Quebec; Grade 10—Luc Tran of Chicoutimi, Quebec; Grade 11—Leonard Morrissey of St. John's, Newfoundland, and Grade 12—Thanh-Nha Duong of Anjou, Quebec.

The Quebec team won the over all championship for the second year in a row. Congratulations to all of the participants and the good work they do for the disadvantaged children of the world.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[*English*]

ROUTE CANADA

Mr. Russell MacLellan (Cape Breton—The Sydneys): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister concerning the privatization of what is now Route Canada.

Four years ago, in 1986, the government sold Route Canada, the trucking arm of Canadian National, to a man who did not have the financial backing or reputation to be able to get a credit card. At that time there were 3,400 people working for Route Canada. A year and a half after the sale the company went bankrupt, and 1,900 people were out of work. The company was sold after the government did a financial check.

Will the government please explain to the people of Canada and to the people who lost hundreds of thousands of dollars why this government went ahead with this deal?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I think my hon. friend's fancy was caught by a headline rather than the facts. In actual fact when the company bought Route Canada the financing was done through the Fingold brothers and not through the individual to whom my hon. friend refers.

Mr. Russell MacLellan (Cape Breton—The Sydneys): Mr. Speaker, the records clearly show that the government was discussing the sale of Route Canada with

Manfred Rhuland a month and a half before it discussed any question of Route Canada with the Fingold brothers.

It is obvious that Manfred Rhuland was the first person the government discussed this issue with, a man who owed money to five financial institutions and who had already at one time declared bankruptcy.

[*Translation*]

Finally, Mr. Speaker, Ruhland and his associates purchased Route Canada without paying a cent of their own money.

I want to ask the minister this: Why did the government pass an order in council to authorize this million-dollar sale, when it was well aware of the suspicious financial past of the buyers?

[*English*]

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I am sure my hon. friend made a bit of a slip there. He realizes full well, I am sure, that this was a subsidiary of CN and was not privatized by the government. It was sold by CN. The market value of the assets was $55 million. In true Liberal tradition, at the time it was losing $40 million a year and it was sold for $29 million.

Is my hon. friend suggesting that the government should have continued to lose that kind of taxpayers' moneys as did former Liberal governments, or should we have devolved it the way we did?

Mr. Russell MacLellan (Cape Breton—The Sydneys): Mr. Speaker, the assets alone of Route Canada were worth $80 million.

The Minister of Transport says that the government did not do anything because it was a subsidiary of Canadian National. If the government didn't do anything, why did it pass the Order in Council approving of the sale by CN to the Fingolds and Manfred Rhuland?

The government was concerned enough about it that just before the election, when the truckers were on the Hill demonstrating and threatening to follow the Prime Minister during the election campaign with their trucks, it had CN open negotiations with the workers. Those negotiations, unfortunately for the workers and strangely enough, ended a few days after the election campaign was over without anything for the workers.

I want an explanation from the government and the Minister of Transport in particular of why the government did this. What explanation does the government have for the 1,900 innocent victims of this scam perpetrated by the government?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, my hon. friend knows full well that there were four offers to buy the assets. It was sold on an arm's length transaction with advice coming to the government from CN as to the best offer.

It doesn't quite compare with the government of which my hon. friend was a member in the Maislin loan transaction where $34 million of the taxpayers' money was wasted on a loan to the Liberal party's friends. It doesn't compare that way at all, and that is what bothers my friend.

Mr. Joe Comuzzi (Thunder Bay—Nipigon): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister.

CN Route was sold for only $29 million, although it was worth somewhere between $75 million and $80 million. It was paid for by leverage wherein a company buys itself out from its own resources. CN Route raised the $29 million by mortgaging the bonds and assets of the company. It is really a junk bond type of transaction and a bad financial deal. The tragedy in this whole affair was that 1,500 to 2,000 employees were fired prior to the transaction taking place.

• (1420)

How could the government approve such a sale where at least 1,500 employees were fired on the spot in order to conclude the deal?

Mr. Crosbie: It's all history.

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, before my hon. friend came along with his business experience I should tell him that it was Liberal party practice to pour taxpayers' money into losing propositions.

My hon. friend knows that if he had an asset worth $55 million and was losing between $30 million and $40 million a year on it, he would get rid of it darn quick for $29 million as we did.

Mr. Joe Comuzzi (Thunder Bay—Nipigon): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question.

In all transactions such as this there is only one eventual loser, and that is the employee. We have been fighting for the employees of CN Route since the deal collapsed.

Mr. Lawless, Chief Executive Officer of CN, said when he was before the transport committee that CN's people are its greatest asset.

Will the minister confirm to this House today that he will start to treat poor employees from CN Route who have lost their jobs like employees of CN with full pension benefits and the rights of all CN employees?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, there were two options available to the government: close the company down or sell it to the person with the best offer, and that is what the government did.

Mr. Peterson: They don't care.

Mr. Lewis: My hon. friend is suggesting that the Canadian taxpayer should have continued to lose between $30 million and $40 million a year. I do not think that is a viable proposition for any government, and definitely not ours.

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CHINA

Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Secretary of State for External Affairs.

Last year all parties in the House supported a motion condemning the brutal use of force and the repression of the Chinese peoples. Canada subsequently placed a number of limited sanctions, but one year later it does seem that it is business as usual between Canada and China. Trade and imports are up.

What is the government doing now to put continuing pressure on the Chinese government to democratize further and to end the repression in China?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, what we are doing now is following the policy I outlined on June 30 last year in response to the events in Tiananmen Square which were, as the hon. Leader of the New Democratic Party indicated, roundly condemned and deeply regretted by all members of the House.

There have been important changes in the rules with respect to export development credit assistance, with respect to the activities of the Canadian International Development Agency, and with respect to the level of visits and contacts between Canada and China.

If the hon. member on behalf of her party is changing her party's position and is suggesting that the government should act to isolate a country which contains one-quarter of the world's population, that would certain be interesting news to members of the House. She may change her policy. We have not changed ours.

Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, my question which the minister did not answer was simply: What continuing pressure is the government prepared to put on the Government of China? I will ask it again. Amnesty International has released a report indicating continued human rights abuses. It seems to me this should be of some concern to Canada. I am sure it is of concern to the minister.

What is the Canadian government policy to deal with the continuing human rights abuses in China?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, we are very much concerned about the continuing human rights abuses in China, and they do continue.

There has been some improvement in at least the legal regime that is being followed in China since the events of a year ago, but it would be misleading and wrong to suggest that there has been a marked improvement in the human rights situation. We continue to make representations as effectively as we can.

I think it is also worth mentioning that while there has been a marked deterioration from the situation in China before the events in Tiananmen Square, there has not been a return—and we think there will not be a return—to the anarchy that marked the situation in China which contributed so much to the threat to human rights that occurred during the period of the cultural revolution.

Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question. I think the people of China and those in Canada of Chinese origin would like to hear the minister say something specifically regarding his

concern and his government's concern about human rights abuses in China. I will ask another question of the same minister.

[*Translation*]

It is reported that Chinese students who are waiting for an immigration permit are subject to intimidation by representatives of the Chinese government. Could the minister allay the fears of these students and give them the assurance that they will not be forced to return to China?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, we are aware there is a possibility that Chinese students may have been subject to a kind of pressure that is not acceptable, and we have indicated to Chinese officials that Canada will not tolerate this kind of pressure being put on Chinese students. There is a dilemma here and I believe parties on all sides of the House will appreciate the problem. We want to keeps putting pressure on the system in China. However, we also want to keep certain avenues open so that the West, including Canada, can have a positive impact on events in China. It is clear that one of the factors that helped liberalize the situation in China, and which contributes and can contribute to improving the situation, is contacts with the West. We have to strike a balance between our determination to show the Chinese that their actions on Tiananmen Square are not acceptable and keeping certain avenues open so that we can have a constructive influence on the situation.

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[*English*]

IMMIGRATION

Mr. David Walker (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Employment and Immigration and deals with the same subject of China.

Last year the minister assured us that Chinese citizens in Canada as visitors and as students "need have no fear that they will be asked to leave Canada as long as the situation in China remains threatening for them."

Will the minister today renew this commitment by providing the necessary visa extensions and work permits for Chinese visitors and students in order to be assured that no one will be forced to return to China until we are absolutely sure of their safety?

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I am glad the hon. member raises this issue because it is something that we have been following very carefully ever since we announced the suspension of removals, which was our initial announcement on June 16 last year.

The vast majority of Chinese nationals who were in the country at the time did apply not just for an extension of their visas that was intended to give them some time in which to determine what they wanted to do permanently for their futures, but also to ensure that if they decided they wanted to stay in Canada they would be permitted to do so.

We have had 8,700 applications from Chinese who were in the country at the time to remain permanently. Some 8,175 of them have had interviews and there have been 7,666 positive decisions. There are still some cases pending, but I think it is a record that all Canadians can be proud of.

Mr. David Walker (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the same minister.

Although the record in the past year may be sufficient and may please the minister, there is still an ongoing concern. My question was not about what has taken place in the past year. I will ask the minister directly in the House whether or not she will provide the same guarantees into the future since we are not yet sure of the safety of these people.

• (1430)

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, since the numbers I spoke about did incorporate virtually all of the Chinese nationals who were in Canada at the time, people who came in since then would come in through the normal way, applying for refugee determination and so on. They are in a slightly different position than the people who were in Canada at the time of those very sad events in Tiananmen Square.

It is very difficult for me to make the kind of commitment the hon. member is asking for because people are in different situations. I do think that Chinese nationals who have found themselves in these difficult situations have been treated with great sensitivity. They will continue to be treated with great sensitivity, but it will be on a case-by-case basis since they are in a different position than the others.

ABORIGINAL RIGHTS

Ms. Ethel Blondin (Western Arctic): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Last Thursday the Supreme Court ruled that the aboriginal peoples have the right to fish in areas not specifically stated in treaties. The Woodstock Maliceet Band in New Brunswick currently has a case in specific claims which was to be settled, that is, until the dollar amount became known. The Department Indian Affairs and Northern Development then changed its position.

In light of the Sparrow ruling of last Thursday, will the minister now recognize that the band had a right to the resources of the fiddleheads and fishes of the Saint John River area and assure the Maliceet that they will be duly compensated for the loss of these resources?

Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, the Supreme Court decision of last Thursday in the matter of Sparrow versus the Crown has indeed a major significance for the question of aboriginal rights, and the settlement of aboriginal claims in the future of our nation.

We are studying this finding very carefully. It has significant implications. The court sought to offer guidance in the conduct of our negotiations of specific and comprehensive claims but specifically to provide guidance in the matters which were brought to the Supreme Court under appeal. Given that they have been referred to retrial, it would not be appropriate to speculate on the specific application of the Supreme Court decision to this or other cases.

Ms. Ethel Blondin (Western Arctic): Mr. Speaker, that answer is simply not satisfactory. The facts of this case are very well known.

My supplementary question is for the minister. The two recent Supreme Court rulings in favour of Conrad Sioui and Ronald Sparrow insure that aboriginal rights will be upheld. That is very clear. I therefore urge the minister and his department to act now, in a timely and just manner, to settle the Woodstock band's long outstanding validated claim and not force this band to have to go to court, because the minister and the department know they do not have the resources to take it to court.

Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, I do not propose, here in the House of Commons, to intercede in matters which are the subject of negotiation under our specific claims policy. I think it is important that all members recognize the guidance that was given by the Supreme Court of Canada in the carrying out of this government's commitment to resolve claims, both comprehensive and specific, in accordance with the provisions of Section 35(1) of the Constitution of Canada which guarantees aboriginal rights.

Ms. Blondin: You just don't want to settle it, that's all.

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ROUTE CANADA

Mr. Lyle Kristiansen (Kootenay West—Revelstoke): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport. I want to refer him back again to the affair of CN Trucking and the "Road Warrior", the other name by which Mr. Ruhland is known.

According to information from Canadian National officials, at least two credit checks were ordered on the buyers, including at least one of them initiated by the cabinet. The government had to know that it was jeopardizing the fate of the company and of the latest 1,900 employees to be terminated, and yet it did nothing to keep a watching brief on the affairs of this company despite the fact that it knew its track record.

What will the minister do to assure Canadians that such fire sales—nothing down and nothing later—of Crown assets will not happen again in the future? Will he assure the latest 1,900 workers who have lost their jobs that they will not have to pay the price of his government's fiscal mismanagement and bad business deals? Will he launch an immediate inquiry to assure that no more "Road Warriors" become highwaymen?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I can assure my hon. friend that when we have been directly involved in privatization of Crown assets we have done reasonably well.

This was a subsidiary of CN which was losing some $30 million to $40 million a year. It was sold to a group of

people on the basis of the credit of the Fingold Brothers and not the individual to whom my hon. friend refers. We received $29 million for it and, as a result, the employees retained their jobs.

Mr. Lyle Kristiansen (Kootenay West—Revelstoke): Mr. Speaker, I hope those 1,900 people who have just lost their jobs have listened to the minister and know that everything is okay and somehow they have kept their jobs. I know he can pull off a lot of magic tricks, but that is not one of them.

In its indecent haste to sell off Crown assets the government approved the giveaway of this trucking company to this man who had declared bankruptcy in 1981, a man who had defaulted on loans to four banks and one trust company and who could not even get a credit card. Now the company is defunct, creditors are owed millions and 1,900 more people are out of work despite the so-called assurances of the minister.

Will the minister explain how these 3,400 jobs and $100 million in Crown assets, including some of the most valuable downtown real estate and property in Canada, were given away to a bad credit risk and why nobody paid any attention? It is not enough to issue credit checks, Mr. Speaker, somebody has to read them.

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I think it is fairly clear that Canadian National wanted to stop the haemorrhaging of the taxpayers' money at the rate of $30 million to $40 million a year. There were two options as far as the employees were concerned; first, to shut down the operation and lay them all off or, second, to sell it as a going concern to the company that bought it for $29 million, and that is what they did.

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IMMIGRATION

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Employment and Immigration. I have here a letter from Mr. Gordon Fairweather, the Chairman of the Immigration Refugee Board, wherein he admits that the decision taken by that board that rejected the refugee application of Mr. Mahmood Hassan Randeree, a member of the African National Congress, is based upon a mistake in assessment of Mr. Randeree's nationality.

In view of Mr. Fairweather's own recognition of the board's mistake and the appeal of over 40 human rights, church and social organizations across this country asking that the case be reheard, will the minister recognize that there has been an error of justice made in this case and undertake to order a new hearing into the Randeree case?

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I am always quite prepared to take new information and look into any case that requires some additional consideration. If Mr. Fairweather, who is an independent chairman of an independent board, believes that the case deserves another hearing, I am sure that he is in a position to ask for that hearing himself.

When I responded to a question on this person in the House last week I said that there are two other ways in which this particular person can seek entry into Canada, and I encouraged him to do that at that time.

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, I hope the minister understands that her unwillingness to intervene in this case, which the Immigration Act gives her full powers to do, will have the impact of tarnishing Canada's international reputation as a being a supporter of the fight for democratic rights in South Africa and that this has implications for the visit of Mr. Mandela in the future and our fight against apartheid. As a part of this government which has led that fight, I think the minister has a responsibility to intervene.

• (1440)

Would the minister undertake at least to have a personal meeting with Mr. Randeree, legal representatives and the coalition dealing with apartheid to listen to their evidence, as she said, to see if there are new facts that can be put on the table? She can then decide whether in fact a mistake has been made and undertake, with the rights and power she has under the act, to correct a serious transgression of justice against this individual.

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I am very well aware of what my rights and powers are under the act and I have always tried to deal with them with enormous sensitivity, as I think the hon. member knows.

This government has been particularly sensitive to the issues of people from South Africa. I have said to the hon. member that if new information is presented to me I am always prepared to look at it.

The man in question has a wife and child in Germany who also must be given some consideration, and he has family in Canada who are in a position to sponsor him. So, while I have expressed some surprise that he has chosen to come to Canada by this route, I am quite prepared to look at the case again.

Mr. Jesse Flis (Parkdale—High Park): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Employment and Immigration. Thousands of immigrants from eastern Europe were sponsored to Canada under the designated self-exiled class. This is a very successful program with no cost to the government or to the Canadian taxpayer to settle these immigrants in Canada.

The minister has been approached on various occasions to clarify the continuation of this program. What exactly are the changes to this program and what is being done with those applicants that have already been accepted within the self-exiled process?

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I want to correct the assumption that there is no cost to the government for people who are settled this way. Even with private sponsorships the government pays a considerable amount of settlement costs for people who come under the designated class. We are always happy to do so because we believe that private sponsorships are an excellent way for people to be settled within communities in Canada. There is an open-ended demand for this which we have supported.

In response to the substance of the question, we have not reached any decision on changing the designated class. I think the hon. member knows that with some of the changes that are going on within eastern Europe, once it is determined as a foreign policy matter that those countries are becoming more democratic in a stable and permanent way, we would want to look at how we view immigration from those particular countries. But we are not in a position at this point to have reached a decision on it.

Mr. Jesse Flis (Parkdale—High Park): Mr. Speaker, I ask the minister to investigate then why the local immigration officers are denying extension of visas to the cases that are being processed so that they cannot even be called for an interview but are asked to return to their country of origin.

My supplementary question is directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Given that the political climate in eastern Europe has moved toward democratic forms of government, as we have already heard from his colleague, and that people coming to Canada in the future from countries like Czechoslovakia, Poland and Hungary may no longer qualify under the designated self-exiled class, will the Secretary of State for External Affairs agree to establish full service visa offices in these countries without delay for normal processing of applications for immigration? As he knows, Canada has not one such full service office anywhere in eastern Europe or the Soviet Union.

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member knows and as was discussed during the hearings of the Standing Committee on External Affairs and International Trade last week, we are now actively reviewing how we can move around manpower, persons employed in the Department of External Affairs in Europe. There is no question that we need to put more people into the Soviet Union and into eastern and central Europe. There is also no question that we have very little fiscal flexibility and we have to do that by moving people from another part of the world into those areas.

Mr. Blackburn (Brant): Hire some more.

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): The NDP suggests we should hire some more. Their solution to every problem is to spend money we do not have. That is not an option that is open to reasonable people.

We are going to be looking at the reallocation of our personnel. I hope that either the Minister of Employment and Immigration or I will be able to make an announcement in the near future that will satisfy him.

* * *

PRESENCE IN GALLERY

Mr. Speaker: I wish to draw to the members' attention the presence in the gallery of His Excellency, Sir Shridath S. Ramphal, Secretary General of the Commonwealth.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

* * *

IMMIGRATION

Mr. Howard McCurdy (Windsor—St. Clair): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Employment and Immigration who, in spite of her protests to the contrary, has made a decision which to many appears lacking in humanity, compassion or understanding in that it will result in the departure of an ANC refugee to East Germany. This decision threatens to become a *cause célèbre* just as we are about to welcome Nelson Mandela to Canada.

Before making this decision, did she engage in any kind of consultation with the Secretary of State for External Affairs about the implication in terms of Canada's position in its fight against apartheid in this whole scene?

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I would remind the hon. member that the person in question has been given a departure notice. That means that he can go to any country of his choosing. He is not being deported; he can go to any country of his choosing. It is a departure notice, not a deportation, and it was a decision that was made by an independent board.

If the head of the refugee board feels that this is worthy of another look, I am sure that he will do that. I would remind the hon. member that this is a quasi-judicial process.

Mr. Howard McCurdy (Windsor—St. Clair): Mr. Speaker, among the countries to which he might go, and which the minister has mentioned, is East Germany where his wife has no rights as a citizen and where Fascist, racist reaction has made it very difficult for people of Randeree's origins.

My supplementary question is directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. This ANC refugee is the son of an ANC activist with close connections and friendships with the ANC leadership. Has the minister reflected upon the impact of removal of this refugee, should this arise during Mandela's visit, particularly when Mr. Randeree, Mahmood's father, has written specifically to Nelson Mandela to ask for his intervention?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, my colleague has indicated to the House on several occasions that there are options open to the individual. She has also indicated to the House, in response to a question from the member from Winnipeg South Centre, that if there is a recommendation by Mr. Fairweather that will be considered very seriously.

Now the hon. member is putting forward a quite remarkable proposition in the House, that is, that the policy of Canada should be changed to take account of the situation of people who are welcome visitors to the country. That would be an absurd proposition and certainly not one that we would want to follow here.

* * *

[*Translation*]

FAMILY ALLOWANCES

Mr. Guy Saint-Julien (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of National Health and Welfare.

In the past few months, I have sought several remedies in the House of Commons, in the form of petitions and motions, to advance the payment date for the September family allowance cheque and give Canadian families much-needed help just before school starts.

Mr. Speaker, my question is this: Could the minister tell the House today whether his department is prepared to allow this change this year, as part of the family allowance review plan?

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for his question.

I am very much aware of this issue, but although the proposal has its merits, I am not prepared to introduce the change at this time. However, I can assure the hon. member that the proposal will be subject to a cost-benefit analysis as part of the review plan for income security programs.

* * *

• (1450)

AGRICULTURE

Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister. What concrete and specific commitment did the Deputy Prime Minister receive from the president of the

U.S.S.R., Mr. Gorbachev, last week, with respect to renewing Canadian wheat sales?

[*English*]

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, that issue did come up in the course of the discussions with the Soviet delegation. We were very encouraged by the prospects of renewing the long-term agreement. We are also encouraged by the fact that they expressed an interest in some immediate additional purchases which members of the Soviet delegation will be dispatched to discuss with officials here in Canada.

We hope that, not only will we be able to negotiate a renewal of the long-term agreement, but we might be able to orchestrate some additional sales at the same time.

Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the same minister. The minister will know that the Americans concluded a massive sales deal with the U.S.S.R. over the weekend. In fact, it is for 50 million tonnes over five years. He will know as well that Mr. Gorbachev really had very little choice if he was going to get most favoured nation trade status, and he may not yet.

What impact will this particular sale have, coupled with the impact of the U.S. Export Enhancement Program, which provides huge subsidies to U.S. farmers, on our own wheat and other grain sales to the U.S.S.R.? Is the Canadian farmer gradually, little by little, being squeezed out?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member talks about a massive sale, and then he talks about a massive contract for a long-term agreement. They are two quite different things. What is negotiated under the long-term arrangement are the minimum sales.

We have had long-term agreements with the Soviet Union for a long, long time. We are considered as one of the reliable suppliers to it. It likes doing business with us. We will be seeking a continuation of that long-term agreement, hopefully in an expanded form.

As I indicated to hon. member, we were encouraged by the response of the Soviet Union. We have done business with it in the past. We are doing business with it now and we are going to continue to do business with it in the future on behalf of the Canadian farmers.

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mrs. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Acting Minister of the Environment, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister.

In 1987, both the Prime Minister and the Minister of the Environment endorsed the report of the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development. The keystone of that report was that there be full public review of the environmental effects of government policies.

How can the government justify then exempting government policies from its own environmental legislation, legislation that has already been too long in the waiting?

Hon. Frank Oberle (Minister of Forestry): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of the Environment is in Toronto today officiating at the celebration of Environment Week. At that event he is pointing out once again the importance of international co-operation in meeting the objectives that need to be met and the Canadian government's commitment to the international accords that have been signed.

As well, my colleague is in Toronto to point out to Canadians how important it is that each individual gets involved in environmental questions. My hon. friend can take from that that consultation with Canadians is high in our priority before we begin arbitrarily to legislate targets that cannot be met.

Mrs. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West): Mr. Speaker, back to the question. It is nice that the minister is off celebrating, but it would be better if he was back here doing something about the environmental assessment legislation that we have been waiting for for years.

I will give the minister another chance to answer the question. The question is quite simply this: Given that we have been waiting years for environmental assessment legislation, given the rumours that it is being watered down from even the present guidelines, and given the fact that the government has totally ignored three court decisions that told it what its duty is for environmental assessment, how can the minister or anyone else expect Canadians or international governments to take this government seriously when it wants to

exempt itself from the very requirements it is going to put on everybody else?

Hon. Frank Oberle (Minister of Forestry): Mr. Speaker, I had to assume that my hon. friend was in the House often enough to know that the minister, on many occasions, pointed out that the environmental assessment legislation is in the final stages of preparation and will be introduced in the House, hopefully before we recess for the summer less than a month from now.

Surely the hon. member can have patience. She should restrain from making negative comments until she sees what is being tabled.

* * *

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Lyle Dean MacWilliam (Okanagan—Shuswap): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Finance. Latest Statistics Canada figures show that from 1986 to 1989 the Canadian dollar rose some 16 per cent against the U.S. dollar, making Canadian purchases in the United States increasingly lower in price. During that same time, the number of Canadians travelling to the United States on same-day visits surged by 54 per cent. The correlation of a high Canadian dollar to this surging exodus of Canadian consumers is not merely coincidence.

Is the minister prepared to acknowledge that the Bank of Canada's high interest rate policy, which has artificially inflated the value of the Canadian dollar, has in fact driven Canadian consumers south of the border causing severe haemorrhaging to our national economy?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I am not going to debate the point that the hon. member has made. However, the hon. member has to consider the alternatives. Do we let inflation just run away with itself? Do we ignore the problems of increased unit labour costs that are going to undermine our competitive position as a country? Do we ignore the fact that that is going to cost us jobs which will cost us business and result in a much less healthy economy? These are the questions that one has to consider when one makes these bald, very narrow minded statements about the impact of the Canadian dollar.

It is important to understand the reasons behind the policies that the government is following. Our policies are designed to improve the health of the Canadian economy, which health has been demonstrated over the last five and a half years as Canada has been second only to Japan in economic growth in the major industrialized countries.

* * *

AGRICULTURE

Mr. Lyle Dean MacWilliam (Okanagan—Shuswap): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary is about the same question but is directed to the Minister of Agriculture.

A case in point is that British Columbia dairy farmers are losing more than $20 million a year due to B.C. residents buying inexpensive milk products in the United States. In the Okanagan Valley alone, the loss is approximately $2 million a year.

In light of our high interest rates and our over-valued Canadian dollar, what steps is the Minister of Agriculture prepared to take to curtail this loss to the dairy industry in particular resulting from Canadian purchases of U.S. products?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, this is a matter that has been looked into by a task force. An assessment has made in the province of British Columbia, one has been made in the province of New Brunswick, and one is being completed in Ontario. It is hoped that when all this data is gathered we will be able to sit down with the industry to see if in fact any steps can be taken.

I want to remind the hon. member that if there was to be a severe tightening up at border checkpoints, it would cause a great deal of congestion. Those are the kinds of things that would have to be taken into account. I do take the hon. member's representation seriously and, as I have indicated, we are acting in that regard.

* * *

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Hon. William Rompkey (Labrador): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans. The

minister will know that there is an ice blockade on the Labrador coast at the present time preventing fishermen from fishing, yet their unemployment insurance ran out on May 15.

Mr. Crosbie: Happens every year.

Mr. Rompkey: It doesn't happen every year as the Minister for Trade says. That is inaccurate.

Some Hon. Members: C-21, C-21!

Mr. Masse: Talk to the other side.

Mr. Lewis: Walk down the hall.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member will put his question.

Mr. Rompkey: The level of concern is impressive, Mr. Speaker. Will the minister intercede—

Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): With Allan MacEachen?

Mr. Rompkey: You're holding the purse strings.

• (1500)

Will the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans intercede with his colleague, the Minister of Employment and Immigration, to extend unemployment insurance along the Labrador coast. Or will he take responsibility within his own department, as he did last year, to take special measures, a special emergency response feature, for those fishermen who cannot fish, through no fault of their own, and who cannot collect unemployment insurance? Will he do that?

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member knows that my colleague, the Minister of Fisheries and I have worked very closely for the last couple of years on solving some of these problems in the Atlantic fishery. We have come up with a very expensive and useful package to help the fishery throughout Atlantic Canada and that is something that the hon. member should be applauding.

If he wants to talk about the specifics of unemployment insurance, I would suggest that he talk to the people in the other place.

Mr. Speaker: A short supplementary.

* * *

FISHERIES

Hon. William Rompkey (Labrador): Mr. Speaker, let me ask the Minister of Fisheries to do something he can do.

Will he allocate a special capelin quota to the coast of Labrador, as has been requested by fishermen there? Will he do that, so that they do not have to depend on the other place or handouts of any kind, but can earn income on their own? Will he allocate a special capelin quota?

Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, I guess he is right, he should not rely on the other place because they will never do anything for the fishermen of Atlantic Canada.

As for the request—

Mr. Rompkey: Just call the election.

Mr. Valcourt: In three years time you will get it and you will have fun.

[*Translation*]

You see, Madam Speaker, they ask questions but they don't want to hear the answer.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*Translation*]

CANADA PENSION PLAN

TABLING OF REPORT OF ADVISORY BOARD

Mrs. Lise Bourgault (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Health and Welfare): Madam Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of National Health and Welfare and pursuant to the provisions of Standing Order 32(2), I wish to table, in both official languages, a report by the Canada Pension Plan Advisory Board entitled: *Reports of the Retirement Benefit Committee on the Level and Structure of CPP Retirement Benefits.*

Point of Order

ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES READJUSTMENT ACT

MEASURE TO CHANGE NAME OF CONSTITUENCY

Mr. Charles DeBlois (Montmorency—Orléans) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-307, an Act to change the name of the electoral district of Langelier.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Does the hon. member have leave to introduce the bill?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. DeBlois: Madam Speaker, the hon. member for Langelier and Minister of State (Finance), Mr. Gilles Loiselle, has asked me to table this bill. Its purpose is to change the name of the electoral district of Langelier to Québec and thus make the name of the riding more representative of the communities which together form the City of Quebec. In fact, my own riding is right next door. I welcome this opportunity to table this bill.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to, bill read the first time and ordered to be printed.

Madam Deputy Speaker: When shall the bill be read the second time? At the next sitting of the House?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

* * *

[*English*]

ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES READJUSTMENT ACT

MEASURE TO CHANGE NAME OF CONSTITUENCY

Mr. David Bjornson (Selkirk) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-308, an act to change the name of the electoral district of Selkirk.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House that the hon. member shall have leave to introduce the bill?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Bjornson: Madam Speaker, it is a great pleasure to stand for the first time as a new member to present a private members' bill. This bill is important because we wish to change the name of the electoral district of Selkirk.

What we bring to this recommended name change is the feeling that everybody who is within what is now called the electoral district of Selkirk has the ability not only to deal with their member of Parliament but with their whole community. So I am looking forward to debate when this does come up.

Motion agreed to, bill read the first time and ordered to be printed.

* * *

[*Translation*]

POINT OF ORDER

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Madam Speaker, I wish to raise a point of order regarding notice of a motion appearing on the Order Paper for Monday, June 4, on pages 12 and 13, under the item "Motions".

Madam Speaker, the Official Opposition maintains that the motion is erroneously listed under this item and that in doing so the government has made use of an unusual and possibly irregular procedure. I will give a short explanation, Madam Speaker, of my reasons for making this claim.

The notice of motion concerning the appointment, by the Minister of Justice, of two individuals, one as Information Commissioner and the other as Privacy Commissioner, was given, at least publicly, on June 1, last Friday. This notice of motion appears on page IV of the *Order Paper* under the item "Notices of Motions".

Madam Speaker, it is customary when the government tables motions for these to be transferred to government orders. I made a quick search, and I can say that although the Standing Orders were amended in 1987, if I am not mistaken, the old Standing Orders provided that when a notice of motion given by the government was called, the Chair was to transfer the motion to government orders.

Since 1987, this has happened automatically, unless—and that is the point I wish to make—the government decides to proceed by notice of motion, under the item "routine proceedings", which is now before the House. To us there is a rather considerable difference, which

may cause a number of problems. I would like the Chair to reflect on this procedure and inform me of its decision as soon as possible.

• (1510)

Is there a difference? Madam Speaker, I would say there is a substantial difference. Why did the government decide or insist on having these two motions for approval of the appointment of two individuals to two important positions— Why should these two appointments come under Routine Proceedings? According to us, Madam Speaker, the appointments are intended to fill two positions of officers of Parliament. The words "of Parliament" are the key words. By listing the motions under Routine Proceedings, the government approached the question as though these people were to be officers of the House. A distinction should be made between an officer of Parliament and an officer of the House.

Furthermore, Madam Speaker, I believe the government used Standing Order 67 (*p*), which I will read to you and which refers to motions that are called for debate.

> 67. (1) The following motions are debatable:
>
> (p) such other motion, made upon Routine Proceedings, as may be required for the observance of the proprieties of the House, the maintenance of its authority, the appointment or conduct of its officers,—

The rest, Madam Speaker, is not relevant to my case.

Standing Order 67 (*p*) provides that the appointment of an officer of the House of Commons may be debatable. This is the argument the government is using today to bring this proposal before the House. According to us, Madam Speaker, these are not officers of the House but officers of Parliament. In other words, this House will express its position on the appointment or the proposal to appoint these two people. The Senate will also have to give its opinion. After this debate, there will be an Order in Council to appoint these two individuals. And after that, Madam Speaker, the Order in Council will come before the House for referral to and consideration by a committee, if the committee deems such is appropriate. As we know, the Standing Orders were amended some time ago, in accordance with the suggestions and proposals for parliamentary reform made by the McGrath Committee. Therefore, any order in council appointment is considered by committee, if the committee deems such to be appropriate.

Madam Speaker, the question before the House is quite clear. Once these appointments have been approved by the House of Commons and the Senate, once these two people have been appointed as officers of Parliament, are they responsible to Parliament or to the government? Madam Speaker, with respect, I submit that these two people are officers of the Parliament of Canada and not, strictly speaking, of the House, and certainly not of the government. My point is that they should have been transferred to Government Orders, so that the question could be debated under a quite different item.

Madam Speaker, the difference is quite substantial. I was looking at precedents, and I went back to 1983 to see what the procedure had been for appointing the two people who had occupied these positions until June 1, this year. At page 5929 of the House of Commons *Journals* of May 26, 1983, we find:

> The following Notices of Motions, having been called, were transferred to Government Orders for consideration later this day or at the next sitting of the House,—

This was done—

> —in accordance with Section 53 of Schedule II of an Act to enact the Access to Information Act and the Privacy Act, to amend the Federal Court Act and the Canada Evidence Act— this House approves the appointment of John W. Grace, Esquire, as Privacy Commissioner.

The motion, once transferred to Government Orders, was called for debate on May 27, 1983. The debate appears at page 25796. It was initiated by the government, on motion of the hon. Mark MacGuigan—

[*English*]

—Mark MacGuigan, Minister of Justice, who moved then, in accordance with Section 54, that these people be named. There was a debate. The Hon. Walter Baker, the former member for Nepean—Carleton, took part in the debate, even seconded the motion. The debate was quite prolonged and interesting. Svend J. Robinson for Burnaby spoke for the NDP. The motion was adopted and we proceeded with these nominations. By order of this House, under orders of the government, that is Government Orders, a debate was held and the nominations were made.

Today we have a different procedure. We have under Routine Proceedings a situation where the government is treating these two positions as agents, officers, if I may use the word, of the House of Commons. They are not, Madam Speaker, I humbly submit to you, officers of the House of Commons. They are officers of Parliament.

The government has given notice under Standing Order 67(1)(p) which, in my view, is not in order. I humbly submit that we should scratch or eliminate that reference in our Routine Proceedings and also on the Order Paper and that the proper procedure be used, that the government transfer these two nominations to Government Orders as required, in my view, by the importance of the nominations, by the impact they will have, and also in my interest and this caucus' interest in our willingness to try to get the government to give an opportunity to Parliament to discuss all appointments, as we do today. I would like to see that done in the near future, Madam Speaker.

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Madam Speaker, it was precisely for that purpose that we proceeded in this way. The hon. House leader of the Official Opposition seems to imply some sort of conspiracy here or some attempt to bypass in some irregular way or some such notion. I suggest that he is perhaps thinking back to practices of previous governments because no such thing was intended.

The law in respect of both of these appointments requires a resolution of this House so as to make it clear that these individuals when appointed are not public servants in the same sense as being accountable to the government. The government does not have the authority under the law to direct or order those individuals. They are like the Auditor General. They account to this House for their actions and report through the appropriate committees. Yes, there is a minister who has responsibility administratively.

The Governor in Council appointment of these individuals, after resolutions of this House and the other place, is almost in the sense of a formality to give them the legal rights to collect salaries and have offices. But, in fact, these individuals are officers of this Parliament. What we sought was an appropriate means to get a resolution of this House. Standing Order 67(1)(p) states that such motion dealing with the appointment of officers of this House is appropriate. So we moved forward under that heading to get a resolution of the House.

Why the hon. member thinks that a resolution of the House is somehow more sanctified if it comes as Government Orders, making it clear that we are talking about a government directed government decision, as opposed to having a resolution of the House under something that is not so clearly Government Orders but in fact a reflection of the House is beside me. Why he should get so worked up about it is ridiculous.

It would seem to me more appropriate to have under a provision of the House as opposed to Government Orders this motion coming forward because the individual is an officer of this House and of Parliament, not an officer of the government, not a part of government.

In Government Orders we bring forward things that the government wants to do for the benefit of the government, motions and otherwise.

• (1520)

This being an allotted day, I do not want to cut into the time of the opposition by proceeding with this. It seems to me a bit of a silly point since all that is being sought is compliance with the law that requires a resolution of this House and a resolution of the other place. How that resolution is done does not matter in terms of the law. This seemed an appropriate way. If it is not, there are the usual channels where we could discuss this and we need not further waste the time of the House.

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Madam Speaker, I am surprised that the government House leader would treat this matter in such a cavalier way. I will be very brief because I recognize we are taking up time on an important debate concerning the role and responsibility of the other place to which I know the government House leader will want to contribute.

Nevertheless, there are some sections of Beauchesne's that are relevant and that in considering this matter the Chair will want to have regard to. I refer to citation 361 of the sixth edition which states:

> The motions allowed under Routine Proceedings are those relating to the business of the House or to the discussion of committee reports.

It has nothing to do with the appointment of officers of Parliament. But I want to stress "relating to the business—"

Mr. Andre: A resolution of the House.

Mr. Milliken: Obviously the government House leader did not hear me read this. I will read it again, Madam Speaker.

> The motions allowed under Routine Proceedings are those relating to the business of the House or to the discussion of committee reports.

The business of the House means the hours of sitting, the order of business and so on. It has nothing to do with the appointment of officers of Parliament.

I refer also to citation 560 of the sixth edition of Beauchesne's which states:

> Pursuant to Standing Order 56, Government notices of motion are placed on the *Order Paper* as an Order of the Day under Government Orders.

I am asking that the Chair, as did my friend, the hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier, direct that these notices of motion be transferred from Routine Proceedings to Government Orders where they would be discussed.

While the government House leader may say that this is unimportant, the significance of it is great in that the time for the discussion of those motions will be under Government Orders and are government business and not under Routine Proceedings. It is my submission that that is where the motions ought to be placed on the *Order Paper* in light of the words of the Standing Orders and in light of the citations in Beauchesne's. My hon. friend for Ottawa—Vanier has given you the words of the Standing Order and I have invited the Chair to have regard to the citations in Beauchesne's to assist in that decision.

[*Translation*]

Madam Deputy Speaker: The procedural point raised by the hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier (Mr. Gauthier) is very interesting. I thank the government leader and the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands for taking part in the debate. The Chair will examine the question, consider all points raised by hon. members, and get back to the House as soon as a conclusion has been reached.

[*English*]

PETITIONS

CANADA POST

Mr. Len Taylor (The Battlefords—Meadow Lake): Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure, duty and responsibility today to table, pursuant to Standing Order 36, a petition signed by residents of Watson, Saskatchewan. These petitioners are anxious to save our national postal system.

The petitioners from Watson, Saskatchewan, say that rural post offices not only provide the service that is needed but also offer an important federal presence in rural communities.

They call on the House of Commons and Parliament to insist that Canada Post end its shameful practice of opening retail postal outlets in communities where, as they say, perfectly good federal post offices exist. They also state: "We did not ask them for retail postal outlets. We do not need them and we certainly do not want them".

The petitioners call upon Parliament to refrain from putting retail postal outlets where there are existing post offices.

[*Translation*]

TAX BENEFITS FOR NORTHERN AND ISOLATED AREAS

Mr. Guy Saint-Julien (Abitibi): Pursuant to Standing Order 36, Madam Speaker, I present a petition from Chibougamau in the federal riding of Roberval concerning the recommendations of the Task Force on Tax Benefits for Northern and Isolated Areas.

Your petitioners reject the conclusions of the Task Force on Tax Benefits for Northern and Isolated Areas, and they ask that Chibougamau be designated as an isolated region under the terms of the existing tax benefits system.

[*English*]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): Madam Speaker, I rise on behalf of a number of Canadians, many in my riding, who bring to the attention of the House the plight

of a Canadian citizen and taxpayer, Mr. Yih-Sheh Leo, who is also a citizen of Taiwan, who was arrested and is being held in prison in that country.

The petitioners urge the government to issue a public statement expressing Canada's concern over the violation of the rights of a Canadian citizen, to appoint a lawyer to handle the case, and to request Canada's allies, who have direct relations with that country, to intercede on his behalf.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Rod Laporte (Moose Jaw—Lake Centre): Madam Speaker, I rise to present two petitions today. The first is a petition from residents of the riding of Moose Jaw—Lake Centre who are concerned with the goods and services tax that the government is jackbooting through Parliament. They call upon this government to immediately withdraw the GST and to enter into proper tax reform in this country that is fair to all Canadians, and certainly average Canadians.

CANADIAN WHEAT BOARD

Mr. Rod Laporte (Moose Jaw—Lake Centre): I also have a petition from a number of farmers in Saskatchewan who are concerned about the way this government is handling the Canadian Wheat Board. They are particularly concerned about the withdrawal of oats from the jurisdiction of the Canadian Wheat Board and they call upon this government to immediately reinstate oats and give oats and barley the same protection that wheat has under the Canadian Wheat Board, namely, that before it can be changed it has to come in front of this House to be debated by this House to protect farmers of western Canada.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise to present a petition signed by numerous people in Hamilton, Ontario, who express their opposition to this government's taxation policies, particularly its thirty-second consecutive tax increase in the form of the goods and services tax.

These petitioners indicate that they feel they are paying far too many taxes to this government already and that their moneys are being wasted. They ask that the government and this Parliament reject the goods and services tax.

[*Translation*]

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

(Questions answered orally are indicated by an asterisk.)

Mr. Pierre H. Vincent (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, I ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Shall all questions stand?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY, S. O. 81-THE SENATE

Mr. David Barrett (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca) moved:

> That a message be sent to the Senate reminding the Senate that it has the constitutional right and the power to defeat any bill coming from the House of Commons.

He said: Madam Speaker, I want to begin my comments on this very important motion by gently rereading the motion which states:

> That a message be sent to the Senate reminding the Senate that it has the constitutional right and the power to defeat any bill coming from the House of Commons.

One could reasonably ask why I would sponsor such a motion, considering that in the years past and to this very moment my position on the other chamber is to abolish it. However, since no previous government has taken my advice or direction on this matter, I am now forced to debate this issue in a new context facing us in this country with a number of crises that we have on our hands.

There are three crises facing this country. One is the Meech Lake Accord, one is the free trade agreement, and last, but not least, is the infamous goods and services tax.

Earlier today we heard the Minister of Finance suggest incorrectly that Japan and Canada have the same economic performance, or relatively the same. That was part of his answer in Question Period.

• (1530)

I would like to refer to a report in today's edition of *The Financial Post*. Why am I referring to it in the context of this motion? I want it clearly understood that if there were ever a time for the Senate to prove to the Canadian people that its existence served some purpose in the context of the crisis I am going to outline in a few moments, this is the time for the Senate to kill the goods and services tax.

I want to alert my colleagues on my right in more ways than one, since they currently dominate the other place by way of appointment rather than by election. If they were serious about stopping the goods and services tax, they would not only support this motion but they would immediately call a joint caucus meeting and instruct their colleagues to block the GST in that chamber.

There are some cynics out there and some cynics in this Chamber, particularly on the government side and some of my colleagues, I must admit, who suggest that the Liberals really want the goods and services tax, that the Liberals are happy that the government brought it in, that the Liberals do not want to impede its progress, and that the Liberals want it to pass so that if and when the Liberals win the next election they will wring their hands in mock anxiety and say: 'Oh my goodness, we have inherited this terrible tax. The only way we can improve it is by bumping it from 7 per cent to 9 per cent".

Far be it for me to suggest nationally that the Liberal party would do such a thing. It would only do such a thing if it thought it would have a chance to do it. I do not suggest that the Liberal party has been absent of any sense of responsibility. Its own record does that, but I am concerned Canadian people will get the impression that the goods and services is a *fait accompli* when indeed we know for a fact, based on the research I did on this motion, that the Senate could stop it.

How could the Senate stop it? By a simple vote in the chamber. How could it get a majority for a simple vote in the chamber? Simple, it is a Liberal dominated other chamber. If it is temporary or not, let the government be responsible for its own actions. I know my colleagues over there are hurting because they supported this legislation and they do not like to set up someone else for a victory out of their initiative. If they were serious Liberal senators could publicly come out and say: "We are Liberals and we are going to kill the bill". I do not think they are going to do it.

An Hon. Member: You don't?

Mr. Barrett: No, and that goes back to my earlier comments about abolishing the Senate.

I believe when we really get down to it, as much as I regret to say this after my many years of public service, there is really no difference between the Liberal party and the Conservative party.

An Hon. Member: You're kidding.

Mr. Barrett: No. I know that there are some differences. The most glaring difference is that one party is in and the other party is out.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Barrett: I am not a very good dentist, but I will keep drilling anyway. Perhaps I have touched a nerve. I notice how quickly they respond. The fact is that they both serve the same master, only some are on the job a little while longer than the others. What has happened throughout history is that Liberals have been able to fool more people more of the time than have the Conservatives and that, no question about it, is another aspect of the difference.

Through this motion I want the Canadian people to understand if the Liberal party is truly opposed to the goods and services tax. We know where government members stand. They have decided to take the bull by the horns or whatever part of the anatomy they play with bulls with and push this bill forward. They have done it and they have used a lot of bull materials to push the legislation.

Nonetheless, the fact is that in a legislative order it is now in the other place and could be stopped there. Do you think for one moment, Madam Speaker, that a party as hypocritical and as cynical as some historians suggest the Liberal party might be would even dare to say to the public that its position is pure, decent, and honourable and that it will have the Senate kill the bill.

I have not heard Liberals say it. This is their chance. This is their time to go on record and say everything we said in committee, everything we fought against when we went to public demonstration, every speech we made on free time on CBC, and every memorandum of intent we have sent out to the voters. As we wait with bated breath for a new leader of the Liberal party, their first pro-

nouncement will be to instruct their colleagues in the Senate to stop the goods and services tax.

Voters who are seriously intending to reflect on the next election and place their support with the Liberal party, contrary to their instincts toward the Tories particularly in some areas of Ontario where it is tweedle-dee or tweedledum, should do so.

An Hon. Member: Tweedledumber.

Mr. Barrett: Tweedledumber, yes. Your chance may come. Yes, that's right. Tweedledumber, your chance may come indeed.

Besides that comment why should this be done? I want to refer to a newspaper clipping which indicates that Canada's global economic standing has slipped a critical notch according to new rankings published by the International Monetary Fund on Friday and that Canada has slipped behind Italy into last place in the G-7 quota ratings. Even the Liberals who have a great deal of ability to mess things up are not capable of doing this. It also indicated that at the IMF meetings in Washington last month the *brouhaha* about ranking was focused on some of the other G-7 nations. The U.S., all agreed, would stay number one, but Japan's surging economic power meant that it would jump from fifth into a tie for second with West Germany in the IMF quota arrangements.

We should keep that in mind as we reflect on an answer given to a question from a colleague of mine about where Canada is in terms of the economic scale. We heard the Minister of Finance say today in the House that we were equal to Japan's growth.

An Hon. Member: Did he say that?

Mr. Barrett: That is what he said, but here is what the newspaper said: "Japan's surging economic power meant that it would jump from fifth place into a tie for second. That meant that Britain and France were forced to refight another position. But a funny thing happened to the bottom line. Canada has gone to seventh place, just behind Italy".

One reason we have slipped is the goods and services tax and the inflationary impact it will have on this country.

• (1540)

I want to suggest that it was not just the sell-off of the CN assets that gave us this mess.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Barrett: As I was about to say before I was rudely interrupted in this Chamber—and the other one has not even had the chance to interrupt—Canada's economic performance is going down. The inflationary impact of the GST by the government's own statistics is a point and a half.

An Hon. Member: Tory times are hard times.

Mr. Barrett: Tory times are hard times, and Liberals only compound it. The fact is that the inflation rate will probably be more like 4 per cent or 6 per cent.

This is wreaking havoc on the poor Canadian taxpayer, the small business person, and the outside investor who wants to take a look at some rational, thoughtful, longer term investment in the country.

Canadian people expect leadership. Canadian people expect some sensitivity. The words being used on the other two crises are flexibility, thoughtfulness, compromise, and reasonableness. There is no flexibility on this one. There is no reasonableness, no compromise. It is full steam ahead into a course that is going to do more damage to this country than the other two crises.

An Hon. Member: It is extremism.

Mr. Barrett: It is extremism, my dear friend. I hasten to reiterate what my colleague said, but with chagrin I say that it is extremism. It is an almost semi-paranoid commitment to extremist philosophy which has no bearing to the situation we are currently in.

We are behind Italy for the first time ever. We have fallen to seventh place. The only reason we did not slip right off the board is simply that the chairman is a member.

There are a lot of people out there who are not interested in politics. They just want to get on with their lives. They will never be members here, and they will not be members in the other place. If I have my way the other place will be a memory.

If the other place has any validity at all to defeat my arguments on why it should not exist, this is the challenge. This is the issue. I have an open mind. I am a reasonable person. I am flexible. I believe in compromise.

Everything is not written in stone. I would be the first one impressed if I heard the Liberal party members pledge that they will instruct their Liberal senators to block the GST and that they will insist upon it as a political party. I have not heard the Liberals do that. They are even more cynical than the Tories are. At least the Tories have taken the heat because of their ideological commitment.

Sitting over there giggling, snickering, chuckling, chortling, happy with the turn of events is the Liberal party because it knows that it can have it both ways. That is what I am trying to prevent. The Liberals are schizophrenic enough without being able to talk out of both sides of their mouth and smile in both conversations. This is a move to demonstrate—and I have the support of all the Tories in the Chamber—that politics cannot override responsibility and that the other chamber will be instructed to block the GST. I have thought about this a great deal, this one last appeal, as I reach the twilight years in my political campaign, this one last appeal to reasonableness, to sensibility, to fairness, and all I get is laughter from the Liberals.

An Hon. Member: Shame!

Mr. Barrett: It hurts me to the quick.

Mr. Kaplan: Even your own members are laughing.

Mr. Barrett: It hurts me to the quick, Madam Speaker, to have to go back to the Canadian people and tell them that they are getting fooled again by the same group that says one thing when they are in opposition, thirsting and lusting for power. They will say anything. They get back into power and laugh and giggle that they got the GST and they are going to keep it.

I am sorry that it is still early in British Columbia. I hope my grandson is in his afternoon nap. I do not want my grandson, like another generation of Canadians, to be a witness to how cynical the Liberal Party is. But, so be it, Madam Speaker, that is the case.

An Hon. Member: It is extremism.

Mr. Barrett: I will conclude my comments, and I welcome questions and requests for interpretation, because I certainly will do that. Many people have asked whether there has not been enough debate about this. If it were a simple matter, there would be no point in bringing forth this resolution. If it were a simple matter, if it is a *fait accompli*, there would be no point.

I want to make an appeal beyond what we have heard so far. I want to make an appeal to those people in the other chamber, should they hear my voice, or should I put it in writing that their colleagues who have subscribed to a non-elected chamber, who have packed that chamber with their political supporters, now call the chit and demand that they stop the goods and services tax.

If we see no evidence of this it will be proof positive of the thesis that I present today. It will be proof positive to every Canadian who is opposed to the goods and services tax that it is a shell game. It will be proof positive that the Liberals have only been playing games and the only real opposition to the goods and services tax is by my party, and I am proud of that.

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Madam Speaker, I have a question for the Member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca.

I would like to remind him that the New Democratic Party constitution in Article 5.2 states that the convention shall be the supreme governing body of the party and shall have authority in all matters of federal policy, program and constitution. Let me remind him of the resolution the party adopted in the federal convention in 1981 where it was stated "Be it resolved that the NDP will continue to fight for the further changes, including the abolition of the Senate".

When the hon. member was running for the leadership of his party, on December 1, 1989 in Winnipeg, a press report stated "I'm for a Triple-A Senate", said B.C. MP Ian Waddell 'Abolish, abolish, abolish."

Another article states: "Front-running contenders Yukon MP Audrey McLaughlin and B.C. MP Dave Barrett agreed: 'Abolish the Senate and use the savings to clean up the environment', said McLaughlin. 'The Senate should and must be abolished', said Barrett."

Madam Speaker, when the hon. member was a member of the legislative assembly in British Columbia, he said on December 11, 1980, in the British Columbia *Hansard*:

I will never give approval to appointing people to legislative bodies that have no accountability to citizens through the democratic process.

Speaking of the premier, he said: "He supports the continuation of an appointed Senate—an anachronism in this day and age of a sovereign nation. The Americans did away with it, as my colleague reminds me, in 1913. Why we have fostered and continued that hotbed of irrelevance, that hand-picked retirement bone-yard for old party hacks, and call that a Senate in terms of response to the electoral needs of the people of this country, I don't know. But when you ask me to pay tax dollars to keep that Senate going, when I've never had a chance to vote for them, then I say nay, nay, nay—never!"

• (1550)

What he should have said afterwards, in anticipation of this day, is, "Unless, of course, I saw some partisan advantage for the New Democratic Party". That he might have said.

I can go on at length to quote from that party but I know it is unparliamentary to use that famous word that starts with H and ends with Y and rhymes with"pocrisy". When the hon. member was talking about comparisons to Italy, he reminds me of a fellow who said, "Well, Mussolini at least got the trains to run on time". The Senate at least can kill GST. He is willing to make a pact with the devil if there was a partisan advantage. Could the hon. member stand up and tell us the difference between him and Dr. Faust?

Mr. Barrett: My dear friends, may I respond to the last question first. Dr. Faust wore no clothes and, like this government, is easily exposed. If members wish for me to go on in poetry, I can think of other ways to do it. However, I am glad my friend, the hon. minister, reminded the House again of my position, which I will restate. I want the Senate abolished; the sooner, the better.

I am not in power. I hope some day, in my lifetime, that social democrats are in power. However, if it is my hon. friend's position and the Liberal Party's position to keep the Senate, then be responsible in your request if you want it to work. Is it just a burying ground for old political cronies? Is it just a place to pay off political debts, like I have always felt?

The simple answer is to prove that it has some worth and not so much for the Tories but for the Liberal Party who has consistently fought and packed the other Chamber which I oppose. They cannot have it both ways. They cannot say in this Chamber they are opposed to the goods and services tax and sit back without a Liberal Party commitment to attempt to coup it within law that exists in this country.

Madam Speaker, the Senate exists.

Mr. Andre: Do you believe in democracy?

Mr. Barrett: My dear friend, if you want to elect the Senate, that is another argument. But it is not elected, it is appointed and they do have influence.

What is the philosophy of those appointees? If it is the Liberal Party philosophy, then we expect consistency. I am glad my colleague entered this debate. I am glad my colleague reminded the Canadian people of my position. My position has not changed.

If they have the legal power, and if that Party over there supports the concept, which I do not, then prove once and for all that the reason the Canadian people support the Senate is because they want to see it act and they want to see it act consistently with their position. The hon. member talks about the word beginning with H and ending with Y. You cannot have it both ways. I say we should abolish the Senate. It is there legally and I do not have the legislative authority to abolish it. You justify it and you want it, so I say to the hon. member, "Don't kid the troops".

An Hon. Member: Maybe the Tories should abolish it.

Mr. Barrett: They won't. The fact is we are seeing a political game here and I do not think it is very healthy.

Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): Madam Speaker, I hope to seek the floor to make an address myself. I am not going to be as tough on this question as was the minister from Calgary Centre, because I am willing to allow the hon. member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca to walk both sides of the street. Let him call for the abolition of the Senate and let him also call for the Senate to fulfil this remarkable role that he chooses to lay out for it.

I am glad he mentioned that he hoped his grandson was sleeping while he was making this speech and while this debate was going on. The question that went through my mind and that I wanted to address to the

hon. member when I read the resolution put forward in the hon. member's name is, "Where is Shirley"? Was Mrs. Barrett in town when the hon. member drafted this resolution? I hope this question will not be ruled out of order, but she is a sensible, intelligent woman and I am wondering whether such a mischievous and pointless resolution was put forward after some family consultation?

Mr. Barrett: Madam Speaker, normally the House does not permit us to refer to spouses but in this case my colleague is correct. He knows I do consult my wife on almost everything I do, including the amount of the allowance that I get. In this case, she agrees completely. This is the only way I could word the resolution to put the Liberals on the hook. I consulted with her, we sat down, and I know that she is going to send me a bill for her consultation. I know she is going to send a sharp letter of reprimand to my good friend, maybe in Chinese. None the less, my wife and I agree the Senate should go, but as long as it is there and your parties justify it, then make it work. I suggest to the Liberal Party that it be consistent about how to make it work.

This is the closest I could come in the resolution and stay in order. They would not allow me to be any more specific at the Table. I do not blame them, they are hide-bound by 400 years of rules that do not permit clear-cut language to interfere with politics in this Chamber, so I had to explain what I could not put in writing. It is up to you Liberals. If you really mean it, tell the senators to kill the bill. I do not think you mean it; I think you have been playing politics. That is okay for a few things but not this issue. The convention is coming up. The Liberals will not bind their leader to cancel the GST, not a fig of it. My wife agrees with me on that one.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Unfortunately, the hon. member's time has now expired.

[*Translation*]

Pursuant to Standing Order 38, it is my duty to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for St. Boniface (Mr. Duhamel)—Government funding: the hon. member for Nepean (Mrs. Gaffney)—Fitness and amateur sport; the hon. member for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke (Mr. Hopkins)—Public accounts.

Resuming debate. The Minister of State for Finance.

Hon. Gilles Loiselle (Minister of State (Finance)): Madam Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to tell you that of course I oppose this motion and also to give you the reasons why.

[*English*]

I think that we have just witnessed a magnificent demonstration of the NDP's great capacity for principles. The hon. member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca said that he was flexible. He has given us a very good demonstration of his flexibility and, on matters of principle, I would suggest to him that this is a bit dangerous. I could quote from him when he said, some months ago, that, "The Triple E Senate offers no hope for worthwhile changes and the Senate should and must be abolished". Therefore, it is with some dismay, I must say, that we see this motion before this House because there is here a danger to democracy.

• (1600)

The hon. member said he felt the need to use this motion in order to fight a measure, the GST, and that we had the economy all wrong. He quoted from an article which stated that Canada now ranks behind Italy, and so on.

It seems to me that the NDP fails to understand anything about the economy. He was referring to the quotas set up for different countries. We are very close to Italy, with a population less than one-half of that of Italy. The performance of Canada is strong and getting stronger, but the hon. member gets everything mixed up so that we do not really know where we are.

[*Translation*]

Madam Speaker, I strongly disapprove of the message that the authors of this motion are trying to put across. What is the message? Very simply, that they think it is quite all right for a non-elected unrepresentative Senate to oppose as it pleases the decisions of the elected body, the House of Commons of Canada.

We must be very clear on this. For decades, the Upper House served a very useful purpose by studying proposed legislation in advance and by sharing its concerns with us in the form of committee reports, but never interfering in the legislative process itself. Over the last several years, though, this useful non-confrontational approach

has deteriorated and we are left with a situation marked by confrontation and polarization. The motion before this House today not only endorses this unfortunate trend but seems to want to perpetuate it.

This motion must be examined in the light of the situation today and the way our parliamentary system works. For example, we must consider it taking account of what the Upper House is today, a body of appointed individuals who have no constituency and therefore no mandate from the Canadian people.

We must also consider this motion without forgetting that it was presented by a party whose goal was to abolish the other House, as we were reminded so well a few moments ago. They are not even interested in reforming the Senate. They only want to abolish it once and for all.

Finally, we must examine this motion in the light of the reasons given to justify some actions taken there. This motion seeks to support the action taken by the Upper House when it considered Bills C–21 and C–28 and the action it is threatening to take when it considers Bill C–62. It seems that polls are their only justification since they indicate that these bills are not popular with Canadians and were not part of the government's platform during the last election in 1988.

[*English*]

I would like to go into some detail. If we were to accept these premises, that position would make it impossible for any government to take unpopular actions.

To take a non–partisan issue as an example, I remember that members of the party opposite were strongly in favour of the abolition of capital punishment. They voted that way in the House even though the polls showed clearly that a majority of Canadians were against abolition.

Should the unelected chamber have opposed the will of the House of Commons in that case? Those opposite would have been livid at such a move because they, and many other members of the House, believed this policy was right. This motion, however, would have encouraged the Upper House to do just that, and that we cannot have.

Also, the position underlying the motion seeks to change our present parliamentary system. Representative democracy, as opposed to direct democracy, recognizes that one cannot function on the basis of daily or weekly referendums on every policy and decision. When fundamental change to the nature of a country is at stake, or when society is equally divided on an issue, then direct reference to the people may be necessary. But the basis of our system of government is that governments are judged at elections, on the basis of their past actions and their proposed policies. If the people do not like what they see, then they will elect another party to power.

By supporting the actions of the unelected second Chamber, on the basis that specific policies are unpopular, this motion seeks to bootleg into our system of government what amounts to a system of referendums. If those opposite want to change the system, then that is their privilege. But they should do so openly and clearly, and in a fashion that permits a debate on that particular subject to take place. They should not be trying to change our system of government in this way.

Finally, in terms of the context in which this motion is being put, I want to consider the moral authority behind these policies. After all, the basis for the actions the other place has been taking, or is threatening to take, is that the people do not want them because of what polls tell them. Our system of government relies on the concept that platforms are presented at general elections and that the people judge those programs. I have heard it argued that the policies in these bills were not before the people in 1988 and therefore it is legitimate to hold them up.

In fact, these policies—not in their details but in their principles—were an integral part of the policies before the people in 1988. They are firmly based in the economic actions we took from 1984 to 1988. They respond clearly to concerns we have had since 1984 and which were before the people in 1988. I cannot accept that the results of the election of 1988 had nothing to do with our economic record and our approach to economic issues.

As I have said, there are three specific pieces of legislation at issue right now. In concrete terms they are what this debate is about. Their measures respond to urgent needs. They were developed as part of an over–all

economic strategy we have been following since 1984, and which has already met with some success in strengthening and energizing the economy.

Let me look briefly at each of these bills from the viewpoint of economic policy.

Bill C–21 carries out badly needed reforms in our system of unemployment insurance. The system we inherited in 1984 was in desperate need of changes—everybody admitted that. We proceeded carefully and on the basis of consultation. In Bill C–21 we proposed a set of changes to the system which makes it more flexible and more responsive to the concerns of those who really need it.

At the same time we were able to redirect some of the resources in the system to enhance the role of retraining and education. Part of our economic reality is that there is a need for people to gain new skills and to get better training. That is the key to higher employment and greater prosperity. By delaying the legislation as it has done, many individuals have been deprived of benefits and opportunities to which we believe they are entitled.

Bill C–28 implements the Income Tax Act related amendments from the 1989 budget. I want to recall that one of the greatest economic challenges we face is inflation. The damage it does to the economy and to individuals is something we experienced in the early 1980s. We do not want to go through that again.

Since 1984 our government has been engaged in a battle with inflationary pressures. One important way in which we have done this is by working to lower the deficit fairly and acceptably. Right now, as a result of the size of the debt and the deficit we inherited, as well as the effects of compounding interest on the debt, 35 cents of every revenue dollar must be spent on paying that interest.

• (1610)

Limiting government spending and increasing revenues are the two ways in which the deficit can be brought down. We have moved on both fronts. The measures in Bill C–28 are part of our over–all policy to fight the deficit in as fair a way as possible. This policy has met with some success. We have moved from the 1984 situation, where spending on programs exceeded revenues by $16 billion, to the situation outlined in the February budget, where revenues exceeded program spending by $10 billion last year. If we are to build on this progress, however, we must continue the battle. By delaying the implementation of the measures in Bill C–28, the other Chamber is harming and not helping this effort.

The third piece of legislation in question is Bill C–62, which implements the goods and services tax. I want to remind all hon. members that this is not a proposal suddenly produced out of the blue in 1989. Tax reform was urgently needed by the economy, and our government's concern about this has been known from the beginning of our term of office. Initially, we proceeded by closing loopholes and administrative reform, while a larger reform of the system was studied. We proceeded with stage one of that reform after a great deal of consultation before the 1988 election. We have continued to work toward a better system of taxation for Canada.

[*Translation*]

We have also made it clear from the start that the manufacturers' sales tax reform was an integral part of our tax reform. The flaws of that antiquated tax were pointed out time and time again. They have been disclosed on many occasions both within and outside this House. We indicated clearly that the second stage in this tax reform would involve the transition to a different system, with as wide a base as possible. Once those provisions were made public, we stayed tuned into the public and made a number of changes based on the needs that were expressed to us.

The principles that were going to be used were laid out in the Budget in 1987 and 1988. This motion seeks to encourage the other place to withold, amend, or, better still, reject the provisions of Bill C–62 without any regard for the principles of electoral democracy. It jeopardizes the economy of this country.

I would also like to ask those who support this motion to tell me where all this will lead us? We have three bills in abeyance. All are very important for the economy as well as for the well–being of Canadians. All are an integral part of the economthe elected governement of this country. Still, if that motion were to be taken seriously—there are times when one wonders—all bills passed in this House, even uninanimously, would be dealt with the same way. We would convert to a system where the legislators elected by the people would systematically clash with a body of non elected individuals

that does not have a comparable moral authority and does not have to account for its actions.

[*English*]

The motion therefore seeks to undermine the principle underlying our system of elections and responsible government. It ignores the fact that the measures which they oppose were part of the election platform of the government in 1988, and that this government won re-election on the basis of that platform.

I stand in favour of the elected House and its historic rights. I stand in favour of the government elected by the people of Canada. I stand in favour of the economic policy presented to the people in two successive general elections and approved by them.

[*Translation*]

On the other hand, Madam Speaker, I must say in concluding that I object to what the non-elected members of the upper House have been doing and to the role they have given themselves. They should never have taken on such a role, which they had never sought to play until these past few years. I object to them claiming a moral authority equivalent to that of this House. Finally, I oppose this motion whose purpose is to legitimize their actions and alter the very nature of our system of government.

Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): Madam Speaker, in principle, we must always take seriously the resolutions that are presented and debated in this House. With this in mind, I would like to discuss the resolution proposed by the hon. member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca. Since it is very short, I would like to start by reading it:

> That a message be sent to the Senate reminding the Senate that it has the constitutional right and the power to defeat any bill coming from the House of Commons.

But, Madam Speaker, with all due respect for the Order Paper and resolutions, I stress that this resolution is not to be taken seriously, as I believe our New Democratic colleague himself admitted.

[*English*]

This resolution is a piece of mischief which is designed as a matter of NDP strategy to make it look as if the Official Opposition, of which I am very proud to be a member, is in favour of the free trade agreement and the goods and services tax.

You have to go a long way to try to make an argument like that. I want to suggest that the resolution that has been put before us just does not do it. It is not a resolution that can be taken seriously in any sense of the word.

It is ironic that a joke should be put on the Order Paper of the House of Commons at a time when there are so many serious things to discuss about the Senate and about the relationship between the Senate and the House of Commons.

We are sitting in this House doing our work, knowing that the more momentous events of today for the future of our country are taking place across the street. They are in the hands of the duly elected representatives of the legislatures of the provinces of our country, and of our national government, who is not a Liberal but a Progressive Conservative, who are working across the street to try to find a solution to the constitutional impasse that faces us. That is where the important things are happening today.

But if there is going to be light at the end of the tunnel, it is bizarre and ridiculous, and I am not going to put it any higher than that, for the New Democratic Party to take today to tell us that the Senate should be abolished and to remind senators that they have the constitutional right and power to defeat any bill coming from the House of Commons. What does that have to do with anything?

What I want to reflect on today in these brief remarks is what we should be saying about the Senate, what we should be asking about the Senate. Starting from a very simple first principle—

Madam Deputy Speaker: I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member. However, I recognized him on question or comments.

Mr. Kaplan: I am sorry, Madam Speaker, I thought I had the floor.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I think there was someone rising on questions or comments. I should recognize him and then I will come back to the hon. member for York Centre.

The hon. member for Edmonton East.

Mr. Ross Harvey (Edmonton East): Madam Speaker, I must admit that hearing the hon. member launch into his

speech has whetted my appetite for the question and comment period following his remarks as well.

However, to return to the hon. member on the government benches, he noted during the course of his remarks—and I was taking this from the translation and believe I got it correct but I may be out a bit—that the motion seeks "to undermine our system of elections and democracy". He said that about half way through his remarks. Toward the end of his remarks he said that the motion seeks "to change the very structure of our system of government".

• (1620)

I am wondering if by this he means to imply that the Constitution of Canada, which provides this power and authority to the Senate, seeks "to undermine our system of elections and democracy", and that the Constitution seeks "to change the very structure of our system of government". If so, how does he propose to make sense out of that contention?

Mr. Loiselle: Madam Speaker, I do not mean that the Constitution of Canada would in any way threaten our system.

What I said was that this motion threatens to legitimize a process which we in this House agree would not be acceptable, that is to say the supremacy of an unelected House over an elected one. Nobody would agree on that.

This motion seeks to confer and to get the authority of the elected House of Commons to approve the Senate in this kind of action, something which is totally unacceptable. Statements by members of his own party have been quoted at length indicating that to them the very existence of that House is an abomination. I could quote the former leader of the NDP, Mr. Broadbent, who said that it is an abomination.

Yet hon. members of the NDP forget that, switch to the other side, channel 2, and still say that it is an abomination. It is as if they are saying: "We are against nuclear arms, but until such time as they are abolished, use them". This is the consistency of the NDP. This is the party of great principle. I feel today very relaxed in the knowledge that principles may not be on the your side of the House.

Mr. Lyle Kristiansen (Kootenay West—Revelstoke): Madam Speaker, I would also like to ask the minister a question.

If the minister agrees, as I believe he said, that "the Senate has no moral authority" to veto any action by the House of Commons, will the government now agree, or will he agree to recommend to the government that it should introduce a motion to remove the legal and constitutional authority of the Senate to pass on the decisions of the House? The Prime Minister himself hinted that he might be prepared to do just a couple of years ago over another issue when the Senate was balking at the action taken by the House of Commons. Surely, the Senate should not have the constitutional right and power to do what it has, in the minister's words, "no moral authority to do".

Mr. Loiselle: Madam Speaker, I would tell the hon. member, as was stated a little earlier by my colleague from the Liberal party, that we have at present here in Ottawa very important discussions going on. An item of these discussions, as we are led to believe, is the Senate. It is hardly the time to come up with these kinds of ridiculous discussions.

Maybe I have not taken the motion too seriously. With this type of motion coming from an NDP member, one wonders if it is not done in a way that is not very serious. Of course, maybe the timing makes it particularly unpleasant to deal with. I do not think when it was introduced that it was meant to be this way. However, I think we should discuss these problems where they have to be discussed.

What I do not like about this motion is that it would give the appearance of support from an elected House, which is this House, to powers that we do not recognize in the Senate. The tradition, which is very important in our British parliamentary system, has to do with what the powers of the Senate are. We have seen them over the years, and we may not like them. But we must not want to diminish or abolish them while at the same time wanting to make them greater.

Madam Deputy Speaker: If there are no other questions or comments, resuming debate with the hon. member for York Centre.

Mr. Kaplan: Madam Speaker, I will spare the House a repetition of the brilliant remarks with which I opened my intervention. I would like simply to pick up on the question asked by the NDP member who rose to ask the minister a question. He asked him to admit that under

our Constitution the Senate has the power, as the motion states, to defeat any bill coming from the House of Commons. The answer to that question is, yes, the Constitution does give that power to the Senate.

But that is not the end of the issue, as the minister pointed out. Unfortunately, to the NDP that does seem to be the end of the issue. Let me tell him and the other members of the NDP that our Constitution needs to be updated. It needs to be updated in more ways than one and in more places than one. If he would care to pay some attention to the national debate that is going on in the country, nowhere is there more dissatisfaction than there is with the place of the Senate in the Constitution of Canada. We want to do something about that.

As I mentioned, while we are sitting here, the constitutional impasse which is labelled "Meech Lake" may be working itself out. If I can give some more news to the NDP, one of the great benefits is that then we may be able to do something to reform the Senate. We may be able to make out of it an institution which a democracy will recognize as having a legitimate function that it can exercise.

It is in an awkward situation now because, unlike a lot of anachronisms, this anachronism is a living organism. It is an organ of Parliament. It is composed of well-meaning Canadian citizens determined to do their duty for their country, hidebound somewhat by the inappropriate amount of power that is awarded to them under this anachronistic and hopefully soon to be revised constitutional aspect of Canada.

I have had the pleasure of being a member of Parliament during the time when our party was in power and in control of the Senate by having a majority of members of the Senate also of our party. I have also served in this period when we are in the Opposition in this party but in the majority in the Upper House.

That exercise of constitutional rights of the Senate, under those circumstances, in every case and on a wall to wall basis of agreement with what the Opposition in the Lower House would like would defy a basic requirement of a democracy.

I do not like to admit it with members of the Conservative party present in the room, but the Liberals were defeated in the last election. I see nods of agreement. We were defeated in the election of 1984. It is very important that that be recognized in the way that Parliament operates.

Members of the NDP say that the Liberal party, in spite of having been defeated in 1984 and in 1988, has this anachronistic, constitutional power to defeat any bill coming from the House of Commons, and that we should do it or else we are not being true to our principles. Our basic principle is democracy. We have to accept the will of the people.

Mr. Harvey (Edmonton East): Like with the UI bill in the Senate right now?

Mr. Kaplan: I want to make two more brief points and then I will be very happy to have questions from my hon. friend.

My first point is how can we operate in those circumstances where the majority of members are Liberals, where they do not agree with the GST, the free trade agreement, or with a government which is trying more and more to eliminate the middle class and to divide Canadians into a two-Canada idea of a rich powerful centre tied very closely to the United States to the exclusion of the rest of the world and the regions of the country which are to be, in its way of looking at it, a source of population flows into the greater populated areas of our country. That is its vision. It is proud of it. It has people in the country who support it and who help it to achieve those objectives. We do not. It is not for the Senate, although controlled by a majority of Liberal members, to contradict the result of the last election.

• (1630)

I did not vote Conservative in 1984 and I did not vote Conservative in 1988. But, enough Canadians did vote Conservative to put this House under the authority of that party. In the Senate, where there are a majority of Liberal members, I think they have been very creative, very respectful of the democracy which is Canada, and I think they have achieved a lot. They have spoken as an Upper House in a federal system should for those who are not fairly represented by the basic application of one person, one vote. They have spoken for depopulating regions of our country where industries are being pulled out by the government, or are being pulled out by the operation of the so-called free market established under the free trade agreement. They have spoken for the

francophone minorities in parts of the country where they do not represent enough of a population to have a real democratic voice. They have spoken for cultural minorities. They have spoken for aboriginal people. They have spoken for the poor. They have spoken for religious minorities within the country. And in each case they have not said, as it states in the resolution "We have the power to defeat any bill coming from the House of Commons and we intend to do it". They have said "Look again at what you are trying to do". They have said to Canadians "Look again at what this destructive government is trying to do to our beloved country". That has been the role of the Senate under present arrangements.

If there is light at the end of the Meech Lake tunnel, the light is that we can develop and I am confident that we can do it. I hear so many talk about the obstacles and the vested interests. I do not believe it. I believe there is a great will in this country to have a Senate that will work for us.

A lot of people believe that Ontario and Quebec will never relinquish their control of the Senate in terms of the numbers of seats they have in relation to the other regions of our country. Madam Speaker, I know it is not news for you, but I think it is news for a lot of Canadians to know that that is just not true.

The number of seats from Ontario and Quebec do not constitute a majority of the number of seats in the Senate. They constitute less than a majority and, speaking as a member from Ontario who has watched the Senate over the years, I cannot remember when it was significant in any of our decisions that the Ontario delegation was more substantial than the delegation from two or three other provinces put together. That is not the way the Senate was inclined to operate.

I want to talk for a moment about some of the evidence that did not get the attention that it should have, that was brought before the committee chaired by the hon. member for Sherbrooke on which I had the great honour to serve, about some of the interesting features of the Senate. Ontario now has 24 seats. If you go by population, it should have 37. I would like to say, if I may interject, that this is evidence given by a lawyer from Winnipeg, Patrick Riley. These are statistics that can be confirmed.

Quebec has 24 seats; by population it should have 27. So already the two big provinces are disproportionately under represented. The Senate is a legitimate voice for more than just rep by pop. British Columbia has six; it should have 12 by population. The reverse. Alberta has six; it should have ten by population. Manitoba has six; it should have four. Saskatchewan has six; it should have four by population. Nova Scotia has ten; it should have four. New Brunswick has ten; it should have three. Newfoundland has six; it should have two. P. E. I. has four; it should have one by population. Then, the Northwest Territories and Yukon, by population, should not have any seats; they have two. I do not agree that this is good advice. I do not think what the composition of an improved Senate should be. I am very taken with the idea of equality. The triple E is one that I am anxious to know more about and to discuss. But here are the facts.

When we are looking at what will follow Meech Lake, we should be looking at things like this. We should not be looking at the historic and anachronistic fact that in 1867 a deal was made on the establishment of the Senate which, even then, was the most controversial issue in the formation of Canada. There were more arguments about how the Senate should be formed and what delegations should come from each province than there were about almost any other issue, including the place of minority language rights in our country.

We have been complaining about our Senate for 120 years. Here is a member standing up, wanting us to pull the trigger that the Constitution gave us 120 years ago, over the democracy which we have built by having senators who have been restrained, discreet, intelligent and effective when they have chosen to speak up for interests that this government has cared so little for and has done so much to abuse.

I know this motion is not coming to a vote. I am hoping, as much as a patriotic Canadian can hope, that the serious issue of Senate reform is soon before us because it will mean that we are moving ahead in building our country not moving backward, as the NDP wants to suggest for a cheap political shot.

Mr. Ross Harvey (Edmonton East): Madam Speaker, I have a question for the hon. member.

Among those instances of admirable reticence, judgment and calm deliberation which he claims characterizes the work of the Senate, would he number the instance in 1988—I believe it is in the order of 20 instances in the history of the country when the Senate has defeated a House of Commons bill—when his own retired leader directed the Liberal majority in the Senate to hold up the free trade agreement, let it go nowhere and make it the subject of an election as an example of the polite and retiring reticence he thinks characterizes the Senate's work? Or would he number the current activities of the Senate with regard to the unemployment insurance legislation in which they have rejected outright certain aspects of the government bill that has passed the House of Commons as an example?

Mr. Kaplan: Madam Speaker, I am not going to fall into the trap of saying I agree with every single thing that the Senate has ever done, and that it always acted in a way which he and I would have agreed appropriate in a particular case.

Mr. Harvey: Are you repudiating what you said?

Mr. Kaplan: No, no. I do want to tell the hon. member that the story is not over on a lot of these very important matters that are before the Senate.

The Senate has heavy handed tools to use to achieve the subtle goals and objectives that I suggested. I think one of the Es to which we will want to move—

[*Translation*]

—would be to find ways whereby the Senate could more moderately, if not make specific changes in the legislation, at least clearly show the people that the opposite is unacceptable and on every issue ensure that Confederation represents the interests not only of those in large numbers but of minorities and takes account of their demands.

[*English*]

Mr. Joe McGuire (Egmont): Madam Speaker, I would like to follow up on the point that the hon. member for Edmonton East was making. He referred to 1988 when the Senate refused to abide by the government timetable on the free trade agreement, thereby letting the people decide how they felt about the free trade agreement and how each party behaved during the campaign when they did not make the free trade agreement a centrepiece of their election campaign, as the Liberal party did.

The hon. member said that this motion is a cheap political shot by the NDP. I would like to know his thoughts about how the New Democratic Party behaved during the last campaign when it had an opportunity to defeat this government. The free trade agreement, this legislation, the GST, UIC, VIA Rail and all these things we are now dealing with, and which it purports to be so much against, would not be with us at all if it had fought on the side of the Canadian people in 1988. It would have saved us a lot of heartache since then.

• (1640)

Mr. Kaplan: Madam Speaker, my hon. friend has made a very good point. It is not required for us to even make the allegations. The history is out now and enough stories have been told by insiders about the NDP strategy to make it clear that there was a critical moment when it had the opportunity to save our country from the free trade agreement and it chose another course. It puts in doubt, if one wants to challenge credibility, their own credibility about where they stand on the free trade agreement.

Mr. Kristiansen: Madam Speaker, I have a point of order. I am just wondering if we could have agreement among the members in the House and the parties, that future speakers might divide their time 10 minutes and 10 minutes, with five and five when it comes to questions and comments, rather than each speaker having to take the entire 20 minutes. It may facilitate further, provided that they give notice of their intent to the Speaker prior to the commencement of their first speaker.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Would there there be unanimous consent for that? The hon. parliamentary secretary.

Mr. Nicholson: Perhaps the way we could do it is if the members of the NDP would like to do that. I know a number of speakers on our side were prepared for 20-minute speeches. Perhaps we could agree for the members of the NDP and if the Liberals are interested in doing that. We will continue as we have been on this side of the House.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gauthier: There is no problem, Madam Speaker. The Official Opposition began that practice a good many years ago already. As long as the member says so at the beginning of his or her remarks, I think that the Chair, being aware of the situation, can take the appropriate measures. Each member must make clear that he or she intends to share the time with a colleague, otherwise it will not work.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I thank the hon. Member. Indeed, if each member advises the Chair at the beginning of the speech the Chair can keep track of the time. Otherwise the Chair simply cannot signal members, or we will end up in a situation where a member will exceed the allotted time and we will no longer know where we stand. I quite agree, provided of course each member tells the Chair whether he or she will take only ten minutes. There is no problem if the allotted time runs to 20 minutes.

Resuming debate. The hon. member for Edmonton East.

[*English*]

Mr. Ross Harvey (Edmonton East): Madam Speaker, at the outset, let me say it is my intention to speak only for 10 minutes, perhaps less. I am sure that will come as a source of considerable joy to the members here today. My colleague from Okanagan—Shuswap may also get in on the debate. I consider it, let's say, an indulgence in the desires of the House.

I would like to say at the outset that like my hon. colleague, the member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, I too will attempt to avoid the use of the *h* word. It is not going to be easy but I want you to know that I am going to do my best to avoid that word in addressing what is in fact the nub of the matter before us today. That is, can the Canadian people trust the Liberal party to put their Senate majority where their mouth is. That is the only question before the House today, although for the purpose of the observance of the parliamentary niceties, it was necessary to draft the motion in a somewhat less straightforward fashion.

I would like to suggest that the Canadian people are finding out that no, they cannot trust the Liberals where they have the ability to abolish the GST to do so. They can trust the Liberals to rail against it impotently in the House of Commons but they cannot trust the Liberals to use their Senate majority to defeat the GST in the other place. We know that for a fact because of May 3. May 3 was the day on which the other place passed the GST bill at second reading. That was the day on which the Senate, in which the majority of members are Liberals, approved in principle the GST. That is something that all Canadians should remember.

Mr. Horning: There were headlines in *The Toronto Star*.

Mr. Harvey (Edmonton East): I wish that were the case. I wish I could have surreptitiously sneaked into the House this afternoon and could have stood here and held up, although I know it is against the rules of the House, a copy of *The Toronto Star* with a 96-point headline on the front page stating: "Senate Liberal Majority Approves GST". It grieves me deeply that I am unable to do that because to the best of my knowledge no such 96-point headline was ever featured in *The Toronto Star*.

Why that is, of course, must remain a matter of speculation. What must not remain a matter of speculation, however, is the performance of the Liberals in the Senate. They had the chance on May 3 to defeat the GST and let it slip by quietly, rather like a weasel nosing around the chicken coop at night.

There are some in this Chamber who believe that the New Democratic Party seeking the action of the Liberals in the Senate to defeat the GST somehow constitutes an abandonment of the party's principled opposition to the Senate. I would like to assure the House of two things. First, the NDP is in no way lessened in its absolute and fundamental opposition to that other unelected, undemocratic—I must stop myself before I get into territory of perhaps unparliamentary adjectives, Madam Speaker, suffice to say that the NDP remains absolutely opposed to the current other place and given a day's chance would abolish it.

What comes after? What form might some subsequent second house in this Parliament take? That is a matter for legitimate debate. I can tell you, Madam Speaker, as I believe to be the case in other caucuses in this House. In the NDP caucus there is a wide variety of opinion as to what form some future second chamber might take. There is no wavering in our caucus in its absolute

opposition to the current nonsense that we call the Senate.

People are having trouble this afternoon getting around the fact that we can both favour the abolition of the current Senate, acknowledge that it is there, and call upon it to do something the overwhelming majority of Canadians want done.

I would remind the Liberals that when they held up the free trade agreement in 1988, they did so when public opinion polls showed, roughly, on a good day that 50 per cent of Canadians were in clear opposition to the deal.

I have not seen a poll of Canadian public opinion with regard to the unemployment insurance bill. My guess is, as sad as it is to have to admit it, that the majority of Canadians are unaware of that bill now before the Senate. Yet it is being made the subject of rigorous action by the Liberal majority in the Senate.

With the GST we have a tax initiative by the Conservative government that is opposed by up to 80 per cent of Canadians. In the last poll I saw a clear majority, in excess of 50 per cent, wants it defeated in the Senate. It does not trouble them.

In an attempt to clarify the question of how one can both favour the abolition of the Senate and at the same time favour the current Senate's destruction of the GST, I would like to give the House a little analogy. I am hoping this will make it a little easier to understand.

Let us say you just bought yourself a house. It is a nice old house. It has clapboard siding, solid hardwood floors, high ceilings, and a big backyard. It is a beautiful place, but in the middle of that big backyard is the largest damn crab apple tree you ever saw in your life. You have nothing against crab apple trees, Madam Speaker. The little old couple next door when you were a kid used to give your parents delicious crab apple jelly every fall. There is lots of fun to be had in climbing big, old crab apple trees.

• (1650)

However, the trouble with this crab apple tree is that it is so huge and so obstructive that nothing much can grow in the backyard. It shades virtually the entire area, making a vegetable garden impossible, and its root system sucks virtually all the water and nutrients out of the soil so that not even a lawn can grow well.

As much as you do not mind crab apples, you resolve to tear this tree down. You want to put in a vegetable garden. You want a nice lawn. Having decided that you are going to get rid of the big, old crab apple tree as soon as you can get the money and time together to do so, are you being somehow dishonest, unprincipled or two-faced if you take advantage of the crab apple tree in the meantime?

Are you going to ignore the crab apples that the tree produces and just let them rot on the ground, or are you going to eat a few and maybe try your own hand at making some crab apple jelly? Are you going to tell your kids: "No, no, you cannot play in that big, old tree because some day we are going to get rid of it."? Are you going to refuse to seek shelter in its shade on blistering hot days? Of course not. That would be dumb as a bag of hammers.

In doing any of those things you are in no way abandoning your long-term goal of tearing down the tree and replacing it with a nice vegetable garden and a lawn. "Aha," some may say, "but what if in using the crab apple tree as it stands you get to like it or even cherish it so that finally all thought of tearing it down disappears," to which sensibly, Madam Speaker, you would reply: "Sure, I might like it, but I know I will like having that vegetable garden and that nice lawn a whole lot more. If I really got to like having a crab apple tree around, hell, I will plant a new one, but it will be smaller and in a different location."

It is just so with the Senate. The fact is that it is there. We can ignore it, but that will not make it go away. We can offer our perfectly reasonable and long overdue arguments to the effect that, in its present form at least, it ought to be abolished, but at present we do not have the power necessary to effect that policy. In the meantime it is there. In fact it does not matter a tinker's damn what we think of the Senate. It is there.

The only question is: It being there, will we call upon it to do the right thing for the people of Canada, an overwhelming majority of whom have identified a clear wish regarding the GST? Or, will we confuse principle with wishful thinking and try to pretend that the damn tree is not even there?

The alternative to myself and my colleagues in the NDP is clear. Again let me state and close with the obvious. The Liberals have a majority in the Senate. They can use that majority to axe the tax, to kill the bill, to get rid of the GST. Their failure to do so—I predict that it will be a failure to do so—can only in future be

seen by Canadians as a clear statement by the Liberal party that they favour the GST.

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Madam Speaker, I am always astounded by the intellectual elasticity of my NDP friends. How they can whistle and suck at the same time is beyond my understanding.

Nevertheless I want to ask a question. We have a motion before us today that says that the Senate should defeat any bill including the GST, the clawback, and the pension bill. The Senate should have the authority to defeat any bill that comes before the House. Then we have on page xiii of today's Order Paper a motion in the name of the hon. member for Kamloops opposing the estimates. It says:

> Notice is hereby given of opposition to Vote 1, in the amount of $27,605,000 under Parliament—The Senate—Program expenditures—

In other words, on May 31, two or three days ago, the New Democrats wanted to take all the money away from the Senate. Today they are telling Canadians that they want to tell the Senate to defeat the bill.

Where do members of the NDP stand? I know they do not have much of a stand on anything. We always think they are either coming or going somewhere, but are they for the Senate, for the Senate's money or not? If they are not for it, okay. If they are for no budget, how can you operate without any money? If they are not for having a budget how can we have this motion today, which would be consistent? How about some consistency in the debate for a while?

Mr. Harvey (Edmonton East)): Madam Speaker, I am indebted to the hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier for raising that most cogent and praiseworthy motion by our hon. House leader to abolish the budget of the Senate. It is utterly consistent with the policy of the New Democratic Party which is to abolish the other place as currently it stands. I do not want anybody in this House to harbour any doubts in this regard. The NDP unequivocally favours the abolition of the current Senate, without any exception or reservation whatsoever.

In this as in so much else we have, it must be admitted, experienced a wee bit of difficulty in convincing the rest of you of the wisdom of this position, the case in point being the fate of that very motion at the end of May. We are left trudging along with this sclerotic, nonsensical other place for the time being. That being the case, let me say again that the point of the motion has much less to do with the Senate and much more to do with the Liberal party. As I said at the beginning, what it boils down to is: Will the Liberal party or will the Liberal party not put its Senate majority where its mouth is?

Mr. Joe McGuire (Egmont): Madam Speaker, I would just like to read some quotes to show the elasticity of the NDP's position. The hon. member for Edmonton East says that it is utterly consistent and absolutely in favour of abolition. I would like to refer to an magazine article in the *Alberta Report* magazine which reads:

> Many in the western wing of the NDP recognize there is widespread popular support in their region for an elected, equal and effective Senate. And Saskatchewan NDP leader Roy Romanow now concedes there is an alternative to abolition.

That is how utterly consistent they are. It goes on to say:

> Mr. Romanow, among the four western NDP leaders, seems most willing to consider some kind of Senate reform as an alternative to abolition. But the others appear willing to listen, at least. "I am open to ideas on (Senate reform)", says Mr. Doer.

There are two NDP leaders in the west who are not in favour of abolition but in favour of reform. It goes on to say:

> —Mr. Waddell professes to be a Senate abolitionist, but he too concedes that reform is worth considering. Some NDPers are coming to accept that it looks like the Senate is going to be around for a while longer, so we might as well have one that does something.

And it concludes by saying:

> Mr. Romanow clearly understands these political realities as well or better than most. "Let's face it", he says, "I've been in politics in Saskatchewan for a long time, and the name of the game is more of a voice for the West".

I would like to have the hon. member respond to these utterly consistent remarks that the NDP has made on this situation.

Madam Deputy Speaker: It will have to be a short rebuttal from the hon. member for Edmonton East.

Mr. Harvey (Edmonton East): Madam Speaker, as I was to the previous Liberal speaker, I am indebted to this one for raising the obvious fact. I will repeat it, and I hope it sticks this time. The NDP is absolutely, utterly, without exception, consistent in favouring the abolition of the current Senate. What is to replace it? That is a

matter of debate in our caucus, as in yours, and as in theirs, but the question of the current Senate in its current form, no.

Mr. Lyle Dean MacWilliam (Okanagan—Shuswap): Madam Speaker, I would just like to read the motion to get us back on track:

> That a message be sent to the Senate reminding the Senate that it has the constitutional right and the power to defeat any bill coming from the House of Commons.

There are many divergent opinions in terms of the relevance or irrelevance of the Senate and the future of that body. That argument, itself, is irrelevant to this currrent debate. The fact is that we do have a duly constituted body with certain legislative authorities, and we are calling on that body to exericse those legislative authorities.

Canadians throughout this country I think honestly believe that the GST is now essentially a *fait accompli* and that they have no more room to manoeuvre, to debate, or to discuss. The fact is that the GST still can be stopped.

• (1700)

The Senate is currently studying this legislation. Not all Canadians realize that the Senate has the capacity not only to recommend changes, not only to study the bill, but to kill the legislation, to stop it DOA. The Senate has a legitimate role in our parliamentary system and this is one aspect of that legitimate role.

I submit to you, Madam Speaker, that it is a role that has become increasingly relevant because of the very unparliamentary jackboot tactics that have been used by this government in ramming some of the legislative initiatives down the throats of ordinary Canadians. It has used closure well over a dozen times in only the last legislative sitting.

Peter Hogg has written in *The Constitutional Law of Canada, 1985* that the Constitution Act, 1867, gives to the Senate the same powers as the House of Commons except that money bills must originate in the House of Commons.

Essentially, the Senate has the same legislative authority as has the House of Commons. One might ask if the Senate ever before defeated legislation from the House of Commons? In 1920 the Senate rejected measures that were forwarded to it by a minority Liberal government. Between 1925 and 1930 no fewer than 48 bills were amended by the Senate and 12 bills were rejected. In the 1930s five bills were defeated by the Senate.

So legal precedents have been established which ascertain the Senate's authority and capacity to deep six bad legislation. The Senate has a responsibility to act. It has established that responsibility and it should exercise that responsibility.

Why do my colleagues and I call for Senate action? The fact is that this government has used every opportunity available to it to shut down the democratic process, to deep six any real debate going on in this country about the goods and services tax. It has used closure time and time again and has essentially disenfranchised opposition members of Parliament from carrying out their duties in bringing forward the concerns of their constituents.

Mr. Barrett: And illegal closure in committee.

Mr. MacWilliam: As my colleague from Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca adds, illegal closure at the committee stage of the GST legislation.

This is why we are asking the Senate to exercise its due authority. We are asking the Senate to kill the bill and that request is not at odds with any perception of whether the Senate should be reformed or abolished. That argument is irrelevant. We are asking it to do the job that it has authority to do right now.

We have called for the Senate to study the bill. To allow it to study the bill and do nothing about it would be hypocritical. If you are going to give the Senators the bill to study, you have to give them the authority to defeat the bill if they so desire. Asking the Senate to defeat the bill could, certainly, provoke a constitutional crisis. Well, so be it. That constitutional crisis may hopefully provide some initiative for real Senate reform.

The Liberals want to rag the puck on this one, make no mistake about it. Have a look at the numbers. The Liberals now dominate the Senate with 54 seats. The Conservatives have 33 seats, there are four independents, 1 independent Conservative and 12 vacancies. The Liberals are just trying to rag the puck until this Tory government comes in and stacks the deck so it can ram through the GST legislation and the Liberals can stand back and say: "Gosh we tried to defeat it but those nasty Tories went and stacked the deck against us. How could we defeat the legislation when that nasty Tory govern-

ment came in and stacked the deck by appointing new Tory Senators? We could only do what we could."

The Liberals want to see this legislation passed. Their leadership candidates have been strangely quiet on this. They have been rubbing their hands in glee just waiting for the Tories to come in and stack the deck in the Senate so that they can ram it through. They want to let the Tories take it on the chin for bringing in the GST and likely go down the tubes as a result of it, then they can sit back and become the beneficiaries.

I have criticized this government many times, but at least it deserves credit for sticking to its ideology. The Liberals have had no ideology on this except the raw pursuit of power. They have been laying in the weeds on this one. They have been praying that the GST comes through and that they can capitalize on it in the long run. The Liberals should not be allowed to fool the Canadian people.

This Liberal dominated Senate has a duty to the people of Canada, and that is to kill the bill now. The people should be encouraged to write their Senators, to write the Liberal leader and urge the Senate to block this GST legislation. Better yet, perhaps the people of Canada should call the toll free number to the Senate: 1-800-267-7362.

Mr. Harvey (Edmonton East): What was that number again?

Mr. MacWilliam: 1-800-267-7362. Anybody in Canada can call that number.

Mr. Harvey (Edmonton East): I am sorry, I didn't quite get that.

Mr. MacWilliam: My colleague asks for the number again. It is 1-800-267-7362. Pick up the phone, dial the number, tell the Senate to kill the bill.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Questions or comments? The hon. member for Scarborough—Rouge River.

Mr. Derek Lee (Scarborough—Rouge River): Madam Speaker, my colleague with the New Democratic Party is surely trying to sell water beds to the House of Commons. The motion placed before the house is also—I do not want to use the word "misleading"—but I think doing a disservice to the Senate. The Senate is there to refine, review and modify legislation that has been passed by the House of Commons. It is not there to kill anything. It never was there to kill anything. My friend in the New Democratic Party does a disservice to the Senate by suggesting that its role is to kill anything that has been created by us in this House of Commons.

I would like him to square what they are really after here with the reality of the function in the Senate. If there were, by happenstance, a member of the Senate here in the gallery of this chamber watching, he or she would be aghast at the perception of the Senate perpetrated by the member representing the New Democratic Party here. I think that is very unfair to the Senate. The knowledge of the Senate by those on that side of the House is perhaps too sophisticated by half. Their ignorance is showing through here this afternoon.

Would the member offer the Senate something constructive that is in keeping with the Senate's own function?

Mr. MacWilliam: Madam Speaker, when legislation is debated fully in any parliamentary procedure it is not done with the threat of closure used not once, not twice but over a dozen times. It is not done with the threat and, in fact, the sanction of illegal closure at the committee stage of legislation, as was the case with this legislation.

We are saying that because this government has abrogated the responsibilities of this chamber by the illegal use of unparliamentary procedures, it has in fact disenfranchised the vote of every Canadian taxpayer out there. Because of that we are saying that the Senate has at this point become the locus of democratic dissent in this country. The Senate should carry out its responsibilities because of the fact that this government has not allowed full democratic participation. Use the Senate to kill the bill.

• (1710)

Mr. David Barrett (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca): Madam Speaker, does the member truly believe that if the Liberal Party wanted to kill the GST it could kill it in the Senate? Are there precedents for this? Could they not be instructed, as Liberal appointees, to do what they say they want done? In light of the fact that they acknowledged in this House in the earlier debate that closure was the wrong thing to use in committee, that closure was the wrong thing to use in the House, is it not logical that they would follow through? Give the members one or two precedents to ease their conscience.

Mr. MacWilliam: Madam Speaker, my colleague for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca has waxed eloquent once again in terms of the real essence of the issue. Precedence was established many years ago for using the Senate to kill bad legislation that has been brought to the other Chamber by the House of Commons. As I indicated earlier, from 1925 to 1930 the Senate rejected 12 pieces of legislation. During the 1930s no fewer than five bills were defeated by the Senate Chamber.

I say to you, Madam Speaker, and to my colleague, that legal precedence for the Senate's authority and capacity to deep six legislation has been well established.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The time for questions and comments has now expired. Resuming debate, the hon. member for Jonquière.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jean-Pierre Blackburn (Jonquière): Madam Speaker, I rise in the House today to respond to and comment on the motion of the hon. member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca which says the following, and I quote:

> That a message be sent to the Senate reminding the Senate that it has the constitutional right and the power to defeat any bill coming from the House of Commons.

Madam Speaker, first of all I must say it is passing strange that a representative of a party that has constantly demanded the abolition of the Senate in its present form should move a motion supporting the constitutional right and power of the Senate to shoot down a bill coming from the House of Commons.

It should come as no surprise that I wondered whether we should take this motion seriously. Especially, Madam Speaker, when we consider that at this very moment, eleven First Ministers are meeting a few streets down to try and resolve the constitutional impasse and save a country that is on the verge of breaking up. One of the strategies of the 11 First Ministers is to reform a Senate that no longer meets the demands and needs of the day. In fact, all members of this House know perfectly well we must proceed with a number of changes.

However, I had only a brief moment's hesitation, since the motion of the member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca is certainly an opportunity to discuss a number of very interesting constitutional issues which may have eluded the understanding of the hon. member for the New Democratic Party. It would be a big mistake to hesitate, and it will be interesting, Madam Speaker, to see how the Liberals in the House will vote when the question is put on the motion.

Madam Speaker, like all our activities in the House, this is a proposal that should be approached with the same care as any other measure that concerns the proper operations of government. My concerns in considering the motion are above all practical, especially with respect to C-21 which is now being held up in the Senate. I know perfectly well that the purpose of this motion, Madam Speaker, was to deal directly with C-21, the bill on unemployment insurance reform which has now been shuttling between the Senate and the House of Commons for several months, although we all know the bill should have come into force on January 1 this year.

It is obvious that there has been sufficient debate on the constitutional rights and powers of the Senate. In fact, some people might even wonder why we are talking about this.

All partisanship aside, Madam Speaker, does anybody in this House seriously believe that our responsibility to the people of Canada must be undermined by a non-elected and non-answerable assembly? Yet this protracted exercise has been going on for months, has drawn the attention of Canadians from coast to coast, and even forced the Speaker of the Commons to make a ruling.

Our Speaker's judicious admonitions notwithstanding, the game is still going on and our parliamentary system is paralyzed. Democratic precedents, public opinion, common sense, in short everything seems to indicate that the Senate cannot block government legislation, especially when it has an impact on public expenditures.

But it has become obvious that we are in a situation which simply does not relate to democratic principles nor even common sense. For the past few years we have been up against systematic abuse of power on the part of the Liberals.

Today's motion is the latest example of the incoherence and opportunism which have been the highlights of the debate. I say incoherence because even such Liberals as Senators MacEachen and Frith once stated that the Senate should yield to the House of Commons, thus acknowledging a parliamentary principle established some 80 years ago.

I would not want to create the impression that the Senate does not have a role to play, but I am sure a distinction must be made between constructive criticism about bills and the weakening of the fundamental rights of the elected House of Commons. The Speaker drew attention to that fact when referring to the important powers the Senate would take away from the elected Lower House.

In his ruling of April 26 last the Speaker recalled a number of precedents in that respect. The non-elected Senate simply does not have a mandate to thwart the adoption of bills to allocate public funds. To try to have such a motion passed is potentially disastrous not only administratively but for the Canadian people and for our democracy as well.

In spite of the attempts made by the Minister of Employment and Immigration so that the concerns of the Senate be taken into account in the bill, the Liberal senators keep interfering with the business of this elected House. The dead-end created by such tactic has serious implications for the Canadian workers across the country.

As the hon. members know, Madam Speaker, Bill C-21 is an integral part of the Labour Force Development Strategy based on the establishment of partnerships with the private sector to maintain a training tradition in Canada and to promote the betterment of our human resources skills. As long as Bill C-21 has not been passed, such urgent business will in large part be left in mid air.

In times of technological evolution and increased international competition, Canada can not afford to delay even very slighly the implementation of the Labour Force Development Strategy and other initiatives related to human resources planning.

To delay a bill providing for additional unemployment benefits and training resources may be of no consequence for the Liberal senators, but things are quite different for millions of Canadians.

I should like to point out to you, Madam Speaker, that the members of the Senate are paid every week, their salary is garanteed, and that they do not have to account to the public for anything since they have been appointed for life, while the members of this House must face the public every four years and account for their decisions. That gives you an idea of the difference between us, who must make decisions while taking the Canadians into consideration, and that other group of individuals who is not accountable to the people.

To give you an idea of the implications of the Senate's conduct as well as to show clearly what this motion seeks to do, allow me, Madam Speaker, to take a moment to set some elements of Bill C-21 in the context of the Labour Force Development Strategy.

• (1720)

Madam Speaker, I am talking about Bill C-21 since I travelled across Canada with several of my colleagues to hear what Canadians thought about it.

If Bill C-21 is passed, the government will be able to implement substantially extended human resources planning programs in co-operation with industries throughout the country.

If Bill C-21 passes, the funds available would allow us to launch employment equity initiatives having a direct effect on native people, women, the handicapped, new Canadians, as well as older workers.

Bill C-21 would also help young Canadians by improving entry-level skills development.

Under the Labour Force Development Strategy, students could learn the basic skills needed to enter a complex and rapidly changing labour market.

Bill C-21 also provides for the allocation of several millions of dollars, including $50 million to the Community Futures Program so vitally important for the small communities and rural areas of this country.

In addition, under the Labour Force Development Strategy, the government wants to double the funds earmarked for the industry assistance program which helps employers and workers adjust to change.

Older workers, who find it particularly difficult to secure a new job, would also benefit, Madam Speaker, from this Labour Force Development Strategy. These workers would have access not only to other retraining

programs but also to $100 million in additional funding for training, if Bill C–21 is passed.

Of course, Bill C–21 would play a considerable role in changing the present unemployment insurance plan into a more constructive and effective tool that can help Canadians at a key turning point in their life.

Bill C–21, Madam Speaker, provides $1.4 billion taken from the $12–billion regular UI fund. This $1.4 billion is being re–allocated, $800 million for worker training and $600 for new services, including twice as much maternity leave, better training, UI benefits for people over 65 and other similar improvements for all Canadians.

If Bill C–21 is passed, some 60,000 people will be able to receive training while they collect UI benefits. This bill would release $350 million to give Canadians the skills they need to find challenging and lasting employment.

Moreover, additional funds would be available to help social assistance recipients escape the trap which social assistance benefits represent.

Yet, because of this non–elected Senate's fault, all these essential initiatives have been pending since January last, as well as the crucial training agreements between the federal and provincial governments.

Madam Speaker, this short summary of Bill C–21 should clearly demonstrate to all the Members of this House and to the Senate just how disastrous an additional delay could be.

This summary of Bill C–21 should also demonstrate how absurd the Hon. Member's motion is on the Senate's right to defeat any bill coming from the House of Commons. The expression "any bill" is vital, because it means the money bills as well as the other bills with no expenditures of funds.

That, Madam Speaker, is what the House of Commons cannot accept and has always rejected for the past 80 years. It is not merely an abstract constitutional issue; the very survival of our country is at stake. Yet, as Bill C–21 has made it plainly obvious, the Senate's interference with the rights and privileges of the House is leading this country straight to political stagnation and senseless waste.

Madam Speaker, it is not the first time that the Senate with a Liberal majority has blocked the progress of this government's bills.

Let us just think for instance of Bill C–22, the Pattent Act, as well as the Free Trade bill which forced the Government to call an election because the Senate was adamantly refusing to adopt it in an effort to block the free trade agreement. Other bills, such as the one dealing with day care have been blocked by the Senate. There was another bill for which a Member of the Senate felt the need to put his life on the line in an effort to stop the government from cutting Katimavik. Senator Jacques Hébert was ready to die to salvage Katimavik. And yet, today, there is not a single man or woman in Canada who remembers Katimavik. Nobody ever mentions it.

This gives you an idea how far some people will go when they are not accountable to the voters and when they are sure to collect their salaray. These people tend to abuse their power.

Mr. Speaker, is the Hon. Member aware that the amendments to Bill C–21 the Liberal Senators insist upon would mean $1,75 billion per year in additional costs for Canadian taxpayers?

Is the Hon. Member aware that by defeating Bill C–21 the Senate would cause the Canadian taxpayers to pay some $2 billion in additional costs?

Is the Hon. Member who moved this motion aware that the proposed amendments would cause an imbalance in the Ways and Means approved by this duly elected House of Commons?

How can anyone be so stubborn, confused and irresponsible to come up with such a motion? If we are completely incapable of answering the hon. member from the New Democratic Party, I am confident that my constituents will remind him that the elected representatives of the people are expected to account for the use made of public money.

Those are its rights, Mr. Speaker, by virtue of the Constitution and of our own rules, as well as by centuries of parliamentary tradition during which precedents, practices and decisions have confirmed that the House of Commons is responsible for government finance matters.

It stands to reason, even for Canadians who oppose Bill C–21 but who have not given up on the underlying principles of the Constitution in a futile effort to gain short term support and who are appalled to see the Liberal dominated Senate, which is not even elected, throw sand in the democratic machine.

If anyone needed further evidence of the intellectual depth the NDP has reached, here it is. As I said, Mr. Speaker, I am curious to see how the members from the Liberal Party will vote on this motion. That should be something to see.

Maybe we will see them do a "flip flop", like some candidates to the direction of the party are doing regarding their position on the Meech Lake Accord. One day, they are against the agreement as it stands, but toward the end of the race, they start mellowing. Flip one way, flop the other way. That is interesting.

The member opposite suggests, let us not forget it, that the Senate has the power and the right to defeat any bill as it pleases. That is what it says. Members of this House will not be surprised to hear such a statement from a member of the New Democratic Party, because many of them doubt that party is committed to the principles it claims to defend.

What a shock it must be for other members of this House who believed the NDP was committed to democratic principles.

The opposition's statement is also preposterous, Mr. Speaker, because it applies to any bill even those our country needs the most. Legislation that could help the unemployed, Canadian workers, people on welfare, older workers and those who would like to get better training, as I say, any bill!

A vote for the motion of the New Democratic Party would be the equivalent of transferring our powers as elected representatives to the Upper House, to people who have not been duly elected by the people. To vote for such a motion would even mean renouncing our responsibilities and it would be a nonsense.

• (1730)

Bill C-21 is such a measure and its basic principle, training UI recipients with UI funds, has the support—Listen to this, opposition members. According to a Decima poll published on May 14, Bill C-21 was supported by two thirds of Canadians. Therefore, the hon. member does not seem to care about the needs or desires of the people with respect to this bill, if we go by his motion.

According to this motion, centuries of parliamentary tradition count for nothing. But the case that concerns us today involves more than disrespect for parliamentary tradition; it shows disrespect for Canadians who expect all elected members of this House to do their job, which is to govern the country.

That is exactly what the government is trying to do with our bill and the Labour Force Development Strategy is a key element. Mr. Speaker, we are convinced that Canadians agree with us on these matters. If they do not, they can withdraw their support from us, unlike the senators, at the next election. That is how parliamentary democracy should operate. Only the elected members of this House and not the senators are answerable to the Canadian people. Suggesting that it might be otherwise, as the motion under consideration does, is unacceptable for all who firmly believe in the integrity of our political system and our democracy.

Mr. Speaker, I know that my time has already expired, but I think that it is important today to tell this House that the motion before us is unacceptable and that it should never even have been introduced. I think it is irresponsible to Canadians.

[*English*]

Mr. Derek Lee (Scarborough—Rouge River): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member opposite is a valued member of the House of Commons. He has ample experience in the business of the House and, to some degree I suppose, in the business of the other place. He has, I think, properly described the substance of the motion put forward by the New Democratic Party as being ill-founded and in many ways misconstruing the role and function of the Senate in Parliament.

In criticizing the New Democratic Party and others in such a way as to perhaps make the other place the whipping boy of Canadian parliamentary democracy, the member has failed to touch upon constructive initiative for reform of the Senate, which I think almost everyone in this House agrees should be initiated.

I know the hon. member will say that Senate reform is a viable, legitimate item on any reform agenda in this House and in the other place, but that perhaps some of us would prefer to postpone it until after June 23.

I suggest that the reform of the Senate is a very important issue. It is certainly a big enough issue to consume us here this afternoon.

I would like the hon. member to address, if he could, the initiatives that his government is prepared to take in terms of suggesting reforms and commencing a true debate aimed at reform of the other place.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jean-Pierre Blackburn (Jonquière): Mr. Speaker, first of all, to respond to the hon. member's comment about initiatives for Senate reform, I may point out that at this very moment, 11 First Ministers are meeting a few streets down to try and ratify the Meech Lake Accord, which was duly signed three years ago by 11 First Ministers, with five minimum conditions, to get Quebec back in the Canadian Constitution. The first step towards Senate reform is to make Quebec part of the Constitution, a full-fledged member of the present Canadian federation.

Until Quebec is back in the constitutional fold, any future reform of the Constitution will be practically impossible. Mr. Speaker, Senate reform is necessary, and I think all of us here in the House have seen for ourselves, what is happening to our bills and how the Senate is holding them up, and I think we all realize how pressing and urgent this reform has become. As you know, within our country, various First Ministers have entirely divergent views on what the Senate reform should be. You may have heard some Ministers talk about the Triple-E Senate. You may have heard other ministers saying it should be different. Our first step, however must be to bring Quebec back into the Constitution and make people understand that Quebecers within Canada form a distinct society, and it is that major step that must now be taken by all eleven First Ministers, and three in particular.

Senate reform will be next on the menu because, as we all know, Meech Lake provides for annual constitutional conferences. And I wish the hon. member would make it clear to one of his party's leadership candidates who is now playing with our country's future to clean up his act and send messages to Mrs. Carstairs, Mr. Wells and Mr. McKenna that they must approve Meech Lake as is. That would be an excellent thing to do for Canada, to make this leadership candidate, who is flip-flopping all over the place, understand that Canada is far more important than his own political aspirations.

[*English*]

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have an opportunity to participate in the debate on this motion concerning the Senate. I can only say how amazed I am that the New Democratic Party would put forward this kind of silly nonsense in a motion. No one can dispute that the motion is correct. But the fact that the New Democratic Party, of all parties in Canada, would today come up with a motion urging the Senate in effect to exercise its undoubted constitutional rights and powers is simply beyond belief.

I took a look at some old speeches made by New Democratic Party members in the past. I want to remind the House of some of the words that have been uttered in this very Chamber by some predecessors of the current membership of that party. Some of those people would be absolutely astounded that their party was putting forward such a silly motion as this today for discussion in this House.

Some of the members must be ashamed even now. I am sure that someone in the leadership of the party got away from things on Friday afternoon and this silly motion got stuck on the Order Paper so that it could be discussed in this House. Now they have got themselves in a bit of a jam.

Let me read from April 6, 1964, as reported at page 1804 of *Hansard*. I have here a speech made by Mr. Stanley Knowles. I notice that that gentleman, who is normally sitting in this Chamber, has absented himself today. I can understand that when he would have had to listen to the drivel that we had to listen to from the hon. member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca when he was making his speech earlier. He was trying to cover all bases at once, as these New Democrats are wont to do.

Mr. Knowles on this day in 1964 had brought in a bill to abolish the Senate and he stated:

> Mr. Speaker, the purpose of this bill is to implement the fundamental principle of democracy that the laws of a country should be made only by the elected representatives of the people. Its aim is to remove the possibility of the legislation enacted by the elected representatives being interfered with or delayed by a body of persons which has no mandate from the people of this country. The Senate being such a body this bill proposes its abolition.

That is what Mr. Knowles said in 1964.

I have more. In 1965, Mr. Howard, who was then a member of the New Democratic Party caucus, and as I recall the member for Skeena if I am not mistaken in my recollection, went on to discuss the votes for Estimates. The House was discussing Estimates and he was opposed to the Senate getting money. As reported at page 13154 of *Hansard* the former New Democratic Party member, Mr. Howard, stated in 1965:

> Mr. Chairman, before you put the question on this particular item—

It was the administrative vote on the Senate.

> I should like to make a few comments. It applies to the operation of what is politely or impolitely, depending upon the mood of the individual, referred to as the other place. This has always seemed to me to be a strange way to refer to it and I prefer to refer to it as the Senate because that is what it is, and it is almost always referred to in that way.
>
> The program of the New Democratic party, as was the case with our predecessor, the C.C.F., includes the abolition of the Senate. As that is one of the things we would like to see accomplished I cannot in conscience lend my support to the item before us for the simple reason that by so doing we would be running counter to our belief. We cannot support an item which tends to perpetuate a structure that we would like to see abandoned and cease to exist.

• (1740)

In 1971, as reported at page 10651 of *Hansard*, Mr. Knowles—and I stress his absence because of shame at this party introducing such a silly resolution—brought forward a motion and sought the unanimous consent of the House so that he could discuss a motion to abolish the Senate. He sought unanimous consent, but he did not get it.

As reported at page 10616 of *Hansard* on December 20, 1971, Mr. Broadbent, the former leader of that party on my left, came up with this point. He stated:

> I will come quickly to the point. In view of the speed with which the Senate is processing the bill, would the Prime Minister take steps in the early future that would result in the abolition of this absurd and undemocratic institution?

I am sure those words were out of order, Mr. Speaker, and why he was not called to order on the point I do not know. But, nevertheless, it reflects the attitude of the party on my left.

On October 30, 1970, as reported at page 758 of *Hansard*, Mr. Knowles stated:

> The hon. member is asking about some of my friends up there—

—referring to the Senate.

> All their lives they have been in favour of abolishing the Senate, and I trust they still are. After they have been there a while they will probably be more in favour of doing so.

In other words, his attitude had not changed from 1964 to 1970. He still believed in the abolition of the Senate.

As reported in *Hansard* on June 4, 1971, Mr. David Orlikow, then member for Winnipeg North, moved that a special committee be established to look at the Senate. In the course of his speech, as reported at page 6396 he stated:

> Mr. Speaker, it will come as no surprise to hon. members that I am personally of the view that the Senate plays no useful role in the political life of Canada and that it ought, therefore, to be abolished.

That was in 1971 and I can understand why the electors in Winnipeg in 1988 realized that they had been duped by the New Democratic Party. They threw them all out, and for the simple reason that these people say one thing and mean another.

On the one hand, they say that the Senate is undemocratic and should be abolished, and on the other hand they say that the Senate, as undemocratic and bad as it is, should block these bills. That is what this motion we are debating today states. They are saying to us that we as a Liberal caucus ought to direct our Senate colleagues to block bills passed by this House.

It was not a matter of asking. The hon. member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca demanded that we do this and that we should insist that our caucus colleagues in the Senate block these bills.

We have never assumed such power over our Senate colleagues. Even before the last campaign when the former right hon. Leader of the Opposition, the member for Vancouver Quadra, asked the Senate to delay the free trade legislation so that the Canadian people could speak on the issue in an election, he did not demand or insist.

Mr. Harvey (Edmonton East): He instructed.

Mr. Milliken: He asked. Read the press releases. He said to the Canadian people, "I have asked my colleagues in the Senate to hold up this bill". He did not say, "I have instructed them". He did not say, "I demand that they do so". He is not Caesar. He is not the government House leader. He is a Liberal and he believes in the democratic principle, unlike the members of the New Democratic Party. They have stuck that name in their party's title to remind people that they are

democratic because they are so undemocratic in their activities.

This motion is proof positive of a lack of democratic feeling on the part of that party. The motion states:

> That a message be sent to the Senate reminding the Senate that it has the constitutional right and the power to defeat any bill coming from the House of Commons.

Let us go back to some of the other motions that the New Democratic Party has put before this House more recently.

[*Translation*]

In this House on March 11, 1985 the hon. member for Oshawa introduced a motion concerning the Senate. On page 2885 of *Hansard* he moved this motion, and I will read only the last paragraph, as follows:

> This House urges the Government of Canada and the Governments of the provinces to act as expeditiously as possible to abolish the Senate of Canada.

[*English*]

Mr. Harvey (Edmonton East): An excellent motion.

Mr. Milliken: That is what Mr. Broadbent stated in 1985. The hon. member for Edmonton East applauds, yet his party policy has changed. He should watch out.

Mr. Harvey: (Edmonton East) The party policy is exactly the same.

Mr. Milliken: The hon. member for Edmonton East must have been away. I will correct his misinformation now. He says that the party policy is just the same, that it is to abolish the Senate. Well, we have words to the contrary from the hon. member for Kamloops, who spoke in this House on May 7, 1990. I questioned him at the end of his speech, but he did not answer my question particularly He did say this, and I would like to quote him. Maybe the hon. member for Edmonton East was not at the convention that elected their new leader. Apparently this is where this change of heart took place. Like St. Paul on the road to Damascus, the New Democratic Party apparently saw lights that it had never seen before.

As reported at page 11075 of *Hansard* for May 7, 1990, the hon. member for Kamloops stated:

> New Democrats watched intently the assault on democracy which took place last year—

Now they are participating in it, but we will leave that aside.

> We exercised our democratic rights within our own party and voted at our December convention to change our party policy on the Senate. Whereas once we were satisfied that the Senate had to be abolished, and that was it, we are now in the process of looking at a variety of options to provide and promote better regional representation in the Parliament of Canada, including but not limited to, proportional representation, an elected Senate, and other options.

Ho, ho, ho, Christmas time was good to the New Democrats. They got off the hook. They got rid of their policy of abolishing the Senate. Then they come up with this kind of silly motion in June. Six months later they have scrapped all their principles, they have scrapped all their policies and they have gone the non-democratic route. It is not the New Democratic Party, it is the non-democratic party of Canada we are dealing with in this House today.

Some Hon. Members: hear, hear!

Mr. Milliken: I do not want the government members to think that I am defending their position in this matter. I hear applause from the other side. Of course they have no respect for the Senate. At least we in the Liberal party hold the senators with reverence and awe; experienced, seasoned politicians who have participated in the democratic process in this House and elsewhere in Canada, who have the capacity for sober second thought and the opportunity to review and pick up faults and errors in government legislation.

We do not urge on them the stopping of bills. We do not say that the Senate should can these bills. We recognize that the elected majority in the House of Commons has its responsibility and it fulfils that responsibility. But, when it comes down to it, we expect that there will be amendments sent back from the other place that may make significant change in some of those bills, because certainly many of the bills this government introduces are seriously flawed.

We try to point out the faults in this Chamber. Sometimes we are successful and sometimes we are not. With the majority the government has, if it is as pig-headed as it often is, it votes these bills through. The Senate then is left to try to pick up the pieces. At least we do not, like the New Democratic Party, urge the willy-nilly defeat of bills in the Senate, saying that the Senate ought to cross the will or wish of this House as

expressed by the elected representatives of Canadians, and that I think that is significant.

Let me go on with some of the other quotes from some other members of the New Democratic Party, because there are so many. In 1985, the hon. member for Oshawa again made comments about the Senate.

[*Translation*]

I believe it was during the March 5, 1985 Question Period, on page 2741. Mr. Broadbent asked the following question, an I quote:

> Mr. Speaker, given the views of the Minister of Justice—I am trying to be very temperate—on this institution, and the well known views of the Deputy Prime Minister and, I dare to say, hopefully half of the Cabinet, not to mention 80 per cent of the people of Canada who correctly see the Senate as being useless and costly simultaneously, and since it takes the same section of our Constitution to abolish the Senate as it does to provide any other amendment of substance, will the Prime Minister give us his assurance today that he will propose to the provinces the correct, democratic action, which is to abolish this abominable insitution?

• (1750)

In light of such remarks concerning the Senate, Mr. Speaker, I am fascinated by the thought that the New Democratic Party would support a motion such as the one we are considering this afternoon. On January 23, 1981, as recorded on page 6533 of *Hansard*, the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre, said something else in a debate on the length of the senatorial mandate, and I quote:

> —that there is no place in our parliamentary democracy for a body that is not elected, not responsible to anyone and that as the Senate now stands it should be abolished.

[*English*]

Mr. Harvey (Edmonton East): Hear, hear!

Mr. Milliken: The hon. member for Edmonton East applauds and yet his party has changed that position. I presume he was in the minority that opposed the change in the position at the convention. I do not know how that all got away from the New Democratic Party at that time.

The other amazing thing is at the convention they changed their policy and yet the hon. member for Kamloops, who announced the change of policy in this House on May 10, has a motion on the Order Paper which was put there on April 4 of last year. It states:

> That, in the opinion of this House, the government should consider the advisability of abolishing the Senate—

It is still sitting on the Order Paper waiting to be discussed. The hon. member for Kamloops now apparently supports his party's ridiculous position where they really do not know what they are doing. They are looking at the options, as it were. They got rid of their policy of abolition and they do not know what else to do.

Mr. Harvey (Edmonton East): What is the Liberal policy?

Mr. Milliken: Our policy has been for an elected Senate. The hon. member for Edmonton East wants to know the Liberal policy. It has always been perfectly clear. We have always had that policy.

I want to go on with other quotes. I could quote the hon. member for Churchill.

[*Translation*]

During a debate on the Senate in this House on March 12, 1985, the hon. member said on page 2958 of *Hansard*, and I quote:

> The image of overpaid Liberal and Conservative fund raisers, campaign managers and defeated or retired candidates who "work"—and I put that word in quotation marks—three days a week and do very little of value, is not too far from the truth. Not too many people realize that in an average week the Senate only sits three days. An average day is usually not a full day.

On the next page of *Hansard*, he goes on to say:

> —To then create another body to control the elected representatives of the people of Canada is completely and obviously undemocratic.

That is the opinion of the hon. member for Churchill. Where is he today? Did he participate in this debate? No, because he clearly disagrees with this motion.

[*English*]

He would clearly disagree with this motion. He would not have supported this based on his previous statements in 1985. The hon. member for—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Schneider): On a point of order, the hon. member for Edmonton East.

Mr. Harvey (Edmonton East): I do truly hesitate to interrupt the flowing waters of the hon. member, however I feel that I really must object to his imputation of opinion to the hon. member for Churchill, especially when that imputation is that he would somehow disagree

with the action being brought forward today by his own caucus.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Schneider): While on my feet, I will acknowledge the fact that it is an established practice that we have agreed not to point out individual members when they are not in the House of Commons and to that extent, I thought the hon. member was rising on a point of order. Other than that, the hon. member will have his time extended by 30 seconds.

Mr. Milliken: It was a phoney point of order, Mr. Speaker, but I appreciate the hon. member's concern. It gave me an opportunity to have a drink of water. I could quote from the hon. member for Winnipeg—Birds Hill, as he then was, who is now the member for Winnipeg—Transcona. Again, I have the French *Hansard* here.

[*Translation*]

As reported on page 2273 of the *Debates* of the same date in 1986, he said, and I quote:

> The best thing we could do would be to abolish the Senate.

And on the following page, he added:

> The traditional NDP call for abolition is based on the fact that it is not a democratic institution.

[*English*]

Now we have that same party saying that this undemocratic institution should block government bills. I could read the statement of the leader of the New Democratic Party which spouted this heresy in Montreal, but I think it would be wasting the time of the House to come out with that.

I have another authority that I want to quote. I want to cheer up the government benches with this one because it is written by one of their own senators. In case the government feels that it ought to ignore the Senate or that the Senate is not doing the constitutionally right thing, I want to read from one of its appointees to the Senate, the Hon. Gérald Beaudoin who has written a book—

[*Translation*]

La Constitution du Canada.

In fact, I believe he is considered as the government expert's in the other place on constitutional matters and powers of the Senate.

I have read some of the speeches he has made in the other place and I must say that if he is their constitutional expert, I wonder about the value of his book because his arguments in the Senate concerning constitutional and procedural matters are somewhat questionable.

Nevertheless, on page 98 of his book *La Constitution du Canada*, he wrote, and I quote:

> With these three qualifications, the Upper Chamber enjoys the same powers as the elected House of Commons. Theoretically, it can even reject a budget or any ordinary legislation.

[*English*]

I see the hon. government House leader is nodding his agreement with his colleague in the Senate. I am delighted to see it after the rantings and ravings we heard the other day from him on the evils of Bill C–21 and what the Senate had done to it. He went on and on saying how dreadful this was. I am glad to see that he agrees that the Senate has the power to block any of these bills. It is quite true, they do.

The good senator in his book clearly says that the Senate has the powers that the New Democratic Party mentions in the motion. The surprising thing is that it is the New Democratic Party that is pointing these powers out to the other place. It is pointing them out and encouraging them apparently to use them, indeed calling upon the Senate to use them.

Just to show how inconsistent the members of that party are, I invite Your Honour to look at today's Order Paper. Here we have notice given by the hon. member for Kamloops, the House leader of the New Democratic Party in this House, of a motion to reduce the Senate's program expenditures. It states:

> Notice is hereby given of opposition to Vote 1, in the amount of $27,605,000, under Parliament—the Senate—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1991.

Here he is calling on the Senate to block the bills, and then on the other hand he wants to take away their money. How inconsistent can you be? The New Democratic Party has to make up its own mind. It has to make up its mind which way it is going. Either support the Senate and say that it is an important part of our Parliamentary government, or else abolish it. They cannot have it both ways. This motion indicates that they are trying to have it both ways.

Madam Deputy Speaker: On questions or comments, the hon. minister.

• (1800)

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Madam Speaker, that was one of the more lucid speeches I have heard from the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands. Most of the time his contributions are more what one might describe as pat. On this occasion he had some actual useful contributions to make. If I sound surprised, you will understand why, Madam Speaker.

I heard earlier when the motion was introduced by the hon. member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca that this had to do with the GST. NDPers were still opposed to the Senate but in this case they were willing to make a pact with the devil, as it were, to accomplish their goal presumably because Shirley Carr demanded it of them or something. I am not sure of the reason but whatever it was, and as pointed out most eloquently by the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands and others, they are straddling both sides of the fence. Hopefully it is painful.

The hon. member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca talked about the GST and said that it concerned him. His party's finance critic, the hon. member for Yorkton—Melville, led the battles for his party on the GST. He was there with his pillow and teddy bear and blanket on the overnight filibusters and fought the good battle. Unlike his colleagues back there who gave moral support but went home to bed, he was there all night along.

The following is what the finance critic of the non-democratic party had to say in *The Globe and Mail* of March 28, 1990 when speaking on Bill C-62, the GST legislation: "I believe the Commons should have the final say. I do not think the unelected body should usurp the elected body".

An Hon. Member: Who said that?

Mr. Andre: The finance critic of the New Democratic Party.

An Hon. Member: Did he really?

Mr. Andre: The man who fought the GST. The fellow who gave his all to this battle but at the end of the day said: "But I am a democrat, I believe in democracy". Is it a coincidence that he has not been here to participate in this debate this afternoon? I think not. He is probably at home ashamed of his colleagues over there.

I have not seen the House leader of the New Democratic Party either, the member for Kamloops.

An Hon. Member: Where is he?

Mr. Andre: There were some quotes from him. You may recall, Madam Speaker, the debate on Bill C-22 of the last Parliament, the pharmaceutical bill, when the hon. member for Kamloops, as reported in *The Ottawa Citizen* on October 30, 1987, said: "Quite frankly I am very disappointed with the Senate because I do not think it has the right to be holding up legislation".

An Hon. Member: Who said that?

Mr. Andre: This was the House leader of the New Democratic Party.

Isn't it interesting how the more experienced, the more senior members such as the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands quoted the former leader Mr. Stanley Knowles and others? One wonders what happened to that formerly great party to have thrown its principles out the window in that fashion for short-term political gain.

I would ask the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands who is an expert on the rules to comment on Standing Order 80(1) which reads:

> All aids and supplies granted to the Sovereign by the Parliament of Canada are the sole gift of the House of Commons, and all bills for granting such aids and supplies ought to begin with the House, as it is the undoubted right of the House to direct, limit, and appoint in all such bills, the ends, purposes, considerations, conditions, limitations and qualifications of such grants, which are not alterable by the Senate.

I realize they are talking about appropriations, but the GST is certainly in that category. I wonder if the hon. member would comment as to whether this resolution is not tantamount to being out of order by virtue of being contrary to this Standing Order of the House?

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Madam Speaker, the government House leader has raised a very good point. I had my book open at Standing Order 80, but I ran out of time in my 20-minute speech and I could not get to this point.

I am delighted to have the opportunity to say that it is quite fortuitous that he has pulled out this rule and read it to the House. I need not read it again. Certainly the rule is one that we in this party have supported, as the hon. member knows.

He knows that on Bill C-21 for example, we argued vigorously that the bill was not one affecting aids and supplies and that therefore the amendments were in order. He will recall that discussion. I am glad he has raised it again today. I hope he now agrees with our position on that.

In any event, it is quite true that the situation is covered in Standing Order 80(1) and 80(2). I am tempted to read Standing Order 80(2) to the House. I may in a minute. It clearly indicates that this House in terms of money bills and in terms of bills that grant aids and supplies to the sovereign—and taxation falls into that category—are ones that are not alterable by the Senate.

Standing Order 80(2) says:

> In order to expedite the business of Parliament, the House will not insist on the privilege claimed and exercised by them of laying aside bills sent from the Senate because they impose pecuniary penalties nor of laying aside amendments made by the Senate because they introduce into or alter pecuniary penalties in bills sent to them by this House; provided that all such penalties thereby imposed are only to punish or prevent crimes and offences, and do not tend to lay a burden on the subject, either as aid or supply to the Sovereign, or for any general or special purposes, by rates, tolls, assessments or otherwise.

In other words, the House tries to co-operate with the Senate when it does propose reasonable amendments to government bills. Certainly we feel that the amendments proposed by the Senate to Bill C-21, for example, are reasonable. I want to take the opportunity to do that. I know the government House leader does not share my view, but I hope he is coming around.

However, with respect to the motion that is before us, we have what the New Democratic Party is suggesting in a statement by its leader, of all people. Obviously the others on the front bench are not particularly supportive of that, except the hon. member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca. The message from their leader is that the Senate should stop the GST legislation, and that is what I find so extraordinary. This appears to be what is intended to be stated in the resolution.

While the difference of opinion there may be very great between the New Democratic Party and us on one hand and the government on the other, we as Liberals at least recognize that the majority wins the day in the House. We have not demanded, as has been suggested by the hon. member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, that our Liberal senators block this bill. We have said: "Look at it. Study it. You may end up blocking it, but it is your decision to that extent." Certainly we hope some amendments will be considered to this legislation that will make it less pernicious.

We would like to see the legislation done away with. We have urged the government to stop it. Through petition and through speech in the House, we have urged the government to stop it. We have been deprived in large measure of our opportunity to discuss the bill as a result of the tactics adopted by the New Democratic Party in stalling the House so that we could not have free debate and discussion.

Madam Speaker, you know this. The hon. government House leader knows it. We are all aware that there has been a real attempt here to stifle discussion in the House to prevent the Liberal party from expressing the valid criticisms of the legislation. The NDP was so bankrupt of ideas on how to criticize it, it did not know what to say.

Mr. Ross Harvey (Edmonton East): Madam Speaker, my heavenly day, certainly there is great deal to be gone through here.

First, I would like to disabuse the House of any suspicion it may have with regard to the attendance of the hon. member for Yorkton—Melville. I am not certain, but I believe that since he is a member of the Charest committee he is closely following the developments in the Meech Lake discussion. The hon. member for Kamloops is currently in Kamloops where his mother was admitted to hospital this afternoon.

Mr. Milliken: I am sure he is also embarrassed.

Mr. Harvey (Edmonton East): Yes, quite. There is more than one cause for embarrassment in the House this afternoon.

I would note that it would be less than reasonable for us to attempt to take lessons in policy consistency from members of a party that campaigned vigorously against wage and price controls in 1974, only to impose them after they became government, and that campaigned

vigorously against increased in gasoline taxes in 1980, only to impose greater increases when they became government.

I am not certain the moral authority assumed by the previous speaker is all that warranted. However, let me try one more time to point out to him the consistency of the NDP position. It is this: the Senate, as it is now constituted, should be abolished, done away with. There is no reason to retain that place.

• (1810)

Second, having abolished it, it is perfectly reasonable to inquire as to what might thereupon replace it. It is a simple problem. You can try to make a silk purse out of a sow's ear, but once you have that silk purse you don't have the sow's ear any more; you have done away with it. That is exactly what we propose to do with the Senate.

I would only ask the hon. member by way of question: Why is it that he is incapable of understanding this simple distinction?

Madam Deputy Speaker: A very short rebuttal from the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands.

Mr. Milliken: Madam Speaker, this is simplicity itself, apparently, to the hon. member for Edmonton East. I am a simple lawyer. I only read the words that are put before me. I heard the hon. member for Kamloops make this speech. He said: "We voted at our December convention to change our party policy on the Senate, whereas once we were satisfied that the Senate had to be abolished and that was it we are now in the process of looking at a variety of options."

In other words, the abolition policy is out the window. This motion clearly shows it is out the window. If it should be abolished, you do not urge it to do something.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I must interrupt the hon. member. His time has expired.

Resuming debate with the hon. member for Niagara Falls.

Mr. Rob Nicholson (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to participate in this debate.

There is a number of ways a member of Parliament gets elected to this House and there is a number of ways in which he gets re-elected. Most important, of course, is to say what your party is going to do and, if you are as fortunate as we were in 1984 to be elected, to be able to run on what your party has done. Certainly we have done that in all areas.

I remember the pamphlets in 1984, as I am sure other members in the House remember. Jobs, jobs, jobs was right on the front of the Tory pamphlet. We passed out thousands of them in Niagara Falls. As all members of the House know and as you know, Madam Speaker, we delivered on that promise. Those were things that helped me as a member and I am sure other members of the Progressive Conservative Party, in being elected in 1984.

In 1988 we ran on our record. As I have said in this House on a number of occasions, it is always one of the things that defines and helps mark the difference between a Liberal and a Progressive Conservative. Progressive Conservatives are always proud to talk about their record in office. The Liberals always say you are being unfair if you bring up matters when they were in power. That is just a fact, but those of us on the government side are proud to talk about what we did between 1984 and 1988, and it helped get us re-elected.

Mrs. Browes: Excellent record.

Mr. Nicholson: Many of the things we have done since then we certainly talked about during the election campaign. I can tell hon. members that I remember on a number of occasions—in fact every public forum I was at—people challenging me with comments made by the member for Mississauga South on the subject of the GST. It was certainly discussed during that election campaign. We have gone forward and implemented those measures.

Those are the things that I think helped. At the same time, if you are lucky you get help from the members of the opposition. That is one of the reasons like the NDP. It is certainly one of the reasons I am pleased to participate in this debate.

Today we got a little bit of help from members of the NDP. For that I know I can always count on them. They have introduced a motion that a message be sent to the Senate just to remind the members of the Senate that they have a constitutional right and the power to defeat any bill coming into the House of Commons. That is what they have asked us to do.

What I find interesting about it is that this is what as known as an opposition day. The members of the New Democratic Party could have chosen any topic to discuss, anything at all to discuss.

Mrs. Browes: Something relevant.

Mr. Nicholson: They chose this motion, calling on and reminding the Senate to fight, to reject, to defeat any bill coming from the House of Commons. Quite apart from anything else, it was very unfortunate for them to do that. The country is involved with very serious constitutional debates in the city of Ottawa right as I speak. Instead of addressing themselves to those vital national concerns, the NDP decided this was the day it would decide to champion Senate rights. I think that is unfortunate. NDP members could have talked of any number of issues. They could have talked about their ideas for cutting the deficit.

That would be a very short debate and this debate is scheduled to last four or five hours. We do not want to talk about NDP ideas to cut the deficit.

An Hon. Member: Ideas on anything.

Mr. Nicholson: The member for Mississauga West says, "Ideas on anything". Well, this is what the NDP have chosen. They have chosen to talk about the rights of the Senate and championing the cause of the Senate to defeat House of Commons bills.

They could have talked about the environment. The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretary of State knows as well as I and other members on this side of the House what a vital concern this is to Canadians from coast to coast. There are so many different aspects of the environment, so many different ways in which the House could be a positive force. The NDP could have chosen to talk about that. But, no, not a word about the environment. They decided to take up all of Parliament's time today to talk about the Senate.

Mrs. Browes: They could have talked about the Rouge Valley.

Mr. Nicholson: They could have talked about the Rouge Valley and all the efforts made by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretary of State. They could have talked and commended her for all of her efforts in championing that cause in Scarborough. That would have been worth a debate. I would be pleased to have government members discuss for four or five hours her efforts to preserve that part of the environment within Metropolitan Toronto. But no, they chose not to discuss that.

They could have talked about the problems in Canadian agriculture. I see a former agriculture minister from the former Liberal government. I am sure he would have been pleased to say a few words on the subject of agriculture. There was nothing about that from the NDP.

They could have talked about the problems in the fishing industry. There are many areas of concern and interest to Canadians, but they chose not to talk about any of them.

The NDP decided to talk about what they could do to encourage the Senate to deny, to hold up, to defeat, and not pass the laws of this democratically elected chamber.

An Hon. Member: That they agreed were necessary. Tax reform they said was necessary.

Mr. Nicholson: Well, they chose not to talk about it today.

It should be made clear that this is a reactionary measure. I cannot help but think that former Leaders of the New Democratic Party would have very strong words to say today if they knew that the party they led in the House had now taken on the mantle of Senate rights. I think many of them would be very surprised.

One of my colleagues was talking about J. S. Woodsworth, a former Leader of the New Democratic Party, Mr. Lewis and T. C. Douglas. I do not even think you have to go back that far. I believe that the Hon. Ed Broadbent would be very disappointed if he knew the direction that the party had taken on this particular issue and I do not think you have to go back in the history—

An Hon. Member: How does Audrey feel about it?

Mr. Nicholson: My colleague asks how Audrey feels about it. It looks like it is every person for himself in the NDP these days on issues like this. They argue among themselves. The House Leader of the NDP said one thing on Senate reform, and the member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca is obviously championing it. The member for Edmonton East is against it. Maybe that is a sign of the new leadership in the New Democratic Party: if they speak in three different voices on the subject of

the Senate, somehow that is going to win them friends across the country. I do not think so.

• (1820)

I see the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands in the House. I enjoyed his comments, but there is one thing on which I disagree with him. He called this a silly motion. I will always ascribe sincerity to the individual members who put forward these motions, so I certainly do not want to be associated with the comment "silly". I believe the NDP is very sincere on this, and in fact on all the motions they put forward. Other than that, I certainly enjoyed his comments.

I think this is a pattern we have seen in the New Democratic Party over the years. I do not think a motion like this should be viewed in isolation. We have seen a number of tactics and directions like this taken by the members of the New Democratic Party. I am sure members in the New Democratic Party will remember some of their comments about the post office.

If there is any suggestion of technological change at the post office, I think we can all be assured that the members of the New Democratic Party will oppose it. I think that goes without saying. When the government suggests that we remove trade barriers in Canada, Madam Speaker, you can count on the NDP to oppose it. The facilitating of movement goods and services across international borders is an idea that is accepted even by socialists in Europe, but no, members of the Canadian New Democratic Party can be counted upon to fight it.

One member of the NDP thought he could pin me down and said: "Don't you know that your party used to stand in favour of trade barriers? The national policy under Sir John A. Macdonald was based on trade barriers." For heavens sake, that was in the 19th century. Has anybody over there up-dated their view of economics? I would like to hear more about some of the ideas that have found a home in the New Democratic Party. I would like to know how they feel about the Divine Right of Kings. That does not get talked about too often. On the next opposition day, let's get into a discussion about it.

An Hon. Member: Not a bad idea.

Mr. Nicholson: I think there is a lot of these floating around in the NDP.

We talked about the hon. House leader of the NDP. One day, he had a private members' motion called Magna Carta Day. In fact, he said that the barons had forced the king to sign this document. When he introduced it into the House, I assumed he thought it might become a national or international celebration some day. I am not so sure any more. Maybe he thinks King John got a bad deal. Maybe that is what he wanted to talk about.

Certainly, I am going to be watching the Private Members' hour. I would be very interested to hear the comments of the New Democratic Party on that subject.

Today, the NDP brings forward their concerns about the rights of the Senate and what the Senate should be doing. I have indicated that I am disappointed that they had nothing to say about the rights of the House of Commons. Could the members of the NDP not have made a couple of speeches about the rights of a democratically elected body?

I have heard no comments at all about the rights of democratically elected members of Parliament to pass legislation. There were no comments about our power to review legislation.

Mrs. Browes: The will of the people.

Mr. Nicholson: The will of the people. Where in the discussion do we hear about that? No. Championing the cause of non-elected members of the Senate. That is what they have chosen. I am disappointed.

The hon. members say that the senators have the power. Yes, they have the power. I have seen the British North America Act and, with all respect, it says: "All power is vested in the Queen." As important as the monarchy is to Canada, who in the Chamber would suggest that it would be constitutional for the Queen's representative, the Governor-General, to hold up or defeat any legislation? I suppose the members of the NDP say: "He has the right and the power." Yes.

When I was at school, I remember a professor talking about the rights and the powers of the Senate that the NDP is talking about today. The professor made a comment about the Canadian Senate. He said: "If the Canadian Senate ever exercised the theoretical powers

that is given to it under the Canadian Constitution, there would be such an uprising in Canada that it would very shortly lead to the abolition of the Senate".

I guess we are still waiting for the national uprising, the coalescing of national opinion on this but we know some of the problems this House has had with legislation. I could go back to the free trade legislation or to the day care bill that was before the Senate and did not get passed prior to the 1988 election.

There were delays on the pharmaceutical bill from the last Parliament. I hope Canadians will pay more attention. If I see that professor again I will tell him that he was not only premature on what public opinion might be but I am sure he would have never guessed that, of all political parties, it would be the NDP that would come to the defence of a non-elected Chamber *vis-à-vis* the wishes of an elected Chamber.

The members of the NDP have chosen to spend their time this afternoon on this subject. I can tell them that I think it is important for all Canadians to know exactly where members of the NDP stand. I want to make the pledge to them and to the members of the House that I will do everything possible, everything within my power as a member of Parliament, to see that the views of the NDP on this get wide viewing and a wide range of distribution in my riding of Niagara Falls.

I sincerely want all the people of Niagara Falls to know exactly where the members of the NDP stand on this. I will do my very best to get the message out for them in my riding of Niagara Falls as I am sure other government members will do across the country.

Mr. Lyle Kristiansen (Kootenay West—Revelstoke): Madam Speaker, I would like to ask a short question of the hon. member who contributed so magnificently to this debate. I think all members would appreciate the fact that the debate has managed to cause a considerable amount of merriment and good feeling, as well as spreading a great deal of long-deserved enlightenment on the issue of the Senate, its powers, and what it ought to be doing to earn its keep.

I would like to comment first on one phrase that the hon. member used when he said it was difficult to get the coalition of public opinion necessary to abolish the Senate. I just want to put the proposition to him that what we are doing in this debate is killing two birds with one stone. We can serve the interests of the vast majority of the Canadian people who have demonstrated over and over again that they want to axe the tax, kill the GST, by persuading the Senate to fulfil its constitutional authority and responsibilities, and to put up or shut up and earn its keep. We may then be able to serve their desires and interests while enlisting the Conservative Party to the cause that we have held for years and continue to hold, which is that the Senate ought to be abolished.

If we can accomplish those two things at once, we can give the friends of our colleagues in the Liberal Party to our right their well deserved reward and put them out to pasture, without having to pay for it, and still accomplish the objectives of Canadians and the long-held objective of the New Democratic Party to put an end to that body which has sat in the other place without making a major, concrete contribution to the body politic for many years.

Mr. Nicholson: Madam Speaker, I am pleased to comment on the hon. member's comment.

He said that we are having a hard time getting a coalition concerning the abolishment of the Senate. My comments were that I would like people just to be aware, to begin with, of what the Senate is doing so they can make up their minds as to whether they agree with having it or not, or whether they agree, in today's debate, with what the NDP is suggesting that they should do. This is one of the reasons I said at the outset that I was pleased in one respect that the NDP brought this forward. I think all Canadians should know exactly what the NDP has to say on this. So, I am very pleased with that aspect of it.

• (1830)

What I think what the hon. member is getting at is this. The New Democratic Party has ended up third in every election.

Mr. Milliken: Not always.

Mr. Nicholson: Excuse me, I should not say that. The hon member for Kingston and the Islands is a student of Canadian politics. Quite properly, he would correct me by saying that the Social Credit Party has ended up third in most of the elections in which it ran—perhaps not in most, but in several elections. So, the NDP sometimes runs fourth.

Mr. Horner: Never a silver medal.

Mr. Nicholson: But sometimes bronze.

Mrs. Browes: Usually last.

Mr. Nicholson: I think the point that the NDP is trying to make is this. It must be very frustrating to lose an election. It must be frustrating to be always at that end of the Chamber. It must be frustrating to have 18, 28, or 40 members in the House of Commons. If one cannot do it by the democratic process, maybe there is some other way by which the NDP can accomplish what it is it wants to do to Canadians.

It has been pointed out very well that for years the NDP fought against the Senate. The concept of an undemocratic upper Chamber was fought by the NDP. It has changed its mind on this and I think I know the reason. That frustration that builds up election after election—

Mr. Duhamel: They are progressive, that is why.

Mr. Nicholson: That was not the word I was going to use.

The hon. member for Kingston and the Islands called it the non-democratic party. I was going to use the term the new dinosaur party, but I think I like his suggestion better.

In a way I can understand the frustration of the New Democratic Party. But that does not change the fact that the people of Canada sent the Progressive Conservative Party in overwhelming numbers to this Chamber on two different occasions in the last two general elections. We have every right to bring in the proposals that we talked about during the election. The members of the New Democratic Party, or anyone else, do not have the right to thwart that.

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Madam Speaker, I listened with interest to the hon. member's speech. I wanted to ask him a sort of hypothetical question, which I know he will want to answer.

One of the things that has happened in my observation over the years is that the New Democratic Party is forever claiming credit for various policies introduced by Liberal governments. One would always think, listening to its members, that somehow they had instituted all the social programs that in fact the Liberal party has introduced and that the Conservative party has tried to break down or curtail in various ways at various times.

The fact is of course that there has never been a New Democratic Party government in Canada. For example, its members have said by suggestion that if there had not been a Liberal minority government we would never have had Petro-Canada. We hear New Democratic Party members claiming that they are responsible for Petro-Canada because they supported a Liberal minority government.

Surely, if we accept the position of the New Democratic Party today that the Senate should block any bill that it wants, then had the Liberal government wanted to stop Petro-Canada and had not been supportive of it, it would have had the Senate block the bill based on the urgings of the New Democratic Party. Its members would have said: "Yes, here in the House of Commons we will vote for Petro-Canada with the NDP and get it set up over the cries and hoots of the Conservatives who oppose these good things. Then, when it gets to the Senate, we will use our majority there to kill the bill." After all, this is what the New Democrats are urging in their motion today.

Does not the hon. member who just spoke feel that perhaps the New Democratic Party in putting forward this motion is defeating the claims that it has asserted in the past, that somehow it is responsible for the good works of Liberal governments?

Mr. Nicholson: Madam Speaker, the hon. member for Mississauga West has cautioned me not to get involved in a lovers' quarrel.

Let me see if I can follow the reasoning of the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands. He said that the members of the New Democratic Party say that they are the ones who suggest pubic policy in Canada. The Liberals say that, no, it is their ideas and they are implementing it. The only thing I know for sure is that we are the ones who end up paying for it.

I was not in the Chamber when the National Energy Program came in. I do not know whether it was one of the great ideas of the Liberals, whether they were cheered on, or whether it was suggested by the NDP. Some members who have been in the House longer than I would perhaps know who exactly should get all the credit. Perhaps it should be the hon. member for Edmonton East.

Mr. Horner: Who should take the credit for FIRA?

Mr. Nicholson: The hon. member asks who should take the credit for FIRA. Was this a great idea that the Liberals came up with on their own without any help from anybody else? Is the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands nodding his head? Was this just a great idea from the Liberal Party?

Mr. Milliken: I wasn't even here.

Mr. Nicholson: Well, deficit financing was definitely a Liberal policy but, to give the New Democratic Party its due, I know its members cheered them on. They were egging them on to spend more and more money that the Liberals did not have.

I say they are equal to what they have done to the country. All I can say is that we on this side of the House will clean up what they have left.

Mr. Derek Lee (Scarborough—Rouge River): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to participate in this debate on a topic which makes me a little uncomfortable. I think that those who put forward the motion, in their eagerness to blacken the noble record of the Liberal Party, have decided to use the Senate as a vehicle to pretend to Canadians that the Liberal Party has failed to provide the leadership and the traditions that have assisted the country to address the challenges of this century.

We have all heard many references to a triple E Senate, one that would purportedly be equal, effective, and elected. I know what elected means. I do not know exactly what equal means. Equal to what? Are we talking about equality as between provinces? Are we talking about equality as between regions? There are many other aspects of the country at which we can also look for equality.

None of these concepts have ever been ironed out, analysed, and developed in a cogent and cohesive manner to allow the House and the party in power to put forward a proposal for reform that has a chance of succeeding.

By way of our Constitution, we have in effect divided the constitutional pie into a number of segments; some portions federal, other portions provincial. Each jurisdiction is supreme in its own field. There are a few areas of shared jurisdiction.

I have to note that no provincial legislature makes use of a second body in their parliamentary process, yet each province enacts legislation fully as important as that of the House of Commons. The House of Commons and each legislature in its own field deals fully and completely with its own aspect of the constitutional field. That makes me wonder why a Senate has a role in Parliament. If the provinces can get along just fine without a Senate or an upper House, why can the House of Commons not get along without a Senate? I have not found an answer to that.

• (1840)

I cannot say that the Senate does not perform a reasonable and effective function in many of the tasks that it undertakes in dealing with legislation. It does initiate some pieces of legislation. I have seen Senators of great repute, great experience, and great intelligence undertake tasks of significance to the provinces that they represent and great importance to the country, and carry out those responsibilities with great effectiveness. They have made a significant contribution to the development of legislation and policy in the country.

Yet, members of the New Democratic Party come forward today with a motion that pretends to endorse the functions of the Senate. But they are not being honest with themselves and they are not being honest with the House. The entire thrust of the New Democratic Party, for as long as I can remember, has been to abolish, to kill, to trample, and to change things so rapidly that it is prepared to throw the baby out with the bath water. When has the New Democratic Party ever given the Senate any credit for any of the work it has done?

The only fault the Senate bears is that through tradition in Canada the Senate has not been an elected body. I suppose many of us regret that. If it were an elected body, we would not have so many of the difficulties we now have in trying to determine its proper role.

I have made reference to those non-policies and destructive suggestions of the New Democratic Party, which from time to time are rooted in real democratic initiative. However, I feel they fail to recognize some of the good things we have here in this country. Not only does the NDP take that approach, but the Progressive Conservative Party in its own way has also failed to address Senate reform in the way it should have.

The Progressive Conservative government over the last half dozen years has spent its time cutting deals with Washington rather than trying to reform and to improve mechanisms of legislation in Parliament. It abandoned the Senate long ago. It did not give a care about the

Senate. Its goals were expedience and quick fix. I am disappointed in that.

What we have to show for it is a half finished free trade agreement. I say half finished because we have not finished negotiating subsidy. We have a challenge of constitutional reform which has been left for three years. As I stand here, we are now negotiating—truly at the eleventh hour—to put together some rational constitutional reform which has emanated out of the Meech Lake Constitutional Accord.

I want to conclude by speaking in opposition to the adoption of the motion put forward by the New Democratic Party. It is a motion that is devoid of any real substance and any real constructive initiative to reform the Senate. It is one that attempts to show our party, a party that I am very proud of, as one that has not done the work that it was elected to do over the last several decades.

I challenge the NDP to abandon its bankrupt approach to Senate reform and address solid, positive, constructive constitutional and Senate reform in the months to come.

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, I was quite interested in my hon. friend's comments. Does he think a joint convention between the Liberals and the New Democratic Party might help them to resolve this impasse in policy between the two parties?

Mr. Lee: Madam Speaker, in the absence of cogent leadership in constitutional and Senate reform on the part of members opposite, I think it might be fun to address that issue with our brothers and sisters in the NDP.

Mr. Lyle Kristiansen (Kootenay West—Revelstoke): Madam Speaker, as I was listening to my friend and neighbour from the Liberal party I could not help but note that he and his colleagues have made it very clear all afternoon that the Liberal party in the Senate has absolutely no intention whatsoever, and never will have any intention, of axing the tax, of using the legitimate authority and power vested in the Canadian Constitution within the Senate, which is a reality, to kill the GST. Every one of their speakers has made that abundantly clear.

The New Democrats and the Conservatives pay strong attention to the principle that we ought to receive value for moneys expended. Therefore, what is the rationale for the large expenditure of public funds currently being contemplated by the Liberal majority in the Senate in order to go across the country to hear Canadians tell them what they have been telling all of us for months and months, that is, to kill the GST, if they have absolutely no intention whatsoever of using the authority that the Constitution gives them and their friends to put an end to that bad legislation?

Mr. Lee: Madam Speaker, my friend has just exhorted the Liberals in this House to do with the Senate what the labour unions have been doing to the NDP for years, that is, telling the NDP what to do in the House of Commons. Every member in this House knows that it is inappropriate for the people in this House to tell the other place what to do. I am sure the members who sit in the other place will undertake their constitutional role, albeit a little old and cobwebbed, to review all aspects of the GST legislation in the responsible way they deal with all other legislation that is sent there.

No one in the Liberal party in this House has stated what the Senate is going to do with the GST legislation. That is up to the Senate. It is clear that the Senate will undertake to study it, review it, listen to Canadians and report back to the House of Commons. It was always going to be that way. Suggestions by the New Democratic Party that the Senate was either going to vote to kill it or do nothing are wrong. The New Democratic Party in this House ought to wait until all the members of all parties represented in the Senate deal with that piece of legislation and return it to the House.

• (1850)

Mr. Rob Nicholson (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Madam Speaker, I guess this is an afternoon to hear of changes in party policy. I thought I just heard the hon. member say that the Liberal party would not presume to tell the Senate what it should do. I know that is a change of policy for sure, because hon. members in the Liberal party will remember their former leader making it very clear just prior to the last election what it was he thought the Liberal Senate majority should do. He told them what to do. That is what was done then.

Would the hon. member not agree with me that this change of policy in the Liberal party has nothing to do with respecting democratic ideals, but has more to do with the fact that their next leader, Mr. Chrétien, knows that the MST is very bad for Canadians and he sees this as a opportunity to replace that bad tax with a much more fair tax? Is this not what this is all about? Would the hon. member comment on that?

Mr. Lee: Madam Speaker, there is virtual paranoia developing here at the prospect of Mr. Chrétien becoming leader of the Liberal party. He is one of four excellent contenders for the leadership of the party—

Some Hon. Members: Five.

Mr. Lee: —and I am sure in due course the members opposite will have an opportunity to deal with whoever the leader of the Liberal party will be.

In any event, I reject the proposition of the hon. member for Niagara Falls. I challenge him to—

Mr. Nault: Go to the polls.

Mr. Lee: That is a possibility.

Mr. Valcourt: Are you not going to answer the question?

Mr. Lewis: Madam Speaker, I have another question that I thought I might address to my hon. friend.

He will know that in the 17 years of Liberal administration from the 1960s through to 1984, when common sense prevailed, that the Senate under the control of the Liberal party used to indulge in pre-studies of bills in an effort to make the work of the House of Commons, the duly elected representatives, flow quickly once the bills got to the Senate. The Senate abandoned that once the Conservatives gained control of the House of Commons.

I wonder if my hon. friend could comment on what caused this change of policy in the Senate and whether or not he thinks it is legitimized at all.

Mr. Lee: Madam Speaker, it seems to me that if there existed a valid, workable, effective institution procedurally at the time that the Progressive Conservatives came into power in 1984, it would only seem appropriate that they exercise leadership and judgment in pursuing that kind of a process. In fact, if that process fell into disuse, I would have to suggest that it was a result, not of the failure of the Senate which does not lead legislation in this country, but of the Progressive Conservative government to make use of processes and of an institution that had validity, and of people who had experience simply because it looked to them like the Senate was filled with Liberals and they did not like Liberals. So they stayed away and they failed to use a good procedure that was there in existence simply out of partisanship.

Mr. Lyle Kristiansen (Kootenay West—Revelstoke): Madam Speaker, I would like to begin the approximately five minutes that are left to us in this evening's debate by reading the eloquent motion put forward by my colleague from Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca earlier this afternoon. It states:

> That a message be sent to the Senate reminding the Senate—

And it needs reminding.

> —that it has the constitutional right and the power to defeat any bill coming from the House of Commons.

At the beginning of this debate my colleague from Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca made it abundantly clear why this particular language was used. We have been listening for months now to representatives of the Liberal party railing against the goods and services tax, this aberration of progressive taxation from one end of Canada to the other. Quite frankly, we thought it was time to call their bluff.

The Constitution says that the Senate has that authority, it has that power and it has that responsibility. We in the New Democratic Party have said for years that it ought not to have that power but the fact remains that it does have it. We also believe that we ought to get value for moneys expended. The long and excellent financial histories of NDP provincial governments across the country are adequate testimony to that.

Mr. Manley: What are you wasting money on this for?

Mr. Kristiansen: We will debate that some other day but the press has already agreed that the facts are on my side and I will not deal with that any further right now. It is not necessary. The facts will speak for themselves.

By this motion we want to ensure that those thousands of Canadians who may appear before the Senate as it

travels from one end of the country to the other to hear testimony, give serious consideration and sober second thought to this question of the goods and services tax, this fundamental rearranging of Canada's taxation regime, know that it is a sham, that it does not mean a thing.

One after another my Liberal neighbours have stood up today and said they have no intention, either as Liberals or as members of a Liberal caucus, of having the Senate impose its will on the Parliament of Canada. So it is a non-starter.

To go back in history a little bit, the Senate was set up as the protector of corporate rights, the protector of private property against those radicals who wanted to democratize society. The Senate has many times in Canadian history used its power, its responsibility and its authority to stop good laws. We are asking the Liberal party to request their fellow Liberal caucus members to use their constitutional rights and authority within the Senate of Canada to put an end to a bad law.

In 1926 the old age pension bill was introduced by a Liberal government after the signed commitment received by J.S. Woodsworth and A.A. Heaps in 1921. It took them a little while but they brought in a bill and the action of the Senate was described as its most notorious act of defiance. The Senate killed the popular policy, the aim of which was to supplement the income of all people 70 years of age or over to $365 a year. The Senate killed a good law.

In 1926–27, the Senate twice rejected a bill to repeal section 41 of the Immigration Act, which permitted the deportation of British subjects not Canadian citizens without trial. The Senate feared its passage would encourage communist infiltration into Canada.

In 1926, 1927, 1928, 1929 and 1930 the Senate consistently refused to pass measures to repeal section 98 of the Criminal Code enacted in 1919 to deal with unlawful association. The majority of the Senate held that communism was still making headway in Canada and if the clause were repealed there would be no provision in the Code to deal swiftly with agitators seeking to overthrow the government. Those were provisions that were opposed by every Canadian who was concerned about civil rights. They stemmed from an incident in the Winnipeg general strike in 1919. Madam Speaker, the Senate uses its authority—

Madam Deputy Speaker: Unfortunately, I must interrupt the hon. member. It being 7 p.m., it is my duty to inform the House that pursuant to Standing Order 81(17), proceedings on the motion have expired.

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[*English*]

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (St. Boniface): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise in this Chamber today to address a number of points which I believe are of critical importance, not only to my colleagues in this Chamber, but to the people of Canada.

Some of you will recall that I had asked when and why this Minister of Finance and his government decided to change their position on the reduction of the deficit, that is their position was predicated on the basis that they felt that there were other ways besides reducing transfer payments to health and education.

I want to quote what the minister said. In 1982, the Minister of Finance said:

> The reductions to federal funding of health and education could have disastrous effects on the universities and on the colleges, on the hospital funding and on the operation of the hospitals. Let us solve those problems not on the backs of the hospitals and universities; let us solve those problems outside of that arena.

That is what the minister said then, but what is he doing now? Supposedly they were not going to touch that formula, supposedly not. They reduced it by 2 per cent in 1986 and they reduced it for two years. They have now frozen it from $86 to $95 billion. There will be $31 billion fewer dollars for health and education. That is just one reduction.

They have reduced funding for training and retraining when they said we would have the best programs in the world. They have done that on the backs of the workers and on the backs of the small business people and other business people of this nation. They have reduced the funding for science and technology by $39 million. You will recall that they said they would double research and development. It used to be at 1.40 per cent gross domestic productivity, half of what it is in the United

States, Japan and a number of European nations. It is now 1.32. It has slipped even further.

The minister's response, I contend, is one that most individuals would agree to be somewhat misleading, to say the least. Some people would even say it is farcical. Some people have even told me it was somewhat machiavellian, but I wonder if it would not be better to say it is "Michaelvellian" or perhaps "Michaelvillain".

Let us go on to the second part of the question. The second question was would he please agree with me and confirm my contention that transferring cash and transferring tax points were actually quite different. Will the minister please tell the whole truth about cash and transfer payments? That is what I wanted to know.

He gave tax points away, or the government of the day did, 10 years ago and he is still claiming them for himself, for his government. They gave points, not dollars, and there is a difference. I can give you 100 points tonight but I must tell you it is not going to buy you a whole lot for dinner. The minister and his government take credit for points which were transferred over a decade ago, and yet the provinces raised the taxes. Surely that is something that needs to be said and a point that needs to be recognized.

During the last two years the tax point credits were greater than was the cash transfer. Manitoba will have no more cash from transfer payments for health and education by the year 2003 to 2004. I think that is really quite unfortunate. This is what the minister said in response to my question, quite apart from being rather flippant and a lot of puffery surrounding all of this and I think rather insensitive: "The tax points and cash transfer are equally important to the provinces because in an equal way they provide cash to the provinces."

• (1905)

Here is what an expert, Tim Sale and Associates, from Winnipeg, Manitoba, had to say about tax points.

"Tax points" is jargon which means that the provinces got the right to levy higher rates of personal and corporate income tax in return for agreeing to the federal proposal. In turn, the federal rates were lowered. Provinces raised their personal income taxes by 12 points (each point is one per cent of the federal tax level), and their corporate rates by 1 point. The federal government could still claim to be funding medicare, but at a lower direct cost to their budget each year. The political price for higher taxes was paid by the provinces.

I could go on and I shall use a couple of other quotes.

> The federal government shifted some taxation to the provinces—gave provinces the right to raise their taxes. But the federal government still counts the money that is raised by those provincial tax points as **federal** dollars.

And it goes on and on and on. The point is a very simple one. The transfer of tax points is not the same as a tax transfer of cash. It is simply not the same. I thought the minister on that particular day had been somewhat arrogant, somewhat pretentious, somewhat pompous and insensitive to the point that I was trying to raise. If that minister discards what I am saying, let him consult with my experts. Let him consult with the Canadian Association of University Teachers, the Canadian Association of Community Colleges, and I could name several others. We can listen to what they have to say. I would be quite willing to settle with their conclusion.

If the minister is so sure of himself and the points that he makes, I wonder why he did not accept my October 13 challenge, which was to discuss the importance of education and transfer payments for health and education throughout the country. In an exchange here in the House one day, I said to the minister that I would love to debate this issue with him throughout Canada. He said he had checked *Hansard* and he could see no indication that he had undertaken to do that.

The points are very simple.

[*Translation*]

Madam Speaker, it is because I had adressed two extremely important issues. I was brushed off by the minister, and I believe he was less then honest with me and my collegues. Tonight, in the House, I ask that someone should explain to me why he believes he is right, when I contend I am the one who's right.

[*English*]

Mrs. Pauline Browes (Parliamentary Secretary to Secretary of State of Canada and Minister of State (Multiculturalism and Citizenship)): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to respond to the hon. member's question that he put to the Minister of Finance on March 13, 1990.

This government inherited a large deficit, a debt problem, in 1984. The federal government at that time was living far beyond its means. It borrowed $16 billion just to cover the difference between the money spent on programs, services, and the revenues that were collected. It built up a $200 billion debt, a mountain of debt that generated more than $22 billion of annual interest charges.

When we came to power, we launched a broad and sustained attack to reduce expenditures and restore our fiscal house. This was part of a long-term plan. We terminated special tax breaks, closed loopholes and increased revenues. The results speak for themselves. We turned an operating deficit into an operating surplus of $10 billion. Progress on these programs of deficit reduction have been made and the growth of the federal program spending has been held below the rate of inflation.

As a share of the economy, our spending is at the lowest level in 20 years. But more needs to be done, we know that, because of the huge deficits built up before 1984. Public debt is still growing faster than the economy, faster than our ability to pay, and this year alone interest payments on our debt will cost almost $40 billion. That is 35 cents out of every dollar collected as federal revenue, or it means $1,500 for each Canadian.

• (1910)

The best way to reduce debt is to reduce spending. The federal transfers to provinces are simply too large to exempt from spending restraint. Major federal transfers to provinces have grown by 6.5 per cent annually over the last five years. This is well in excess of the 3.6 per cent average annual growth of federal program spending over this period. Cash transfers alone represent 24 per cent of total federal program spending.

Therefore, the budget proposes to hold per capita Established Programs Financing transfers constant for the next two fiscal years. Total transfers under the Establish Programs Financing arrangements will continue to grow with the population, or about 1 per cent annually.

The impact of this measure will be spread broadly and equitably across all provinces and will represent less than 1 per cent of provincial revenues.

Federal program spending will increase about 3 per cent in 1990–91. Our transfers to provinces will also increase by about 3 per cent next year. So we are requiring no more of the provinces than we are willing to bear ourselves.

It is important to remember that in addition to Established Programs Financing, the federal government provides substantial additional assistance to the lower income provinces through the equalization program.

I want to mention particularly to the hon. member that this helps provinces provide better public services in health care and education and that equalization transfers have been exempted from the restraint measures announced in the budget.

FITNESS AND AMATEUR SPORT

Mrs. Beryl Gaffney (Nepean): Madam Speaker, on May 24, 1990 I asked a question of the Minister of State for Fitness and Amateur Sport concerning the devastating effect the proposed goods and services tax will have on amateur sport in Canada, and in particular minor hockey.

The minister responded by saying that the Sports Federation of Canada is very pleased with the provisions of the GST to amateur sport. However, a report produced by Douglas A. Rollins of Nepean suggests that any provisions the government has put forward do not go far enough to address the problems of a GST on certain amateur sports in Canada.

To better provide evidence of my belief that the GST will have a negative effect on minor hockey in Canada, I will read verbatim from Mr. Rollins' paper:

> This paper has been researched and prepared to assess the impact of the proposed Goods and Services Tax (GST) on local minor hockey associations across Canada, and of individual teams and officials operating in such an association. The purpose of the paper is to provide a clearer understanding of this tax, and to make recommendations as to how these associations could arrange their affairs so as to prepare for the GST.
>
> This paper has been prepared as a "case study". It examines the operations of the Nepean Minor Hockey Association, and of the teams and officials in it. This was a deliberate choice, since by examining the GST and its impact upon one specific organization, other similar organizations would be able to clearly identify the underlying principles of law, and relate these principles to their own particular organization. This would then fulfil the objective of the paper; to provide a clearer understanding of this tax for all.

Material was gathered through examination of existing federal sales tax law, through review of Bill C-62, an act to amend the Excise Tax Act, and discussions with officials of the Nepean Minor Hockey Association and tax policy officers with the Department of Customs and Excise, and Finance.

It must be clear at the outset that the material presented in this paper, because of the nature of the subject, cannot be considered as definite. This is because the goods and services tax has been introduced into the House of Commons as Bill C-62 but is not a law at this time. Also, in certain of the more technical aspects of the application of GST there is no policy. What is presented is the likely direction such policy will take. These areas of uncertainty have been identified in the body of the text.

Despite these considerations, what is presented here is the first detailed look at this tax and its specific implications for minor hockey.

• (1915)

I do not have the time to read the background and methodology of the report, but I will read the executive summary.

The GST is intended to eliminate many of the flaws and inequities which exist in the current Federal Sales Tax. The vast majority of goods and services in Canada will be subject to this tax, which is essentially a 7 per cent tax on personal consumption. It will require all businesses and organizations in Canada who have annual taxable sales in excess of $30,000 to register for and collect this tax.

The Nepean Minor Hockey Association, like all other hockey associations in Canada, will be affected by this tax. As the organization providing a minor hockey program for players between the ages of five and 19 in the city of Nepean, the NMHA in 1989-90 operated with a total budget of $402,000. The vast majority of these funds come from the sale of memberships to individual players. In addition, other revenue comes from the rental of practice ice purchased from the city, the proceeds from a bingo, profits from a used equipment sale, sponsor contributions and tournament revenues.

It is concluded that the NMHA, given its current operations, would have a total of $206,500 in taxable sales annually. This would require the NMHA to register for GST and collect some $14,020 in taxes yearly. However, by taking eligible input tax credits of $10,185, the net amount of GST to remit would be a total of $3,935. While the NMHA is a non-profit organization, it will receive no special funding, unlike certain other organizations engaged in organizing amateur athletics.

In addition to the amount of GST required to be added to its sales, the NMHA will be forced to absorb a total of $20,406 in GST on its purchases. As a consequence, the NMHA will face a total GST related increase of $24,341. This represents a 6 per cent increase.

There are ways of reducing the NMHA's total amount of taxable sales to less than $30,000 per year, but this would only save some $3,935 in GST annually. This is due to the fact that the NMHA, being a non-profit organization, does not mark up purchases subsequently resold to any significant amount. By not being registered, by being below the $30,000 threshold, they would not have to keep books and records, and file periodic tax returns, but would save relatively little money.

Individual teams in the NMHA would not be registered for GST as long as their operating budget does not exceed $30,000. In a similar manner, referees, timekeepers and instructors would be below this threshold.

I filed a copy of this report with the Minister of Fitness and Amateur Sport at the time I asked the question. I hope the parliamentary secretary or whoever responds will have had the time to read the report and to specifically refer to the items that I mentioned.

This report was very well thought out and researched. Even after it took into account all the provisions that were supposed to help non-profit amateur sport, an increase of 6 per cent to an organization such as the NMHA still exists. This could have an extremely negative effect on minor hockey in Nepean and, as is probably the case, all of Canadian minor hockey.

In response to my initial question in the House, the Minister of Fitness and Amateur Sport praised the Minister of Finance for doing a tremendous job for amateur sport in the GST legislation and stated he should be congratulated. I say to the minister, come on. Put your helmet on and get into the game. Your praise of the Minister of Finance is eloquent but makes no sense. In hockey terms, you do a lot of dazzling skating and shooting but no scoring.

Your answers to my questions deserve a misconduct and I am sure you will be cut from the team when Canadians vote in the next election.

Mr. Murray Cardiff (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to respond to the hon. member's concerns.

I want to make very clear that the Government of Canada has no intention of scrapping the goods and services tax. We all know the GST is an important part of the government's economic plan. It is a crucial element that contributes to making the economy stronger and more dynamic, to restoring the country's financial health, and to improving the fairness of the tax system.

The proposed tax will correct many of the flaws of the existing federal sales tax. It will remove the existing tax burden from many Canadian exports, eliminating the bias in favour of imports by applying a uniform tax rate to imports and domestic goods and services. It will provide a more reliable source of revenue and thereby contribute to efforts to reduce the national deficit.

• (1920)

With a uniform rate of 7 per cent applied to most goods and services, the GST will provide a less complex system for government and businesses to administer. In strengthening the competitive position of Canadian producers, the GST will stimulate economic growth, encourage investment, and create jobs.

Insofar as the amateur sport community is concerned, let me remind hon. members that non-profit organizations as a whole are not now given special status under the existing FST. As a consequence, such organizations currently bear an element of sales tax on their purchases, which presumably they are required to factor in to the cost of the programs they provide.

In developing the GST proposal, the government recognized that, given the broader GST base, such organizations would generally incur additional costs. As a result, important features of substantial benefit to charities and non-profit organizations have been incorporated into the proposed system.

First, government grants or subsidies available to charitable and non-profit organizations in order to carry out their activities are not taxed. They are ignored for GST purposes.

Second, charitable and non-profit organizations which produce taxable supplies will be able to claim full input tax credits on their purchases.

Third, to further mitigate the impact of the GST, charities—and this includes registered Canadian amateur athletic associations—will automatically be entitled to a 50 per cent rebate on GST paid on purchases for non-commercial use, regardless of the amount of funding they receive from governments. Organizations which do not have charitable status, but which nonetheless are substantially funded non-profit organizations, that is, those whose revenues comprise at least 40 per cent in government funding, will also be able to claim a 50 per cent rebate of GST on purchases of goods and services for which they are not entitled to an input tax credit. This places them in a better position than under the current federal sales tax.

There are a number of other features which have been built in to the design which will benefit sport and other non-profit organization. Among others, these include the provision of an optional simplified accounting method to reduce any additional compliance burden, the exemption of sponsorships from tax, and a special exemption for recreational programs designed for children primarily under the age of 14.

The former Minister of State for Fitness and Amateur Sport helped to facilitate representations by the Sport Federation of Canada before the Commons Finance Committee last fall and also facilitated key meetings between that organization and the Department of Finance. At the present time, officials of the Fitness and Amateur Sport Branch are working with the Sports Federation and Revenue Canada to ensure as smooth an implementation of the GST for the sport and fitness communities as possible.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Mr. Len Hopkins (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke): Madam Speaker, I rise as chairman of the Public Accounts Committee to raise an item once again that was first raised in the House on October 23, 1989.

The purpose of the Public Accounts Committee is to study, as thoroughly as it can, the annual report of the Auditor General of Canada tabled in the House each year during October or November. It is the committee's job to study the items in that report where the Auditor General finds weaknesses in financial administration or areas of government that should be corrected. We have hearings and, after those hearings with civil servants and senior officials from government departments and agencies before us, we table our report in the House, not only stating our findings, but also making recommendations on the cures.

On October 23, I raised an issue in the House because the Deputy Prime Minister had sent out letters to all the chairmen of committees of the House of Commons, asking them for suggestions as to how the deficit could

be decreased. But he forgot to send one to the chairperson of the Public Accounts Committee.

I raised that in a question in the House and the Deputy Prime Minister gave me a very good answer. He said he was willing to co-operate with us. In a second question to him, I said the Auditor General's report will be tabled in the House tomorrow and it will be permanently referred to the Public Accounts Committee. I asked if he would assure us that no roadblocks will be put in the committee's way as we witnessed, to a degree, in the early stages of this Parliament. The Auditor General's Report was tabled the next day on October 24, and these points were raised:

> In 1989-90 we had planned to conduct a government-wide audit of expenses claimed by ministers for travelling on government business. In our opinion, the Auditor General has clear statutory authority to audit these expenses.

• (1925)

The Auditor General went on to say in his report:

> We requested access to receipts where ministers had followed Treasury Board's advice to retain them. The Government told us that even if receipts existed they would not be made available to us.

In other words, the government refused access to those ministerial receipts to the Auditor General of Canada who looks after tax moneys given to the government on behalf of the people of Canada.

On October 24 in the House, I rose again and said:

> Today we learned that the Auditor General tried to do an audit on ministerial travel, but he could not perform it because he could not get any receipts from any ministers in this government and therefore could not do an audit of the cabinet of this country. Surely the Deputy Prime Minister does not consider this to be co-operation.

The President of the Treasury Board replied:

> I can assure you that this government is totally committed to accountability and openness.

Madam Speaker, on November 10 in *The Globe and Mail* there is a report of one of the public accounts committee meetings and it states:

> Paul Tellier, Clerk of the Privy Council and secretary to the cabinet, testified yesterday before the House of Commons public accounts committee that the Auditor-General of Canada will not have access to receipts for government-paid trips taken by ministers.
>
> He said it is up to each minister to decide how to spend his or her time and it is not the role of the Auditor General to pass judgement on where the minister goes or why.

That was not really the purpose of it. It was a request for information for the purpose of bringing forward an audit.

Time went by and the President of the Treasury Board gave us a commitment that he would bring back a report on this.

On February 8, not having a report, I wrote to the President of the Treasury Board and asked him for his report. I said:

> At a meeting of the Committee with the Comptroller General on February 8, 1990, it was brought to our attention that two reports on the above subject are presently in your hands, one is entitled: "Report to the President of the Treasury Board on the accounting for the Administrative Flight Service provided by the Department of National Defence"; the other is a report on ministerial travel.

We asked the President of the Treasury Board for that information. He replied to my February 8 letter on March 13. He said:

> The Comptroller General's study has been provided to me just recently and is presently under consideration. As you know, I promised to table this document in the House and will do so early in the new fiscal year. At that time, it will be available to the Public Accounts Committee.

In other words, Madam Speaker, hurry up and wait. On January 17, I received a letter from the Auditor General. I will quote a paragraph from that as follows:

> I thought your Committee might appreciate knowing that the government of the Province of Manitoba has very recently moved away from an honour system for accounting for ministerial travel expenses to a system requiring receipts. The significance of this development is that it leaves the government of Canada as the sole jurisdiction where Ministers' travel expenses are accounted for on an honour basis, i.e. receipts are not required.

It is now June 4. Parliament will be rising this month. This issue that started on October 24 last fall and our public accounts committee still does not have an answer from the President of the Treasury Board. We still do not have an answer from the government.

Madam Speaker, I want to state very clearly that the public accounts committee studying matters of inefficiency and bad expenditures in government can only operate if we get the full co-operation of the government. I want to point out, as chairman of the public accounts committee, it is obvious that on this item we are not getting co-operation, either from a senior official or from the government itself. I would like the government to tell us why and when we are going to get it.

Mr. Murray Cardiff (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Madam Speaker, I would first like to point out to the hon. member that when he raised this question on October 23, the Deputy Prime Minister did apologize to him for not sending a letter and wanted to assure us that the government wants the public accounts committee to be the watch-dog committee of the public purse.

As well, the committee can expect the same freedom and independence it has always exercised. Furthermore, as the committee continues to fulfil its important role, we would welcome any ideas, suggestions or otherwise to assist the government and the country in reducing its national debt.

I know the hon. member shares the view that we must find ways to reduce duplication in government and to find efficient methods to meet the program demands of Canadians. We as a government are constantly searching for ways to improve the delivery of programs. But, as he well knows, when an operation the size of the federal government spends approximately $100 billion annually, it has an obligation and a duty to promote efficiency in our spending.

The Public Accounts Committee, which the hon. member chairs, is tasked with reviewing federal government spending and with providing alternative ideas and new opportunities. I know the hon. member will be doing just that.

However, we should take time to look at our record. If we take away government spending to service the Liberal national debt, we will find that that the government has gone from a $16 billion operating deficit in 1984–85 to a $25 billion operating surplus in 1990–91.

That sounds impressive. The deficit will drop to $28.5 billion this year. It will be cut to $14 billion in three years and reduced further to $10 billion in the next years.

Given these facts, I want to congratulate the Public Accounts Committee for its hard work in helping to achieve this impressive turn-around. In the same view, I know the hon. member who chairs the Public Accounts Committee would want to congratulate the government for providing leadership in getting government spending under control.

[*Translation*]

Madam Deputy Speaker: The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 11 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

The House adjourned at 7.32 p.m.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, June 5, 1990

The House met at 11 a.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*Translation*]

PETITIONS

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the Government's response to five petitions.

[*Editor's Note: See today's Votes and Proceedings.*]

* * *

[*English*]

LABOUR, EMPLOYMENT AND IMMIGRATION

THIRD REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

Mr. Jean-Pierre Blackburn (Jonquière): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the third report of the Standing Committee on Labour, Employment and Immigration.

This is an interim report on demography and immigration levels.

[*Translation*]

The interim report was tabled at the specific request of the minister, to indicate what immigration levels in Canada should be during the next five years.

[*Editor's Note: See today's Votes and Proceedings.*]

[*English*]

ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES READJUSTMENT ACT

MEASURE TO CHANGE NAME OF CONSTITUENCY

Mr. Benno Friesen (Surrey—White Rock) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-309, an act to change the name of the electoral district of Surrey—White Rock.

Mr. Speaker: Does the hon. member have leave to introduce the bill?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Friesen: Mr. Speaker, this is the bill I wanted to submit last Thursday and time is catching up on me now.

It is a bill to change the name of my constituency from Surrey—White Rock to Surrey—White Rock—South Langley. It is incumbent upon the name of the constituency to reflect the geography and the population base of the riding and until now a certain large proportion of my constituency has been left out of the name. I would like to have the constituency name reflect the population of the area. Langley has been left out, therefore I would like to have South Langley included in the name.

• (1110)

Motion agreed to, bill read the first time and ordered to be printed.

Mr. Hawkes: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I see what point we are at in Routine Proceedings. I was inadvertently held up and have a Striking Committee report which relates to a couple of committee meetings later this afternoon. I wonder if I could have unanimous consent to table that report.

Mr. Speaker: Does the hon. member have unanimous consent to table the report?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Routine Proceedings

STRIKING COMMITTEE

PRESENTATION OF FORTY-FIFTH REPORT

Mr. Jim Hawkes (Calgary West): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present the forty-fifth report of the Striking Committee.

[*Editor's Note: See today's Votes and Proceedings.*]

* * *

[*Translation*]

ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES READJUSTMENT ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

Mr. Guy Ricard (Laval) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-310, an Act to change the name of the electoral district of Laval.

Mr. Speaker: Does the hon. member have leave to introduce the bill?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Ricard: Mr. Speaker, I would like to table a bill that would allow me to change the name of my riding to Laval West instead of Laval.

The purpose of this bill is to give the western part of Laval more prominence—to enable people to identify more readily with their riding, because at the present time, the riding of Laval logically would mean the entire island, although there are actually three ridings on Laval Island. I therefore would like to see the western part identified as Laval West.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to, bill read the first time and ordered to be printed.

Mr. Speaker: When shall the bill be read the second time? At the next sitting of the House?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[*English*]

PETITIONS

DETROIT AIRPORT EXPANSION

Hon. Herb Gray (Windsor West): Mr. Speaker, today, I have the honour to present a petition signed by almost 8,000 people from the city of Windsor, Ontario.

This petition has been duly certified by the Clerk. The petitioners call upon Parliament to direct the federal government through the Secretary of State for External Affairs and the Minister of Transport to take all steps within its power to protect the interests of the residents of Windsor, Ontario who would be adversely affected by a proposed expansion of Detroit City airport and who were adversely affected by last year's expansion, including using Canada's sovereignty over its own air space through which any additional flights using an expanded Detroit City airport would go, to ensure that no such expansion takes place that creates noise or other pollution, brings about deterioration of the quality of life, and creates risks to the health and safety of the Canadian residents in question.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Rod Laporte (Moose Jaw—Lake Centre): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present two petitions.

First, I present a petition from approximately 200 residents from the riding of Moose Jaw—Lake Centre and from people in other parts of Saskatchewan who are concerned about the goods and services tax.

The petitioners call upon the government to enact some laws that will provide fair taxation for Canadians. They call upon the government to deal fairly with average Canadians and with those who are having difficulty making it through a difficult time in Saskatchewan. They want the government to introduce a fair tax system in the country.

CANADIAN WHEAT BOARD

Mr. Rod Laporte (Moose Jaw—Lake Centre): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition from a number of farmers in Saskatchewan.

The farmers call upon the government to reinstate oats and give it the same protection under the Canadian

Wheat Board that is now enjoyed by wheat. They have a concern over the future of marketing boards and the orderly marketing system in the country.

The petitioners call upon the government to reinstate oats and barley, and to give them the same protection that wheat has now under the Canadian Wheat Board.

[*Translation*]

TAX BENEFITS FOR NORTHERN AND ISOLATED AREAS

Mr. Guy Saint-Julien (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I am tabling today a petition from Chibougamau, in the federal riding of Roberval, as a result of the recommendations of the Task Force on Tax Benefits for Northern and Isolated Areas.

Mr. Speaker, your petitioners reject the conclusions of the task force and want to see Chibougamau recognized as an isolated area, as defined under the present tax benefit system.

[*English*]

ABORTION

Mr. Ross Harvey (Edmonton East): Mr. Speaker, despite the vote taken in the House a week ago today, I would like to present a petition signed by 215 residents of Edmonton, almost all of whom are women, that points out that the choice to bear children or not to bear children is a matter of personal choice, not criminal law.

The petitioners point out that the Canadian Medical Association already has guidelines and regulations in place concerning abortion and that criminal sanctions do nothing to address the reasons why women seek abortions or to reduce the numbers of unwanted pregnancies.

Wherefore, the petitioners call on Parliament to refrain from imposing any criminal sanctions against abortion.

I present this, Mr. Speaker, because I am certain the matter will return to the House.

[*Translation*]

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Mac Harb (Ottawa Centre): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, it is a pleasure to rise in the House to present a petition signed by Canadians who are opposed to the government's GST proposal.

Your petitioners call upon this House to reject the GST proposal again, as soon as it comes back to the House.

• (1120)

[*English*]

VIA RAIL

Mr. Lyle Kristiansen (Kootenay West—Revelstoke): Mr. Speaker, I rise with some pride to present a petition on behalf of over 200 Canadians and others from around the world. They have forwarded a petition pointing out that the city of Revelstoke, as a result of the abandonment of the VIA Rail The Canadian train through the Rocky Mountains, has become truly isolated due both to winter closures as a result of avalanches and the fact that there is no scheduled air service to that community.

They point out that the discontinuance puts more vehicles on the Trans-Canada Highway through Rogers Pass. This highway is already close to capacity in summer months and will require twinning, at great expense to the people of Canada.

They further point out that the discontinuance will put more vehicles on highways passing through Glacier and Mount Revelstoke National Parks causing great environmental damage to these ecological reserves. They further point out that the discontinuance will deny that community in the province of B.C., revenue from the tourist traffic the passenger train carries.

Mr. Speaker, I point out that in addition to almost 200 signatures from throughout the west Kootenays in British Columbia, there are further signatories from Grey Town, New Zealand; Perth, Australia; Nabari City, Michigan; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Washington, D.C.; New York, New York; London, Ontario; Alberta, throughout Saskatchewan; Seattle, Washington; and Portland, Oregon. There is a great demand for this service and the petitioners ask that that rail line through the Rocky Mountains be re-instituted.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, I have the duty to table again today a petition signed by several Canadians from Newfoundland who would like to tell the House how they would not like to see the goods and services tax imposed by the government. The tax will impose upon all Canadians an extra 7

per cent on all their goods and services purchased after January 1, 1991.

They would like to tell the government and Parliament that they object strongly to this imposition on their goods and services and that they believe it is an unprecedented tax grab from the pockets of Canadians. This government has already increased taxes 31 times since it took power and the effect of this new tax will cause higher inflation, probably higher interest rates than we have at this time and most likely, higher unemployment. They would like to see this tax scrapped absolutely.

YOUNG OFFENDERS ACT

Mr. Stan Keyes (Hamilton West): Mr. Speaker, I have the duty, as the elected member for Hamilton West, pursuant to Standing Order 36, to present to this House a petition that is certified correct by the Clerk of Petitions. It is signed by thousands of residents who reside in and around Hamilton.

The petitioners call upon Parliament to revise the laws of Canada to replace the Young Offenders Act with an updated Juvenile Delinquents Act with a lowered maximum age of 13 years.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mrs. Diane Marleau (Sudbury): Mr. Speaker, today I stand to present a petition signed by 150 residents of Cavendish, Newfoundland. They are extremely worried about the proposed goods and services tax. They ask that this government reject it. They feel that it is extremely regressive and that the regions of this country will suffer far more than some of the other more centralized regions. They ask that the government go back to the drawing board and come up with something that is far more equitable for all the people of Canada.

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, I have the privilege to present a petition which has been certified correct under Standing Order 36. It is signed by 41 residents of Newfoundland, from Islington, Whiteway and Heart's Delight.

These Canadians are complaining about the government's plans with respect to the goods and services tax. They recognize, notwithstanding the denials from the Minister of Finance and his colleague, the Minister of State for Finance, that the goods and services tax will not affect the price of food, but in fact that it will affect the price of food in their communities because of transportation costs. They object to this tax and call upon Parliament to reject it.

Mr. Brian Tobin (Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte): Mr. Speaker, I have the pleasure of presenting a petition pursuant to Standing Order 36 on behalf of 34 residents of Sunnyside in the great province of Newfoundland. They call upon the Government of Canada and the Prime Minister to withdraw the goods and services tax. The residents of Sunnyside in the province of Newfoundland believe the tax is a hidden tax and proposes a huge new tax burden, in particular, on middle and low-income Canadians. The tax is inflationary and is neither in the best interests of Canada nor its citizens.

The signatories in question ask the government to withdraw this tax immediately.

Mr. Ron MacDonald (Dartmouth): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to present petitions from over 1,400 individuals from the Dartmouth, Eastern Passage, Preston and Coal Harbour area of Nova Scotia.

The petitioners ask the government to withdraw its regressive, ill-conceived goods and services tax proposal. These Canadians feel very strongly that this tax, which is a hidden tax, is unfair to low and middle-income Canadians. They believe it is a very regressive and unprecedented tax grab and urge the government to withdraw this measure immediately and to come forward with real tax reform which helps all the people across the country.

Mrs. Shirley Maheu (Saint-Laurent—Cartierville): Mr. Speaker, I would like to present a petition on behalf of several residents of Newfoundland, pursuant to Standing Order 36, whereby they request that the government scrap the GST which will be applied to virtually everything they buy. Now we have just found out that it will be applied to everything they buy, including essential food items in smaller stores. The tax will present an unfair hardship on low and middle-income Canadians.

VETERANS AFFAIRS

Mr. Bob Wood (Nipissing): Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege this morning to present a petition from the residents of Nipissing pursuant to Standing Order 36. The petitioners are upset that the government has seen fit to introduce charges that will reduce housekeeping services to veterans and subsequently increase the cost of long-term care. There are over 150 signatures. They

feel that the veterans have already given service to this country and should not be targeted by these measures.

* * *

[*Translation*]

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

(Questions answered orally are indicated by an asterisk.)

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, question No. 290 will be answered today:

[*Text*]

DRILLING OPERATIONS IN ECUADOR

Question No. 290—**Mrs. Stewart:**

1. Is Petro Canada exploring for oil in the Ecuador Amazonian rain forest and, if so, for each oil well (*a*) what is the composition of the drilling muds, including all additives (*b*) what were the results of the chemical analyses (i) of the sediments settled out from the drilling muds and the formation water in the sumps (ii) of the formation water pumped into the sumps (iii) after water treatment and release from the sumps (*c*) were the sediments tested for heavy metals and if so, which ones (*d*) what was the ph readings and oxygen content of the water released (i) how do these readings compare to baseline studies of streams in the vicinity?

2. Is a fish impact study being conducted at a well, and if so, when will it be completed?

Hon. Arthur Jacob Epp (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Petro-Canada reports as follows:

1. To date, Petro-Canada has drilled two wells in the Oriente Basin in Ecuador. Both of these wellsites were constructed and operated according to industry approved, environmental standards which are accepted internationally.

1. (a)—(b) During the drilling operations at both sites all fluids and drill cuttings were contained in drilling sumps dug into laterite clay and lined with an impermeable plastic liner. The management and testing of the mud system was carried out by a leading international mud service company, according to standards which are among the most stringent in the world.

In some cases, geological formations contain low concentrations of heavy metals. However, analysis of the drilling mud and sumps at both locations show the absence of these metals.

Government standards determine the concentration of chemicals that can be released with the fluid portion of drilling muds from the sump into the surrounding environment. If these fluid components do not meet the necessary standards, the sump is chemically treated to neutralize or precipitate out the offending chemicals. The sump is then dewatered, again according to standards, to prevent site erosion, disturbance of local vegetation and pollution of surface water sources.

Following the dewatering of the sump, the remaining mud and cutting components, contained in the liner, are covered over and the sump is capped and contoured to prevent erosion and invasion of surface water.

The procedures described above, including the sump construction procedures and chemical analyses of the mud, were carried out at both sites. One sump has been closed in and the wellsite restored to facilitate natural revegatation. The other sump remains open and secured as Petro-Canada develops their plans for potential further work at the wellsite. Once these decisions are made and necessary work is conducted, this second sump will be restored.

2. Petro-Canada continues to study natural revegetation as well as fish and water quality in nearby local streams to ensure that the corporation's programs are successful.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, I ask that the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

Mr. Speaker: Shall the remaining questions be allowed to stand?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*Translation*]

RAILWAY ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill C-26, an Act to amend the Railway Act (grain and flour subsidies), as reported with an amendment from a legislative committee.

SPEAKER'S RULING

Mr. Speaker: There are seven motions on the Notice Paper for the report stage of Bill C-26, an Act to amend the Railway Act (grain and flour subsidies).

Motions Nos. 1, 3 and 6, standing in the name of the hon. member for Lambton-Middlesex, are in order and will be grouped together for the purposes of debate.

[*English*]

The intent of these motions is to continue the charge already provided for in the present or existing legislation, namely, Section 281 of the Railway Act, for another five years.

A vote on Motion No. 1 will be applied to Motions Nos. 3 and 6.

A motion similar to Motion No. 2 was moved, debated and negatived in the legislative committee which considered this bill. The intent of this motion in amendment is to continue a charge presently in the statute law with respect to the ports of Halifax, Saint John and West Saint John. This was the principle and intent of the amendment moved in legislative committee.

• (1130)

Thus, I must say that, pursuant to Standing Order 76(5), this motion cannot be selected.

Motions Nos. 4, 5, and 7, standing in the name of the hon. member for Moose Jaw—Lake Centre, delete Clauses 2, 3 and 4 of the bill. Such motions are in order at this stage of our proceedings and these three motions will be grouped for debate.

A vote on Motion No. 4 will be applied to Motions Nos. 5 and 7.

MEASURE TO AMEND

Mr. Speaker: I will propose Motions Nos. 1, 3 and 6 to the House.

Hon. Ralph Ferguson (Lambton—Middlesex) moved:

Motion No. 1

That Bill C-26 be amended in Clause 1 by striking out lines 5 to 27 at page 1 and lines 1 to 22 at page 2 and substituting the following therefor:

"1.(1) Section 281 of the *Railway Act* is amended by adding thereto, immediately after subsection (2) thereof, the following subsection:

"(2.1) Subsection (2) expires on April 1, 1995."

Motion No. 3

That Bill C-26 be amended in Clause 1 by striking out lines 23 and 24 at page 2 and substituting the following therefor:

"(2) Section 281 of the said Act is repealed on April 1, 1995."

Motion No. 6

That Bill C-26 be amended in Clause 4 by striking out lines 14 to 18 at page 3 and substituting the following therefor:

"4. Sections 2 and 3 shall come into force on April 1, 1995."

He said: Mr. Speaker, these amendments at report stage of Bill C-26, the at and east legislation, if passed, will delay the removal of this program until 1995. This will fulfil several objectives. It will allow those organizations which are dependent upon these rail rates to plan rational alternative routes and methods to export grain and flour in order to maintain both an equitable return and their competitiveness in international markets.

This bill, as it stands, would adversely affect both the returns of producers and their international competitiveness. In fact, this has already happened. The benefits of the at and east legislation were withdrawn a year ago. The harvest of wheat will start less than one month from now in Essex County in southwestern Ontario. This has left the Ontario Wheat Growers Marketing Board and, indeed, the wheat producers of Canada in a very difficult position.

The government has chosen to withdraw the legislation without any thought to the circumstances or the difficulties it has imposed upon the producers and the local elevators, and the ability of the Ontario Wheat Producers' Marketing Board to move that product into the market during the year.

In the past, the Ontario Wheat Producers' Growers Marketing Board, through its pooling system, would purchase the wheat from the farmers, giving them an initial payment upon delivery at the elevators. It would then store that wheat for a number of months if necessary in Bay Port elevators at Georgian Bay. This would allow them to supply Atlantic Canada with wheat or flour during the winter months when the seaway was frozen up and also to export.

Consequently the elevators at Halifax and the port of Saint John have been adversely affected by this legislation as well. The domino effect or the chain reaction to this withdrawal has vibrated across the eastern prairies and all of eastern Canada.

It is ironic to note that the government is now talking about an alternative program, but it is too late. If it was going to have an alternative program, it should have been in place before the legislation was withdrawn. In the meantime we see elevators being demolished or slated for demolition in the Georgian Bay area in Port McNicoll, Midland, and Owen Sound. While these elevators may have been built a long time ago, the one at Port McNicoll in particular, they are still state of the art in terms of their ability to unload large volumes of grain and load it onto rail cars in very short order.

It is interesting to note that of all the witnesses who appeared before the legislative committee, not one agreed with the withdrawal of the legislation. Yet, when the minister appeared before the committee he stated: "Well, the wheat still moved last year." What was not considered was the fact that it had to move at a price which resulted in a lower price to the producer through the pooling system. This impact, when spread through the whole system, is very large. To top it all off, the government announced that the initial payment prices for wheat for this year at approximately $115 per tonne.

So again, the withdrawal of the legislation has been another kick in the pants to producers who are already down with returns that will not result in a profit on investment, management, and risk. The government is withdrawing it without a full examination of the widespread impact it is going to have on our total Canadian economy.

Once those Bay Port elevators are demolished, they will be gone for all time. Consequently, we have to move very quickly. Delaying the implementation of this bill until 1995 may put a hold on that demolition and put the legislation back into place to enable us to move our product into export position, particularly to supply the Caribbean market in the winter months. That market has been held by Canada to a large extent for many years.

The Ontario Wheat Board alone moved between 150,000 to 200,000 tonnes under this legislation. That amount of product moving through the Atlantic seaports ensured the viability of those port elevators and also the flour mills.

• (1140)

One of the witnesses pointed out that, without CP Rail's main line which services the Saint John grain elevator, "not only the grain elevator would be finished but also many of the facilities that move product in and out of the port of Saint John".

This is another one of the domino impacts of the withdrawal of the at and east legislation. It will put additional hardships on the port of Saint John. Without the movement of grain through it, it may no longer be a viable port. Port officials pointed out that they intend to mothball their grain elevator. Anyone with any experience at all in the industry will know that an elevator can only stay in mothballs for approximately two to three years before it deteriorates to the point where it is no longer a serviceable working grain elevator.

Consequently, the port authorities are quite correct when they point out that this could very well be the death knell for the port of Saint John which has been exporting wheat for a couple of hundred years.

The port of Halifax and its flour mills are also very upset and concerned about the end of the at and east legislation. With these amendments before us today we are responding to their request to keep it operational, not only to maintain its status as a viable port but on behalf of the flour mills there which produce flour for export as well as domestic use.

Therefore, I am putting forward these amendments to delay the demise of at and east programs until 1995. If the government is sincere about coming up with alternative programs, perhaps this will allow it the opportunity to do that and to undo the damage done by the withdrawal of this legislation in the budget of April, 1989.

A tremendous number of jobs have been lost. In addition to those lost in rail transportation, there have been jobs lost in the elevators in the Bay Ports on Georgian Bay, and in Saint John and Halifax. There will also be jobs lost if the flour mills are forced to close.

The United States has indicated its intention to subsidize the export of about 3 million tonnes of flour this year. Their Export Enhancement Program is undermining the price of wheat on the world markets. The price of wheat does not reflect that world supplies are at the lowest level since 1971 to 1973. Yet, we in Canada are having to bear the brunt of that, not only with the lowering of world prices but also as a result of the government withdrawing the programs that made this a viable industry in Atlantic Canada, central Canada, and the eastern prairies.

Therefore, I urge the House to support this amendment to assist the people across Canada and maintain the flows of product that we have been accustomed to in the past.

Mr. Rod Laporte (Moose Jaw—Lake Centre): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to speak in favour of this motion. It is clear through the work of the legislative committee on this bill that the government has not done a proper study of the impact of this legislation, it has not looked at what will be the full implications not only for the maritimes but for the whole grain industry in this country.

We had a number of groups before our committee, including the Minister of Transport and representatives from the Department of Transport. It was very clear when they were before this committee that they had not done a full evaluation of the reports that had been in front of them. They said unequivocally, in fact, that there had been no reports that were unfavourable to the government's position.

In fact, as has been said many times before, as early as 1985 the Atlantic Provinces Transportation Commission put an alternative before this government. It said that the at and east must be changed, that the at and east was not adequate as it was and that there should be some changes, that although the ultimate purpose it was serving was valuable it was actually costing the government too much money. It put a proposal in front of the government, not once but twice in 1985. Upon asking the departmental representatives what sort of evaluation they had done on it, they admitted that they had taken only a very cursory look at it and in fact they had not even had the courtesy to respond fully to the Atlantic Provinces Transportation Commission.

The fact is that the removal of this program is going to have some wide implications. That has been very clear. We had Dover Flour Mills before our committee. It is the only flour mill on the Atlantic seaboard. To make things clear, this bill is affecting Dover Flour Mills. Dover Flour Mills has no intention of shutting down. It is a very efficient mill and should be commended for the work it is doing to maintain that mill in Atlantic Canada. But as a result of this bill it has lost a commercial export market. Its domestic market is still doing very well but it has lost a commercial export market. Its profits have been eroding and it does rely on the Halifax elevator remaining open in order for it to remain open.

The loss of the at and east, combined with the loss of the feed freight assistance on mill feeds, has had a major impact on the whole agriculture industry in the maritimes. When the Atlantic Provinces Transportation Commission was before the committee it highlighted again the fact that it was going to cost Atlantic Canada $27 million and hundreds of jobs and that it was going to have an impact on diversification in the maritimes.

We heard from people in the agricultural industry who indicated that the loss of the Halifax elevator would have a devastating effect on the whole livestock and poultry industry in the maritimes.

The city of Saint John was before the committee and outlined some other concerns. The fact that the Saint John elevator has already closed has cost a number of jobs in that city. The line that was used to haul grain to Saint John is becoming more and more questionable. We in the west have experienced rail line abandonment for some time and the maritimes are now starting to experience that same problem. If that line to Saint John is removed, and it is becoming less viable for the railway, it will have a major impact on the city of Saint John.

The port of Halifax appeared before the committee and expressed similar concerns about the loss of the at and east program and the possible closure of the Halifax elevator.

The longshoremen appeared before us. They are very concerned because their workers are losing jobs. They have workers with families who are trying to make ends meet who simply do not have work. It is not because they do not want to work, it is not because they are not ready to work, it is simply because the jobs have disappeared because this government, without thinking, has removed a program and is affecting the livelihood of many people in Atlantic Canada.

• (1150)

The Canadian Wheat Board was before us and said that the loss of the ports of Halifax and Saint John will mean the loss of the only ice-free ports on the Atlantic seaboard. If those ports are lost it could mean the loss of sales. As the representative from the Canadian Wheat Board indicated, countries with warm climates and warm waters do not want to go up the St. Lawrence during the winter to the St. Lawrence River ports because they do not want to deal with the ice. In fact, they like the idea of coming to an ice-free port because they are not used to dealing with ice and they do not want to deal with it. If they have the choice of going to an ice-free port or dealing with the St. Lawrence River, they may well go somewhere else.

The Canadian Wheat Board has expressed that the loss of these ports takes away one marketing element that it uses. As we know, this country needs all the help it can get in marketing grain. The Canadian Wheat Board, which is an institution that has done wonders for the Canadian grain industry needs all the help it can get.

The issue boils down to the elevators at Saint John and Halifax. The question that must be asked is if the government is going to remove this program what is it going to put in its place? It has offered nothing. It did not listen to what the APTC had to say. It has offered nothing to put in its place.

I have found this experience very frustrating because the government, despite being hit over the head with information, ignored it and bullheadedly moved ahead with its agenda, which is not always clear to all Canadians.

One thing that was satisfying was that the work we in the New Democratic Party and others have done on this bill has forced the government to recognize the devastating impact that this bill is going to have. As a result, it has appointed a study to look at the future viability of the elevators at the ports of Halifax and Saint John.

It is great that the government is concerned about the elevators at Halifax and Saint John. It is too bad that it would not have been interested about 18 months ago and looked at some real alternatives to this program so that today, instead of debating the demise of the elevator at Saint John and the potential closure of the elevator at Halifax, we could be debating the very logical and well thought out proposal put forth by the Atlantic Provinces Transportation Commission. A vast majority in each party in this House would favour that sort of proposal. Instead, the government is being bullheaded and is going ahead without any real thought for the consequences of its action.

It is only the work of members of this party, the Atlantic Provinces Transportation Commission and others, that has forced this government to realize that the passage of this bill will have a devastating impact on regional development. The promotion of agriculture in Atlantic Canada is important to its economy. At least we got the government to recognize that. It is really sad that the Saint John elevator is already closed. By the time this study is finished Halifax may be closed. Everything is in limbo. Everything is up in the air.

I want to remind the government that we have to keep in mind that regional development is an important factor in this country. It has been a factor since Confederation. If the government is not going to consider regional development, if it is going to consider only the bottom line, we are going to have problems in Atlantic Canada, Saskatchewan and other regions of the country that do not have a great population base but are part of this Confederation and deserve the consideration of this government.

In closing, I would like to remind the government that it has a duty to all regions of this country to make sure that there is a fair opportunity for all, to make sure that every Canadian, no matter where he or she may live in this country, has the opportunity to work, to raise a family, to make a living and to live in a way that is satisfactory to all of us in Canada.

Mr. Pat Nowlan (Annapolis Valley—Hants): Mr. Speaker, I also want to contribute to this debate and I am not happy to do so. Frankly, it is a little embarrassing.

I listened very attentively to the remarks of the hon. member for Lambton—Middlesex in explaining his amendments. For members on all sides who do not appreciate the history of Bill C-26 and the effect of the amendments, what the hon. member for Lambton—Middlesex said in very even, objective, non-provocative prose is absolutely correct. The member for Moose Jaw—Lake Centre, who a little younger and a little more partisan, got pejorative. He said things that could excite one and perhaps the facts would cause one to get excited. I certainly do not take exception to anything he said.

That is the dilemma that this member and, frankly, all Atlantic members are in. Bill C-26 is a retroactive piece of legislation which I guarantee 90 per cent of the members in this House do not even pretend to understand. It is about something that we have heard of from time to time, the at and east. It is to do with the compensatory rates at and east of the port of Buffalo. I do not have all of my file here, but I was here in the opposition when a fellow called Pickersgill, whose name is now used in the great constitutional debate, spoke on something called the National Transportation Act which set up the Canadian Transport Commission. He became the first chairman of that commission. I remember him here in the front row of this House explaining the fundamental implications of the National Transportation Act on the Canadian Transport Commission.

People think he comes from Newfoundland. He was the member for Bonavista—Twillingate but he was born and grew up in Manitoba. He became the private secretary to Mackenzie King. That was really his interesting contribution to the politics of this country long before he came out of retirement and has been vocal in certain issues that are presently confronting our First Ministers at the Conference Centre.

Mr. Pickersgill, the Minister of Transport at the time, right in that debate said that the National Transportation Act will do many things and he appeared before the committee. We have written into it a little clause, Bill C-26, a simple little amendment to the Railway Act which in effect helps to pay for the export of flour and grain through Atlantic ports. It helps to pay by giving the difference between the compensatory rate and a rate frozen at that time. The history has been that this is a subsidy of somewhere between $25 million and $30 million without taking into account all the multiplier effects and benefits to the ports which the hon. member for Lambton—Middlesex mentioned and/or the ports of Atlantic Canada, the elevators and the employment there too.

I have to restrain myself because I am very bothered and somewhat embarrassed that we are proceeding with this bill when even government members admit now that the Department of Agriculture is going to have a study of the Halifax and Saint John ports to assess, through the representatives of the Atlantic Provinces Transportation Commission and Grains 2000, what effect the removal of this subsidy is going to have on Atlantic Canada. As has been mentioned here already, the Atlantic Provinces Transportation Commission, knowing full well that there might have been more economical ways to get export flour and grain off-shore, years ago suggested changes to the Railway Act.

• (1200)

My problem and I would think the problem of any Atlantic Canadian member is that since 1985, the Atlantic Provinces Transportation Commission in a very unrestrained, unprovocative way has been in communication with the Department of Transport and/or the Department of Agriculture on something called offsets. They have said: "Look, we will agree. We understand the need to change the program because times have moved on. If there are offsets, then we really cannot fight too hard the removal or change in the at and east subsidy."

When the last program was brought before the Standing Committee on Transportation in, I think, February of this year, the suggested change was going to be about $10 million. In effect, it said: "Give us $10 million and we can still make sure we have the export of flour and grain at the ports of Halifax and Saint John. All the ports and elevators along the way will stay in operation." The problem now is that while the bill has the very invidious retroactive effect of July 1989, the government admits through a press release of May 18 that it is going to have a study.

Without getting too provocative at this stage in terms of all that has happened with at and east and all the offsets, the amendment of the hon. member for Lambton—Middlesex to put this off until 1995 would give time for all the studies that should have been made before the decision to cut the subsidy.

The only real way to get to members in the House and the bureaucracy—hopefully many of them are watching this debate—is this. What happened is that some bureaucrat in the Department of Finance who was looking for fiscal control and subsidy reduction picked on something that no one really understands.

Mr. Speaker, I know you hail from west of the lakes. You have that great bread basket of grain between the lakes and Alberta. Then, you go into the lowlands of Alberta where they grow grain and raise cattle. There are the Rockies, which are beautiful. The country is beautiful.

In a budget bill, without consultation with affected parties, a Minister of Finance would not dare to attack, reduce and/or eliminate—which is what is being done with at and east—the Western Grain Transportation Act. The only way to put this into perspective is to state that this is our mini "western grain transportation act" in Atlantic Canada. It has been there for more than 20-some years.

Why should we accept this quietly as fiscal control and deficit reduction when there is another subsidy program for western grain going to Thunder Bay and in particular to the port of Vancouver? Nothing is being done about that, except that it is being studied. At least it is being studied. Of course, under the act it has to be studied before the government moves. There may be very necessary changes made.

Anyone involved in that debate knows there has been a continual question of whether the money should go to the railways or to the farmers. At least it is being studied.

My time is pretty well up. We are moving retroactively with this bill. This amendment will just delay the matter for two years while all the studies are being completed. It should have started anyway.

Certainly, I fully support the amendment and hope that other members will too. Quite frankly, it fits in with what the government is thinking. It is not a great defiance of a government. We should sometimes have cross court and cross aisle areas of concern where members from a region can join together. The easy thing is for a member to avoid the vote on this measure. As members know, one takes parliamentary flu from time to time to avoid a vote on a matter of general interest where perhaps one is not settled in his or her mind. On something that is so precise, that so affects Atlantic Canada and also transportation, with which I am somewhat involved, I cannot stay silent on this bill. I support the amendment and certainly intend to vote for it.

Mr. Maurice A. Dionne (Miramichi): Mr. Speaker, if you would like, I would be happy to sit down and allow my colleague, the hon. member for Annapolis Valley—Hants, to carry on for a while because he certainly made a lot of sense.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Dionne: Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. members: No.

Mr. Dionne: In any case, this is not a joking matter. It is a matter of very serious concern to Atlantic Canadians. Before the smoke clears, it will be a matter of very serious concern to this government, particularly members on the government side from Atlantic Canada who have not stood up and fought against this silliness. In fact, it may even be more cynical than that, it may be the punishment that this government wants to subject upon Atlantic Canadians because of the way they voted in the last election.

I had the opportunity to speak on second reading of this bill some months ago. I simply want to reiterate some of what has been said with regard to the importance of the at and east to Atlantic Canada. We had two grain elevators in Atlantic Canada, one of which has now been mothballed because of the action of this government with this legislation. We have one elevator left in Halifax. It is the only source of flour milled in Atlantic Canada. Without it, it is at least highly unlikely that there will be any milling of flour in Atlantic Canada.

The livestock industry in Atlantic Canada is vital to the agricultural sector. Without elevators or access to those elevators for western grain, it is highly unlikely that the beef and dairy industry will remain as we know it in Atlantic Canada. We do not yet have sufficient grain productivity in Atlantic Canada to meet our needs. I am talking about feed grains, not just flour. The government is hitting us with a double whammy. Not only is it going to destroy our elevators and flour milling operations, but

it will very likely destroy the feed grains production in Atlantic Canada and perhaps the beef and dairy industry.

There are very heavy implications, yet this government took absolutely no notice of those implications in its head-long and foolish attempt to do more of its cost cutting in the area of Canada where the last thing we need is cost cutting.

I want to read a small quote. This was said before the committee by Mr. Keith Russell, Director of Atlantic Farmers Council. He said: "Mr. Chairman, the organization I represent is a co-ordinating regional organization representing the four provincial federations of agriculture and the agricultural co-operatives in Atlantic Canada. As such, we can speak for more than 80 per cent of the livestock and poultry producers in the Atlantic region which is an industry with a farm gate value of $500 million in 1989."

• (1210)

Mr. Speaker, $500 million is a lot of money to Atlantic Canadians. That might not seem too much to Ontario or some of the other industrialized areas, but $500 million is vital in Atlantic Canada. It is even more vital now that this government has decided to cut back on its regional development efforts and on other subsidies to Atlantic Canada.

I want to read another quote: "I am told that the elimination of this subsidy could mean a loss to Canada of something in the order of $28 million worth of value-added processing activities or a total economic spin-off of something in the order of $65 million."

That statement was made in this House on March 29, 1976, by none other than our esteemed Deputy Prime Minister, who ought to know something about grain production, farming and the terrible disservice that this proposed legislation will do to Atlantic Canada. I am making a plea today to this government. If it has any sense of propriety left, if it has any sense of fairness left, if it has any thought at all for Atlantic Canada, it should withdraw this stupidity and go back to what we had in terms of elevators and in terms of grain movement in this country and stop trying to destroy the grain, poultry, livestock and flour industries in Atlantic Canada.

Mr. Lyle Kristiansen (Kootenay West—Revelstoke): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise for a few moments this afternoon to address Bill C-26, which would eliminate the at and east grain subsidy.

Some members may wonder why somebody from the mountains of British Columbia is speaking on this subject. Quite frankly, my own area of the Kootenays was brought into Canada by a contract with the people and the Government of Canada at the time of a strong secession movement. The West Kootenays were going to follow the normal flow of our economics and were seriously considering joining with Spokane and Washington state. There was an agreement to build the Crow's Nest railway and to have certain rates apply in order to keep us as a part of this country so that we could make our contribution to this act of political will that was and still is called Canada.

This is not a dissimilar sort of situation. Once again we see this government with its dogmatic theology of the private market that, come hell or high water, is determined to let loose those private economic forces to do what they will regardless of the impact on the regions of this country and the very fabric of this nation.

To briefly explain to anybody who happens to be listening, Bill C-26, the at and east freight assistance program, pays a subsidy to the railways on export grain and flour moving by specified routes through eastern Canadian ports. The rates paid by the shipper have been frozen since 1960 with respect to export grain and 1966 with respect to flour.

At the next stage in this discussion my colleagues in the New Democratic Party will be moving an amendment to this bill to set the freight rates for grain and flour shipments to Halifax and Saint John, New Brunswick at 5 per cent higher than the rate for shipments to Quebec City. This is similar in effect to a proposal made by the Atlantic Provinces Transportation Commission. The idea is reducing the cost of the program while ensuring the ports of Halifax and Saint John remain competitive.

The amendment currently before us on behalf of our colleagues in the Liberal Party is calling for the at and east to be left as is. It puts me in mind of the Liberal attitude to almost everything else around here, which seems to be: "Don't touch a thing, don't make a suggestion, feel no sense of responsibility to do something to bring costs a little more in line, don't have any innovative proposals or compromise proposals, just say

no". That attitude is as unjustifiable in this case as it is in the case of the goods and services tax. If people want to say no, they have some responsibility to come up with some alternatives. My New Democratic Party colleagues will do that later in this debate.

Back in the real world outside this Chamber, just what is happening? Since the at and east subsidy ended on January 31 due to one of the provisions of the bill which ends it retroactively, the grain elevator at Saint John, New Brunswick closed on February 28 with a loss of 90 jobs. The elevator in Halifax is in trouble and may be forced to close. The closure of the Halifax elevator will affect the economy of the Atlantic region in several ways.

First, the Halifax elevator plays a vital role as a grain storage facility. Without it Dover Flour Mills, the only flour mill in Atlantic Canada, would probably be forced to close.

Second, without the Halifax elevator shipping feed grains by lake vessel through the port of Halifax, the only competitive alternative to rail transport, would no longer be available. Based on past experience this would result in an increase in the rail rates for domestic feed grains that livestock and poultry producers in the maritimes depend on.

Third, local breweries will face similar problems as they will no longer be able to use water transport for malt barley.

Closure of the grain elevators alone will result in the loss of 573 jobs at the ports of Halifax and Saint John. In Saint John 90 jobs; Halifax, 483 jobs. Another 250 indirect jobs may be lost as well. The closure of Dover Flour Mills would result in another 45 jobs being lost and the loss of a local market for producers of milling wheat.

Livestock and poultry producers in the maritimes are already at a disadvantage when competing with Ontario and Quebec producers. In the opinion of the Atlantic Provinces Transportation Commission any feed cost increases could place those industries in jeopardy.

What has been the government's response? In response to political pressure from many sectors, including the New Democratic Party but certainly not solely—a lot of people have been involved, particularly many from Atlantic Canada—the Deputy Prime Minister and the minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board announced on May 16 that Agriculture Canada would conduct a study on the future of the grain elevators in the Atlantic region. The study will look at the Halifax elevator, the Saint John elevator, a proposed elevator in Summerside, and how they can be made more viable.

When he appeared before the committee on May 30, the Minister of Transport stated that the alternatives to eliminating the at and east put forward by the Atlantic Provinces Transportation Commission had not been studied. They had not even been studied and still we are getting this legislation in spite of the fact that they had been received over a year ago. He also refused to commit the government to any measures to offset the effects of cancelling the at and east.

There is also an impact on western Canada if this bill should go ahead. The loss of the at and east will mean higher freight rates for western Canada in grain, and flour mills outside central Canada will be hard hit because they will no longer be able to take advantage of the program to ship their flour.

At a time when we have the first ministers and the Prime Minister meeting just a few blocks away to try to salvage something of this dream called Canada—this active political will from the last century called Canada—it simply does not make sense for us to pretend that this country was ever a "natural economic unit".

This nation was built in defiance of all economic reality based on the classic definitions of a market economy and how it works. Hopefully some day, with changing demographics and population, it will be easier to service all our parts and give us all a chance at a good and productive life without subsidies.

• (1220)

However, you cannot take a small number of people spread over 4,000 miles or 5,000 miles in a narrow ribbon and expect to operate in the same way as if you were shipping from Chicago to New York, both major population areas. That is not what this country is about.

It appears that this is simply one more action of a government which, whether it is dealing with Canada Post or dismantling the social safety net with the scrap-

ping of unemployment insurance, the ending of VIA Rail facilities, or the dismantling of the Crow rate without anything viable to take its place, is determined to put doctrine before reality and to put blind faith in Friedmanite economics ahead of the welfare and the survival of this nation. There is too much at stake with all the discussion going on today, as I said, just a few blocks away.

It is about time we realized that there is more to this country than a dollar and cent sign. We believe we can build and maintain a country that is worthwhile living in, that has room for some compassion, and that believes not only in equality but that there ought to be more equal treatment of all Canadians and the several regions that make up this country.

We will support this amendment by the Liberal Party, even though it offers nothing new. We will be proposing our own amendment today, depending perhaps on how the debate goes, in order to try to bring some kind of modification and keep the basic system alive while adjusting to some current economic realities.

This is an important bill, probably much more important than the public recognizes. The issues central to this bill are the same issues that are central to the existence and the survival of Canada. That is why we will oppose the bill, that is why we will support any amendment that attempts to stop it, and that is why we will be proposing our own suggestions to keep this program alive, to keep these communities alive, to keep the regions alive, and to keep Canada alive.

Mr. Ron MacDonald (Dartmouth): Mr. Speaker, I rise again to participate in the debate, this time at report stage of Bill C-26, the at and east legislation.

When I spoke the last time I clearly articulated, after much research and listening to a lot of people in my region, the economic impact of the loss of the at and east on the ports of Halifax and Saint John. In addition, a tremendous economic dislocation will take place in the agricultural industry and related shipping industries in the port of Halifax and the port of Saint John.

I was here today to listen to the remarks of my colleague, the hon. member for Annapolis Valley—Hants. It would do well for all members of this place to sit down and listen to a member of his stature when he speaks on such issues and when he appeals to the House for some cross the centre aisle exchange when bills are bad bills and affect people across this country negatively.

I was exceptionally happy to see him holding firm to the position he espoused in the House the last time he spoke on this bill. Unfortunately he was not here for the vote that day. I hope he will be here for the vote today, because what he said is that this government has missed the mark when it comes to dealing with the at and east bill. More important, I believe he said that he would be supporting the amendments we are currently debating because they are good amendments.

Since the government introduced the regulations which would have done away with the at and east subsidy in Atlantic Canada in June 1989, the government has been so hell-bent on going through with its proposals, no matter how badly flawed they are and no matter where and how poignant the responses are in the communities affected, that it just steamrolls whenever it can.

When I participated in debate the last time, my hon. colleague from Halifax West took exception to the fact that I thought his comments expressed the certainty this bill would pass anyway so let us just deal with the consequences. I did not hold that view then and I certainly do not hold it now. This is not a *fait accompli*. This is a parliamentary democracy and in a parliamentary democracy the government introduces legislation.

After full and thorough debate the bill goes into committee and the committee reports. Hopefully, if the bill is flawed, it will be amended to make it better legislation. The hon. member for Halifax West does not particularly like the fact that government legislation might be flawed and that even members on his own side of the House can agree with the amendments that have been put forward by my colleague. The hon. member for Annapolis Valley—Hants who happens to be the chairman of the Standing Committee on Transport agrees.

The effect of this amendment is basically to rescue the government. In 1985 the Atlantic Provinces Transportation Commission sent some unsolicited proposals to the government because it heard rumours that the at and east legislation was going to be gutted and that the subsidy would be done away with. Being responsible and trying to ensure that its industry was not terribly dislo-

cated by such an action, it sent some information to the government about some potential offsets.

When the hon. member for Annapolis Valley—Hants spoke last, just a few weeks ago, he indicated that five years later the government had not even responded to the submission from the Atlantic Provinces Transportation Commission. It talked about possible offsets for the at and east. Indeed, on February 19, the Commission slightly revised what it had given to the government in 1985 and sent it in. At the time he spoke about April 30, the government still had not responded.

We went into committee and we heard a lot of individuals during the proceedings. One of the things that we found surprising was that the industry members who were most affected had no question about the negative impact that was going to take place with the sudden loss of the at and east legislation without any consultation by the federal government.

The federal government did not come in and say: "Look, we are rethinking our national transportation policies, and we think that because the at and east is flawed it must change or go." It did not say that. What the government did was come in and say: "It is gone." The hon. member for Halifax West said it best. He said: "It is a *fait accompli*. Whatever this government wants, it gets." That is what was said. It is in *Hansard*. "It is a *fait accompli*." If the government wants it, the government gets it.

The effect of these amendments is to try to rescue the government. What the government did was show government at its worst: it came in with legislation that is fundamentally flawed. It has not undergone the test of consultation with the industry sectors affected, and now it is trying to play catch-up.

It was pretty clear. During the committee hearings I asked Mr. Armitage from the Atlantic Provinces Transportation Commission: "Do you believe the loss of the at and east and the resulting traffic loss may have an impact on the viability of the main line of CN?" In his response, which is in the *Minutes and Evidence of Proceedings*, he said: "I do not think it is going to jeopardize the line, but it will certainly have an impact on the viability of that line."

We talked to Mr. Doering from Dover Mills and asked him whether he was consulted prior to the loss of the at and east. Dover Mills is the only flour mill in eastern Canada. Mr. Doering said: "In terms of what it has done for Dover Mills, first of all were we consulted? No, the industry was not consulted."

I asked Mr. Russell from the Maritime Farmers' Union specifically, because of the lack of consultation and the sudden withdrawal on July 15, 1989 of the at and east regulations, what it would do. I said: "What is it going to do to the grain elevator in Halifax?" We already know that the grain elevator in Saint John has had to close with the resultant loss of jobs and moneys from the local economy there. I said: "Will there be an effect on the agricultural industry in Atlantic Canada?" He said: "I guess the breaking point for us would be if the situation reached the point where the Halifax elevator had to close. It would be Doomsday for us."

Mr. Speaker, 65 per cent of traffic through the very elevator in Halifax, which Mr. Russell says if closed would spell Doomsday for the agricultural industry in Atlantic Canada, is as a result of the at and east legislation and subsidy. What does the government do when it gets itself caught in the wringer—and I will not say any more than that in this place—it comes out with a study. It came out, I believe sometime in March, with a press release. After five years from the point in time that the Atlantic Provinces Transportation Commission stated that if this was going to be eliminated they would have to have some offsets and they would be a leader in this case. Five years after, in an effort of damage control, we have a news release from the Communications Branch of Agriculture Canada which states that we are now going to study it. It states that the study will address concerns about the future of grain handling facilities in the Atlantic region.

• (1230)

This is certainly what you call closing the barn door after you have let the horse out. We heard from witness after witness at the committee that by the time the government has decided to study it, we have already had untold economic devastation in Atlantic Canada. We have already had a grain elevator close in Saint John. We have already lost at least $15 million from the Port of Halifax economy as a result of what it has done.

We heard from Mr. Russell. Mr. Russell says that if the Halifax grain terminal closes the agricultural industry will be put on its knees, and this all after the fact. The government states that it is going to study the impact. It is a little bit of face saving. It is trying to recover some of the negative publicity that it is getting from the sectors down there that are being devastated by this short-sighted piece of legislation.

My colleague has brought forward the three amendments that we are debating today. The effect of the amendments is to further save the government from its own devices, from its own incompetence in this particular case. The effect of the amendments is to make sure that the at and east grain subsidy is still in place for the next five years, so that the government has a chance to do what it should have done back in 1985 when the letter first went in with the proposals from the Atlantic Provinces Transportation Council, and that is to sit down and study the offsets.

It is not good enough, almost a year after it has cut the subsidy, to say that now it will look at the economic consequences. We know what they are. They are devastating. Once a flour mill or a grain terminal closes, or a farmer goes out of business in Atlantic Canada because he does not have access to the same-priced feed, it is too late six months after that to come and say, "My goodness, boys, we made a mistake. We should have put the offsets in before we took the subsidy away".

The other thing that is particular galling to me as a member from Atlantic Canada is that this government is still absolutely hell-bent, whenever it wants to cut, to snip down east first. I guess it wants to see whether, after all the cuts, we still have any blood left in us.

In effect, by putting this at and east legislation through, the government has cut over $40 million. That sounds like a lot of money. The government said it had to get rid of subsidies in the interest of deficit reduction and better management. While I am not suggesting that it should impose cuts elsewhere, it did not treat the rest of the country and the rest of the transportation infrastructure the same way. It did not mention once that it was going to do anything with the Western Grain Transportation Act which has subsidized the movement of grains in the western part of Canada to the tune of over $860 million. Once again, we from the east have to bear the brunt of this government's cuts.

In conclusion, I would urge those from the other side of this House who have listened to the impassioned plea of the Member for Annapolis Valley—Hants to do the right thing for once and vote in favour of these amendments or to defeat this bill.

Hon. Roger C. Simmons (Burin—St. George's): Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to rise and speak for a few minutes on the report stage of Bill C-26, an Act to amend the Railway Act.

I rise principally in support of my colleague, the hon. member for Lambton—Middlesex, who knows infinitely more about this subject than I do and than do most members of this House. As a matter of fact, I would go so far as to say that he knows a fair amount more about it than the man who happens to be current minister responsible for this bill.

My colleague, the hon. member for Lambton—Middlesex was all too briefly Minister of Agriculture. Had he been able to stay there longer, this entire business would be in much better shape than it is in today.

I sense that some of the government members are rousing themselves to the importance of this particular bill, and that is encouraging. I say to my friends opposite that they would do well to have a look at today's Order Paper and to read the good sense which is embodied in the three amendments put forward by my friend from Lambton—Middlesex, the essence of which would be to delay this entire bill.

In the circumstances, it is a very good idea that we at least put this legislation on hold for four or five years. After all, let us keep in mind that in the last two or three weeks the government itself has seen fit to launch a study. Why prejudge the results of that study by acting precipitously here at this particular time? Why not follow the advice of my friend, the hon. member for Lambton—Middlesex, and put this whole proposal on hold, at least until we hear the results of the study, but more to the point until 1995.

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

Mr. Simmons: The member will realize that after we hear the study and there is some burning and pressing reason to move it forward, it is a very easy matter to bring a bill such as this back into the House. That is all these amendments would do today and I cannot see anybody wanting to vote against these three very sensible amendments.

The hon. member for Annapolis Valley—Hants takes the right view. If more people on that side listened to him more often they would be in a lot fewer problems than they are there these days. The amendments would simply delay the removal of this program until 1995. That would assist the organizations concerned that are dependent upon rail rates to plan rational alternative routes and methods to export grain and flour in order to maintain both an equitable return and to maintain their competitiveness in the international market. We all know that the bill as it stands now would adversely affect both the returns of the producers and adversely affect their international competitiveness.

Where is the compassion of the government? For example, government members keep telling us that when the goods and services tax is implemented the government is going to help everybody. I happen to doubt that, but that is another debate for another time. I use it by way of example to show that if this government is so seized with helping people, it has here a golden opportunity to help some people maintain their position as producers and maintain their position of competitiveness internationally. It can do it with one stroke of the pen, by simply withdrawing this crazy bill altogether. But if it does not want to do that, it could have its cake and eat it too by legislating in accordance with the bill but putting it on hold until 1995.

These amendments put forward by my friend, the hon. member for Lambton—Middlesex would have the effect of allowing the government some time to develop the alternative programs it has announced for the ports of Saint John and Halifax, rather than abandoning these ports and the livelihood of the individuals affected by the removal of these rail rates while it determines what it ultimately plans to do.

• (1240)

These amendments would also give the government an opportunity to be consistent with the testimony of witnesses who appeared before the legislative committee during committee stage. Witnesses stated that there may be inefficiencies in this legislation but urged, in essence, that rather than eliminating the program and then assisting in an *ad hoc* manner certain parts of the puzzle, it would have made more sense to have the alternative programs for all groups affected in place before eliminating the existing programs.

Since that makes very good sense one must ask why the government persists in pushing this legislation through before the time is ripe?

It is worth reviewing again the process that we go through in this House to ensure that our legislation is good legislation which serves the common good. We have had first reading and second reading of this bill, after which, it went to a legislative committee. We are now, in effect, debating the report of that committee. At this stage we are entertaining amendments which have come forward as a result of the testimony of witnesses before the committee. In short, at this stage we ought to be deciding whether the legislation is no good at all, whether it is perfect as is, or whether we must find ways to improve it.

My colleague, the hon. member for Lambton—Middlesex has found two or three ways in which this legislation, as bad as it is, could be salvaged and be improved upon, or at least a way in which we could buy some time for the people who are going to be adversely affected if this bill passes unamended.

Therefore, we must ask why the government persists in doing something like this, having been told the havoc it will create and the damage it will cost in economic terms for a lot of people across this country. That is the question.

The answer lies in this almost glazed over messianic zeal that we get from those members on so many initiatives these days, whether it is on the goods and services tax, closing of rural post offices, or the attacking of the rural way of life generally. That is an issue that I could talk long and hard about. It shows that we have a government that has stopped listening to the Canadian people and one of the sad results of that is that we are getting some very bad legislation in this Parliament.

Any draft bill is subject to the whim of the drafter. That is why we have this process in this House, so that by scrutiny in committee and in this chamber we can find the flaws in the legislation and cure those flaws. We can nip them in the bud, before they are perpetrated in legislation and before they affect the lives of people across this country. That process breaks down completely if there are people who are not listening any more. Someone once said that none is so deaf as he who will not hear. That is what we have on our hands right now, a government that will not hear. The government has stopped listening to the Canadian people whether on the

issue of this bill, the goods and services tax, the closing of rural post offices, or so many other issues that I could mention if I had the time.

According to your signal, for which I thank you, Mr. Speaker, I see that my time has run out.

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to say a few words at the report stage on Bill C-26, an act to amend the Railway Act.

With regard to the at and east rate, Subsection 281(2) of the Railway Act reads as follows:

> (2) For the purpose of encouraging the continued use of the Eastern ports for the export of grain and flour,
>
> (a) rates for grain moving in bulk for export to any Eastern port from any inland point over any line of a railway company subject to the jurisdiction of Parliament shall be maintained at the level of rates applying on November 30, 1960 to the movement of that grain to Eastern ports; and
>
> (b) rates on flour moving for export to an Eastern port from any inland point over any line of a railway company subject to the jurisdiction of Parliament shall be maintained at the level of rates applying on September 30, 1966 to the movement of that flour to Eastern ports.

Therefore, we are really talking about grain being maintained at the 1960 level and flour being maintained at the 1966 level. The impact of this is not only on western grain producers shipping to European, Mediterranean, and North African customers. There is also a spin-off advantage for the local grain producers in the Atlantic ports of Saint John and Halifax.

There is an advantage for western producers of grain, wheat and barley, as well as oilseed crops. They are facing a serious drop in income this year. Even with the recent adjustments in net-farm income, Saskatchewan goes from a minus $9 million net-farm income this year to minus $116 million, which is a drop of 87 per cent.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if you, as Speaker, with the very large special allowances provided to Speakers had to suffer an 87 per cent reduction in your income, it would practically destroy the financial and fiscal integrity of your whole operation, or for that matter, the operation of any other hon. member of the House.

Yet, at a time when farmers in Saskatchewan are facing a loss in net-farm income of 87 per cent in this calendar year, the government is removing its support program of the at and east rate which amounts to some $50 million. It is inconceivable that, at a time when we are facing the most outrageous international trade war between the United States of America and the European Economic Community for those markets for grain around the world, we are reducing our export support programs for grain. In fact, the United States has increased its support programs for exports of wheat and a whole range of agricultural commodities from some $600 million last year to $900 million this year. It is subsidizing wheat sales at the rate of $20 to $40 a ton.

• (1250)

At the same time, we are removing an integral support program for our wheat producers in western Canada to ship grain at the 1960 rate for wheat, barley and oats, and moving that up to the current day rate. The impact will be really tremendous, not only for those producers, but for Atlantic Canada in total and those grain elevators in the Great Lakes ports in the area around Georgian Bay.

Our complaint is that, at a time when we are facing a very serious trade war in agriculture commodities, we are unilaterally disarming. The Prime Minister and the Minister of National Defence say that we have to maintain our support and our strength for NATO, although they have not actually done that. Surely, if that is important in a military context, then it is important in a trade context that we do not unilaterally disarm our farmers and our producers of grain at such a time. That is essentially what we have done.

In his 1989 budget, the Minister of Finance removed support programs for Canadian agriculture producers of about $500 million. Some of those budget cuts did not actually trigger in until January 1, 1990. However, the at and east rate, which provided some $50 million of support, was triggered last year. That amount of support and encouragement for export of our chief agriculture exports, wheat and oilseeds, was triggered last year. But that is only one. What has to be understood is that there

is a whole range of programs: the at and east rate; a reduction in crop insurance in that 1989 budget of $200 million; a reduction in the rail line rehabilitation program of some $50 million; and a reduction in the gas tax rebate.

What does the gas tax rebate mean? Last week, I was talking to a group of grain producers in the southeastern part of Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Some of those producers were talking in terms of a fuel tax rebate loss of some $3,000.

The government talks about its grand schemes of a $500 million program to support western agriculture while it glibly overlooks that one year earlier in April, 1989 it reduced support programs to Canadian farmers by exactly $500 million. Essentially it is refunding, with a grand sweep of the pen, support programs. This at and east rate, Bill C-26, is to implement the reduction the government made in 1989.

I believe that the amendment that the hon. member for Lambton—Middlesex has introduced into the House is a good amendment, because the government obviously did not know what it was doing. A few weeks ago, it announced that it was going to put in place a special commission to investigate how to support agriculture because it was removing this support to the grain elevators and the at and east rate to Atlantic Canada. Surely, delaying the removal of this rate for five years would allow the government an opportunity to find out what it is going to do to support agriculture as a result of this ill-conceived project to remove the at and east rate.

I would hope that hon. members, especially on the government side, would look very closely at the hon. member's amendment for the at and east rate, so that it would not be implemented for five years. Perhaps by that time, the government either will be out of office or will know what it is doing with this ill-conceived removal of the at and east rate as proposed under Bill C-26.

Mr. Vic Althouse (Mackenzie): Mr. Speaker, I rise to debate Motion No. 1 which would have the effect of delaying this particular action to do away with the at and east rates until April 1, 1995.

This motion makes some sense, given the recent actions by the government in a couple of instances when it has indicated that it is prepared to restudy this issue. That leaves the impression that the budgetary move to cancel the at and east rates without any discussion has created some problems which the government is apparently now talking about redressing.

For instance, on May 16, the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of State for Grains and Oilseeds announced that the federal Department of Agriculture would conduct a study on the future of the grain elevators in the Atlantic region. The study will look at the Halifax elevator, the Saint John elevator, a proposed elevator in Summerside, and how they can be made viable. There is not much point in having such a study, if there is no method or means of getting the grain to those elevators. Therefore, it makes eminent good sense to delay the implementation of this government proposal to cease the movement of grains in that direction and to look at other options.

There have been options put forward by my colleague for Moose Jaw—Lake Centre, one of which would have the effect of raising the transport rates from Quebec City further east. This would not have cost the government as much money in subsidizing the rate. It would have saved about $10 million, would have provided an opportunity for Atlantic Canada to get used to slightly higher rates, and very likely would have kept the flour mill now faced with closure in Atlantic Canada in business. It would have kept in business the two terminals that are at risk, the one at Saint John which has announced that it will be closing if the program does not go forward, and the one at Halifax which has a very shaky future now that at and east rates have been discontinued.

The impact of the policy change stretches beyond just terminal operators and the jobs that will be lost there which are quite numerous. We understand that the closure in Saint John which occurred February 28 meant a loss of 90 jobs. There is a possible loss of 483 jobs at the Halifax terminal with the termination of this program. As well, the closure of Dover Flour Mills, which is expected if this program goes into effect, will mean 45 more jobs lost and something in the neighbourhood of 250 indirect jobs in those cities, all due to the closures of these fairly major employers.

Further to the government announcement on May 16, there is the statement by the new Minister of Transport on May 30 when he appeared before the committee. He

stated that the alternatives to eliminating at and east rates that were put forward by the Atlantic Provinces Transportation Commission had not yet been studied. The government has taken its initiative, stopped the program without any consultation, and has not even looked at alternatives presented by the region affected.

Mr. Speaker, I see your signal. It is one o'clock. I would like to continue after 3 p.m..

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The hon. member will have six minutes remaining in debate on this motion after three o'clock.

It being one o'clock, I do now leave the Chair until two o'clock this day.

At 1 p.m. the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S. O. 31

[*English*]

WOMEN'S PROGRAMS

Mr. John E. Cole (York—Simcoe): Mr. Speaker, this weekend I had the pleasure of officially opening a job entry program for women of the York region who are presently receiving social assistance but wishing to gain the experience and necessary skills to move into the workforce and be fully contributing members of society.

The program called Alternative Paths for Women is funded by the federal government and operated by Lumbers Cuts of Aurora, helping women in the York region wishing to earn and to learn.

This program provides job training, work habits, life skills and other aspects, such as filling out job applications, acquiring a professional attitude in the workforce and general self-confidence to these women. Basic furniture refinishing skills were chosen as the medium for the employment skills training. However, it is not the intent to provide qualified refinishers but rather to produce qualified workers. Lumber Cuts are already at their maximum number and are having great success in developing the skills necessary for these women to re-enter the workforce and prepare them for entry level positions in private industry.

This type of program exemplifies the intention of Bill C-21 and I would hope the other place will pass this bill soon so that many more similar programs can be set up throughout the country to produce more qualified workers.

* * *

NATIONAL UNITY

Mr. Eugène Bellemare (Carleton—Gloucester): Mr. Speaker, on Sunday, June 3, some 250 residents of the Fallingbrook community in the Orleans area of the national capital region held a march for a united Canada.

This march was held to show their commitment to a tolerant Canada and a respect for Quebec and its place within Canada.

[*Translation*]

At this gathering, the First Ministers were urged to concentrate on the principles of tolerance, respect and mutual trust that are the very foundation of this country.

Furthermore, these citizens expressed their respect for the people of Quebec and their culture, language and institutions.

Finally, the gathering asked Canadian municipalities to stand together to show their love for their country and their respect for a dynamic Quebec within Canada.

[*English*]

This march had the support of the mayors of eastern Ontario, municipal politicians, especially the members of the Cumberland Township Council.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I strongly congratulate the citizens who organized this spontaneous gathering, which I believe represents the feelings of a growing number of Canadians.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker: I want to thank the hon. member for his comments on a subject that is so important to all members in this House.

[*English*]

I thank very much the hon. member for his intervention which is important, not only to members here, but to our entire country.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Bellemare: Mr. Speaker, I thank you from the bottom of my heart for those kind words.

* * *

BILL C–21

Mr. Jean–Guy Guilbault (Drummond): Mr. Speaker, I wish to condemn the attitude of Liberal Senators to Bill C–21 which was to come into force on January 1 this year.

The uncertainty caused by the present deadlock is intolerable. Postponing passage of the unemployment insurance legislation is causing considerable harm and is very costly for Canadians.

I regularly receive complaints from my constituents who would be eligible for unemployment insurance benefits under the provisions of Bill C–21 and who are now in financial difficulty because they must wait until the bill is passed.

Bill C–21 provides that $800 million can be spent on skills training for workers and $600 million on new services such as better maternity leave and unemployment insurance benefits for persons over 65.

The Canadian Chamber of Commerce which represents 170,000 businesses has recommended the immediate passage of this bill.

A recent study indicated that two–thirds of Canadians are in favour of the government's proposal for changes in the unemployment insurance system.

I therefore ask the members of the other place to act promptly and pass Bill C–21.

* * *

[*English*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Catherine Callbeck (Malpeque): Mr. Speaker, this week is Environment Week, a time to remind ourselves of the importance of reducing the environmental impacts of our individual, collective and governmental activities.

In the energy field, Canadians can do a lot more for their environment. For example, individual Canadians can conserve energy and install more efficient lighting fixtures. Corporations can do the same and electric utilities can promote conservation among its customers.

The federal government has a major responsibility in the area of energy and the environment, but it is not living up to it. This fall the energy minister is expected to unveil his new energy efficiency and diversity program, which hopefully will repair some of the damage done by his government's neglect of this area in the past.

I urge all Canadians, and especially this government, to make every week Environment Week in its policies and in its actions and not just in its words.

* * *

EMPLOYMENT

Mr. Howard McCurdy (Windsor—St. Clair): Mr. Speaker, Varity Corporation received a $200 million bail–out from the federal and Ontario governments. That assistance was successful, it had a $90 million profit last year, but it seems to have no hesitation about biting the hand that fed it.

Varity executives are now musing about moving the company to the United States, a move that would violate the covenant it signed with the taxpayers of Canada. So what, it has already broken the agreement it made to create and maintain 1,000 permanent jobs in Canada by May 1, 1989. In fact, it is 450 jobs short. The taxpayers can bite back. Under the terms of the covenant, the federal and provincial governments can fine Varity Corporation $30,000 per job that it has failed to create.

I challenge the federal government to levy the fine, collect the money and pay it to the workers who have been laid off or who are about to be laid off at Varity's Kelsey–Hayes subsidiary in Windsor. Better still, use it to save Kelsey–Hayes and save those jobs. It is time that this government showed some teeth.

* * *

HEALTH

Mr. Harry Chadwick (Brampton—Malton): Mr. Speaker, Hollywood creates heroes. Remember Gary Cooper in *The Lou Gehrig Story*? But in everyday life disease creates the real heroes. I met one of those everyday heroes last weekend in my riding. His name is Donald Glen.

Like the real Lou Gehrig, Mr. Glen has Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis, or Lou Gehrig's disease as it is more commonly known. It is a devastating disease of the nervous system which destroys the voluntary muscles. Average life expectancy after diagnosis is 2.5 years.

Hollywood will never make a movie about Donald Glen and that is probably okay by him, but it is important to Mr. Glen that Canadians become aware of this disease so that the chances of beating it are better.

Mr. Speaker, there is no cure because doctors and researchers do not know the cause. Today, on behalf of Donald Glen and others across the country who suffer from ALS, I urge Canadians to contact the ALS society in their community and give their support. With the right team effort, we can pull together and help strike out this disease.

* * *

• (1410)

FISHERIES

Hon. Roger C. Simmons (Burin—St. George's): Mr. Speaker, this morning I received a letter which says in part: "I have two beautiful children, I am five and a half months pregnant. I have no job, no income, no future, neither does my husband. How are we supposed to feed our children?"

That letter, like many others I receive, comes from a woman who used to be a fish plant worker until her fish plant closed. Her community, like so many others, is in total collapse because of the situation in the inshore fishery in Newfoundland.

Small fish plants in communities like Picadilly, Rose Blanche, Belleoram, and many others by the dozens have been closed because of the failure of the inshore fishery. This failure has nothing to do with another problem we have been hearing much about in the House, the northern cod stock issue. Fishermen cannot go fishing because there are no fish to catch in the seas off those communities and the plants are closed because there are no fish to process.

The Minister of Fisheries will know that his program of aid some weeks ago did not address the situation as it relates to these communities. I call upon him to come forward with an aid package and do it now while there is still time.

[*Translation*]

CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

Mr. Jean-Pierre Blackburn (Jonquière): Mr. Speaker, last night, like many francophones in this country, I turned on my television set to find out what was happening with the Meech Lake negotiations.

Unfortunately, I was sorry to see that the French CBC channel was not providing live coverage. So I turned to the English All News Channel and saw that English Canadians had the privilege to get all this information live from Ottawa.

Mr. Speaker, my fondest wish and that of all French Canadians is that the President of the CBC will file a proposal with the CRTC as soon as possible so that we too can have an all-news channel in our language.

* * *

[*English*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Lynn Hunter (Saanich—Gulf Islands): Mr. Speaker, today is World Environment Day and the first anniversary of the release of the New Democratic environment task force report, "Toward a Sustainable Future".

While the government was busy talking, New Democrats were busy travelling across the country listening to concerned Canadians and developing our own green plan for action on the environment.

Today, one year later, New Democrats released the green report card, grading the government on 10 key recommendations. For its ability to produce hot air and lots of environmental rhetoric the government gets an A-plus. For reneging on its commitment to reduce greenhouse gases, for skimping on foreign aid, for allowing toxic discharges into waterways and for ignoring pleas for help in upgrading municipal infrastructure, the government gets an F-minus. For its lack of action in protecting forests, cleaning up hazardous discharges and developing conservation and alternative energy, the government gets failing grades and a recommendation from the teacher for remedial classes on the greening of Canada.

BILL C-21

Mr. Felix Holtmann (Portage—Interlake): Mr. Speaker, this past weekend I found more casualties of the refusal by the other House to pass Bill C-21.

At the Fisher River Indian reserve, 100 fishermen are facing the bleak prospect of welfare because of the refusal of the Senate to pass Bill C-21. What is even worse, these fishermen were fed Liberal Party propaganda telling them that Bill C-21 would force them all into the poor house, but the fishermen are not so easily misled.

These fishermen have asked me to tell the senators in the other place to pass Bill C-21 so they can restore some order to their lives. If the members of the other place are not willing to pass Bill C-21, then the fishermen of Fisher River have an alternative. They will sit in the red chamber and pass the bills while the Senators go out in their boats on Lake Winnipeg. The fishermen of Fisher River will not even suggest that they receive the $150 a day pay.

* * *

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Jerry Pickard (Essex—Kent): Mr. Speaker, confusion over the proposed goods and services tax continues. The government maintains that this is not a new tax, that it is revenue neutral on housing costs and that it is simple.

Yet the business community is outraged over the propaganda campaign. Home builders testified that housing prices will increase. The Canadian Federation of Small Business calls it an administrative nightmare. If, as claimed, it is so simple, why is the government using a band-aid approach to stop the haemorrhaging by introducing a new flat tax for small business?

Last week, the minister apologized for the loss of voice due to being overcome by praise heaped upon the government. The minister would be well advised to use his ears, not his mouth, to listen to Canadians. He would be speechless when he heard what Canadians truly think of the GST. You can be certain that it is not praise they are heaping.

S. O. 31

HEALTH

Hon. David MacDonald (Rosedale): Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to announce that members of the parliamentary *ad hoc* committee on AIDS will be holding a press conference tomorrow at 1 p.m. at the National Press Theatre to release its report.

The report will include recommendations to the Minister of National Health and Welfare for the upcoming National AIDS Strategy, which will be announced later this month.

Members of Parliament from all three parties, and Senators, have been working on a voluntary, non-partisan basis for over a year to confront one of the most serious global epidemics that we are facing today.

Since the first case of AIDS was reported in Canada in 1982, at least 3,735 Canadians have been diagnosed with AIDS. More than 2,300 of those have died. Estimates show that between 25,000 and 50,000 Canadians may already be infected with HIV.

It is with this sense of urgency that the committee began holding public hearings in March and will officially release its report to the Minister of National Health and Welfare tomorrow.

* * *

HOUSING

Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill): Mr. Speaker, once again, federal funding cuts are going to have a negative effect on the low income people of Manitoba.

This time, low cost housing is on the Conservative chopping block. The federal government has informed Manitoba and other provinces that there is going to be at least a 15 per cent reduction for social housing in 1990.

Private and public non-profit housing, rural and native housing for communities under 2,500 people, urban native housing, rental supplements and funding to rehabilitate urban housing will all suffer, thanks to these cuts.

The backlog of housing in our communities will only increase. At a time when it is harder and harder to afford shelter, this government is taking the mean-hearted step

of turning its back on the people who need help the most.

Instead of the promised programs for housing for average and low income Canadians, we are witnessing a total retreat by the minister. The flurry of public relations press releases are cold comfort to the thousands of Canadian families sharing crowded homes or living in substandard houses.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[*English*]

MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Deputy Prime Minister.

The provincial premiers and the Prime Minister are now in the third day of discussions to find a way out of our current constitutional impasse.

To say the least, Canadians are very interested in what is happening. They are concerned about the future of their country.

Under our system of government, the Prime Minister has an obligation to report to Canadians through the House of Commons on these matters.

Therefore, I ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will bring the House and Canadians up to date now on the progress of these discussions.

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I am advised that this morning the First Ministers spent a good deal of time considering a number of options for an amending formula as it relates to the Senate.

I am advised that the spirits are very high. It is a very constructive session. There are many suggestions. The atmosphere is friendly but very frank and business-like. All First Ministers are working very hard toward coming to a satisfactory conclusion.

I know all members of the House would want to join in expressing our very best wishes for success.

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, we want to see these discussions succeed in a way that will assure the future of our country.

The press has reported in some depth on a detailed, four-stage proposal that the Prime Minister is said to have presented to the provincial premiers yesterday.

If there is one thing we have learned from the recent impasse, it is that Canadians believe they have a right to be kept up to date in a meaningful way on the progress of constitutional discussions as they occur.

I ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will table today in the House the federal proposals that have been reported to be presently under discussion between the premiers and the Prime Minister.

• (1420)

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I am sure the hon. Leader of the Opposition would understand that there are many proposals being considered and, yes, there has been what I understand to be a framework paper put forth for discussion purposes. The bulk of the time spent this morning was in respect of the pursuit of an amending formula, particularly as it related to the Senate. My understanding is that there are many suggestions being advanced. The session is very constructive. I can only presume that at an appropriate time this information will be released. Since the mood of the session is such that all premiers are working toward making some progress in this particular area, it would seem to me that that would be the most appropriate course of action for the present time.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, someone has obviously shared some presumably specific information with the news media. However, I think that the Canadian people are entitled to be informed of matters involving the future of their country. I therefore ask the Deputy Prime Minister: What will the government do to make these constitutional discussions more open and more accessible to the Canadian public?

[*English*]

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. Leader of the

Opposition would agree that much of the discussion that is taking place revolves around the technical aspects as they relate to an amending formula. As I said, suggestions are being put forth. There is a frank and friendly discussion taking place. It is very business-like and obviously, at an appropriate time, the session will become a public session. I think it is incumbent upon all of us to put our faith and our trust in the First Ministers, who are working and who are talking in a very business-like manner, with the hopes that progress will be made. At the appropriate time, I can assure the hon. member that the discussion will be made public.

* * *

[*Translation*]

STATUS OF WOMEN

Mrs. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the minister responsible for the status of women and concerns the report on poverty among working women. The number of working poor has increased five times faster among women than among men. Six hundred thousand women in the labour force in Canada have incomes below the poverty line and they have 1.6 million children. How does the government intend to end the segregation and discrimination in the labour market that keep working women poor?

[*English*]

Hon. Mary Collins (Associate Minister of National Defence and Minister responsible for Status of Women): Mr. Speaker, I understand that the report to the Advisory Council on the Status of Women was released this morning. I have not yet had an opportunity to read it, but I am certainly looking forward to the recommendations as I know they will be helpful to us as we move forward to deal with this very important problem.

Obviously, as a government we have undertaken a variety of initiatives to address the issue of women in poverty, including the first employment equity legislation, the first pay equity settlements and examples which are going to be important as we work together with provincial governments and the private sector to address these issues. I am looking forward to receiving these recommendations and working with my colleagues at the federal and provincial levels to redress this issue and ensure that all women can achieve economic equality in this country.

Mrs. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West): Mr. Speaker, I think we all received the report at exactly the same time and it points out quite frankly, Madam Minister, that the economic status of women in Canada is a national disgrace and that women are getting poorer not better off, despite what the minister and her colleagues constantly claim. The recommendations are nothing new, Madam Minister. You have heard them all before and yet, still, nearly half of the single mothers are poor and their children are poor. These women are poor when they get old because they have never had a chance to earn a decent salary and to build up a decent pension.

Will the minister take responsibility personally for ensuring that her colleagues address these long-standing issues, end discrimination, end segregation, provide decent child care, provide decent working conditions for women, and make sure that women who are working are able to put food on the table and clothing on the backs of their children?

Hon. Mary Collins (Associate Minister of National Defence and Minister responsible for Status of Women): Mr. Speaker, I am sure that my hon. colleague is aware of the statistic that since this government took office in 1984 there are some 760,000 Canadians who have escaped poverty. In fact, the poverty rates have declined during these years.

Obviously more needs to be done, and I can assure my colleague that I am working closely with my colleagues and in meetings last week with my provincial colleagues on the issues of pensions and child care.

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Today is World Environment Day. There can surely be no greater threat to the environment of the world than continued nuclear testing and continued emphasis on nuclear warfare and improving nuclear weapons. In fact, while the cold war is ending, the environmental problems in the north are not, and I speak of the north as the Arctic.

The Soviet Union recently announced that as of 1993 it will re-establish nuclear testing on the Arctic island of Novaya Zemlya. This particular site has been used in the past.

Given the prevailing spirit of co-operation we saw with Mr. Gorbachev's visit last week, and the comments he made about a zone of peace in the Arctic, my question to the minister is this. Could he share with us what the Prime Minister conveyed to Mr. Gorbachev about the Arctic and in particular was a circumpolar treaty on the Arctic discussed with President Gorbachev?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I thank the Leader of the New Democratic Party for returning to a question which was raised by her colleague and spokesperson on foreign policy in the recent committee hearings on external affairs.

As a result of those discussions, as I reported to the House a few days ago, I raised the question with Mr. Shevardnadze with respect to the shifting of the emphasis of Soviet testing to the Arctic and expressed Canada's concern about the environmental consequences of that testing. I indicated to him that we were particularly aware of the fragility of the ecology there and wanted to ensure that the co-operation established between Canada and the Soviet Union on Arctic matters could apply to co-operation with respect to testing.

I would be prepared to give a fuller briefing to the hon. member or to her colleague from Winnipeg on those discussions if she desires.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary is for the same minister.

The minister is of course aware that Canada is not the only source of the pollution that is destroying the Arctic. The Soviet Union also produces a great deal of pollution.

Canada has the necessary technology to reduce these dangerous emissions, but technology exports to countries in Eastern Europe are controlled by a NATO treaty that dates back to 1949.

What does the minister intend to do to enable Canada to export this technology to all countries?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the regulations in question do not apply exclusively to NATO. The arrangement involves NATO members but also other countries like Australia and Japan.

Discussions are now under way to change these regulations in order to provide for a broader exchange of expertise and technological skills with the Soviet Union and other Warsaw Pact members.

This is one of the questions that was discussed when Mr. Gorbachev and Mr. Shevardnadze were here, during their visit. I am informed that it was also discussed in Washington. Tomorrow, I will be in Great Britain, where I hope to have an opportunity to talk to my fellow NATO ministers and find out whether we can make a little more headway on the COCOM system.

• (1430)

[*English*]

Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, I certainly appreciate the minister's comments, because it is clearly madness that the health of Canadian citizens is being affected by pollution which Canadians could assist to reduce in another country except for a military treaty.

I would like to raise as well with the minister low-level flights over Labrador. As we know, according to NATO, the plans to build a base at Goose Bay have been scrapped because of the ending of the cold war. However, fears still exist that these flights will not diminish but increase. In fact figures by officials of the department indicate as much as a doubling.

How does the Secretary of State for External Affairs feel about such increases, in view of his comments a week ago about NATO's forward defence strategy and the need to rethink that strategy?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, that question is being considered, as the hon. Leader of the New Democratic Party suggests, in the context of general discussions that are occurring within NATO.

I am not sure that the specific question of the pace of low-level flights will come up in the discussions in the next two days. I rather doubt that. However, the general

question as to the over-all configuration of NATO and indeed the orientation of NATO will be discussed.

If I may refer briefly to the earliest question posed by the Leader of the New Democratic Party with respect to the north, one of the suggestions that has been made by members of the standing committee is that it would be useful for parliamentarians from Canada and the Soviet Union to meet more regularly to discuss matters of common interest in the north.

I made that proposal to Mr. Shevardnadze who immediately accepted. I hope it will be possible through the intermediary of the standing committee to make arrangements for that kind of practical co-operation by elected representatives of the Canadian and Soviet people.

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ROUTE CANADA

Mr. Russell MacLellan (Cape Breton—The Sydneys): My question, Mr. Speaker, is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister.

Yesterday the Minister of Transport tried to tell us that the sale of Route Canada was an arm's length transaction between the buyers and Canadian National, with no involvement whatsoever of the federal government, although we know that before the sale could take place there had to be an Order in Council by the federal government approving the sale. Also yesterday we found out that CN did not even know that Manfred Ruhland, one of the three purchasers, was actually involved in the deal.

Why does the federal government not admit that it was the government, not CN, that put this deal together? Who else could have sold the company to three people, one of whom did not have the financial stability to get a credit card, and the other two known Tory contributors?

Hon. Jean Corbeil (Minister of Labour) and (Minister of State (Transport)): Mr. Speaker, I think the Minister of Transport was very clear yesterday.

CN Route is a subsidiary of CN. CN asked for offers from the private sector to get rid of a company that was losing $30 million to $40 million per year. It got four offers and accepted the best offer because it represented a possibility that the company could be reactivated, made profitable again, and save the employment of 2,300 people.

Mr. Russell MacLellan (Cape Breton—The Sydneys): Mr. Speaker, in the sale of the company the federal government got $29 million and then proceeded to give the company $40 million through CN actually to retire 1,500 of the employees, leaving the remaining 1,900 completely adrift.

Why does the government not admit that it did not care what happened to Route Canada? It just wanted to get rid of the company. It just wanted to slough off its responsibility to the employees. Why does the government not admit that and be frank about it?

Hon. Jean Corbeil (Minister of Labour) and (Minister of State (Transport)): Mr. Speaker, I will repeat that CN had two choices: either to shut down the operation of CN Route immediately and put 2,300 people out of work or to accept an offer which provided a possibility that this organization could be made profitable again and save some employees. I think CN did the proper thing.

Mr. George S. Rideout (Moncton): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister.

The Minister of Transport suggested that privatization of Route Canada was a good deal. In light of the fact that 1,900 employees have lost their jobs, that $40 million was paid in severance pay, that employee contributions to pension plans and Revenue Canada were used by the company, that $60 million is owed to creditors, and that the government only received $29 million, would the minister admit that the only ones to benefit from this sweet deal are friends of the government?

Hon. Jean Corbeil (Minister of Labour) and (Minister of State (Transport)): Mr. Speaker, any interpretation can be made by the opposition, but the facts are that CN was losing $30 million to $40 million a year through the operation of CN Route. It was faced with two possibilities: either to close down the operations completely and put 2,300 people on the street or to try to sell the organization to a private company that could possibly make it profitable again. It asked for offers. It got four offers and accepted the best offer it could get at that time.

Mr. George S. Rideout (Moncton): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the Solicitor General.

Over two years ago government briefing notes indicated that the RCMP commercial crimes unit would be completing an investigation of this matter in nine months. Almost three times that length of time has passed, and we still have nothing.

What excuse does the Solicitor General have for the delay and when will justice be done?

Hon. Pierre H. Cadieux (Solicitor General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, the investigation will be completed soon.

* * *

ROMANIA

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. It deals with the issue of seismic studies that were conducted while AECL was in the process of selling Candu reactors to the Ceausescu regime in Romania.

On March 14, in an answer to a question I placed on the Order Paper, the minister replied, and I quote from page 9286 of *Hansard*:

> Studies as to the likelihood of seismic activity or earthquakes occurring around the Cernadova site in Romania were conducted by the Romanians.

Because of this AECL could not release the studies to me or to other Canadians.

Yet, last Thursday, May 31, the minister replied to another question by saying, and here I quote from page 12119 of *Hansard*:

> I am saying to him that there was an independent pier review done in respect to seismology and with respect to the earthquake situation.

Was the minister referring to the same studies in these two answers? Was the study conducted by the Romanians the same as the independent pier review?

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, no, I will repeat the answer that I was giving.

The question first arose as to whether there were any seismology studies in the earthquake zone in which Cernadova was located. Those studies were done by the Romanian authorities, and this is on the public record. In fact the hon. member put that into his question today.

Commissioned by the Romanians and available to AECL was a pier review, a second study done by a company from Belgium. That information is in the hands of the Romanians. I wish it could be released. It is Romanian property and it is for that reason that I cannot release it.

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question.

If these two studies existed, why did the minister not make this clear in March in his answer to my question on the Order Paper?

Would the minister not now agree, given the uncertainty that seems to exist around the studies, uncertainty which has been reflected in the minister's own answers, that it is time for the minister to put aside his attachment to nuclear power as an option, and indeed for me and others to put aside our opposition to nuclear power, and have an inquiry to determine whether or not it is appropriate and in the Canadian and global interests to have that reactor proceed in Romania?

Let's have an independent inquiry, let's settle all the facts with respect to studies, and let's have full answers from now on in the House of Commons.

• (1440)

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, when I answered the question in March that information regarding the independent study done in Belgium was not available to me. I was not aware of it.

As the hon. member will know, when his colleague, the member for Burnaby—Kingsway, and the member for Winnipeg North Centre returned, they made the point about seismology. It was with further discussion and further review that that issue came to my attention. That is the background.

Second, in terms of an independent study I reviewed that with his colleagues. I appreciate the spirit in which he mentions both his perspective on nuclear energy and mine. We are looking at what kind of a study could be put

into place to meet the requirements of both the government and colleagues. Quite frankly, in terms of the need to have an independent airing there is really not a lot of difference between his colleagues and myself.

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PRESENCE IN GALLERY

Mr. Speaker: I wish to draw to the attention of members the presence in the gallery of the hon. Maj-Lis Loow, Minister of Immigration of Sweden.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

* * *

IMMIGRATION

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Employment and Immigration.

The minister has now had 24 hours to review the evidence dealing with the Randeree case, in particular the error in judgment that was made by the refugee board. Also evidence has been submitted to her demonstrating that Mr. Randeree has no status whatsoever in Germany, neither has his wife, and therefore he would be a stateless person without documents.

Taking into account that kind of evidence, is the minister prepared to use her discretion and authority under the act to redress this unfair decision and allow Mr. Randeree to stay in Canada, the country of his choice?

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to table in the House today, at the appropriate time, the letter that was actually sent by Mr. Fairweather, which does not in any way suggest that the decision was erroneous.

It does suggest that it was not appropriate for him to discuss the correctness or otherwise of the decision. Mr. Fairweather made a suggestion similar to what I suggested in this Chamber on two separate occasions, that Dr. Randeree consult a lawyer and might also consider assisting his son as an immigrant under the family reunification provisions of the Immigration Act.

Having said that, I have said that I will review the case and I am in the process of doing that. I am disappointed that the hon. member, who in a previous incarnation had some interest in this portfolio, has chosen to use the letter in this way.

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, I would like to read the excerpt from the letter from Mr. Fairweather which directly contradicts the statement of the minister. Mr. Fairweather says:

> The documents set out in the material you sent to me support your son's position that he is a national of South Africa and not a national of India.

The refugee board made the decision on the grounds that he was a national of India. Mr. Fairweather says the documents support the opposite. Therefore the minister is not prepared to look at the proper evidence and is clearly rejecting her responsibility and authority in sending Mr. Randeree back to a situation—

Mr. Speaker: That all may be. Would the hon. member put his question.

Mr. Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): Is the minister aware that by sending Mr. Randeree back to the Union of South Africa the Government of Canada will be totally transgressing its responsibilities under the convention for refugees? Is she aware of that responsibility and the change of policy that she has directed?

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, there is no one who is more aware of our responsibility to refugees than I am. I am sorry that the hon. member is less aware of what those responsibilities are.

As I explained to the hon. member yesterday, in addition to being perfectly aware of what my responsibilities are I am quite prepared to review this case. If the hon. member is not satisfied with that, I am sorry with his impatience.

* * *

COURT CHALLENGES PROGRAM

Mrs. Christine Stewart (Northumberland): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Secretary of State and Minister of State for Multiculturalism and Citizenship. In December of last year the Standing Committee on Human Rights tabled a report on the Court Challenges Program strongly advising its continuation but also recommending a review and possible change of the

non-government administering agency. To date, to the detriment of the program, the minister has not given a response about the administering agency.

Will the Secretary of State tell us today which agency is going to administer the program and, if not, why not?

Hon. Gerry Weiner (Secretary of State of Canada and Minister of State (Multiculturalism and Citizenship)): Mr. Speaker, we have an ongoing agreement with the Canadian Council on Social Development for the administration of the program until the end of July.

I have also indicated publicly before the standing committee that I was quite prepared to look at other options if they exist. I have recently written to the Canadian Council again to determine their availability and their desire to continue and under what parameters we would want to continue with a further discussion of some of the criteria and some of the work that they were doing.

Indeed, I have also investigated another option. At a very near date in the future, after I have had a chance to consult with my colleagues, we will be able to make that public.

Mrs. Christine Stewart (Northumberland): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is to the same minister. The Court Challenges Program comprises two panels, one on equality and one on language rights. It goes without saying that one of the serious problems today is legally binding interpretations of minority language rights in this country.

Will the Secretary of State with his government find additional funding for the Court Challenges Language Rights Program?

Hon. Gerry Weiner (Secretary of State of Canada and Minister of State (Multiculturalism and Citizenship)): No, Mr. Speaker, the announcement that was made recently was quite clear on the parameters of the program and both the Minister of Justice and I made that clear in a recent announcement before this House and outside this House.

PRIVACY COMMISSIONER

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice and it concerns the government's proposed appointment of the Prime Minister's former director of communications, Bruce Phillips, to the important position of Privacy Commissioner.

This morning I spoke with Canada's internationally respected privacy expert, Professor David Flaherty of the University of Western Ontario, who said he was "disgusted by this appointment". He went on to say: "The appointment ruins the integrity of the office—"

Some hon. members: Order!

Mr. Speaker: Just a minute. What has it to do with the question? If the hon. member wants to put a question, put it. To use as a preamble somebody's view of somebody else who is not even in this chamber is, it seems to me, stretching the tolerance of the whole place.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Robinson: Mr. Speaker, this is not just somebody's view. This is the view of the leading expert on privacy in Canada.

Some hon. members: Order!

Mr. Speaker: I am sorry. In the interest of order I have asked the hon. member to co-operate. The hon. member will please put his question.

Mr. Robinson: Mr. Speaker, will the minister now recognize that this office, which must be recognized as vigorously protecting the privacy of all Canadians in areas such as random drug testing and AIDS, must not be used as a patronage plum for the Prime Minister? Will she cancel this proposed appointment?

Hon. Kim Campbell (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I am quite astonished at the hon. member's comments because it seems to me that the career pattern of the current nominee for Privacy Commissioner is very similar to that of the current incumbent, Mr. Grace. Both have had very distinguished careers in journalism, both being award-winning journalists. The current nominee, in fact, was involved in assisting the member of this House who brought the access to information legislation before this House. Both the current incumbent and the nominee have served in the public service. I do not think that the

current incumbent would be offended if I were to point out to the House that he, by his own admission, is a very close friend of the hon. member for Vancouver Quadra. I do not think anyone in this House would suggest that that in any way disqualifies the current incumbent from holding the job.

• (1450)

People who work in Ottawa develop personal relationships and friendships in political life. They also occasionally spend time working in the public service—

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Crosbie: What about Broadbent? What about the rest of you socialist horde? What about what's his name, Lewis, who we appointed to the UN? What about that turkey? You don't protest about him. What about buddy down on the civil service board? What's his name? Ian Deans, what about him? That was all right. If Phillips was a socialist it would be all right.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member will put his question.

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, obviously Canadians expect the Privacy Commissioner to be an effective watch-dog, not a lap-dog for the Prime Minister's Office.

In view of the deep concerns that have been expressed by Canadians over the appointment of Bruce Phillips who, by the way, unlike John Grace was in the Prime Minister's Office—

Some hon. members: Order, order!

Mr. Robinson: They're a little sensitive, Mr. Speaker. And in view of the shabby treatment of Inger Hansen as Information Commissioner, will the Minister of Justice refer the proposed appointments of John Grace and Bruce Phillips to the Justice Committee in order that that committee can hold full hearings before this House is called upon to vote on these appointments?

Hon. Kim Campbell (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is perfectly aware of the procedure involved in making these appointments. These are appointments that are made by a resolution of this House.

Although the hon. member's party does not have a realistic prospect of forming a government, I would hope that that scintilla of expectation that resides in all of his party members would lead them to recognize the logical conclusion of stating that anyone who takes a break from a private career to serve in government, whether it is in the office of the Prime Minister or any other office, is forever tainted. That is a notion that has very serious implications for the integrity of the Public Service.

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[*Translation*]

AGRICULTURE

Mr. Jean-Guy Guilbault (Drummond): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State for Agriculture. It concerns feed grains and the substantial financial looses. Suffered by feed mills, especially those in Quebec, as a result of changes in shipping rate subsidies made several months ago.

Could the minister tell the House and people in the farm business community about the measures he intends to take to remedy the situation?

Hon. Pierre Blais (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Minister of State (Agriculture)): Mr. Speaker, my colleague the Minister of State for Grains and Oilseeds has pursued consultations and studies on shipping rates. Changes have been made to the subsidy rates. Regarding the particular question raised by the hon. member about corrective action resulting from these changes, I am consulting with my colleague the Minister of State for Grains and Oilseeds, and 10 days from now, Mr. Speaker, we should be able to reply and announce the kind of corrective action that will be taken to deal with the situation.

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[*English*]

JUSTICE

Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice. I want to ask her a question concerning the decision in the Ontario high court relating to the Finta case, which was the first case brought under the war crimes legislation.

Does the government intend to appeal the acquittal obtained in this case?

Hon. Kim Campbell (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, we are still reviewing the case. The transcript of the trial is not available at the moment. The judge has asked for an opportunity to review it before it is released. The transcript is not ready.

As the hon. member will know, it was a very complex case and it involved very extensive charges to the jury. We are reviewing the case, but no decision has been made at this time.

Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): Mr. Speaker, as a supplementary question, will the minister assure the House, bearing in mind that in a number of such cases both in the United States and West Germany lower level cases were lost and on appeal decisions were often reversed, that this decision of this court will not deter the government from bringing forward and continuing to promote this policy in justified cases?

Hon. Kim Campbell (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I am quite happy to reassure the hon. member of that. Each case is assessed on its own merits. Clearly we will be reviewing this case to determine whether it is appropriate for appeal and what we can learn from it. We are committed to continuing to enforce those provisions of the Criminal Code.

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LITERACY

Mr. Mac Harb (Ottawa Centre): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of State for Multiculturalism and Citizenship. Last night more than 60 national and regional groups representing business, media, labour, community and literacy met to deal with the fact that over 30 per cent of Canadians have trouble reading or writing. This group reached a consensus that combating illiteracy must become Canada's priority.

What is the government going to do in order to ensure that Canadians are not left behind?

Hon. Gerry Weiner (Secretary of State of Canada and Minister of State (Multiculturalism and Citizenship)): Mr. Speaker, it is a major social illness but, as the press and others have said, it is curable.

In the previous study, we had divided the world into the literate and the illiterate. While that was a very important opportunity to evaluate Canadian skills, the more recent examination carried out by Statistics Canada gives us a continuum of literacy skills. It gives us an idea of how we can evaluate Canadians in terms of their individual abilities.

It showed that 62 per cent of the population have no trouble at all in the reading skills. It also gives us a complete understanding of where the troubles exist. Now, with our very effective program under this government's leadership and our National Literacy Secretariat, we are building partnerships with Canadians right across the country with every provincial government and in the private and public sectors. We have a plan and we appreciate the assistance and participation of all Canadians.

Mr. Mac Harb (Ottawa Centre): Mr. Speaker, I am sure the minister would agree with me that the $10 billion cost to our society is a hell of a lot of money when you consider that the deficit is $30 billion.

Would the minister not agree that the best way to deal with this issue is by setting national standards for literacy? Would the government make a firm commitment today to put these standards in place?

Hon. Gerry Weiner (Secretary of State of Canada and Minister of State (Multiculturalism and Citizenship)): Mr. Speaker, this government was the first government to even mention literacy, which it did in its Speech from the Throne in 1986. The Prime Minister and this government brought forward a program of $110 million over five years. We have used that program in a very effective manner to build partnerships.

This International Literacy Year is a year to reflect on the tremendous contribution being made by Canadians in all walks of life. Once and for all we intend to eradicate this situation in Canada.

As I said last Friday in the House in response to a question from one of his colleagues, nobody should rest while there is even one person who is not able to read or write and function properly in our society.

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SOCIAL PROGRAMS

Ms. Joy Langan (Mission—Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, because the Minister responsible for the Status of Women has not read the report from the Advisory Council on the Status of Women, I would like to put my

question to the Minister of National Health and Welfare.

His government has been responsible for clawbacks to family allowance, clawbacks to pensions, the cap on the Canada Assistance Plan and a failure to deliver child care programs. Just what is the minister responsible for social assistance programs prepared to do to help women who are finding themselves in ever increasing poverty in this country pull themselves out of that poverty? What kind of support services does he propose?

• (1500)

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, possibly the hon. member overlooks some of the facts, for example, the fact that the government this year will be spending about $1 billion on child care in Canada and that we have a commitment to introduce a full program during the life of this Parliament. She overlooks the fact that the child tax credit was increased by more than 50 percent between 1984 and 1988. She overlooks the fact that there has been a significant drop in poverty in Canada during the tenure of this government and that trend continues. She overlooks the initiatives that have been taken by the government in terms of encouraging training for women and in terms of encouraging opportunities for women.

I would suggest to the hon. member that, if she wants her questions to receive the attention they deserve, she should do her homework with regard to the progress that has been made to date.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Ms. Langan: Can you believe that?

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Ms. Joy Langan (Mission—Coquitlam): I have a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, for the Minister of National Health and Welfare. I would suggest that the Minister of National Health and Welfare do his homework. I would suggest that the minister look at the reports about women and poverty in the country that come in consistently. I would suggest that he give us a plan. I am asking for that.

Will the minister give women in the country a plan to help them pull themselves out of poverty, not just so many words about programs that may or may not come along in the term of this Parliament, such as the one for child care?

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member finds it incredible that I would ask her to do her homework. I do not think that is an unreasonable request to make of her.

The hon. member should know the fact that between 1984 and 1988 there was a significant decline in poverty in Canada across the board. Instead of the hon. member simply attacking the government with regard to child care, she should be aware of the fact that this year the government will be spending about $1 billion on child care and is committed to increasing that during the life of this Parliament.

If she is serious about being concerned about the role of women in Canada, she should be supporting these measures and working with the government in order to improve the lot of women in Canada.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: The hon. minister, on a point of order.

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POINT OF ORDER

TABLING OF LETTER

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I hereby table the letter to which I referred in Question Period.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

RAILWAY ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

The House resumed consideration of Bill C–26, an act to amend the Railway Act (grain and flour subsidies), as reported (with an amendment) from a legislative committee; and Motions Nos. 1, 3, and 6 of Mr. Ferguson (p. 12266).

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): When the House rose at one o'clock the hon. member for Mackenzie had the floor. The hon. member has six minutes remaining.

Mr. Vic Althouse (Mackenzie): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At one o'clock I was pointing out some of the effects on various regions of the country and on various sectors of the economy that this move by the government to discontinue the at and east rates to Atlantic Canada is having.

The poultry and dairy industries in the Maritime provinces will no longer have access to as much feed grain and will have to pay a higher price for their feedstuffs, putting those industries at risk in terms of continuing to be competitive. Those commodities produced under supply-management systems are the stand-by and the backbone of the agricultural community in Atlantic Canada.

As well, the decision has meant the complete writing off of capital investments in two or three major points in the country. The terminal at Port McNicholl has now closed down. That terminal was a very low upkeep kind of facility that did not require a lot of maintenance. There are big, concrete silos that require virtually zero maintenance and that will probably stand for another 50 to 200 years with very little extra investment. The belts that take the grain from the bottoms of those silos have been running for 50 to 60 years without maintenance and appear to be ready to continue for many years to come.

The effect of the decision has been to make this investment worth absolutely zero, in fact less than zero. The owners of the property will now have to blow up the silos, clean off the property, and make it available to use for something else. Doing that takes away a storage facility that could be made available on a surge capacity basis for grain and oilseeds producers in southern Ontario. This option is now closed off and forestalled.

The farmers in Ontario are going to have to spend more money either directly themselves or through the commercial grain handling part of the agricultural supply chain. They are going to have some new investments in storage capacity for grains and oilseeds in southern Ontario.

Similarly, in Saint John, New Brunswick, there will be no more grain storage silos left in a few years. There is no reason for those terminals to exist any more, and they will probably be torn down as well. Again, this takes away any further option of moving grain, other than through the St. Lawrence system. In fact, it makes it more difficult to even out the flow of feed grains and flour grade wheat to the maritime region because it will reduce the amount of storage available.

While the intention is not to close the storage facility at Halifax immediately, the future of that terminal is very much in jeopardy with this decision.

The final effect is that not only are western grain producers losing another shipping option that has been available to them, but the users are going to have to change their pattern of operation. Some of them are going to be forced completely out of business, even though their facilities are good for another 50 to 200 years. The whole thing makes very little economic sense.

The government would have been well disposed to have negotiated a different arrangement such as that suggested by my hon. friend from Moose Jaw—Lake Centre. He proposed adding 5 per cent to the freight rates from Quebec City on to the maritime region. This would permit the traffic to flow on a need and called for basis. This would have permitted the continuation of hundreds of jobs and lessened the negative impact on the agricultural production sectors in maritime Canada. It would have very likely kept the flour mill in that part of the region in operation as well.

In closing, I urge the government to reconsider its move to close down the at and east rates at the end of the last crop year. Instead, I urge it to permit the program to continue until April 1, 1995, as this motion requires, so that there can be adequate time for the kinds of studies that the Minister of Transport, the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of State for Grains and Oilseeds are now saying should have been done.

Mr. Joe McGuire (Egmont): Mr. Speaker, we all know that today we are continuing to participate in a parliamentary charade.

The legislation that we have been debating here has been in effect since last July. We have gone through first and second reading. We have called in witnesses at great expense. We are going through report stage now. We will

go through third reading tomorrow. The bill will be sent to the Senate. There will be Royal Assent and proclamation. We are going through the motions to legitimize a government action, which has no legitimate reason to be in a policy, that has been in effect since last July. That is supporting a parliamentary dictatorship. We are trying to expose what the government is doing to the Canadian people.

• (1510)

The elevator at the port of Saint John has been closed because of this legislation. The work force at the elevator in the port of Halifax has been severely reduced. Already we have 1,000 jobs lost in the Atlantic area.

The chairman of the transport committee, even though he is sympathetic to what we are saying on this side of the House, will have no effect on changing the government's mind regarding the withdrawal of this bill.

The amendments of the hon. member for Lambton—Middlesex are a valiant attempt to make a disastrous bill a little better. The government will railroad this bill through without amendments. As a matter of fact, it has already announced a study into the effects of the bill, a bill which has been in effect for almost a year. This is totally unbelievable. The government has implemented a policy and has now announced it will study the effects of the legislation. It will end up re-implementing a very similar program to the at and east grain and flour subsidy after destroying it.

The government already knows the disastrous effects the bill will have on Newfoundland, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, but, it will kill the bill anyway and then re-implement a similar program. The reasons for the policy in the first place have not changed. What was the purpose of the at and east grain and flour policy?

I would like to quote from a witness at the legislative committee from the Atlantic Provinces Transportation Commission as to the purpose of the flour and grain subsidy:

> The "At and East" Grain and Flour Subsidy program was implemented in the mid-1960s to ensure that eastern Canadian ports could compete with United States east coast ports; and to enable the Ports of Halifax and Saint John to compete with the St. Lawrence River ports.

The reason for the subsidy has changed somewhat in that eastern Canadian ports can now compete with the United States ports. The second reason for the program, to enable the ports of Halifax and Saint John to compete with the St. Lawrence ports, is still in effect. The fact is that the Atlantic ports of Saint John and Halifax cannot compete. To the detriment of Halifax and Saint John, the ports in Quebec City, Baie Comeau, and other St. Lawrence River ports will benefit at the expense of Atlantic Canada.

I would also like to refer to the minister who implemented that at and east program, the Hon. J. W. Pickersgill. In 1966, referring to the reasons for the at and east program, he said: "According to the Board of Transport Commissioners these rates are already unremunerative—We decided to keep those rates at their present level and to pay compensation for doing so. This is because we feel there is an equal obligation in this field to the obligation with regard to the Crowsnest. The purpose of this is to ensure that we will have rates which will provide some inducement and incentive to shippers to use the facilities of the Atlantic ports".

Basically, these are the reasons why the minister, Mr. Pickersgill, implemented the program. He viewed it as an equal obligation to the western program of Crowsnest.

In 1975, the program was extended to include the Ontario wheat growers. This was for the purpose of storing grain in the Georgian Bay area and then shipping in the winter, once prices had stabilized, to the export ports in the east. As the board states in their objectives in using this program:

> The At and East has allowed the board to put in place an effective and orderly marketing process.

There was an additional reason for this program and it was that it created an efficient marketing program for the wheat growers of Ontario.

The abolition of the at and east program will severely hurt Atlantic Canada. I would like to refer to some statements that Mr. Keith Russell, executive director of the Atlantic Farmers Council, has made to the legislative committee. Mr. Russell represents about 80 per cent of all farmers in the Atlantic provinces, in that the federations of agriculture from Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Newfoundland are repre-

sented by this co-ordinating body which they call the Atlantic Farmers Council.

According to Mr. Russell, the livestock and poultry industries in Atlantic Canada require about one million tonnes of grain per year. The Atlantic provinces are growing about half that requirement, that is about 500,000 tonnes. That means they are importing about 500,000 tonnes from western Canada.

At the same time they are not allowed to even investigate—I suppose they could investigate—but they are not allowed to purchase grain from the European Common Market or from the eastern United States, because in order to do so, one needs a licence from the Canadian Wheat Board and it refused to give one. We are caught in a position where we have to buy our grain from western Canada and from Ontario and we are going to have to buy it at a much increased price. Because of the increased cost, it is going to detrimentally affect our livestock and poultry producers in Atlantic Canada.

The main beneficiaries of this program, in addition to Atlantic Canadians, are the wheat and grain producers of western Canada and Ontario. This program is now costing farmers an additional $25 to $30 a tonne in transportation costs of grain coming into the region. This is going to have the effect, according to Mr. Russell, of cutting the number of livestock and poultry growers in half. If this is not going to be a disaster to the Atlantic provinces, then I do not know what it is going to take to show this government that this bill is a piece of ill-advised legislation.

In conclusion, I implore the government, on behalf of the livestock and poultry producers of Atlantic Canada, to withdraw this bill or at least to agree with the member for Lambton—Middlesex to not implement this program for at least a five-year period so the farmers of Atlantic Canada will have an opportunity to make adjustments to the withdrawal of the program.

Mr. Howard Crosby (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, if you would allow me a few moments to respond to at least some of the comments and statements that have been made in support of this particular amendment and the other amendments proposed to Bill C-26.

I do not think it is too much to say that the amendments are virtually and entirely without merit. I say this for historic reasons. We have heard many times in this debate that the subsidization embodied in the at and east rate was created in the early sixties and affirmed in 1966 as a provision of the Railway Act of Canada. The purpose of the subsidization was to ensure the flow of grain and grain products, including flour, to the east and particularly to the east coast ports of Halifax and Saint John.

• (1520)

Simply on the passage of time and the changes that have taken place over the past 25 years, the subsidy requires some form of re-examination. This re-examination did not start yesterday, it started in 1984 when the government reviewed all the expenditures that were part of the massive deficit that the previous Liberal government had incurred over the years and piled into a $200 billion national debt. I do not think anybody would ever fault the government for reviewing each and every item of federal expenditure.

Of course, subsidies were one of the items that came under review. The question was asked as to whether this form of subsidization was accomplishing a useful purpose, bearing in mind the cost to the treasury that exceeded, in some years, $40 million and was capped in one particular year at $40 million. It is understandable that the subsidy was reviewed and found at fault. This review took place in the mid-80s and the at and east subsidization program was under attack from 1985 onward.

The Atlantic Provinces Transportation Commission recognized that fact and came forward in 1985, making some suggestions for change. It knew that the at and east subsidy was not fulfilling its purpose, was not cost effective and was not producing all the results that effective government assistance can produce.

All these matters were considered by officials, whether letters were answered or not does not matter. The matter was on the table, it was fully considered, but no positive recommendations were made. No authoritative body, provincial government, railway company, shipping company, or elevator company came forward and said, "Here is exactly what we want to replace the at and

east". So a decision was taken in April of 1989 to cancel the at and east subsidy.

That decision was taken in the budget and the legislation embodied in Bill C-26 simply implements a budget decision taken in April of 1989. And here we are, years later almost, debating what is a *fait accompli*. The members opposite knew in April of 1989 that the at and east had been abolished. They know that in July of the same year, transportation of grain through the system embodied in the at and east rates stopped. They know that all subsidies terminated in January of 1990. They know that grain is not now flowing eastward as a result of the at and east subsidy. They know the game is over. They know *fini* has been written to the book and now it is time to write a new book on grain movements to the east coast. Now the time has come—

Mr. Benjamin: Like what?

Mr. Crosby: And so the member for Regina—Lumsden, who is not involved in the port of Halifax nor in the port of Saint John, says, "Like what?". Well, now what do you do? Do you start writing a new program before you have terminated the old? Can you have two kinds of subsidies arguably in effect? No, what you have to do is terminate the subsidies and then take the positive attitude toward what might be an appropriate replacement.

You have to listen to organizations like the Halifax-Dartmouth Port Development Commission which has suggested unit trains and are conducting a study to determine whether unit trains can be used to carry grain from western Canada directly to the ports of Halifax and Saint John.

Look at those kinds of suggestions and examine them carefully, not sit in the House of Commons and use arcane arguments to support a policy which has already been eliminated. What, indeed, is the purpose of that? Do they really think they are helping the longshoremen in the port of Halifax? Do they really think they are helping the operators of the grain elevator in the port of Halifax? Do they really think they are helping Dover Flour Mills, by arguing against a matter that has already been clearly established and is now a matter of history? What is the point of that? Are members of the House of Commons, allegedly acting in the interests of the people involved, the people of Nova Scotia, the people of New Brunswick, the people of Atlantic Canada, simply going to stall this bill so that no resolution of the problem will ever occur?

Is that your purpose? Is that what you want to do for the people of Atlantic Canada? Or do you want to get to work and find replacement policies and programs that will mitigate any damage caused by the elimination of the at and east subsidy? Is that too much to ask members from Saskatchewan to do? Is that too much to ask of members from Ontario? Is it too much to ask members from Nova Scotia to put aside the political rhetoric, and to recognize that a decision has been taken by government and that decision is part of history and to go on to resolve the problem? Is that too much to ask? Is that what they enjoy?

Is it their purpose in life to sit here and involve themselves in useless political rhetoric when there are people at work in the country trying to resolve the problems? They want help from members of Parliament. They want support, but I do not know anybody who appeared before the legislative committee who said: "Preserve the at and east." Since 1985, the Atlantic Provinces Transportation Commission has admitted that the at and east rate is ineffective and that we must move to some other form of assistance.

The members from the New Democratic Party say: "We agree with the Atlantic Provinces Transportation Commission. We support their submissions." They say: "Keep the at and east and then we will see what else we can get." That is not going to work. They know it. They are just taking political advantage. They think somebody in Nova Scotia or New Brunswick might be listening to them and actually believe that they are acting in their interests instead of putting roadblocks in the way of the resolution of the problem.

I have lived in the port of Halifax all my life. My grandfather served in the House of Commons before me. I do not think anybody can doubt my motives in trying to assist the port of Halifax. Yet, they come here from Regina, Saskatchewan and say: "No, no. Don't eliminate the at and east. Keep it in force. Let's go on for another six days. Carry it over the summer. Don't solve it until the fall." How is that going to put in any alternate programs of the kind recommended by the Atlantic Provinces Transportation Commission? How are we going to act upon any of their suggestions unless we

deal with and finalize this matter here in the House of Commons?

I appeal to members to put aside the rhetoric and the partisan, infantile policies. Let us get the bill passed. This will allow us to go on in a positive way to implement some of the recommendations of the Halifax–Dartmouth Port Development Commissions and some of the recommendations that flow from the Atlantic Provinces Transportation Commission. It will allow us to look at the possibility of unitrains and the cost factors involved, to preserve the elevator, to implement the study that has been undertaken by the Minister of Agriculture and the task force to see if we can preserve the grain elevator, to help the longshoremen and the employees in the port of Halifax to gain other employment.

They do not want to listen to you people. They want jobs. They want the grain elevator operating. They do not want to listen to you. They want some hope for the future and you are not giving them any while debating this bill and stalling it in the House of Commons. I wish my colleague from the city of Dartmouth was here to argue against me and to tell me that the people in the port of Halifax want the at and east rate stalled in the House of Commons.

They want this matter decided. They want to go on. They want hope for the future. They do not want your empty rhetoric any more.

Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina—Lumsden): Mr. Speaker, I wish I lived in Halifax so I could run against the hon. member.

In all the years I have been here, I have never heard a member betray his own region and his own city with the kind of garbage to which I have just had to listen. The hon. gentleman forgets that something like the at and east freight rates affect us all from Moose Jaw to Halifax. From where do you think you get that high quality milling wheat? From where do you think you get that high quality feed grain?

Do you think it grew up in the middle of the St. Lawrence River? You do not know a damn thing about grain and grain movement. You do not know anything about it. The hon. member talks about jobs. This bill has already put over 100 people out of work. He talks about making jobs. The hon. gentleman submits that they are going to replace this. Well, the one thing you do not do, if you are any kind of a government with a handful of brains, is cancel a program until a replacement one is agreed to and ready to put in place. These guys have got nothing.

• (1530)

The Atlantic Provinces Transportation Commission has made proposals which the government has refused to accept. When we get to Motion No. 2, which is a proposal of the Atlantic Provinces Transportation Commission, I wonder where the hon. member will be. He will be out behind the curtain, hiding. He will not have the courage to vote for his own city and his own port.

We will support Motion No. 1 of my colleague the Liberal critic because, if nothing else, passing this motion would give the government time to come up with its replacement program that the hon. member for Halifax just talked about. Obviously the hon. member and the government do not have a replacement program. That will give the government a year or two, as long as they are going to last, to come up with their replacement program. They have not got one yet and they will not listen to the people from the Atlantic provinces who have made proposals which the government refuses to act on or even listen to.

The worst tragedy of all is that this is a total emasculation of the parliamentary process. I know Mr. Speaker ruled on the question of privilege of my colleague, the hon. member for Moose Jaw—Lake Centre. He ruled under the rules of Parliament that the legislation was in order. Mr. Speaker frankly said that he did not want to rule on a constitutional matter, that that was to be dealt with in some other place. The problem is, Mr. Speaker, who has the money to go to the Federal Court and then the Supreme Court? I do not, and I doubt if the Standing Committee on Transport can get a budget for it.

In any case, what has happened has happened before and the Federal Court threw the government out of court. The government had to fork over $100 million in storage payments to the Canadian Wheat Board. Why? Because the government tried to make legislation retroactive. That was a Liberal government. This government is doing exactly the same thing. It is giving legislative effect to a bill that has not even passed Parliament. If

that does not violate a parliamentary democracy and violate our Constitution, I do not know what does.

No self-respecting democratic institution should allow the government of the day, any government of any political stripe at whatever level, to bring into legislative effect and legislative force legislation that has not been dealt with and passed by Parliament and received the signature of the Governor General.

This law has been in effect and enforced since July 1989. The least the government could do is say that the law does not take effect until the day of Royal Assent, and then it would be doing the right thing in terms of parliamentary process.

This amendment gives the government some time. It can keep this at and east rates legislation in effect for a year. If it has an alternative program, fine, bring it in and the legislation to cover it and then repeal the at and east rates. Instead of that, the government just repeals it. It is perfectly understandable why it is done that way. The government does not want to spend any more money. It has no intention of bringing in a replacement bill.

We have moved an amendment, which we will discuss a little later, that implements a request of the Atlantic Provinces Transportation Commission. The government will not listen to them. The government has heard them but they did not listen, and for the amount of money that the government thinks it is going to save, it is going to end up costing the Government of Canada more money by the cancellation of this program.

It is going to cost the government in lost jobs, lost income, and lost income tax. It is going to cost it in the lack of a grain handling facility in Saint John, which does not do much for Canada's export position, whether it is for flour or grain. It is likely going to cost it most, if not all, of the operation of the grain terminal in Halifax. Then the hon. member for Halifax states that these people want jobs. Of course they do, so why is he supporting a bill that does away with their jobs? Where does the hon. member for Halifax stand on the jobs that the people in his city want when this legislation is causing them to lose their jobs?

If and when the Dover Flour Mill shuts down, that will decrease our export capacity of flour. More significantly, the feed grain users in Atlantic Canada depend on that terminal to store the feed grain.

The hon. member for Halifax talked about unit trains. I do not know where he has been. The issue of unit trains from Thunder Bay to Atlantic Canada has been studied *ad nauseam* every year since I have been here, and the costs are pretty high. The government of those days and the government of today does not want to spend any more money and ergo unit trains are not being used. They should be in the winter months. In the summer months we can use the Seaway.

The hon. member is talking about using unit trains. What would you do with 100 cars at 2,000 bushels per car, 100 tonnes per car, and a 100 car unit train that arrives in Saint John? Where are you going to put it? The grain terminal is closed. It arrives in Halifax, where are you going to put it? The aftermath of this legislation means forget about unit trains. Dover Flour Mill will have to bring in just sufficient flour or milling grain to see them through month by month. That is about as much as they can store.

It is going to be a jerk-water operation. It hurts the shippers of malting barley. It hurts the brewery industry. It hurts the shippers of malting barley in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. It hurts the shippers of high grade, high protein milling wheat. It decreases our export capacity and capabilities. We lose what we used to have, a flour and feed grain market in Cuba. Cuba sent sugar and rum to the Soviet Union, and the Soviet Union paid us in cash. It was a neat three-way deal. It was in place for about 18 or 20 years. That is down the drain.

There is the whole Caribbean and central American region that is there for us, and what do these guys do? They scrap it. They scrap what we do have, and goodness knows it is little enough.

I do not understand any self-respecting member from Atlantic Canada from any party supporting this legislation. It passes beyond all understanding. I suspect that any member from Atlantic Canada who supports this legislation and all the implications there are to it will rue the day. I can tell them one thing: Do not be a Tory candidate in my part of Canada. You will have to answer for this one, as well as a number of others.

• (1540)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Before I put the question, a vote on Motion No. 1 will be applied to Motions Nos. 3 and 6.

The question is on Motion No. 1 standing in the name of the hon. member for Lambton—Middlesex. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): In my opinion the nays have it.

And more than five members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Pursuant to Standing Order 76(8), the recorded division on the motion stands deferred.

We will now go to Motion Nos. 4, 5 and 7.

Mr. Rod Laporte (Moose Jaw—Lake Centre) moved:

Motion No. 4

That Bill C-26 be amended by deleting Clause 2.

Motion No. 5

That Bill C-26 be amended by deleting Clause 3.

Motion No. 7

That Bill C-26 be amended by deleting Clause 4.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I rise to debate those motions. I note that Motion No. 2 was ruled out of order as it had been dealt with substantially in committee. However, the purpose of the motion was to introduce the option that had been put forward by the Atlantic Provinces Transportation Commission, the proposal that has been discussed many times in this House.

I would like to turn for a moment to another area. In fact, the effect of the motions would be to kill the bill and leave the *status quo*. There is another area that has only been touched on briefly with respect to this issue, and that is with respect to the transportation system in this country generally.

It has been asked a number of times in this House why the government persists in pushing this legislation through. It is clear on the face of the bill and all the evidence that has come forth from the committee and through the House that this bill makes no sense.

However, it does make sense in terms of the government's over-all agenda. It is a private agenda, an agenda that has not been discussed openly, but it is there and it can be seen if one looks very closely. That agenda that the government is coming forth with will change the whole face of agriculture in this country, and it will change the face of the transportation of grain in this country.

The elimination of the at and east grain transportation program is simply a rehearsal for the removal of the Crow benefit that is now being enjoyed by western farmers. It is clear that the government is determined to completely dismantle the grain transportation system in this country as we now know it. The elimination of the at and east program is only one item on the government's agenda in its plan to dismantle our grain transportation system and to reintroduce the Crow debate.

This fall we are going to be into the real Crow debate. This is simply, as has been determined before, a mini-Crow debate. We had a Crow debate in the early 1980s. Many members who are here today, my senior colleagues, were part of that debate and did an admirable job with respect to that. That is the issue that is in front of us. What we are facing is the whole dismantling of the way we transport grain, the way agriculture survives in this country and the way it is progressing.

There is no consideration for the survival of the family farm. There is no consideration for the survival of the economic regions of this country. There is simply a concern for bottom-line economics which is coming forth.

This Tory government is very good at tactics and strategy. It has a strategy and it is putting it forth step by step. It was very clear in part of this bill the strategy that was taking place. It is a strategy that is very concerning. What was happening is that some of the members on the committee were falling into that trap.

The hon. member for Halifax stated in committee that if this subsidy goes it is unfair to the maritimes, because the western farmer still has the Crow benefits, still has the Western Grains Transportation Act and the benefits under it. She said that if the maritimes lose the at and east why should western Canadians keep the Crow benefit? That is a dangerous trap. That is the trap that

this government wants people to fall into, the talk of the so-called level playing field.

That is not the case. The reason that we have those benefits in the first place, the reason that we have had the Crow rate and now the Crow benefit, and the reason that we have had the at and east program was to allow the regions of this country to develop. That was the purpose of it.

They are removing the Crow benefit. That is not going to help the terminal at Halifax. It is not going to help the terminal at Saint John. It is not going to help agriculture in the maritimes.

When grain is shipped through Halifax and Saint John, it already gets the benefit of the Crow benefit because that benefit applies to Thunder Bay. Grain for export goes from the prairies to Thunder Bay, and then from there on through Halifax and Saint John. The at and east was simply another program to encourage the use of the elevators at Saint John and Halifax. Now that the at and east program is gone those elevators are in deep trouble. We have seen that one has already closed, and the elevator at Halifax is also in a shaky position.

If the Crow benefit goes, that is not going to benefit the maritime farmer. It is simply going to hurt further the average producer, the average family farm in Saskatchewan, in Manitoba, in Alberta, and in parts of British Columbia. What this government has done is laid the groundwork for the removal of the Crow benefit. It is laying a foundation. It is laying a trap which some people are walking into and which we must be very careful that we do not fall into.

If this Confederation means anything to us, if this country means anything to us—and there is a lot of debate about that these days—we have to pay attention to the regions. There are regions that do not have the same advantages as other regions.

We in Saskatchewan know what it is like to live in a province that does not have some of the economic advantages of other provinces. Certainly under a Tory government, which we have suffered for the last eight years, we now are a have-not province. We know what it is like to be from a region such as the maritimes because we are experiencing that situation now. This is a government that is not planning to better our lot in life. It is not planning to help the average Canadian. This is a bottom line economic government that is simply wanting to cut the deficit. It is simply looking after the interests of corporations.

What we have had since the Second World War is a *de facto* agricultural policy that has seen the family farm struggle. It has seen rural Canada disintegrating. Right now we have a severe crisis in rural Canada. Many of the same problems that exist in rural Nova Scotia are exactly the same problems that exist in rural Saskatchewan. The only difference in some cases is that the economic base is different. In some parts of rural Nova Scotia and the rural maritimes, fishing is the economic base and the same is true in Newfoundland, whereas in Saskatchewan the economic base primarily is agriculture.

The fundamental issue that we have to keep in mind—and I remind members to keep it in mind—is that this government has a strategy. It is a strategy that is going to be turning full force in the fall on to the western producers. We will be having a major change in transportation policy. We will be having a major change in support programs for the western farmer and a whole new attitude toward agriculture. I feel very concerned about that. I feel very concerned for the future of my province, for the future of western Canada, for the future of the maritimes, and for the future of Newfoundland. By passing this legislation the government is simply laying the groundwork.

• (1550)

I call upon members to do what they can to keep the issue alive and to show the government up for what it is doing. The government knows that this is its plan and does not hide it. One can see that it exists. It is there to be looked at.

In conclusion, I would remind members that we are simply beginning the debate. This a mini-Crow debate. The real Crow debate will begin in the fall when the government finishes its work on the transportation system and the movement of grain in Canada.

Hon. Roger C. Simmons (Burin—St. George's): Mr. Speaker, I say to my friend for Fraser Valley East that I was here this morning, as was he, at which time I was speaking in support of three amendments put forward by my colleague from Lambton—Middlesex. Now I am delighted to rise and support a set of amendments put

forward by the gentleman from Moose Jaw—Lake Centre.

I am surprised the amendments got by the Chair because the effect of the amendments, without telling the Chair how to do its job, as I understand it, would be to negate the bill effectively. There is another way to do that, simply by voting against the bill, but we will not be choosey on this side of the House. If we can beat some sense into the government by whatever means, we intend to do it.

That brings me to what I thought was a courageous move earlier today by the hon. member for Annapolis Valley—Hants, a gentleman who is normally in support of the government. He is a Conservative. He has run and been elected many times under the Conservative banner. He and I disagree on many issues, and that is as much to his credit as it is to mine, I am sure. However I do not want to talk about our differences today. What I want to do is salute him and the courage he exercised earlier today. I am sure he will follow through with a vote against the bill later on today.

The gentleman from Annapolis Valley—Hants, although he bears the same party label as those who have sponsored this bill, although he is normally a supporter of the Conservative government in this Chamber, gave notice today—and it took courage; I congratulate him—that he would be voting effectively against the government in this measure which is now before the House.

By way of contrast to what the gentleman from Annapolis Valley—Hants did, it is instructive to recall what the gentleman from Halifax West did, he who has stevedores, longshoremen, elevator operators, and other people in the dozens in the port of Halifax who are his constituents. We have in the one case a gentleman from Annapolis Valley—Hants who does not have very many constituents whose livelihood is directly at stake, although in fairness to him he does have some farmers whose feed prices will be adversely affected if this bill goes through.

An hon. member: Once the beef prices go up.

Mr. Simmons: I do not know how much they are going to go up. Did I suggest to the gentleman that I knew how much they were going to go up?

Mr. Hughes: Nobody was suggesting that you know what you are talking about.

Mr. Simmons: The gentleman from Macleod shows signs of stirring and having some interest in this particular matter. We welcome him to the debate. It is by far his best contribution to a debate during this entire session.

I say to both friends opposite that I do not know in dollars and cents terms how much will be the difference. I know that the impact will be adverse. One does not have to be terribly bright to figure that out. The impact will be adverse.

I also listened to the representatives of those farmers and those grain elevator operators who came before the committee during committee stage. One only has to read the transcripts of the committee hearings, which I have done, to find that people like Mr. Keith Russell, Executive Director of the Atlantic Farmers Council, told the committee as recently as May 17 when this bill was before it that there is a fair degree of concern among farmers in Atlantic Canada about this matter.

I was anticipating the next question as to why it is that I from what is essentially a fishing constituency am standing here right now talking about an issue that is essentially a farm and transportation issue. There is a very simple answer to that question.

While it is true that almost every one of the 151 communities that make up the riding of Burin—St. George's have an involvement in the fishery and are currently being devastated by the downturn in the fishery both inshore and offshore, it is also true that there are three important farming pockets in the riding of Burin—St. George's.

There is the very fertile Codroy Valley. Those of you who have gone to Newfoundland by Port aux Basques will be aware that after getting off the ferry in Port aux Basques and driving the Trans-Canada Highway across the island, within 20 miles of leaving Port aux Basques you will pass on your left particularly, but on your right as well, the very fertile and very picturesque Codroy Valley. It has a farm community which has thrived over the years and which will be hurt by the obvious increase in feed prices to be triggered by the bill now before the House should it pass.

There is a second pocket of farmers a little farther up the highway in what we know as the Robinson's area: the communities of Robinson's, McKays, Jeffries and so on. There is a third pocket on the Burin Peninsula centred around the community of Winterland.

Just a little footnote here for the benefit of my good friend from Macleod: between 1934 and 1949, during that 15-year interregnum there was no elected government in Newfoundland. The democratic government, a Tory government by the way, which had been elected in 1932 suspended itself and in effect voted itself out of office. That must have been the one and only time that a Tory government ever did that. It invited in a British appointed Commission of Government to run things. A governor plus six commissioners were appointed by the British government, three Britishers by birth, three Newfoundlanders by birth, plus the governor who was normally a Britisher by birth.

That seven-member commission was the government for a 15-year period, known as the Commission of Government. It did a lot of clumsy things, a lot of inefficient things, and a lot of undemocratic things. One of the better things that the Commission of Government did during that period was to encourage farming in Newfoundland, in particular to set up a number of farm communities for returning veterans, people who had come back from the Second World War. One such community was Winterland in my riding of Burin—St. George's, as well as some others.

Do I understand that my time is so soon running out, Mr. Speaker? There are many more things I would like to say about these particular amendments. In my digression I wanted to talk about the particular import of this bill to the farm community in Newfoundland, the three pockets in my riding, as well as other farm pockets not in my riding but elsewhere in Newfoundland.

• (1600)

Since time is running out, let me say in conclusion that we are against this particular bill and we are going to try and defeat it in any way we can. We believe that by voting for the amendments of the hon. member for Moose Jaw—Lake Centre we can send a signal that we are against the principle and the substance of this bill. I intend to do that.

I believe the gentleman from Fraser Valley East is almost persuaded he ought to do likewise. If so, that will be to his credit, unlike the gentleman from Halifax West who not only betrayed the workers in his riding who are depending on this at and east, but never had the courage to stay in the House and register his vote at the end of the discussion.

Mr. Stan J. Hovdebo (Saskatoon—Humboldt): Mr. Speaker, I am just going to take a few minutes. I think the member for Halifax West made an attempt to defend himself in the eyes of his own constituents. In the process, he attempted to make it seem that the benefit of this bill is not for Halifax and the east coast but for inland Canada and for the prairies. While there is some benefit as far as western Canada is concerned, the amount of grain that we ship through Halifax and Saint John is minuscule compared to the over-all shipment of grain.

The Atlantic Provinces Transportation Commission, regardless of what the minister has attempted to put before us, made a number of attempts to have the government hold off on this bill until a number of problems have been solved. The Atlantic Provinces Transportation Commission is not a fly-by-night group. It is a well established and respected organization representing a cross-section of Atlantic Canada and its transportation needs.

It pointed out in its presentation to the government and the committee that the total identifiable cost of the elimination of these particular rates in the form of wages paid to the people of the community is something over $34 million. They consider this to be a fairly conservative estimate.

Furthermore, it recognized the considerable spin-off activity in the community relative to the at and east rates. This bill will result in the elimination of a source of economic activity for Halifax and Saint John, as well as a source of materials of feed and grain that has allowed them to make use of Canadian products.

These motions, if passed, would keep the bill in place, since it appears the government is intent on eliminating these rates. This would give the commission an opportunity to see what must be done before this bill is put into

effect. It has made a somewhat ridiculous suggestion considering that we want to make Canada secure in food products and that Canada buys Canadian products as much as possible. It says, "Okay, if we cannot have western or Ontario barley, give us the right to buy our barley from France". In other words, instead of shipping our grain to the maritimes, we should buy barley from France and other European countries, ship the barley to the east coast of Canada and use it there because it is cheaper to ship it across the Atlantic Ocean than it is to ship it by rail, if the at and east rates are disallowed.

The second suggestion was that if it could not buy the western products, then the federal government should possibly eliminate the countervail duties on American corn so that instead of buying the Canadian feed it could then buy American corn at a cheaper rate and use that instead of the western or the Ontario grain.

The third possibility which it suggested should be explored was changing the structure of moving grain by rail, gathering up unit trains in the west and moving directly to Halifax by rail, thereby bypassing the seaway and possibly bringing that grain to the east coast at a cheaper rate. If economic, this proposal would require federal assistance. Government-owned hopper cars which are presently used in the west would then be used to travel further eastward. These are all ideas which the Atlantic transportation commission suggested should be considered.

The two groups of amendments we are looking at today attempt to allow the maritime provinces time to carefully examine these proposals to determine how the legislation will work, or whether we should return to the old structure and make as much use as possible of the at and east rates to allow the elevators to continue to operate and to allow the flour mills, the port, and the livestock operators to keep operating as they have.

Mr. Speaker, I speak in favour of these motions which have the effect of leaving the bill as it was before, that is, keeping the *status quo*. I suggest that if we vote for either group of motions, or both preferably, we would give the maritime provinces an opportunity to examine their own situation, an opportunity which they have not had until now.

• (1610)

Mr. Ron MacDonald (Dartmouth): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to be able to participate again today in this debate at report stage on the latest series of amendments.

I could not help but listen from behind the curtain to my colleague from Halifax West in his passionate plea of ignorance on the entire issue of the at and east freight rate subsidy. Unfortunately, the Member for Halifax West, or perhaps we should now call him the member from *fait accompli*, because every time we are faced with this particular piece of legislation and its negative effects, he throws his hands up in the air in a fit of not being able to do anything and says it is a *fait accompli*. I hate to tell him this but this is not an executive democracy, it is a parliamentary democracy.

We know full well that the government opposite has seen fit in its wisdom, or more particularly lack thereof, to introduce this piece of legislation last June. Because the regulations went into effect July 15, the hon. member for Halifax West would have us just sit on our hands and button our lips and not speak for the people of Atlantic Canada.

It is very clear that if Bill C-26 goes through, this abomination on the grain transportation industry in Atlantic Canada, there will be untold havoc in our agriculture industry. The hon. member for Halifax West may think that we have to adjust, and I heard him address this particular issue in his speech and say very clearly that the stevedores in Halifax just want to get rid of this and get on with it. That is simply not true. The stevedores in Halifax have been saying that if the at and east bill is flawed, if we have to reduce subsidies, then we have to look at the alternatives, and consider them first, not after you let the horse out of the barn and close the door.

According to the committee hearing of May 17, the hon. member for Moose Jaw—Lake Centre questioned Mr. Russell from the Atlantic Farmers Council. He asked about the effect of no consultation, no remedial measures, and no new programs on trying to offset the negative effects of the loss of the at and east:

> If there is nothing to replace this program, what does that do to the potential growth of agriculture in the Maritimes?

Anyone in this House who claims to know anything about agriculture knows that the Atlantic agricultural industry is one that has a great deal of difficulty. It is far away from the larger markets. We have smaller farms to

work. We know these facts exist for the agricultural industry in Atlantic Canada. Mr. Russell from the Atlantic Canada Farmers Council said that if this bill went through:

> It would set it back two to four years while we made a readjustment.

This is not rhetoric from the other side. This is coming from an individual who represents, and represents very well, the agricultural industry in Atlantic Canada.

Every piece of documentation that the committee heard while coming to its report, every piece of evidence it was given said that if this bill goes through at this particular point in time, it will cause untold devastation not just in the shipping industry, not just for the grain terminals, not just for the Dover Flour Mill in Halifax, but potentially could be disastrous for the competitiveness of the Atlantic agricultural industry.

If the member opposite needs more evidence then perhaps he should reread the evidence presented to the committee.

The only thing we can do is to ensure the bill does not pass. The government seems to be concerned. It is johnny-come-lately on this, in a conversion on the road to Damascus. If the bill does not pass the government will be able to sit down and talk to the industry. It will be able to look at the proposals set forward by the Atlantic Provinces Agricultural Council for input and changes necessary to ensure that the adjustment which would take place with the reduction of the at and east over a period of time would not lead to a lessening of competition in the Atlantic agricultural industry and we would not see the economic devastation that we currently see with the grain elevator that is now closed. We are not going to get the one in Saint John open again. The 65 per cent reduction of traffic through the Halifax grain terminal not only jeopardizes the future viability of the Halifax grain terminal, but also may jeopardize the future viability of Dover Mills, the only flour mill in Atlantic Canada.

I urge all my colleagues to listen to the member for Annapolis Valley—Hants. My goodness, he is a veteran of this place and he has fought many partisan battles. They should go back and listen. They should call up his speech today on Oasis and listen to what he said. They should listen particularly to the member for Halifax West, a senior colleague from his home province. He said that sometimes the government must listen to the other side of this hall. It must look across and try to get the good out of the debates that take place in the House. If it did that, he said that it would do what he is going to do. It would support at least a five-year hold on the effect of the bill coming into place, or indeed can it.

* * *

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I have the honour to inform the House that a message has been received from the Senate informing the House that the Senate has passed Bill S-16, an act to amend the Act of Incorporation of the Canadian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy to which the concurrence of this House is desired.

[*Translation*]

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 Comox—Alberni—Fisheries; the hon. member for Parkdale—High Park—External Affairs; the hon. member for Ottawa West—Transport.

* * *

[*English*]

RAILWAY ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

The House resumed consideration of Bill C-26, an act to amend the Railway Act (grain and flour subsidies), as reported (with an amendment) from a legislative committee; and Motion No. 4 (Mr. Laporte).

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The question is on Motion No. 4, standing in the name of Mr. Laporte, and applies to Motions Nos. 5 and 7.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): In my opinion, the nays have it.

And more than five members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Pursuant to Standing Order 76(8), a recorded division on the proposed motion stands deferred.

The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred divisions at the report stage now before the House.

The first question is on Motion No. 1, standing in the name of Mr. Ferguson, which applies to Motions Nos. 3 and 6.

Call in the members.

The House divided on the motion, which was negatived on the following division:

(*Division No. 273*)

YEAS

Members

Althouse
Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing)
Blondin
Brewin
Callbeck
Crawford
Dionne
Ferguson
Fontana
Gaffney
Gardiner
Harvard
Heap
Hovdebo
Kaplan
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)
Langan (Mission—Coquitlam)
Laporte
MacDonald (Dartmouth)
Maheu
Marleau
McGuire
Milliken
Nault * 18Nowlan
Parker
Phinney
Prud'homme
Robichaud
Simmons
Speller
Taylor
Volpe
Wood
Young (Beaches—Woodbine)—68

Arseneault
Benjamin
Boudria
Butland
Catterall
de Jong
Duhamel
Flis
Foster
Gagliano
Gauthier
Harvey (Edmonton East)
Hopkins
Hunter
Keyes
Kristiansen
Langdon (Essex—Windsor)
Lee
MacLaren
Manley
McCurdy
McLaughlin
Mitchell
Nystrom
Peterson
Pickard
Rideout
Rodriguez
Skelly (Comox—Alberni)
Stupich
Vanclief
Whittaker
Young (Gloucester)

NAYS

Members

Anderson
Atkinson
Belsher
Bertrand
Bjornson
Blais
Bouchard (Roberval)
Brightwell
Cadieux
Cardiff
Chadwick
Charest
Cole
Cook
Corbeil
Couture
Crosby (Halifax West)
DeBlois
Desjardins
Dobbie
Dorin
Epp
Feltham
Fontaine
Gibeau
Guilbault
Hawkes
Hockin
Holtmann
Horning
Hughes
Johnson
Kempling
Layton
Littlechild
MacDonald (Rosedale)
Malone
Mazankowski
McDougall (St. Paul's)
Monteith
Nicholson
Plamondon
Pronovost
Ricard
Saint-Julien
Shields
Soetens
Stevenson
Thacker
Thorkelson
Tremblay (Québec-Est)
Turner (Halton—Peel)
Vankoughnet
Vincent
White
Assiniboia)
Worthy—112

Andre
Beatty
Bernier
Bird
Blackburn (Jonquière)
Blenkarn
Boyer
Browes
Campbell (Vancouver Centre)
Casey
Champagne (Champlain)
Clark (Brandon—Souris)
Collins
Cooper
Côté
Crosbie (St. John's West)
Danis
de Cotret
Dick
Domm
Edwards
Fee
Ferland
Gérin
Gray (Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine)
Harvey (Chicoutimi)
Hicks
Hogue
Horner
Hudon
Jelinek
Jourdenais
Langlois
Leblanc (Longueuil)
Lopez
MacDougall (Timiskaming)
Marin
McCreath
McKnight
Moore
Oberle
Plourde
Reid
Richardson
Schneider
Siddon
Sparrow
Tétreault
Thompson
Tremblay (Rosemont)
Tremblay (Lotbinière)
Valcourt
Venne
Weiner
Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek—
Wilson (Etobicoke Centre)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I declare the motion lost. I therefore declare Motions Nos. 3 and 6 lost.

The next question is on Motion No. 4 standing in the name of Mr. Laporte. The vote on this motion also applies to Motions Nos. 5 and 7.

Mr. Gauthier: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I think you will find there is a disposition to apply the vote taken on the prior amendment to this one.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The House divided on the motion, which was negatived on the following division:

(Division No. 274)

YEAS

Members

Althouse	Arseneault
Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing)	Benjamin
Blondin	Boudria
Brewin	Butland
Callbeck	Catterall
Crawford	de Jong
Dionne	Duhamel
Ferguson	Flis
Fontana	Foster
Gaffney	Gagliano
Gardiner	Gauthier
Harvard	Harvey (Edmonton East)
Heap	Hopkins
Hovdebo	Hunter
Kaplan	Keyes
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)	Kristiansen
Langan (Mission—Coquitlam)	Langdon (Essex—Windsor)
Laporte	Lee
MacDonald (Dartmouth)	MacLaren
Maheu	Manley
Marleau	McCurdy
McGuire	McLaughlin
Milliken	Mitchell
Nault	Nowlan
Nystrom	Parker
Peterson	Phinney
Pickard	Prud'homme
Rideout	Robichaud
Rodriguez	Simmons
Skelly (Comox—Alberni)	Speller
Stupich	Taylor
Vanclief	Volpe
Whittaker	Wood
Young (Gloucester)	Young (Beaches—Woodbine)—68

NAYS

Members

Anderson	Andre
Atkinson	Beatty
Belsher	Bernier
Bertrand	Bird
Bjornson	Blackburn (Jonquière)
Blais	Blenkarn
Bouchard (Roberval)	Boyer
Brightwell	Browes
Cadieux	Campbell (Vancouver Centre)
Cardiff	Casey
Chadwick	Champagne (Champlain)
Charest	Clark (Brandon—Souris)
Cole	Collins
Cook	Cooper
Corbeil	Côté
Couture	Crosbie (St. John's West)
Crosby (Halifax West)	Danis
DeBlois	de Cotret
Desjardins	Dick
Dobbie	Domm
Dorin	Edwards
Epp	Fee
Feltham	Ferland
Fontaine	Gérin
Gibeau	Gray (Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine)
Guilbault	Harvey (Chicoutimi)
Hawkes	Hicks
Hockin	Hogue
Holtmann	Horner
Horning	Hudon
Hughes	Jelinek
Johnson	Jourdenais
Kempling	Langlois
Layton	Leblanc (Longueuil)
Littlechild	Lopez
MacDonald (Rosedale)	MacDougall (Timiskaming)
Malone	Marin
Mazankowski	McCreath
McDougall (St. Paul's)	McKnight
Monteith	Moore
Nicholson	Oberle
Plamondon	Plourde
Pronovost	Reid
Ricard	Richardson
Saint-Julien	Schneider
Shields	Siddon
Soetens	Sparrow
Stevenson	Tétreault
Thacker	Thompson
Thorkelson	Tremblay (Rosemont)
Tremblay (Québec-Est)	Tremblay (Lotbinière)
Turner (Halton—Peel)	Valcourt
Vankoughnet	Venne
Vincent	Weiner
White	Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek—Assiniboia)
Wilson (Etobicoke Centre)	Worthy—112

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I declare the motion lost. I therefore declare Motions Nos. 5 and 7 lost.

Hon. Don Mazankowski (for the Minister of Transport) moved that the bill be concurred in.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): In my opinion the yeas have it.

And more than five members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Shall I dispense with the ringing of the bells?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Gauthier: Mr. Speaker, maybe someday I will win one. On this one again I suggest that you would find a disposition of all members to apply the vote on the

amendments to the concurrence motion, in reverse, unfortunately.

Mr. Friesen: Mr. Speaker, I missed the first vote, but I would like to have my vote included with those of the government.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed

The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:

(*Division No. 275*)

YEAS

Members

Anderson	Andre
Atkinson	Beatty
Belsher	Bernier
Bertrand	Bird
Bjornson	Blackburn (Jonquière)
Blais	Blenkarn
Bouchard (Roberval)	Boyer
Brightwell	Browes
Cadieux	Campbell (Vancouver Centre)
Cardiff	Casey
Chadwick	Champagne (Champlain)
Charest	Clark (Brandon—Souris)
Cole	Collins
Cook	Cooper
Corbeil	Côté
Couture	Crosbie (St. John's West)
Crosby (Halifax West)	Danis
DeBlois	de Cotret
Desjardins	Dick
Dobbie	Domm
Dorin	Edwards
Epp	Fee
Feltham	Ferland
Fontaine	Friesen
Gérin	Gibeau
Gray (Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine)	Guilbault
Harvey (Chicoutimi)	Hawkes
Hicks	Hockin
Hogue	Holtmann
Horner	Horning
Hudon	Hughes
Jelinek	Johnson
Jourdenais	Kempling
Langlois	Layton
Leblanc (Longueuil)	Littlechild
Lopez	MacDonald (Rosedale)
MacDougall (Timiskaming)	Malone
Marin	Mazankowski
McCreath	McDougall (St. Paul's)
McKnight	Monteith
Moore	Nicholson
Oberle	Plamondon
Plourde	Pronovost
Reid	Ricard
Richardson	Saint-Julien
Schneider	Shields
Siddon	Soetens
Sparrow	Stevenson
Tétreault	Thacker
Thompson	Thorkelson
Tremblay (Rosemont)	Tremblay (Québec-Est)
Tremblay (Lotbinière)	Turner (Halton—Peel)
Valcourt	Vankoughnet
Venne	Vincent
Weiner	White
Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek—Assiniboia)	
Wilson (Etobicoke Centre)	Worthy—113

NAYS

Members

Althouse	Arseneault
Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing)	Benjamin
Blondin	Boudria
Brewin	Butland
Callbeck	Catterall
Crawford	de Jong
Dionne	Duhamel
Ferguson	Flis
Fontana	Foster
Gaffney	Gagliano
Gardiner	Gauthier
Harvard	Harvey (Edmonton East)
Heap	Hopkins
Hovdebo	Hunter
Kaplan	Keyes
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)	Kristiansen
Langan (Mission—Coquitlam)	Langdon (Essex—Windsor)
Laporte	Lee
MacDonald (Dartmouth)	MacLaren
Maheu	Manley
Marleau	McCurdy
McGuire	McLaughlin
Milliken	Mitchell
Nault	Nowlan
Nystrom	Parker
Peterson	Phinney
Pickard	Prud'homme
Rideout	Robichaud
Rodriguez	Simmons
Skelly (Comox—Alberni)	Speller
Stupich	Taylor
Vanclief	Volpe
Whittaker	Wood
Young (Gloucester)	Young (Beaches—Woodbine)—68

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I declare the motion carried.

It being five o'clock the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on today's Order Paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS—MOTIONS

[*Translation*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

INDOOR AIR QUALITY

Mr. John Manley (Ottawa South) moved:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should implement a national strategy for reducing the threats posed by exposure to contaminants in the air indoors that would include a national research centre, technology development programs, a set of national standards on indoor air quality and an information campaign designed to raise awareness of and provide advice on indoor air contaminants.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity this afternoon to present this motion on indoor air quality.

[*English*]

This is an issue of which many Canadian citizens are acutely aware because of the effect it has on their personal health. I do not think any incident could better give people the understanding of how important the issue of the indoor environment is than the story of the events that transpired in Pennsylvania in 1976.

At that time there was a retired air force captain, Ray Brennan, who was 61 years old. He had been retired for a few years and was having a few heart problems, but he was a keen Legionnaire. He was the bookkeeper for American Legion No. 42 in Towanda, Pennsylvania. As his sister said, all he lived for was to go to Legion conventions.

He set off for Philadelphia in July 1976 to attend a state Legion convention, an affair which typically consisted of lots of good times for people who had fought in foreign wars. He came home a bit tired, his sister recalled, and three days later he had chest pains, a fever, and some difficulty breathing. His sister said he did not want to go to the hospital. "We had to fight him all the way", she said. That very night, with his lungs filling with blood, Brennan died of an apparent heart attack.

That was July 26, 1976. Brennan was the first. Three days later in Clearfield, Pennsylvania, Legionnaire Frank Aveni, 60 years olds, died in much the same way. So did three other Pennsylvanian veterans. On Sunday, August 1, there were six more ranging in age from 39 years to 82 years scattered in towns all around the state of Pennsylvania. All of them had just one thing in common. They had all attended the Legion convention held in Philadelphia from July 21 to July 24, 1976. All of them came down with the same signs and symptoms: headaches, chest pains, high fevers, and lung congestion.

It seemed as though the terror spread without any rhyme or reason. Charles Seidel, an 82-year old World War I veteran from Reading, Pennsylvania, died. People in Williamstown were surprised when John Ralph, 41 years old, suddenly died. People did not want to go to his funeral for fear that they were going to catch something.

Then all of a sudden it seemed to level off. There were no instances of victims passing on this disease to any of their families or friends, so the initial fears of some kind of rampaging epidemic were quelled. In the end, 34 people who had attended the Legion convention in Philadelphia in July 1976 died.

As we all now know, they died of what has become known as legionnaire's disease. A bacterium, now called legionella, was the cause. The transmission of that disease is still not completely understood, but we do know that it is caused by inhalation, not consumption, of small particles of contaminated water or even soil. If you were to drink contaminated fluid it would not affect you, but if you inhale little particles of it it could.

The story of the tragic events that unfolded in 1976 in Pennsylvania where legionnaire's disease first occurred highlights as well as anything the fact that the indoor environment is intricately connected with the health and well-being of people who live, work, visit conventions, and do all of the things that are a part of normal modern life indoors.

The motion that I propose is that the government implement a national strategy for reducing the threats posed by exposure to contaminants in indoor air. This strategy would include a national research centre, technology development programs, a set of national standards on indoor air quality, and an information campaign designed to raise awareness and to provide advice on indoor air contamination.

We do not have to look to the United States or further afield than Canada to find examples of important, well-known government programs to deal with indoor air problems. The most recent one in the federal experience was the program a few years ago that assisted homeowners who removed urea formaldehyde foam insulation from their homes. It was a program that the Government of Canada assisted in to ensure that money was available to people who had to incur the cost of removing this foam from their walls and buildings because it was believed that improperly installed the foam insulation was causing health problems in people who lived in close proximity to it.

The fact is that North Americans spend over 90 per cent of their time indoors, either at home, school, or work as well as inside recreation and transportation facilities. Some people have estimated that in Canada this figure is as high as 98 per cent because of our more inclement climate.

• (1710)

Prompted by the energy crisis, construction techniques have tended to focus on airtight buildings with a dependence on mechanical ventilation systems. There has been a tendency to view the operation of ventilation systems solely in the context of economic efficiency, that is cutting energy costs, and rightly so.

However, more and more people are becoming aware of the untoward health effects that living and working in these airtight energy efficient buildings can have on them, either because of the lack of ventilation or some of the construction or paint materials that surround them all the time.

More and more consumer and office products are made up with a complex array of synthetic chemicals. These products include the furniture that we use and sit on, the paint on the walls, and the materials that are used in insulation.

We now have for the first time something known as the sick building syndrome. It is the term that is being used to describe large outbreaks of a whole range of illnesses that occur from irritations of the eyes, nose and throat, to major respiratory problems and even in some cases cancers. These health problems ultimately contribute to productivity loss in the workplace and greater allergic sensitivity in the home and in the workplace. In the case of some indoor pollutants, long–term physical impairment can result.

People who live in the national capital region, particularly those who are employed by the federal government, are well aware of the problems that have occurred at the building complex within sight of here across the river at Terrasses de la Chaudiere in Hull, Quebec, known affectionately in English by those who work there as Terrasses de la Shoddy–Air.

This huge new building was leased in the late 1970s by the federal government. Complaints began almost as soon as people began to occupy that building. Unions and researchers indicated that 97 per cent of the workers in that building reported a deterioration in their general health since they had been located there. Some 54 per cent reported more fatigue, 46 per cent experienced frequent headaches, and 43 per cent reported chronic dryness of the nose and throat.

In 1981 about 300 employees of a Ford of Canada assembly plant took sick after returning to work after a nine–day shutdown of the plant. Pumps for fluids used to cool machines were shut off when the plant closed and bacteria in the coolant had multiplied during the shutdown and spread through the air when the machines started up again.

This is similar to the problem that was ultimately identified as the cause of legionnaire's disease in Philadelphia where the ventilation system connected to the air conditioning system was the source, through the contaminated water that was around it, of the spread of the legionella bacterium among the people who were attending that convention.

The Public Service Alliance of Canada has identified a number of buildings in different places in Canada as problem buildings where their members are frequently experiencing problems related to the sick building syndrome including Terrasses de la Chaudiere, the Portage IV complex, the Harry Hayes Building in Calgary, the Taxation Centre in Winnipeg, and the RCMP buildings in Corner Brook. My staff complain in the West Block on Parliament Hill from time to time.

These are problems that surround us. They are common, everyday problems that workers in Canada are dealing with. They are health problems. They directly affect the productivity of our workers, and they are meritorious of the urgent attention of the Government of Canada.

What are some of the causes of the pollution? One that is of very great importance is radon. Radon, as I am sure you know, Mr. Speaker, is a colourless, odourless gas that occurs naturally. It occurs through the deterioration of natural materials. It causes no problem at all in very low quantities but when it gets trapped in a building problems can be significant. In fact, it is believed that it is second only to cigarette smoking as a cause of lung cancer, with some estimates being as high as 5 per cent to 20 per cent of lung cancer being caused by radon being trapped within residential buildings because they are not properly sealed.

There is a series of concerns about biological contaminants. There is carbon monoxide which at low levels causes fatigue and headaches in healthy people. It can cause chest pains in people with heart conditions and can be fatal at high doses.

There is nitrogen dioxide which results from various kinds of heaters and unvented gas stoves. There are problems of organic gases often resulting from paint, paint strippers, solvents, aerosol sprays and so on which result in eye, nose and throat irritations. They can result

in loss of co-ordination, damage to liver and other very serious ailments.

There is formaldehyde, which results from pressed wood products, and UFFI, as well as environmental tobacco smoke, asbestos and lead. These are all common, everyday materials that we know about and hear about which are causing problems for the people of Canada in their places of residence and work.

I suggest that the time has come in Canada to address these problems in an organized and concentrated fashion. That is why I have suggested that by way of a national strategy the government take on a number of initiatives. I do not think these involve great direct expenditure of public money, but I do think that there will be direct benefit to the economy of Canada if we address these problems. Benefit will be realized through increased productivity in the workplace and increased job and worker satisfaction.

It is also important that we recognize the interrelationship of so many aspects of our lives, that we begin to realize that environmental problems exist at all levels. Global environmental problems, of course, concern us all. In fact, the ability of mankind to survive depends on addressing some of those important issues.

Recognizing the importance of integrating mankind with the environment in which we live is also of great importance, whether that is the natural outdoors environment or the indoors environment. It is also important, as a matter of health policy, that we not merely look to find cures for ailments but rather that we look repeatedly to the causes of ailments to see whether we cannot remove some of those. Some of them require us to address these important environmental issues.

The federal government is already involved in some of these issues through the National Research Council which devises the building standards for Canada, through CMHC and through involvement, as the largest employer in Canada, with its employees and the unions that represent them. So I suggest that it would not be too much for the government to co-ordinate, through a national research centre on indoor environmental issues, the research that is currently being done in the federal government; to put together a set of technology development programs; to devise national standards on indoor air quality and to begin to raise the awareness of people of the importance of these problems and help individuals, employers and building owners to understand how they can contribute to the solutions to the problems that are created by indoor air contamination.

• (1720)

[*Translation*]

Therefore I propose that the government implement a national strategy to reduce the threats from exposure to contaminants in the air indoors.

I believe that this is a very important health problem for all Canadians, and that as a matter of health policy, all governments, not only the federal government but also the provincial governments, must take an interest in these problems and find solutions to the medical problems caused by environmental factors indoors.

[*English*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): On a point of order, the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the House Leader.

* * *

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, I hesitate to interrupt the member, but it is better that I interrupt him before he begins his remarks than during his remarks.

There have been discussions among the three parties and I believe you will find consent for the following two motions.

The first one is:

That, from the date of this Order until June 30, 1990, notwithstanding any Standing Orders, whenever the House sits beyond the ordinary hour of daily adjournment, calls for quorum and dilatory motions shall not be receivable by the Chair between 6 o'clock p.m. and 8 o'clock p.m.

The second motion is:

That, further to Order made Thursday, May 31, 1990, on Wednesday, June 6, 1990, recorded divisions requested on any motion in that day's Supply proceedings up to 9.45 o'clock p.m., be deferred until 10 o'clock p.m., provided that, if debate on motions numbered 1, 2 and 3 is concluded prior to 9.45 o'clock p.m., Members may be recognized for the purpose of debating the motion for concurrence in

the Main Estimates standing in the name of the President of the Treasury Board.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Members have heard the terms of the motions. Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Motions agreed to.

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

INDOOR AIR QUALITY

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Manley that:

> In the opinion of this House, the government should implement a national strategy for reducing the threats posed by exposure to contaminants in the air indoors that would include a national research centre, technology development programs, a set of national standards on indoor air quality and an information campaign designed to raise awareness of and provide advice on indoor air contaminants.

Mr. Murray Cardiff (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, the motion before the House draws attention to a very important national issue which concerns all Canadians. Whether we are in the home or the workplace, the quality of the air we breathe has a direct impact on our health. With our cold climate and the time that we spend indoors we could say that indoor air quality is very much a Canadian concern.

The importance of programs related to this cannot be over-estimated. Over and above the health concerns there is the enormous economic aspect of this issue. There is convincing evidence that employers can enhance the productivity of their employees by providing them with a well-designed and ventilated workplace.

Efforts to address this challenge on a national scale are certainly vital and the government recognizes this fact. The hon. member's motion is seriously flawed in that he ignores and downplays the important work that is already underway and the major contribution that is already being made by scientists and engineers across Canada.

Many government departments and agencies, as well as private sector institutions, are working together on this problem. There are clear responsibilities and recognized leadership roles, and I would like to speak specifically about the National Research Council of Canada. I feel that the motion is a swipe at the NRC and the work of the people at the NRC's Institute for Research and Construction. By calling for the creation of a national research centre and technology development programs, the member shows that he may not be fully aware of all of the programs and the role that is already being played in this field.

In fact, the NRC's Institute for Research and Construction already is the national research centre for the Canadian construction industry. NRC engineers, scientists, architects and technologists at the institute pool their professional talents to develop cost-effective technology for safe, durable construction.

An important part of this work is related to indoor air quality. The institute helps building owners and managers across the country address ventilation and air quality problems through new engineering systems and other technologies related to employee safety and comfort. IRC also performs its own research to improve ventilation as a means of achieving good indoor air quality in projects of benefit both in the home and the workplace and it is specifically concerned with airtight construction techniques.

As we all know, airtight construction measures can save energy but they also create indoor air quality problems and magnify the effects of emissions from new construction materials. Last year, for example, the institute's researchers made important strides in this field by developing reliable procedures for studying the airflow patterns in apartment buildings. This work will help engineers and scientists identify air leakage characteristics of buildings and this, in turn, helps in defining the ventilation needs of newly constructed buildings.

The institute is working with the Canadian Home Builders' Association in this and other work and it is thus truly linked to the national effort. An example of the national scope of this work is a recent NRC collaboration with the Home Builders' Association to survey the airtightness of hundreds of homes across the country. This survey and other studies will help define the need for mechanical ventilation systems in homes.

In the future the NRC institute will be developing computer models and other information systems to help transfer technology about physical and human performance associated with indoor air quality. This information will be made available to building operators in all parts of Canada to use as design guidelines that link the physical attributes of space to its intended use.

This work is definitely tied into a national strategy as it and all of the Institute for Research and Construction is overseen by the nationally representative Canadian Construction Research Board. This board includes the leaders of the construction industry and the unions as well as public sector executives from the provincial and federal departments and agencies and universities with an interest in this field.

Furthermore, the NRC, under the terms of its act, has an important national leadership role in all areas of national construction standards as it is responsible for the development of the national building fire codes. The NRC's national codes are praised world-wide and reflect the state of the art in construction regulation.

The code development process is reviewed for its consultative approach which involves over 300 volunteers across Canada. The institute's employees are working constantly with the code committees and with the provinces and territories to harmonize regulations across this country and to help ensure quality construction techniques on national standards.

The success of the institute's approach to the national public building codes has been recognized in many awards and citations. Last year, for example, the prestigious Royal Bank Award was presented to Dr. Robert Leggett, the first director of the NRC's division of building research and the man who guided the code process for more than 20 years. Clearly, we have a well established and widely supported system for setting national building standards that does not need to be duplicated or undermined by a new one.

The hon. member's motion also advocates a national information campaign. He is clearly unaware of the efforts being made by the NRC and the Institute for Research and Construction to make technology transfer a part of all research programs. For over 25 years the NRC has been presenting an across Canada seminar series called Building Science Insight. Last year, for example, about 1,400 professionals in 14 cities attended that conference. In these seminars, technical experts provide authoritative answers to a host of issues such as material selection, design details and maintenance practices.

The institute also spreads information about its research through hundreds of scientific papers and reports as well as in newsletters distributed across the country through the regional chapters of the Canadian Construction Research Board. The institute also spreads the word about the latest building technologies through its key role in scientific and technical training. An increasing number of young researchers are learning their trade with NRC. They then take their knowledge of the latest technologies in indoor air quality and other areas with them to careers in industry and government.

• (1730)

Information on air quality techniques and other new building technologies are also passed on through NRC's construction technology advisory network.

Thirty-six advisers, with about 700 years experience in total, serve clients across the country. The advisers help local building industries through technical advice and guidance on the evaluation procedures of NRC's Canadian Construction Materials Centre. They also help firms access NRC's vast store of technical expertise and even arrange support for air quality research and other projects under the NRC's Industrial Research Assistance Program.

In conclusion, I would like to commend the hon. member for his desire to draw attention to the indoor air quality issue and for his support of scientific and technical approaches to the problem. However, I believe that we should not ignore the tremendous contribution already being made in this field. There are excellent programs under way at Health and Welfare Canada, CMHC, private sector institutions, and the National Research Council's Institute for Research in Construction.

Mr. Lyle Kristiansen (Kootenay West—Revelstoke): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be able to engage in the debate today. I want to congratulate my colleague from Ottawa South for bringing this motion forward.

The subject of indoor air quality, whether at home, in the industrial workplace, in aircraft, or in any other area, is one that is topical. It has been for some years and, as

yet, has received rather scant attention from government and industry.

In 1981, May Britt Carlson, who was the labour attache to the Swedish embassy, travelled for years from one end of Canada to the other addressing labour, schools, workshops, and senior public servants from departments of labour and departments of health in various provincial jurisdictions. She tried at that time to draw attention to the major problems being created and the major health risks caused by poor indoor air quality, particularly in offices and in industry across Canada and around the world.

While there has been some research and there have been some laws passed, and some enforcement, the degree of concern necessary to do something serious about the problem of indoor air quality in Canada has left a lot to be desired.

The motion before us, and I will read it into the record, states:

> That, in the opinion of this House, the government should implement a national strategy for reducing the threats posed by exposure to contaminants in the air indoors that would include a national research centre, technology development programs, a set of national standards on indoor air quality and an information campaign designed to raise awareness of and provide advice on indoor air contaminants.

It is a worthwhile motion. I am glad it is here and hope it is not talked out. It will serve a major purpose in helping to focus attention on the problems of inadequate laws and particularly inadequate enforcement.

While the intent is proper and laudable, there is a problem in the attitude, and that is an attitude prevalent in almost all law-making institutions in Canada. It is kind of a legal mind-set that, if we change the law or educate ourselves, then something will happen. It is my experience, and the experience of literally millions of Canadians in industrial workplaces across Canada, that no matter what laws one has and no matter how much education one has, if you do not have enforcement mechanisms—whether they be public enforcement or self-enforcement—in the work place, then nothing worthwhile is going to be done.

I want to give an example of this. I will not take my limited time to illustrate all the kinds of sickness hazards that exist due to poor indoor air quality. I think those are well known. They can be looked up by anyone with an interest.

I want to refer to one classic example in my own province of British Columbia that shows how a vague law can be much more worthwhile than a law that spells out everything. What is important is that the government has the political will to see that something actually gets done in the workplace and in homes where it matters to people.

In the late 1960s, some of us in the B.C. forest industry discovered a dilapidated old copy of something called the Factories Act. This was legislation stemming from the early 1930s. About all it had to say about air quality was that the air should be clean and that there should be a healthy work environment. It lacked any specificity at all. Because of that and as soon as we had a government that was prepared to act—unfortunately it was there only from 1972 to 1975—suddenly we had major clean-ups in factories all over British Columbia without a sentence of law being changed.

I want to say exactly what the situation was. We had this law on the books. When we phoned Victoria in the late 1960s, no department of government could tell us which department was responsible for the legislation or who had to enforce it. Later when we—the NDP—went into government, we found out when the government changed that there were only two people in the entire province on staff to enforce that law. They were supposed to inspect annually every factory—old and new—and every industrial undertaking in the province before it opened. We asked them: "How did you do this job?"

They said: "We did telephone book inspections." We asked: "Do you mean to say you just phoned companies and asked them if they were in compliance with the law?" They answered: "No, we did not have time to do that. We just wrote the names in the telephone books into our annual reports." That was a classic case of lack of political will. We did not change an item in that legislation. Because we had inspectors in every region of the province that co-operated with both labour and management and went around the work sites, we had major clean-ups far more than anybody had ever dreamed, and without compulsion.

Even if we could pass this motion, there has been a total lack of political will evidenced on the other side of the House. It is six years, almost to the day, since Bill C-45 was passed to look after the occupational health and safety interests of employees of the House of

Commons. Part III would set up joint health and safety committees with some teeth and influence in this place so that we could clean up the problems in the Wellington and Confederation Buildings having to do with asbestos.

People are working in asbestos and do not know it. They do not know what to do about it when they do find it, and nobody makes them do anything about it even when it is discovered. This government has simply refused to proclaim Part III which it, we, and the Liberal Party all passed almost six years ago to the day. That shows the kind of lack of political will there is here.

While I support wholeheartedly the motion of my colleague from Ottawa South, until we get a government with some political will, I doubt that it will do much good. I think the hon. member for Ottawa South will probably agree with me when I point out that we do not even need a new national research centre. I think the member would probably agree that the Canadian Centre of Occupational Health and Safety might be a good place from which to start.

After a great deal of pressure from this side of the House both from our party and the Liberal Party, the government has finally agreed in a half-baked sort of way to do what it can to keep the centre limping along at least until the next election. That is the hope of all of us. By giving them this job to do we could not only have some excellent expertise readily available, but we could give that institution a new lease on life by giving it another major project that they already have some experience in to be able to conduct some work on behalf of all of us.

• (1740)

I said that I was not going to comment in detail on many of the specific problems, but I would like to urge all hon. members and anyone in the public who is interested in the air quality in their homes, their factories, or their workplaces, to see a Public Service Alliance of Canada film that I attended the *première* of a few months ago on the sick building syndrome. Watching a few minutes of that video would do more to convince all of us how serious these problems really are, not just for our employees or for employees generally, but also for those of us who work or live in buildings that are still not healthy places.

The Public Service Alliance of Canada did a commendable job in producing a film that the layman can understand. Again I urge all members to view it. I will not say any more at this point except to say—and I am not giving any hints to people out there in the workplace—that we know of the sick building syndrome in Ottawa and of some of the towers that we have had here, resulting from the energy crisis and the NEP related laws a few years ago.

Sometimes I think that a sledgehammer through a few windows around this capital would do a lot more to clean up and create a healthy workplace than lobbying for laws and enforcement to get some fresh air into some of these buildings. Better that than wait months and perhaps years more before we finally get a government with the gumption and the nerve actually to do something about its problems.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jacques Tétreault (Laval-des-Rapides): Mr. Speaker, I am thankful for the opportunity to provide this House with an update on recent and current initiatives undertaken by Health and Welfare Canada to maintain and improve the health of federal government employees. Not the least of these is the department's ongoing investigation and monitoring of indoor air quality in facilities where its employees work. However, experience has shown that problems of indoor air quality often arise in conjuction with other problems in the work environment. And so, before speaking specifically of recent actions connected with indoor air quality control, I think it would be opportune to situate those activities within the broader framework of the department's overall approach to maintaining a healthy workforce. I am certain that the hon. member, given his obvious interest in the health and well-being of public servants, will find the following thumbnail sketch of Health and Welfare's activity in this important area both valuable and informative.

Health and Welfare Canada is fully cognizant of the threat posed to the health of its employees by exposure to contaminants in the air inside office buildings and has, for some time now, been taking countermeasures to ensure against this potential danger. This mission is carried out by the Public Service Health Directorate of the Medical Services Branch, which provides a high

quality and comprehensive program of occupational and environmental health services to client groups. These services consist of health protection and promotion activities designed to support and enhance the physical, mental and social well-being of clients, and include: environmental and health surveillance that focuses on the health and well-being of the individual and the physical environment where people work; education and health promotion activities aimed at encouraging healthy living and working habits and the reduction of detrimental or hazardous activities in the workplace, at home, and in the community; counselling and employee assistance services to assist, support and enhance the ability of federal public servants to carry out their activities and responsibilities in the workplace in a safe, healthy productive manner; and consultative and advisory services to federal departments concerning the health of employees in the workplace.

The Public Service Health Directorate is responsible for providing these services to federal public servants, people working in federal facilities, residents of Indian communities, the travelling public, V.I.P. visitors to Canada, and in the Yukon Territory, for the provision of environmental health services on behalf of the Yukon Territorial Government. It is also worth mentioning that the Public Service Health Program co-ordinates these activities and services with other departments and agencies of the federal government and other sectors of the Canadian health care system.

The Public Service Health activity maintains an occupational health program for more than 240,000 employees in the Public Service of Canada. Its tasks are to promote occupational health and safety; to provide health services designed to ensure the health and well-being of all federal employees, regardless of location; and to minimize the incidence of work-related illness. These tasks are carried out by a variety of professional staff including Environmentel Health Officers, Occupational Health Nurses, Employee Assistance Advisors/ Consultants and licensed physicians. The Public Service Health Program also operates a clinic in Ottawa which is the main vehicle for providing health services to federal employees in the National Capital Region and the foreign service. There is also an Occupational Health Unit which is responsible for the provision of consultative, field and analytical services to regional personnel concerned with occupational and environmental health programs.

The Employee Assistance Program, which is part of the Public Service Health Program, is designed to help organizations implement procedures to effectively prevent employee problems from affecting their job performance and to create a route whereby employees with a problem are referred to the best professional resource available. In compliance with the Treasury Board policy of 1977, Employee Assistance Services are available at every federal government worksite.

Pre-employment and periodic health examinations are conducted on many occupational groups of federal public servants in order to protect their health and safety, that of their co-workers, and the general public. A major review of this activity, with participation from other federal departments including the Department of National Defence, Corrections Canada and Transport Canada is scheduled for completion in 1990. Among other things, there will be an attempt to replace routine annual examinations with screening examinations tailored to the needs of specific occupational groups.

The Occupational Health Unit of the Public Service Health organization provides analytical and field services which includes special investigations and studies of specific work sites; analysis of data, samples and specimens; remedial recommendations, where appropriate; educational sessions for occupational health staff and employing departments; plus technical support for professional staff in the field. Assistance is also provided to regionally based Environmental Health Officers across the country who deal with environmental conditions and hazards to the health of public servants in the workplace. They provide services which include monitoring, surveillance and educational services to all federal facilities and workplaces.

It is the Environmental Health Officers who carry out investigations of air quality complaints, normally at the request of federal government departments. They can request a stop work order if a serious hazard is found in a public service workplace and will make recommendations to correct the problem or remove the risk. They liaise with other departments and agencies such as Labour Canada, Public Works and Environment Canada. They co-operate in solving problems and exchange professional information about areas of mutual concern.

They work closely with departmental managers and health and safety committees.

Having described the program structure by which Health and Welfare Canada carries out its health in the workplace responsibilities, I would now like to mention a few of the more outstanding examples of indoor air contaminants investigations recently carried out, since it is this particular area of this activity that interests the hon. member.

On October 29, 1988, the Department of National Defence closed its Lancaster Park Supply Depot in Edmonton, Alberta, following an epidemic of complaints from employees of stuffiness of the nose, itching and irritation of exposed skin, and soreness of the eyes and throat. An extensive survey was carried out by PSH staff in order to identify the problem and make recommendations to DND officials. Following a survey and examination of employees by occupational health nurses, and physicians, and where necessary, dermatologists, and an environmental survey by Environmental Health Officers, it was recommended that the warehouse air be humidified, avoiding chemical irritants in the atmosphere and that adequate dust control with particular reference to fiberglass be instituted; and that vigilance concerning asbestos be maintained.

• (1750)

A full cleanup operation took place in May, 1989. All staff returned to work and the warehouse is now operational. Further steps were taken to promote the health and well-being of the workforce such as promotions and presentations on lifestyles and health; occupational cancer and diseases associated with asbestos.

No discussion of indoor contaminants would be complete without mentioning tobacco smoke. According to studies done by Health and Welfare for the period 1984-1989, tobacco smoke was identified as a primary culprit in the contamination of indoor air. Until roughly 1987, environmental tobacco smoke was ubiquitous in Canadian federal workplaces, and was accepted by most investigators as a normal constituent of indoor air that did not merit comment in reports. More recently, perceptions of Health and Welfare Canada investigators have changed. By 1987, some of them considered environmental tobacco smoke to be a significant contaminant. By 1988, for a number of reasons, smoke-free federal workplaces were being seen. On January 1, 1989, a smoking ban in all federal workplaces came into effect.

From what I have said, I think it is obvious that the federal government has been implementing a national strategy for reducing the threats posed by exposure to contaminants in the air indoors. Of course, more can always be done, and this is happening as well. Right now, Health and Welfare Canada is assisting in the financing and promotion of the Fifth International Conference on Indoor Air Quality and Climate: Indoor Air '90, which will take place July 29 to August 3, 1990, in Toronto.

[*English*]

Mrs. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West): Mr. Speaker, I want to start by thanking my colleague from Ottawa South for his motion and for the non-partisan and thoughtful way in which he has brought to the attention of the House a serious problem that needs to be addressed.

I was concerned to hear the parliamentary secretary refer to some suggestion that perhaps my colleague might have been critical of the NRC in his comments, that he might have been unaware of the work the NRC is doing in this field, and of the efforts being made to make their work available, known and used by building owners and managers throughout the country.

I think the comments were entirely unwarranted. No one who has sat in the House for any period of time and listened to the debates can be unaware that my colleague from Ottawa South has been instrumental in bringing to the attention of the House, the government and the public, the very serious damage being done to the National Research Council and to its contributions to science and technology in this country, and his very strong defence of the role of the National Research Council in all aspects of its work.

One would normally think that when a group of employees move to a new building, and in the case of many public service employees from temporary buildings that had existed from the time of the Second World War, that those employees would be just delighted with their new accommodations, happy to settle in, to have straight

and even floors for the first time in their working life. In fact, that is not what happened. From the minute certain buildings in the national capital region were opened and occupied, there were persistent and serious complaints from employees about the effects on their health from working in those buildings.

I do not think people moved into those buildings and suddenly starting looking for something to complain about. If anything, at least superficially, their working environment had been substantially improved and normally they would be overjoyed.

It has been a long effort to bring to the attention of employers the problems of the buildings in which they work. I do not intend to repeat the excellent information that has been put before the House by my colleague, but in 1988 the Public Service Alliance of Canada eventually out of frustration went to the point of actually producing a rather thick document for its members. Because the normal process of trying to bring their complaints to the attention of management simply were not being dealt with, they literally put out for their members a manual on how to deal with their complaints, how to identify the problem, how to document those problems and how to get action on those problems.

The manual they put out for their members outlines quite clearly that we are dealing with "sick buildings" and that the effect of working in sick buildings is sick people. The symptoms worsen during the day and as the week progresses and most disappear on the weekend. There has been some tendency on the part of management and government to think that they are dealing with a group of hypochondriacs, and to take these problems less than seriously. I do not think any responsible employer can believe that a group of employees suddenly turn into hypochondriacs overnight. These are very real problems, they are not unknown to the international scientific community and they deserve the very serious attention of government.

As well, people not working for government are subject to the same problems as we try to control our use of energy, make our buildings more airtight and produce a more controlled environment. Apparently we have also produced very sick environments. We seem to be less aware of it in North America. Already in Europe some governments have made significant progress in determining the causes and solutions to the sick building problem.

My colleague from Ottawa South has brought forward a motion which hopefully will improve our knowledge of this problem, and make us aware that solutions must be found. I am sorry that the government members have decided that this is a bill that should not be voted on because I think it is one that is eminently in the public interest.

Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to have this opportunity to discuss the subject of indoor air quality.

The public has always been concerned with air pollution but until a short time ago the focus was mainly on outdoor air quality and the release a chemicals into the atmosphere. It is now recognized that non-industrial indoor environments can contribute significantly to human exposure to airborne pollutants. The Department of National Health and Welfare has been involved with indoor air quality for at least a decade and remains active in this area.

In 1980, through the federal-provincial Advisory Committee on Environmental and Occupational Health, a working group on indoor air quality was established for which the Department of National Health and Welfare provided support.

In 1987, the Department of National Health and Welfare published, on behalf of the advisory committee, exposure guidelines for residential indoor air quality which presented guidelines and recommendations on 18 substances or groups of substances. To our knowledge, these were the first guidelines on indoor air quality established in any jurisdiction in the world. This year the guidelines have even been expanded to include radon and a new edition is now being published. Work in the department is continuing to identify other contaminants of concern which will be included in future editions of the indoor air quality guidelines.

Also, in 1987, the department published a report entitled *Significance of Fungi in Indoor Air—A Report of a Working Group*. This document, prepared by a departmental working group, reviewed the emerging issue of moulds and fungi as indoor air pollutants and potential hazards to health.

The current indoor air quality guidelines are restricted to residential buildings. The quality of air in many offices though falls within the responsibility of provincial governments to monitor and regulate. Unfortunately, many of the most conspicuous problems have to do with air quality in non-residential settings, namely offices, schools and public buildings. As a result, a new federal-provincial working group has been formed to investigate these problems.

• (1800)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired. Pursuant to Standing Order 96(1), the order is dropped from the *Order Paper*.

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[*English*]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing order 38 deemed to have been moved.

FISHERIES

Mr. Robert E. Skelly (Comox—Alberni): Mr. Speaker, I asked a number of questions a few months ago now, I think on December 8 in the case of one and January 23 in the case of the other, of the hon. Secretary of State for External Affairs and the hon. Minister of Fisheries of the day. My questions concerned the seizure of two Canadian fishing vessels, the *Fonzie* and the *Viscount* within Canadian waters on July 5, 1989. Those fishermen were accused by the United States of fishing above what is known as the A-B line, which is the boundary demarcation between Canadian waters on the one hand and Alaskan waters on the other.

The fishermen themselves had the A-B line programmed in their loran, so they were aware that they were fishing in Canadian waters, but in order to avoid a dispute with the American Coast Guard, which had been harassing Canadian fishermen in the area at that time, they steamed south farther into Canadian waters to avoid contact with the United States Coast Guard.

Nine hours later, the U.S. Coast Guard came into Canadian waters, far into Canadian waters in what they called "hot pursuit", although it could hardly be called "hot pursuit" nine hours after the initial contact with these two fishermen. The Coast Guard steamed into Canadian waters and seized those Canadian fishermen inside Canadian waters.

When the boats were seized, or boarded by the U.S. Coast Guard, the Canadian fishermen contacted External Affairs through the local fisheries officer and were assured that Canada would provide legal assistance to the fishermen. If they simply surrendered to the U.S. Coast Guard, they would get legal assistance afterward.

In fact, they were seized and after their boats were taken to Ketchikan, Alaska, they were unceremoniously thrown out of the United States until their hearing, and these fishermen got absolutely no assistance from this government. In fact, they had difficulty getting the government even to answer their letters concerning the assistance promised by Coast Guard radio.

What a way to treat Canadian fishermen, legally fishing in Canadian waters, doing what Canadian fishermen are permitted to do as a consequence of their licences and their Canadian citizenship.

After the seizure of the boats, the federal government refused to help. It was only after lobbying from the Pacific Trollers Association, the fishing organization that represents the two fishermen on the west coast of British Columbia, and only after representations from members of Parliament in this House and the two questions that I asked, one on December 8 to the Secretary of State for External Affairs and one on January 23 to the Minister of Fisheries, that the government promised some assistance.

The provincial minister responsible for fisheries in British Columbia also came to their assistance. As a result of these combined lobbying efforts, the Minister of Fisheries and the Secretary of State for External Affairs decided to come down with a paltry $25,000 supposedly to help these fishermen pursue their case in Alaska.

Because of the small amount of the aid, these fishermen could not pursue the case and had to drop the case. As a result, they lost a part of their catch and a substantial amount of fishing time. One of the fishermen who lives in my constituency may be forced to give up his house because he mortgaged his house in order to finance his boat, his fishing and also to finance his legal fees. The federal government, although it had promised assistance, never delivered the required amount. As a

result, at least one of these fishermen has ended up bankrupt.

The concern that fishermen have on the west coast is that they are wondering if this government is going to defend the right of Canadian fishermen to fish in Canadian waters.

• (1805)

Is this government, having promised to provide legal assistance to fishermen who get into problems with the United States Coast Guard, which is known to harass Canadian fishermen fishing from Canadian vessels inside Canadian waters in order to try to advance their territorial claim in Dixon Entrance south of the A–B line, going to protect those fishermen? To date this government has not shown the backbone or the courage to do that and now many fishermen on the west coast feel that if you want to get protected by the Canadian government when you are fishing legally in Canadian waters, it is probably better to have a United States passport.

Mr. Ross Belsher (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport): I want to thank the hon. member opposite for bringing this forward again in this House. I must say that in listening to his remarks, I could not disagree with him more fully.

Yes, it is true that on July 5 of last year, two Canadian vessels the *Fonzie* and *Viscount* were arrested in the Dixon Entrance, one and a quarter miles south of the A–B line in an area that is claimed by Canada and the U.S. It is alleged that they were illegally fishing earlier that day in the undisputed U.S. waters. Both captains deny that they had crossed the boundary into the disputed U.S. waters in Alaska.

At the time of the arrest, the fishermen sought advice from the government. The statements that were made by the Canadian Coast Guard radio led the fishermen to believe that they had received an undertaking from the government for legal assistance.

From the time of the incident, the government has worked continually to persuade the U.S. authorities to drop the charges because the arrests were a violation of an understanding between Canada and the U.S. on mutual restraint in the disputed area. Legal assistance was provided through diplomatic channels and the provision of advice to aid their case. The Canadian Embassy in Washington twice protested the arrests of the Canadian crews and vessels by the U.S. Coast Guard in Dixon Entrance and requested their immediate release and the dropping of charges. The arrests were also protested in Ottawa by the Department of External Affairs to the U.S. Embassy at the level of senior officials.

In addition, Canada's concerns over these incidents were raised repeatedly at bilateral enforcement meetings. During discussions with senior U.S. officials in Ottawa on August 2 and September 25, and again in Washington, D.C., on December 18, we requested that the civil charges against the vessels be dropped. In April of this year, a tentative out of court settlement was reached with the Alaskan government. The agreement should be finalized imminently.

The government provided all forms of legal assistance in this case normally provided to Canadians facing charges outside Canada. Moreover, in view of the exceptional circumstances that existed in this particular case, financial assistance in the amount of $25,000 was provided to the Pacific Trollers Association to contribute to the association's efforts to help the Canadian fishermen operate in the disputed boundary areas off the B.C. coast. These efforts should ensure that fishermen have a better understanding of the legal and enforcement issues in the disputed zone in Dixon Entrance in order to prevent such incidents as occurred last summer.

Newly developed guidelines for fishermen concerning the disputed zone in Dixon Entrance are now available from the department. Guidelines for use by the Canadian Coast Guard concerning boundary incidents will also be finalized shortly.

I want to make it abundantly clear that the Government of Canada is concerned. The A–B line constitutes the international boundary for all purposes in Dixon Entrance and the government is determined to ensure that Canadian fishing vessels have unimpeded access to all Canadian waters, including Dixon Entrance.

In this regard, a public meeting will be held on June 21 in Prince Rupert with fishermen's groups, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and the External Affairs officials to discuss issues related to the boundary in Dixon Entrance.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Mr. Jesse Flis (Parkdale—High Park): Mr. Speaker, on December 7 of last year, I rose in this House to ask the Prime Minister, in the wake of recent reforms and economic hardships in the Soviet Union, when he was going to help President Gorbachev, give him something tangible to enable him to meet the population's expectations.

My question was responded to by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, and with all due respect, I did not receive a satisfactory response. Maybe the Parliamentary Secretary today will give me a better one.

• (1810)

The Prime Minister had recently returned from a trip to the Soviet Union where he claimed that "in terms of bilateral co-operation the visit marked a watershed in Canada-Soviet Union relations. We signed 14 bilateral agreements—more than had been signed in the previous 20 years—on subjects ranging from international affairs to Arctic co-operation, to the environment, to military and cultural co-operation, to investment protection".

Since that day, which was November 27, 1989, as this House knows we have had various visits from Soviet officials, parliamentarians such as today's parliamentary delegation of the Supreme Soviet led by Mr. Rafik Nishanov and most recently, of course, Mr. Gorbachev himself. I have yet to hear any details as to whether there has been any progress or success with respect to these 14 agreements.

I cannot help but feel rather cynical about the intent of the government when it signs such sweeping agreements, all-encompassing agreements, especially in areas where the government's own commitment is highly questionable. Examples would be the agreements on the Arctic and on the environment.

It was brought to our attention in the time leading up to the recent summit on the environment that Canada had made a behind the scenes deal with the United States and Britain to veto a proposal offered by several other countries on the levels of reduction for CFs. Such behaviour truly undermines any effort we may want to make internationally on any given issue. At home we are not even able to get an already watered down green plan off the ground.

Ideas are great if they are followed by substantive goals and objectives which can be measured by results within time frames by successive re-evaluation, re-examination, revision.

We have the same problem with PCBs in our food chain in the north. Granted, there seems to be a will to do something. The Prime Minister himself on that same day offered an endorsement by President Gorbachev toward co-operation in the Arctic with respect to this very issue, but there is a long distance between endorsing and doing something about it. What guarantees did we get that this would become a priority for the Soviet Union?

We are fast losing any influence that we may have had on events around the world. What Canada says these days is met almost with a polite impatience as we self-importantly and self-righteously condemn or congratulate as we see fit.

When we get assurances from the Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union that medical supplies are reaching and will continue to reach Lithuania, and they do not, we seem surprised and almost shocked, as if we had done something wrong. I am not surprised or shocked, because for the last six years, I and my colleagues on this side of the House have watched this government become merely a shadow and a voice piece for the Government of the United States.

The opportunity to show leadership has risen again. The changing face of eastern Europe and the Soviet Union has presented Canada with a rare chance to take the initiative in the inevitable changing role of NATO.

Yet what do we hear? On the one hand, we hear the Secretary of State for External Affairs propose a new direction for NATO by rejecting the policy of maintaining nuclear weapons in Europe. On the other hand, we hear senior External Affairs departmental officials say that Canada continues to support the strategy of maintaining a mix of nuclear and conventional weapons in Europe. I thought it was the politicians who set policy and the bureaucrats were there to administer it. It seems it is the other way around here.

For once I think that the Secretary of State for External Affairs is moving in the right direction. The

time has come for NATO to take up responsibilities that better represent and better serve the present day realities.

Were NATO to become less threatening by giving up on the traditional argument of nuclear weapons as the ultimate deterrence, we may find the Soviet Union less paranoid of a united Germany and more willing to dismantle its forces, other than as we heard Mr. Gorbachev say when he left the United States that this could lead to another cold war if we insist that the united Germany be a member of NATO.

I truly feel that isolating the United States, Britain and France, the only members of NATO who are developing air-launched nuclear weapons to replace land-based nuclear missiles and artillery, and showing them up as countries with misplaced and outdated policies will serve to further the call from the international community to re-evaluate global priorities.

I urge the Secretary of State for External Affairs first to clarify his position—and I hope that his position is that of rejecting current policy—and stick to his proposal during his meeting on June 7 and June 8 of the North Atlantic Council so that we are allowed to play a central role as NATO transforms itself and so that Canada can be free to promote peacekeeping processes, peacekeeping forces, and become truly a nation that can once again make peace a priority as it did under Liberal governments under Pierre Elliott Trudeau, Pearson, St. Laurent, et cetera.

• (1815)

Mr. Patrick Boyer (Parliamentary Secretary to Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I am glad I am in the House because I think some of the points that have just been mentioned by the hon. member do require a response. I would like to say that I recall his question in this House last December very well. In fact, as reported at page 6612 of *Hansard* for December 7, 1989, the hon. member stated that the Prime Minister "has just set back the termination of the cold war for another 10 years".

The overstatement and the hyperbole involved in that assessment is unfortunately typical of the strain that is carrying through some of his assessment late this afternoon in his continuing review of the many different facets of what is happening in eastern and central Europe, the Soviet Union, and the Canadian response to it.

He wound up, with his heart covered, almost with a Liberal Party appeal to the memory of Lester Pearson and Pierre Trudeau and Canadian policy in eastern Europe and the Soviet Union in those days. There is not a person on this planet who does not recognize that there has been a change in the relations in those countries.

We have seen a shift from totalitarianism to democratic regimes. We have seen a shift from the Communist Party domination to multi-party states. We have seen a shift from centrally planned economies to the market economy. We have seen the cold war ending in place of pursuit of collective security and dialogue. The very kind of meeting that was held in this city last week between our Prime Minister and Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev and between our Secretary of State for External Affairs and Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze give clear evidence of the highest attention that is being paid to the continuing evolution of Canadian policy in that region.

The hon. member, as he is his party's critic for External Affairs, has touched many different aspects and issues in his brief remarks, too many to respond to in total right now. However, I would refer him to the excellent discussion and debate which we had in this House last Thursday on the whole question of Canadian foreign policy in eastern Europe. There was a lot that was put on the record, to which I would refer him, at that time showing how in very specific ways the government is continuing to follow up on these agreements that were assigned last November in the Soviet Union. The Prime Minister suggested that the Soviet Union have observer status at GATT. Since the Prime Minister made that suggestion, the GATT has agreed to grant the Soviet Union observer status.

I could go on as I did last Thursday when again then you had to cut me off, Mr. Speaker, but the list is so long of positive action that I commend it to the hon. member for close study.

TRANSPORT

Mrs. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak again on an issue of very serious concern to the business community of the national capital region, and that is the lack of direct air service from this region to the American midwest. It is having a serious effect on business in this region and on the attempts of our local business community to diversify the

economic base, which have met with substantial success, and to become part of the growing market from here to the year 2000 for tourism and conference business.

The business community of Ottawa-Carleton, and of the entire national capital region, are not asking for any preferential treatment. They are simply asking for objective and fair treatment of the government to ensure that they are able to enjoy the kind of access to their markets and to their customers that is enjoyed by virtually every metropolitan region in the country.

The national capital region is the fourth largest urban metropolitan area in Canada, and yet it is the only major urban centre in Canada—the only one—that is discriminated against in this way. Under the bilateral air agreements between Canada and the United States it is the only urban centre specifically denied the right to direct air service to the American mid-west. This situation has existed since 1966 and has been ignored in one subsequent round of negotiations with the Americans on the bilateral air agreement.

• (1820)

The business community has proposed a simple solution. It has documented the need for the service. It has secured the support of American officials for a minor change. It has convinced American Airlines to provide this service on a regular daily basis between the National Capital Region and Chicago, providing access to its markets and customers in the American mid-west. It has documented the harm being done to the local business community because this service is not available.

The solution is quite simple. The service that is now available between Montreal and Chicago can be extended by declaring Ottawa a co-terminal with the Montreal airport. That would allow the airline to simply service Ottawa as well as Montreal as part of the same route.

An even simpler solution has now been proposed to the government by American Airlines and as yet has not been responded to.

I want to address briefly some of the important impacts the lack of this service is having on the business community locally.

First, I want to quote from a letter from the Minister for International Trade, who was then Minister of Transport, to Len Potechin who is now Chairman of the Ottawa Economic Development Corporation and is a past chairman of the Ottawa Carleton Board of Trade. In that letter, the minister agreed that Ottawa should have more international flights and suggested that "the real challenge is to persuade Canadian and foreign airlines that Ottawa is a market worth serving". The minister also states, "It is hoped that business leaders like you will continue to try to attract international visitors to Ottawa, as it is only through traffic demand that international service will be developed".

The local business community did indeed do its homework. It spent substantial time and substantial amounts of money documenting exactly what the minister asked it to do in April, 1987.

I want to put a bit of an historical perspective on this. In the early 1970s, Ottawa as a community and the entire region faced the need to start diversifying its economy and becoming less dependent on the federal government for employment. It did that. It developed a strong and reasonably stable, but still fragile high technology base that has become the core of the high technology industry in Canada. It developed a conference and tourism business and invested in a conference centre specifically to attract international business which is going to be the bulk of tourism business by the year 2000.

It has become the economic hub of eastern Ontario as conjunction with its sister city, Hull, was to western Quebec, an area that is recognized as an economically disadvantaged region not only in Ontario but in Canada.

Now we find that many of our high technology companies, in order to service their clients, are having to establish offices in the United States. It is simply not productive for business people, who could normally take a two hour flight to be at their business destination, to have to leave Ottawa for Toronto in order to reach American markets. We know that Toronto is congested and delays are extensive and frequent because of the over-crowding and the safety measures that have had to be taken at Pearson International to restrict the number

of flights landing at any given period of time. These delays have often meant missed flights. As a result, a business trip that could take place in one day often requires an overnight stay, extra expenditure, and extra wear and tear on extremely valuable and talented personnel.

• (1825)

The community has documented the need for this service. It did exactly what the Minister of Transport advised. It had a very extensive survey done. In fact, it used the results of that study to persuade KLM to provide direct regular service to Amsterdam, which is now happening. It used it to persuade Wardair to provide direct and frequent service to Gatwick Airport in London.

The Government of Canada is the only party it is unable to persuade that these studies are valid, the services needed, and would produce economic benefits not only for the urban area but for the entire region, and with respect to the high technology sector, for the entire country.

The community is upset that the government has said to open up trade, to go out and compete and then ties one hand behind their back. It is concerned that in a deregulated atmosphere when it is now dealing with private air companies, it is giving preferential treatment to airlines in Canada, protecting them from competition on a route that they do not want to service.

Why is the government putting the interest of a private airline and its profits ahead of the interests of an entire business community? That is the question the business community of the National Capital Region is asking.

Mr. Ross Belsher (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, my remarks address the hon. member's question about why the government has not approved the proposal by the Ottawa–Carleton Economic Development Corporation for a new Ottawa–Chicago air service. As was stated in the House on February 19, by the former Minister of Transport, this government has been sensitive to the request but the proposal posed certain difficulties.

Air services between Canada and the United States are governed by bilateral air agreements, particularly the Main Air Services Agreement of 1966 which the member opposite mentioned, last revised in 1974. There is no provision in this agreement for an Ottawa–Chicago service. The inclusion of a provision for an Ottawa–Chicago service in the agreement would require that the agreement be amended to meet the requirements of the National Transportation Act. Amendments normally come about through government–to–government negotiations.

Therefore, the government cannot unilaterally approve the service in question, even if the proposal made by the Ottawa–Carleton business community contemplates service by an American carrier.

More importantly, Canada prefers a broadly–based pro–competitive approach that seeks to provide efficient air services to all our communities and opportunities for our air carrier industry. This cannot be achieved on the basis of piecemeal negotiations focusing exclusively on the needs of a single community.

When negotiations are undertaken with the United States, they will have to take an account of the national interest, including the aspirations of other Canadian cities that have made representations for improved services, and here I am thinking of Halifax, Edmonton, Calgary, Winnipeg, to name but a few.

Let me assure you that Ottawa's request, along with those of other Canadian communities, has been given serious consideration. The government, however, is not prepared to take actions at this time on behalf of a single community which could jeopardize Canada's ability to pursue a broadly–based re–negotiation of the Canada—U.S. air relationship on terms favourable to Canada and to all interested communities.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The motion that the House do now adjourn is deemed to have been adopted. The House therefore stands adjourned until tomorrow afternoon at two o'clock, pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

The House adjourned at 6.29 p.m.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, June 6, 1990

The House met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S. O. 31

[*English*]

IMMIGRATION

Mr. David Berger (Saint-Henri—Westmount): Mr. Speaker, I appeal to the Minister of Employment and Immigration to halt the deportation of Mr. Jayantha Ilanderidewa, a refugee claimant from Sri Lanka.

Sri Lanka is one of the most violent countries in the world. As many as 20,000 people have been killed in that country in the last year. Many areas, particularly in the south where this man comes from, look like ghost towns.

Five members of Mr. Ilanderidewa's family have already been killed in the strife in that country. He has lost two brothers, two uncles and a cousin for their involvement with the JVP, the People's Liberation Front.

A Sri Lankan M.P. and human rights activist was recently shot dead outside the Canadian embassy. He was calling to arrange a visa for a speaking trip to Britain and North America.

The government should not be deporting people to Sri Lanka. I ask the minister to reconsider her decision.

* * *

D-DAY

Mr. Peter L. McCreath (South Shore): Mr. Speaker, I wish to draw to the attention of the House that 46 years ago today was D-Day in Europe. June 6, 1944, D-Day, will always remain a memorable date in the history of the world.

Canadians can take pride in the knowledge that our services were a major part in this largest ever armada. Over 15,000 Canadians, a fifth of the total allied invasion force, established themselves on the Normandy beaches. Our army, the Royal Canadian Navy, and the Royal Canadian Air Force all played notable roles in the invasion.

As a country we can also take some comfort in the knowledge that the lessons learned during the disastrous Dieppe raid saved many lives on D-Day.

Canada suffered over 1,000 casualties on D-Day. The 5,400 Canadian graves in Normandy tell of the tough times that were to follow during the inland drive.

Mr. Speaker, 46 years ago the prospect of freedom came ashore in Normandy. Let us never forget those who were there for us on that day.

* * *

LITERACY

Mr. Jack Whittaker (Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt): Mr. Speaker, in 1987 the Southam Literacy Survey found that 45 per cent of those 65 or older have low literacy skills.

Although this is a shocking figure, we learned last week that the problem is much more serious. Statistics Canada revealed that 65 per cent of older Canadians have only fair to poor literacy skills.

Illiterate seniors may not be able to understand the directions for taking their medication. They may be unable to find the right bus, or an important phone number in the telephone book, or be unable to manage their own bank accounts.

Illiterate seniors must rely on a network of friends and family for assistance. When the support network breaks down they may find themselves unable to cope with their daily survival, resulting in premature institutionalization.

Why this lack of literacy skills among older Canadians? Not because they are unable to learn, Mr. Speaker, but because existing literacy programs too often neglect the special needs of older learners.

We have a responsibility to our seniors to address their specific literacy needs. One Voice, The Seniors' Network, is developing a national literacy strategy for older Canadians to be completed by the fall.

I urge this House to ensure the implementation of that strategy.

* * *

[*Translation*]

LE PAVOIS

Mr. Marcel Tremblay (Québec-Est): Mr. Speaker, to many of us, schizophrenia means little, but it is a very serious illness whose causes are insufficiently known, and it creates tremendous problems for its victims and their families.

It is an illness that many people do not understand and it is also frightening, and because of that, people are reluctant to get involved with those suffering from schizophrenia.

Last week, in my riding of Québec-Est, I visited a new community agency founded by a woman directly concerned by the problem of mental illness, who works very hard to rehabilitate patients.

Le Pavois is, first of all, a psycho-social club where a person suffering from this disease can meet fellow sufferers. Together, under the skilfull direction of a social worker and three specialized group leaders provided under the federal government's Job Development Program, these people work to regain the self-confidence they have lost as a result of their illness, and they learn skills that will eventualy help them return to the labour market.

Mr. Speaker, this work deserves our admiration and should be supported in every way possible.

* * *

[*English*]

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Robert D. Nault (Kenora—Rainy River): Mr. Speaker, the proposed goods and services tax will apply to public utilities commissions, thereby adding an additional 7 per cent on electricity bills. Canadians view electricity as a right and not just as a service. Electricity is as much a necessity as water, groceries, sewer services and garbage collection and, therefore, should not be taxed.

Public utilities commissions have predicted that the proposed goods and services tax, combined with their normal rate increases, will push electricity bills up by 15 per cent or more in 1991 in the riding of Kenora—Rainy River.

Consumers will already be faced with a barrage of increases as a result of the proposed goods and services tax. As a basic, necessary service, electricity should be exempt from the proposed GST. In fact, Mr. Speaker, the goods and services tax should be scrapped entirely.

I call on the government to scrap the proposed goods and services tax and if it refuses to do the honourable thing, then I would suggest that it identify electricity as a necessity of life and therefore exempt it from this inflationary tax.

* * *

MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Mr. Lee Clark (Brandon—Souris): Mr. Speaker, even as I speak Canada's Prime Minister and the 10 premiers are meeting in a last-ditch effort to resolve some of our constitutional differences. Most Canadians are conscious of the dangers that face our country should these 11 leaders fail in their task.

However, one of my constituents, Don Armstrong, Secretary-Treasurer of the Boissevain Legion, perhaps said it best when he in a recent open letter implored me to do my personal utmost "to halt the current trend toward the disintegration of Canada". He went on to state: "Stop those who are doing so from only thinking and talking in terms of deadlines, 'inevitable results' and 'regional realities'. Stop them from thinking in terms of re-election and party policies. Rather, publicly encourage the idea of Canada the nation, Canada the strong, united country, a world symbol of opportunity, bounty and tolerance."

• (1410)

In closing, I want to add my voice to those thousands of others who plead with those meeting just a few hundred yards away to remember that they must be Canadians first and politicians second. The future of Canada depends on those who lead today.

NUTRITIONAL HEALTH

Mrs. Beryl Gaffney (Nepean): Mr. Speaker, this morning I had the opportunity to meet with members of the Canadian Dietetic Association which represents more than 4,500 dietitians dedicated to helping Canadians toward better health.

They are concerned that Canadians are faced with food insecurity through shortages and limitations of choice. The CDA made hunger a priority issue. Food banks are the best evidence of food shortages.

According to the report released yesterday by the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women, there are 2.8 million adults, many single-parent families headed by women, and over one million Canadian children living in poverty in 1986.

The CDA points out that there is a lack of information regarding many different aspects of the nutritional value and food intakes of the poor.

There is a growing recognition of the role of nutrition in the promotion of health and treatment of disease. Limited access to food can have a detrimental effect on physical and mental health.

I urge this government to take immediate action to adopt and promote the goal of food security for all Canadians and to combat the growing feminization of poverty.

* * *

[*Translation*]

PARTAGE HUMANITAIRE

Mr. Jacques Tétreault (Laval-des-Rapides): Mr. Speaker, on May 29, more than 1,200 people attended the annual benefit supper of Partage humanitaire. Established in 1971, this non-profit agency, the oldest local agency of its kind in Laval, focuses exclusively on senior citizens and the handicapped. Mrs. Pierrette Patenaude, member of the Laval executive committee, was one of the agency's most committed and energetic founding members. General manager of Partage humanitaire from 1982 to 1990, Mrs. Patenaude is now honorary chairman, leaving Mrs. Carmelle Lefebvre as general manager.

The services of this agency, enjoyed by more than 1,000 people in 28 institutions, are provided by 16 group leaders and about 350 casual volunteer workers—that in a nutshell, represents Partage humanitaire and its community involvement during the past year.

I am proud to see that the federal government supports this outstanding humanitarian cause through its job development programs.

Thank you, Partage humanitaire, and our thanks you to all those who make it possible!

* * *

[*English*]

THE SENATE

Mr. Larry Schneider (Regina—Wascana): Mr. Speaker, I must voice my profound frustration with the actions of the Senate. Prior to 1984, there was only one incident of Senate obstruction. Since 1984, the Liberal-controlled Senate has blocked two supply bills, held up drug patent legislation, refugee legislation and a copyright bill.

More recently, the Senate has delayed the passage of the unemployment insurance bill for almost seven months. It has delayed the passage of Bill C-28 for close to six months. When the Senate received the GST bill, it decided to take a three week vacation. I have no doubt that with its return, active stalling will begin in earnest.

As part of the elected Parliament, I feel it impossible to fulfil my duties to my constituents when my attempts to carry out their wishes are continually frustrated by the other place. There must be Senate reform and it must come soon.

* * *

SOVIET PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION

Mr. Jesse Flis (Parkdale—High Park): *Spasibo*, Mr. Speaker.

I rise to welcome the parliamentary delegation of the Supreme Soviet led by Rafik Nishanov, Chairman of the Soviet Nationalities of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

This visit is part of a regular exchange program between the Parliament of Canada and the Supreme Soviet. It follows the visit of last August to the Soviet

Union by a Canadian parliamentary delegation led by the Speakers of the House of Commons and the Senate.

I am particularly pleased to welcome the delegation because, together with my colleagues on the House of Commons Standing Committee on External Affairs and International Trade, I visited Moscow, Leningrad and Kiev a month ago. During the course of that visit, the committee was treated with the greatest warmth and hospitality. Moreover, we found that our often probing questions and critical comments were responded to with openness and candour.

I think I can speak for all my colleagues in the House of Commons when I say that we applaud the new era of *glasnost* and *perestroika* in the Soviet Union. Moreover, we recognize the obligation to undertake the new thinking about relations between our two countries, the future of east-west relations and our common responsibility for the fate of the planet. Again, a warm welcome to the House of Commons and to Canada.

* * *

CORPORATE TAXATION

Mr. John R. Rodriguez (Nickel Belt): Mr. Speaker, we have a first for the corporate welfare bum of the week. A winner by acclamation. It is the privatized Route Canada, and its friends in the Conservative government. The Mulroney government sold the $100 million company for $29 million in 1986.

Route Canada was sold to Manfred Ruhland, the Road Warrior, and Dave and Paul Fingold, capitalists without capital. The cabinet knew that Mr. Ruhland was such a credit risk that he could not even get a credit card. The buyers of Route Canada never put up a penny of their own money. They just took out a mortgage on the land owned by the company. Soon after buying the company without spending a penny, Mr. Ruhland went on a spending spree, using Route Canada money to send his family to Austria and his mother's dogs to Italy.

The company went bankrupt 20 months after the sale. For throwing 1,900 people out of work, Route Canada is the corporate welfare bum of the week, with credit going to the federal cabinet.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[*English*]

THE ECONOMY

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Finance.

It was reported today in *The Globe and Mail*, "Report on Business" by Ken Romain that, "shackled by high interest rates which are biting deep, car sales by the North American manufacturers fell by 22 per cent" in the month of May, compared to a year ago. This is the fourth straight month that auto sales have declined.

Why will the Minister not recognize that the automotive industry, a key sector of our economy, is being seriously damaged by this government's economic policies? When will the minister bring in policies that will reverse this decline, rather than encourage it and make it worse?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member would do the country a greater service if he would point at what the true causes of the interest rate policy that we have been following are. That is the underlying cost pressure in the economy, as set out yesterday in a study from Wood Gundy, which is very consistent with the message that I have been making to the House through committees and speeches across the country. We must get our underlying cost structure under control.

I remind the hon. member that in 1989, our unit labour cost, which is the broadest measure of our competitive position, increased by 4.9 per cent at the beginning of the year and by 6.9 per cent at the end of the year. Throughout 1989, the American unit labour cost increase was 4.9 per cent and it was a good deal less in Japan and Germany.

These are the things we are faced with. We must get these competitive cost structures under control in order to save jobs in the country.

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, this same Wood Gundy report pointed out that the government's high dollar policy is one of the key

reasons for any loss of competitiveness we are suffering. The government's own policy is causing the problem.

Auto makers like Bill Atkinson, vice-president of sales at GM Canada, are pointing the finger at the government's high interest rate policy. He said that "because of continued high interest rates, GM had expected a further softening of the market."

Othmar Stein of Chrysler Canada, said that interest rates and the softening economy are "spooking car buyers—Canadians are getting nervous, and they are hedging their bets."

Why does the Minister want to see automotive plants like Kelsey-Hayes in Windsor shutting down? When is he going to bring in economic policies that will create automotive jobs in Canada and not destroy them as his policies are doing right now?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I want to take exception and correct what the hon. member said in the preamble to his question. He said that the primary reason is the increase in the Canadian dollar. That is not so. That is not what Wood Gundy said.

They point out that compensation per person/hour rose by 8.2 per cent last year, a 6.5 per cent point premium over productivity gains, and the growth gap widened noticeably in 1989. They point out that the gap between compensation and productivity has widened steadily since 1985.

• (1420)

Throughout this whole report, the focus is the cost increases, not the level of the Canadian dollar. They talk about an alarming loss of competitiveness. This continual higher cost growth in Canada has led to a dramatic decline in our competitiveness. For the business sector as a whole, Canada's advantage in U.S. dollar denominated unit labour costs has shrunk from nearly 20 per cent in 1986 to only 5 per cent in 1989. It is—

An hon. member: We can read.

Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): The hon. member says he can read. I would hope that he would read and learn.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I quote from the Wood Gundy report:

> The rise in the Canadian dollar has, of course, heightened even further the difficulty in which Canadian business now finds itself.

The minister wants to make the situation worse by the added cost to the economy of the GST.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, the government wants Canadians to believe that the economy is in good shape. However, our manufacturing sector has lost 70,000 jobs since January. Last year, our trade surplus fell by more than 50 per cent. Finally, during the first quarter, the bankruptcy rate rose by 29 per cent.

I have the following question for the Minister of Finance: When will he introduce economic policies that will boost the economy, not strangle it?

[*English*]

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, if we listen very carefully to what the Leader of the Opposition said, he was drawing conclusions based on the symptoms of the problem. I do not question the symptoms of the problem. Our job as a government is to deal with the cause of the problem.

An hon. member: You are the cause of the problem.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): The cause of the problem as set out very clearly by the Wood Gundy study is the growing loss of competitiveness in the Canadian economy. The loss of competitiveness is related directly to the increasing cost structure, primarily wages, in the Canadian manufacturing sectors.

Since 1986, manufacturing costs in Canada have risen 10 per cent faster than in the United States and Germany, and 20 per cent faster than in Japan. If we do not get these costs under control in Canada, we will suffer a further loss.

* * *

[*Translation*]

MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Deputy Prime Minister, as my leader did yesterday, to keep us and the nation informed of devel-

opments at the Conference Centre with respect to the constitutional question.

[*English*]

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, as I indicated yesterday, and as was indicated by all first ministers coming out of their sessions yesterday, there has been some progress on a number of issues. There still remain a number of difficult issues to be undertaken. While there has been progress on some individual items, it is such that, until such time as there is a broad agreement on the package, the deal will not be consummated.

The report I received just before coming into the House is that the work is ongoing, the mood is excellent, and the First Ministers are working hard. It is hoped progress can continue today. At an appropriate time, when all the issues can be agreed upon and a package consummated, hopefully we will then be able to accept the good news. That is our hope.

Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): Mr. Speaker, fully understanding the reservations that the Deputy Prime Minister has and the reasons for them, I want to ask if he can nevertheless give some details about any agreements which may have been reached about the possible composition of a reformed, elected Senate?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I can only refer to the statements made in the press which I believe are a fair reflection. It would be inappropriate for me to comment on any one specific or given issue because I think it is fair to say that, until such time as there is agreement on a broad range of issues, all First Ministers are not prepared to sign any package.

While I would like to be as helpful as I possibly can, I think the hon. member will realize the dynamics of the discussions are such that things change minute by minute. But, I repeat, there is a very firm and strong commitment in that room to put the unity of the nation first. The negotiations are going very well. They are working very hard and I am confident, given the mood I discern, that there will be a successful outcome. I am sure that is a view shared by all hon. members of the House.

* * *

SALARIES

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Finance. Yesterday, the minister said "we must all fight inflation by reducing underlying cost pressures that push up prices. The greatest of these pressures by far is wage costs".

Why is the minister attacking wage costs, which actually fell in real terms by 3.4 per cent over the 1980s, instead of going after bonus increases of $40,000 to $80,000 to senior executives in crown corporations such as CN or instead of attacking Governor Crow's increase of $40,000 to $93,000? Is it right that the rich get so much richer and the poor, the working people of the country, get hammered again and again?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I want to draw to the hon. member's attention the level of salary increases throughout the Public Service. The broad averages have been 4 per cent to 4.2 per cent, as well as in the senior levels of the Public Service, the deputy minister level. Ministers and members of Parliament have had salary increases of 1 per cent less than the inflation rate during the last seven, eight, or nine-year period. The federal government itself, I believe, has shown very clear leadership in the battle against inflation.

The hon. member has referred to certain Crown corporations. He knows quite well that the rules for increase in remuneration of Crown corporations are related to the comparability of the senior employees of those crown corporations to the private sector. They are subject to review by an appointed advisory committee that has been in place for the last eight or ten years. I believe this is a legitimate way of arriving at salary levels of senior executives of crown corporations.

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Mr. Speaker, that is precisely the point. If we look, for instance, at a recent study by Towers Perrin of top executives throughout the world, we see that, in fact, Canadian top

executives are the second highest paid throughout the world with an average salary of over $400,000 per year.

[*Translation*]

I want to ask the minister whether he thinks it is fair to put the blame on Canadian workers, when such high salary increases are being given to people in the top jobs in this country. I think the minister will agree this is not fair.

• (1430)

[*English*]

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I am not attacking Canadian workers. What I am pointing out to all Canadians is that if we allow our cost structure as a country to get out of line in relation to our main competing trading partners, then it will cost us business—business in the export markets and in competing against imports.

I am only making this point to draw to the attention of Canadians that if our competitive position gets out of line, we will lose business, and as we lose business we will lose jobs.

It is in the interests of all Canadians to contribute to getting our cost structure in line with our competitors so that we can have a healthy outlook for our economy, create more jobs, create a better standard of living and create a better way of life for Canadians.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary. Why doesn't the Minister of Finance object to the salary increases paid executives like the President of Bell Canada Enterprises, who got a 9 per cent increase, or $100, 000 per year, and the President of Alcan, David Morton, who got a 15 per cent increase or $152,000? Why do workers always get the short end of the stick?

[*English*]

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I think if the hon. member had listened carefully to what I said, he would understand that I have been talking about the over-all cost structure. That includes wages, salaries, the salaries of people at senior levels in these corporations, as well as pricing policies. It is important in all elements of the cost structure of the economy that we take into account the fact that over the last two or three years we have become less and less competitive. Until we get that competitive position in line with our major competition, we are going to suffer as a country because of the fact that we will be losing jobs and business. That is certainly not in the interests of any Canadian.

* * *

ROUTE CANADA

Mr. Russell MacLellan (Cape Breton—The Sydneys): My question directed is to the Deputy Prime Minister.

Before he was given Route Canada by the government, Manfred Ruhland did not have the financial stability to get a credit card. Yet, after he was given Route Canada by the government, within a week he took his family on a $17,500 vacation to Austria, paid for by Route Canada. Following soon thereafter were more vacations, expensive cars, two boats and a $3.5 million plane, all paid for by Route Canada.

Why did the government give Route Canada to Manfred Ruhland when it should have known that by doing so these abuses would occur?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, that is straight out of *The Toronto Star*, and my hon. friend knows it.

He knows that the assets were sold by CN after an investigation of the financial abilities of the Fingold brothers. That is also in the records, if he wants to check.

There was no gift, none whatsoever. It was sold as a going concern to the Fingold brothers. That is exactly the way it happened. Any other suggestion is absolutely incorrect, and my friend knows it.

Mr. Russell MacLellan (Cape Breton—The Sydneys): Mr. Speaker, Manfred Ruhland talked to the government a month and a half before the Fingold's came into the picture. The government did a credit check on Manfred Ruhland before the sale. The government passed an Order in Council approving the sale.

Some hon. members: Shame!

Mr. MacLellan: CN did not put this deal together, the government did. CN did not even know that Manfred Ruhland was involved.

Why does the government say that the employees of Route Canada who lost their jobs—and many of whom lost their homes, their trucks and their futures, not to mention the taxpayers of Canada—have no right to know why the government gave this company to Manfred Ruhland?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, the government sold assets with a market value of about $50 million to $55 million, and received $29 million for them. Those assets were producing a grand loss per year of $30 million to $40 million. You can only do that for so long before you run out of taxpayers' money.

Therefore it was sold by CN as a going concern to a company formed by the Fingold Brothers in an effort to make those jobs continue. The jobs did not. They went bankrupt, and that is a fact.

My hon. friend knows the matter is being investigated by the RCMP. I am sure the allegations that he made earlier will be investigated by the RCMP. When the report is finished action will be taken, if there is action to be taken.

Mr. Joe Comuzzi (Thunder Bay—Nipigon): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the same minister.

The employees of Route Canada relied on the integrity not only of the president of CNR but their employer, CNR, the largest Crown corporation in Canada. They relied on the integrity of the cabinet for fairness. They relied on this government which has a positive duty to each employee affected by this aborted transaction.

When will the government acknowledge its responsibility to the employees of Route Canada, reinstate them to their former employment, pay those employees their back wages and bring back the pension benefits which most of them have lost?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, now I know why my hon. friend got out of business and went into law.

You can only lose $30 million to $40 million a year for so long, especially if your asset base is only worth $55 million. It was worth $55 million. We got $29 million for it, giving those employees an opportunity to continue working.

The company went bankrupt. Unfortunately, those are the facts of life. If my friend has any other information to bring to bear on the matter, he should phone the RCMP and give them that information.

Mr. Joe Comuzzi (Thunder Bay—Nipigon): Mr. Speaker, just to answer my friend, sometimes I wonder why I got out of business and went into law.

This transaction is truly a fraud on the Canadian taxpayer. Mr. Ruhland brought no cash to the table. He walked away with a $100 million company. In 20 months he destroyed a $100 million company by buying boats, airplanes and first class trips around the world. To add insult to injury, his mother's dog, whose name is Garci, is treated better than the employees of the company.

When will the minister take it upon himself to look after the employees who are affected by this aborted transaction?

Mr. Ferguson: The government is going to the dogs.

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, my hon. friend knows that if anything was going to the dogs it was a company losing $30 million to $40 million a year. The taxpayers do not have that kind of money.

The Liberals used to think they had that kind of money. They used to think they would make it up on volume. But that does not happen any more. That is why we sold the assets.

* * *

FISHERIES

Mr. David D. Stupich (Nanaimo—Cowichan): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans.

Mike Hunter, representing the processing industry of B.C., told the fisheries committee yesterday that the disastrous effects of the Canada sell-out of the west coast salmon and herring on the altar of free trade are just beginning to be felt.

Does the minister agree that the B.C. processors reflect the reality of the free trade ruling, namely, that the future of the industry has been thrown into serious compromise?

Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): No, Mr. Speaker, I do not agree.

• (1440)

Mr. David D. Stupich (Nanaimo—Cowichan): Mr. Speaker, the minister does not agree but the Prime Minister does. The Prime Minister, speaking at a press conference on February 23, 1990, said: "We want to do everything we possibly can to help the British Columbia fishery".

Can the minister give us any details, such as dates of implementation, estimated costs, nature of programs, with respect to the salvation promised by the Prime Minister just three months ago?

Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member must be pleased to see this council coming to Ottawa complaining that money should be thrown at the problem because money is being thrown at the problem everywhere.

The reality is that this ruling to which the hon. member refers under the free trade agreement reached between Canada and the United States forces not one fisherman—not one—in B.C. to sell to the Americans. Do not forget this.

* * *

JUSTICE

Mr. John Harvard (Winnipeg—St. James): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice.

Evidence is piling up in the David Milgaard case. There is mounting evidence that there was a terrible miscarriage of justice when Milgaard was sentenced for murder 20 years ago.

A second forensic report, this time from the chief medical examiner of Manitoba, seriously questions the only physical evidence that linked Milgaard to the crime. Yet all we get from the Department of Justice is foot dragging and silence.

When is this minister going to take her responsibility seriously and decide what she is going to do about David Milgaard?

Hon. Kim Campbell (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, it is hard not to be cross with the hon. member—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Ms. Campbell (Vancouver Centre): —who has questioned me on this issue at great length before the standing committee, and who has been given an explanation as to why it has taken some time for the Department of Justice to deal with this.

He knows perfectly well that that delay results not from delays in the Department of Justice but from the applicant himself, whose counsel has brought forward continuing pieces of new information that he wishes to have considered on behalf of his client.

I think it would be extremely negligent of the Department of Justice to rush this process and to tell Mr. Milgaard's counsel that there is an arbitrary deadline beyond which he may not bring new evidence forward to be considered.

In May of this year the applicant retained the services of Manitoba's chief medical examiner to provide a report on a previous forensic report that had been commissioned. That report has now been received by the Department of Justice. It is being reviewed and will be part of the considerations on which I will make my decision.

If Mr. Milgaard's counsel comes forward with more information, I am prepared to wait until I can consider that as well so that he may have the fairest possible hearing based on the fullest possible information that he can provide to us.

Mr. John Harvard (Winnipeg St. James): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the Solicitor General.

For 20 years Milgaard has denied consistently his guilt. For that he has paid a high price. He has been denied parole—no confession, no parole. Just today, he was scheduled to appear before the Parole Board.

Given the unique aspects of this case and given the fact that there is a possibility of a wrongful conviction, would the Solicitor General be prepared to recommend a full parole for Milgaard?

Hon. Pierre H. Cadieux (Solicitor General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I think my colleague the Minister of Justice, has just indicated that she is looking into the question, awaiting further information apparently from Mr. Milgaard's counsel. Therefore, I think it is being handled in the appropriate way by the Department of Justice.

[*Translation*]

NEW HORIZONS PROGRAM

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State (Seniors) and concerns the freeze on the New Horizons Program.

Last Friday, in response to my question, the deputy leader of the government denied there was a freeze.

The Minister of State (Seniors) told the Standing Committee on May 22 that one-quarter of the funds allocated had been withheld. Who is telling the truth?

Hon. Monique Vézina (Minister of State (Employment and Immigration) and Minister of State (Seniors)): Mr. Speaker, one thing is certain: programs for seniors are being maintained. You read the Estimates, and you know this year's budget is the same as last year's.

What we must not forget, here in the House, is that the New Horizons Program has been in existence for several years. We are now in the process of evaluating the program, and we have withheld $4 million so that during this year, we will be able to introduce new initiatives following the results of our evaluation which we intend to submit in the next few months.

[*English*]

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, it appears, contrary to what we were told on Friday, that there is in fact a freeze of $4 million of that program. I would like to restate my questions from Friday and try to get an answer from the government.

Will the minister tell us when the review will be completed? When will the frozen funds be released? When will the review's findings be made public, or will they be made public?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Monique Vézina (Minister of State (Employment and Immigration) and Minister of State (Seniors)): Mr. Speaker, we are in the process of consulting seniors to make sure that the programs meet the needs exactly. We say that funds are available to seniors and we have an office that answers all calls. Once the evaluation is done, I will be very pleased as minister responsible for seniors to let you know our recommendations and, if there is room for new initiatives, to implement them.

* * *

[*English*]

PRESENCE IN GALLERY

Mr. Speaker: I wish to draw to the attention of members the presence in the gallery of Mr. Rafik Nishanov, Chairman of the Soviet of Nationalities of the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

* * *

ROUTE CANADA

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport. It has to do with the question of Transport Route Canada.

I want to say to the minister that what we are debating here is not the wisdom in the first place of the privatization but the question of the relationship of trust between Canadians and a government which sets a certain series of events in motion.

The government cannot deny that it was as a result of its policy that these workers were turned over to a particular series of events that resulted in them losing their jobs, their pensions and their benefits.

I want to ask the minister this. Does he not see the dimension of elementary justice involved in this issue? Does he not see the obscenity of what has happened to these people as a result of the events which this government set in motion? Will he not at least give a commitment to these people that at the appropriate time the government will make good what these people lost as a result of its policy?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, CN was losing some $30 million to $40 million a year on this proposition. It felt that with the refinancing brought to the company by the Fingold brothers, and some reorganization, that the company would have the ability to turn things around. Unfortunately, that did not happen.

Everyone in this House regrets the fact that those jobs were lost. The question is whether or not there is any responsibility on CN. CN sold the company, sold the assets. The taxpayer was thus relieved of a burden of a

loss of $30 million to $40 million a year. Unfortunately, as things turned out, it was not possible to make a profit and the company went bankrupt.

If there are any illegalities, they will be taken into account, I am sure, by the Superintendent of Bankruptcy and the RCMP in the course of their investigation.

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona): Mr. Speaker, I ask the minister if he recalls occasions on which he has risen in this House and made the distinction between a legal responsibility and a moral responsibility. What we are claiming here and what we are asking the minister to recognize is that the government, through CN has a moral responsibility to the people who lost their jobs as a result of this very, very botched privatization.

The very least the government could do would be to make a commitment, as I asked the minister before, at the appropriate time, whenever he feels that the investigation has gone far enough, to make good what these people have lost as a result of a train of events that this government, and not only CN, through its privatization plans set in motion.

• (1450)

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, CN sold these assets with the expectation that with the refinancing and with the effort that the Fingold brothers said they would put into it that the jobs would continue. After all, these assets were bringing a loss of $30 million to $40 million a year. They felt it could be turned around. Unfortunately, it was not turned around. I am sure they made an effort to turn it around.

I am sorry, but CN's responsibility was terminated when it sold the assets to somebody who tried to make a go of it. Businesses succeed and fail every day in this country. This, unfortunately, is one that failed. We all regret that. I am sure CN does, too.

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RADIO LICENSING FEES

Mr. Ron MacDonald (Dartmouth): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Communications. It deals with the outrageous and ill-conceived radio licensing fees that he has imposed on municipalities and emergency services right across Canada.

There are literally thousands of volunteer and municipally-operated fire departments that simply cannot afford these fee increases, and in some cases they will either have to decrease service or put off the acquisition of much-needed emergency vehicles.

Is the minister prepared today to respond to this issue which could affect public safety and announce that fire departments and other emergency services will be fully exempted from these fee increases?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Marcel Masse (Minister of Communications): Mr. Speaker, I am surprised to be asked that question today because it has been public knowledge for months. I recently had the opportunity to meet the leaders of the Canadian Municipal Association and they agreed it is normal for all governments to share equitably in both spectrum management and the public costs of its operation, Mr. Speaker.

[*English*]

Mr. Ron MacDonald (Dartmouth): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the same minister.

The issue has not been before the public for only a matter of months. The issue, indeed, has been before the public for a matter of years.

I would like to quote from December 1, 1986, the previous Minister of Communications, the Hon. Flora MacDonald, who said in the House of Commons in reference to Bill C-3: "The changes as they affect municipalities and volunteer fire departments will not be proceeded with".

Why has the current minister broken this government's stated commitment to exempt all fire departments from the Bill C-3 schedule of fees? Will he now finally see that the reasons for which fire departments were exempted in 1986 are equally valid today in 1990?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Marcel Masse (Minister of Communications): Mr. Speaker, quite simply, we agreed that there should be some equity among users of the frequency spectrum and governments, be they departments of the federal or provincial governments or even municipalities.

[*English*]

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Jerry Pickard (Essex—Kent): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance.

The GST advertising campaign is extremely confusing and misleading to Canadians. Since last fall the government has embarked on an $11 million advertising campaign, a campaign that has been filled with inaccurate and incorrect information because of change after change.

Now, new brochures, and millions more must be spent, to attempt to correct the information already sent out to the Canadian public.

How much more money is being spent on this advertising propaganda program?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I take exception to the description the hon. member uses.

I have received a lot of very good comments from people—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): —who have received the most recent tabloid which responds to specific questions, questions that we have monitored on the phone lines, the 1-800 numbers. We have had somewhere around 250,000 to 300,000 calls.

We have taken the calls that have come from those 1-800 numbers and put the answers to the questions these Canadians have asked us in a tabloid which cost, I think, less than 10 cents a copy.

These questions respond specifically to what Canadians are interested in knowing, information that they have been asking for about the goods and services tax.

Mr. Jerry Pickard (Essex—Kent): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the same minister.

The tax went from 9 per cent to 7 per cent. There has been a total change in small business advertising.

Will the minister promise that they will get their act together here today, stop wasting money on propaganda campaigns, inform the Canadian people properly or take the tax back?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I do not understand the language that the hon. member has used.

The tabloid that we have just sent around to some 10 million Canadian homes responds specifically to questions that have been asked of us again and again through the 1-800 number, the information number. The responses that have been given are straight, direct responses. They are not propaganda in any form. They are specific responses to questions that have been asked by 250,000 Canadians.

The responses that I have had as a result of this tabloid have been very good. People have said: "That is exactly the information that we want to hear about the goods and services tax".

* * *

FUR INDUSTRY

Mr. Vic Althouse (Mackenzie): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Agriculture.

Yesterday when the Deputy Minister of Agriculture appeared before the agriculture committee, he informed us that the fur component in the $500 million Supplementary Estimate is to be aimed at fur farmers and that fur trappers will not qualify for assistance to counteract the 50 per cent decline in fur prices due in part to the European boycott.

Will the minister reconsider this decision and include trappers who have also suffered from the price decline and have traps, vehicles, cabins and other equipment to pay for and maintain, as well as families to support?

Mr. McDermid: Why not talk to Greenpeace? They ruined the bloody trade.

Mr. McKnight: Are you supporting sealing now?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member knows that this assistance package is one that was designed with the help and support of the provincial governments. It was in that context that the program was put together.

The funds will be distributed by the provinces. They are closest to the scene and in the best position to design the program in the most effective way so that it is targeted to the area that is in most need.

I will certainly take the hon. member's question as a representation and raise it with the provincial counterparts. If there is a disposition on their part to provide the assistance in that manner, I will certainly make that representation on the hon. member's behalf.

Mr. Vic Althouse (Mackenzie): Mr. Speaker, since trappers have recently had to invest in heavier equipment, heavier traps to meet the humane component of consumer demand, and since they are suffering from virtually the same negative income that Saskatchewan farmers are suffering, will the minister change the federal component of the program and make it available to fur trappers, which is not now the case, so that the provinces can pick up on that?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member should know that it was through the provincial representation on behalf of the fur industry that the federal government responded.

As I said, I will certainly take his question as a representation. But we felt that because they were closest to the scene and identified the area of need we, in a generous fashion, responded, which this federal government has done in the past.

We can only hope and trust that the provinces will design their program in such a way that the industry that is affected in all its elements will be supported by the results of our joint efforts.

* * *

• (1500)

THE ESTIMATES

Mrs. Sheila Finestone (Mount Royal): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Communications.

Can the minister tell us if he is going to support the vote as proposed by the chairman of the finance committee to cut the budget of the National Gallery of Canada by $1.8 million?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Marcel Masse (Minister of Communications): Mr. Speaker, that is a very good question, and there is going to be a lot of debate and a lot of anxiety. I hope the hon. member will be here this evening to see the last instalment of this drama!

Mr. Speaker: I have a request from the hon. member for Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead to raise a question of privilege.

* * *

PRIVILEGE

HON. MEMBER FOR MÉGANTIC—COMPTON—STANSTEAD—DENIAL OF ACCREDITATION WITH RESPECT TO THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE

Mr. François Gérin (Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead): Mr. Speaker, at noon I went to the Conference Centre where the First Ministers' meeting on the constitutional question is being held. I was denied the necessary accreditation to enter the building, unlike over 100 reporters from across the country, members of provincial legislatures, and leaders of provincial parties, including opposition leaders like Mrs. Carstairs and Mr. Doer. Members of the House of Commons were also there. I asked why I, as a member, could not go in. I was told it was since I had not been a member of the Charest Committee and was not on the list of a recognized party, either the government party or one of the opposition parties.

I know other members who were denied the same accreditation. Mr. Speaker, this is obviously a very important conference, and I wanted to express my objections to the fact that this important question is being discussed behind closed doors. Quebec's return to the constitutional fold will not only be without honour and enthusiasm—but they are now trying to do it in secret.

Mr. Speaker, my rights and privileges as a member of this House have been breached. Surely, a member of the House of Commons has the right to be admitted as an observer to the Conference Centre, as much, if not more, so than the people representing the media.

Mr. Marcel Prud'homme (Saint-Denis): Mr. Speaker, I believe the hon. member has raised a very important question of privilege. I hope the Chair will, as usual, give it prompt consideration, as it has always done in the past.

I do not agree with everything my colleague said, but if there is one thing that must be perfectly clear it is that there can be no difference between members, whatever their political affiliation, whether it be an official party or not. When the Chair considers this very important question, and there may be other precedents, I hope it will take all the time required to do so. My colleagues

and I will listen very attentively to the Chair's ruling on this question of privilege.

I must say that I was not aware of the situation, but I immediately and instinctively thought that we do not make distinctions between members of the House in matters such as this one.

[*English*]

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, to be very brief on this issue, I am not aware of the details and certainly would want to have more information before being absolutely definitive.

It is the nature of these kinds of situations that there is limited space and limited ability for people to observe. In this case, of course, we are talking about a conference that is closed and there is no opportunity for anybody to participate.

The way we have handled that is to have representation from the parties in the House based on the proportion of their membership in the House, rather the same way we do with any delegated operation in the House, be it a committee and so on.

We have always had a problem on how to deal with Independents. The question is one of wanting to be fair to Independents but by the same token recognizing that it would be equally inappropriate to give Independents an opportunity not available to every member. If you open things up to every member, is it possible to have some delegation from this institution as opposed to everyone in the institution participate?

Without knowing the details of what is involved, I would humbly suggest that it might be something like that. Certainly, I will undertake on behalf of my party to examine and ensure that there was no overt attempt to exclude anybody by virtue of them not being a member of an established party in the House. That, I am quite certain, is not the intent, but I will look into it and inform the Chair if I find out differently.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alex Kindy (Calgary Northeast): Mr. Speaker, I want to support the question of privilege raised by the member for Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead.

I believe that members elected to the House of Commons are here to represent their constituents, and they all have the same rights whether or not they belong to a political party.

I think it is inconceivable that a member sitting as an independent should be subjected to flagrant discrimination. Mr. Speaker, I hope you will take these points under consideration. I know you have excellent judgment and I hope you will respond to the question of privilege raised by the hon. member for Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead.

M. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, I wish to support the position of the member for Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead although I have, as a member of the Charest Committee, been accredited for the congress.

We were 15 members on the Charest Committee, but the issues we dealt with concern all the hon. members of this House. Of course, the independant members were not appointed by the three parties as members of the Committee.

That is why, Mr. Speaker, and also because of the fact that there are so many people from the media and so many provincial members and because of the importance of this issue affecting not only the members of Parliament from the province of Quebec but all Canadians, I hope that the Chair and the government House leader will consult each other and give their support to the position of the member for Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead.

[*English*]

Mr. David Barrett (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca): Mr. Speaker, I do not want to repeat comments made by other members on the matter of principle and privilege, but what is important in this particular instance is the fact that access to the meetings may become an issue which detracts from the debate itself that is taking place.

If the member feels that he was denied access, that indeed could be misinterpreted by the Canadian public in terms of access to process, which is already a question relative to the accord itself.

I urge that the member and any member who wishes, as a duly elected member of this Chamber, to be present at any meetings that are open to any elected person be given absolute access. Without that we develop a side issue that becomes a separate story that does damage to

the process rather than allow us all to participate without an easy excuse that there was no access to anybody who wanted to go.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker: I have listened very carefully to the concerns that have motivated the hon. member for Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead and the others to take that stance.

[*English*]

I think it is a very helpful suggestion from the government House leader and I will look into the matter further. I treat it as a matter of some concern.

* * *

POINT OF ORDER

NOTICES OF MOTIONS—SPEAKER'S RULING

Mr. Speaker: On Monday of this week the opposition House leader, the hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier, rose on a point of order concerning two items which the government placed on the Order Paper.

One was for the appointment of an information commissioner and the other was for the appointment of a privacy commissioner. The opposition House leader contends that the government erred in requesting that these items be placed under the rubric "Motions" in the Order Paper. He believes that they should have been placed under the rubric "Government Notices of Motions".

• (1510)

[*Translation*]

Several members, including the government House Leader, contributed to the discussion of this interesting point of order. The Chair thanks all hon. members for their contributions. I am now prepared to address the concerns raised and render a decision.

To many persons in our listening audience, it may appear irrelevant as to where a notice of motion is placed on our *Order Paper and Notice Paper*. It is important to note, however, that these categories have been developed over a lengthy period of time in order to respect the organization of the business of the House. Some categories are uniquely reserved for the government or the opposition, whereas others are reserved for private members and some very special categories are reserved for items which affect the transaction of the routine business of the House.

[*English*]

To illustrate matters, motions to amend or suspend the Standing Orders, to appoint special committees, to concur in committee reports, to instruct a committee to divide or consolidate bills are moved under the heading "Motions" and are often adopted by unanimous consent.

By contrast, motions to deal with matters of substance or government policy are moved under the heading "Government Motions". For example, motions to advance government bills or to adopt resolutions are handled under this heading and are usually adopted on division after extensive debate.

At this point I wish to refer to a decision I delivered on June 13, 1988 relating to a similar procedural problem. At page 16377 of *Hansard* I explained:

> —a "Government Notice of Motion" is any motion that the Government gives notice of. In other words, a "Government Notice of Motion" is not based on the content of the motion, but rather upon the mover. In many cases, therefore, a notice of motion could go under more than one heading and it is up to the Minister giving notice to decide which heading should be chosen. Clearly a "Government Notice of Motion" can only be moved by the Government, but the Government can choose to place it either under "Motions" or under "Government Notices of Motion".
>
> This concept is borne out in a ruling on May 16, 1985, by Speaker Bosley. He was called upon to rule on whether a time allocation motion had to be moved under "Motions" during Routine Proceedings or whether it could be placed under "Government Notices of Motion" and then transferred to "Government Orders" His decision was that it could be proceeded with in either way and that the choice was up to the Minister moving it.

[*Translation*]

A key element in the government House leader's argument concerned a definition of what items are permitted to be placed under the rubric "Motions". While no specific Standing Order enunciates exactly what should or should not be included under this rubric, Standing Order 67(1)(*p*) gives us a partial list. It reads, in part:

> — [motions] as may be required for the observance of the proprieties of the House, the maintenance of its authority, the appointment or conduct of its officers, the management of its business, the arrangement of its proceedings, the correctness of its

records, the fixing of its sitting days or the times of its meeting or adjournment.

[*English*]

From this the opposition House leader and hon. member for Kingston and the Islands suggest that it is inappropriate to file a motion for the appointment of the Information Commissioner or for the Privacy Commissioner under the rubric "Motions" because these appointments are for officers of Parliament rather than for officers of the House. This rubric, the opposition House leader contends, should only be reserved for officers of the House.

A review of precedents reveals that previous appointments to these positions were moved under the rubric "Government Motions". However, the question still remains: because that route was followed in the past, can we logically conclude that this route is the only option open? The Chair is not persuaded to that conclusion. Instead, as in the decision of June 13, 1988, the Chair concludes that the government has the option of choosing to move such a motion under either heading.

Several hon. members have pointed out that the Standing Order refers to the appointment or conduct of the House's officers. I have been unable to find anywhere a precise definition of who fits into that classification.

Taken in its widest sense, an officer of the House could include such positions as diverse as the chair occupants, the House leaders, the Clerk and the Sergeant-at-Arms and the other officers reporting to the House through its Speaker. Some of these are appointed by resolution of the House, but many of them are not. Unless the House directs me otherwise it is this broad interpretation that I intend to be guided by.

As to the distinction that the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands attempted to make between an Officer of the House and an Officer of Parliament, I have not been able to accept his reasoning on that issue, although I must say it is an interesting if not ingenious argument.

It is my view that the Auditor General for example could be considered to be either an Officer of the House or an Officer of Parliament.

In conclusion, the Chair judges that the government has liberty to move the appointment of the Information Commissioner or the Privacy Commissioner either under the rubric "Motions" or under the rubric "Government Motions". The motions as they now stand on the Order Paper under the rubric "Motions" are regular and can be proceeded with.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*English*]

ORDER IN COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS

TABLING OF APPOINTMENTS AND REFERENCE

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table, in both official languages, a number of Order in Council appointments which were made by the government.

Pursuant to the provisions of Standing Order 110(1) they are deemed referred to the appropriate standing committees, a list of which is attached.

* * *

PETITIONS

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Mr. Jim Hawkes (Calgary West): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I would like to table in both official languages, the government responses to six petitions.

[*Editor's Note: See today's Votes and Proceedings.*]

* * *

[*Translation*]

FISHERIES ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-74, an Act to amend the Fisheries Act and the Criminal Code in consequence thereof.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House that the hon. minister have leave to introduce the bill?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to, bill read the first time and ordered to be printed.

Mr. Speaker: When shall the bill be read the second time? At the next sitting of the House?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES READJUSTMENT ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

Mr. Jacques Tétreault (Laval-des-Rapides) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-311 intituled "An Act to change the name of the electoral district of Laval-des-Rapides".

Mr. Speaker: Shall the hon. member have leave to introduce the bill?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Tétreault: With the leave of the House, Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce a bill to change the name of the electoral district of Laval-des-Rapides to Laval Centre, in order to better represent the communities in that riding. In fact, my riding extends from the rivière des Prairies in the South, to the rivière des Milles-Îles in the North, through Laval-Centre and takes in the areas formerly occupied by the towns of Laval-des-Rapides, Renaud, Vimont, Auteuil, as well as Sainte-Rose which is celebrating this year its 250th anniversary.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to, bill read the first time and ordered to be printed.

Mr. Speaker: When shall the bill be read the second time? At the next sitting of the House?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

• (1520)

[*English*]

ORDER IN COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS

APPOINTMENT OF PRIVACY COMMISSIONER

Hon. Kim Campbell (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada) moved:

That, in accordance with subsection 53(1) of the Act to extend the present laws of Canada that protect the privacy of individuals and that provide individuals with a right of access to personal information about themselves, Chapter P-21 of the Revised Statutes of Canada, 1985, this House approves the appointment of Bruce Phillips as Privacy Commissioner.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: No.

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. One of the important elements of parliamentary reform in this House some time ago was the opportunity for the appropriate parliamentary committee to consider proposed government appointments, to interview and scrutinize with care the qualifications of the proposed appointee and then to report back to the House.

The procedure which the minister is following in this particular case, while it may be strictly legal according to the provisions of the act, clearly flies in the face of the intent of Parliament in allowing parliamentary committees to conduct this form of scrutiny.

I want to raise this point of order and ask whether the minister might be prepared to refer this matter to the Standing Committee on Justice and the Solicitor General in order that we might conduct the kind of careful scrutiny that is required before an appointment of this nature is made.

Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): Mr. Speaker, I want to make exactly the same point of order. I think of all the appointments that one can imagine, the appointment of a Privacy Commissioner is one in which the government should have made the greatest possible effort to obtain agreement among all parties about the choice of a candidate. To my knowledge, there was no consultation at all about this appointment, at least not in the form of trying to find someone who would be acceptable to all parties. We know there are many, many Canadians, even for this difficult position, who would have been acceptable to all members of the House.

I would ask the minister, as my colleague from the NDP has done, before proceeding to enforce strictly the rules of the House, to consider referring this nomination to a committee and the choice of the justice and solicitor general committee is an excellent choice before the appointment becomes final. It may well be that the minister herself will find that process useful in making her own decision about the correctness of what it is she is proceeding to do for the first time, I believe, as Minister of Justice.

I would urge the minister not to proceed to force a nomination on the House, knowing in advance the position of the opposition parties, without at least the opportunity for the candidate to present himself to a parliamentary committee and to let us hear from him about his qualifications.

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, these points of order are more in the form of representations to the government to put aside the procedures in the law for the appointment of these positions which call for a resolution of this House and resolution of the other followed by a Governor in Council appointment.

Mr. Speaker, I will allow questions, which seem to be behind this, to be debated during the debate period. At this point in time my response to the representations from the opposition parties is no, we intend to follow the procedure as laid out in the law. There will be ample opportunity because of parliamentary reform and the ability that committee and others have to call people forward to go on whatever witch hunts members might want.

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, I would like to make one or two comments. I find it shocking that the government House leader would use that kind of approach. Indeed, he is pre-empting debate on a very important matter, that is, our last allotted day in this period where we want to debate certain important matters such as finances, housing, and other very important financial questions.

I respect the decision the Chair made at 3 p.m. but it suited the government's purpose just beautifully, to move the motion at this time and then spare us the obligation to ask it to have the decency of referring this to a committee, which is a reasonable suggestion made by all parties on this side—the opposition parties in particular.

I think it would be in the interests of democracy and good debate that the whole issue be sent to a committee for study and consideration.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. members have raised a matter under points of order which amount to a suggestion, or perhaps a complaint, to the government as to the procedure on which it has decided to use this afternoon.

Whatever merit lies in those suggestions, it is certainly a matter of legitimate discussion, I think it is really a matter of debate. I am bound with the rules as they are. It was pointed out by one hon. member that the government is proceeding strictly legally, although there is dispute within the Chamber as to whether it ought to be proceeding this way at this time.

But, the government has so chosen to proceed, and I must say that the procedure is in order. I will now recognize the hon. Minister of Justice for debate.

Mr. Gauthier: Mr. Speaker, I made my point, and I want to raise another point of order.

Today is the last allotted day in this period where the government has before us expenditure plans for the coming year. If we do not reach Orders of the Day, the government loses its day. If the government loses the day today, and loses the Estimates, I hope it does not come to us crying that it missed the boat on this one.

If the government cannot figure this out, I am telling you right now that we are going to debate this one until 10 p.m.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Kamloops, and then I want to come back to the hon. leader of the government.

Mr. Riis: Mr. Speaker, I want to support the point just put forward by my hon. friend from Ottawa—Vanier.

This is the last allotted day, and as you see by the agenda it is a very full day. We have been looking forward to this day for some time.

The government has decided to proceed this way on an important motion, and we have a number of speakers who wish to speak to this appointment motion. I am seeking clarification.

If, in fact, we do not get to Government Orders because of our interest in speaking to this government motion, what happens to the final allotted day? Can you give some guidance on this, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Speaker: I may be able to give the hon. member some guidance. I would suggest that he speak to me in a few minutes.

Strictly speaking, the question is hypothetical, and I do not think it is appropriate for the Chair to rule on it. I would be very pleased to discuss the matter with the hon.

member or with any other hon. member in a few minutes.

Ms. Campbell (Vancouver Centre): Mr. Speaker, as the hon. members will know, when there is an Order in Council for this appointment, it will be referred to the standing committee for 30 days for discussion. The standing committee is always free to call forward the person nominated to discuss the nature of the appointment.

As Some hon. members will know, the seven year appointment of the Information Commissioner and the Privacy Commissioner expired at midnight Friday, June 1, 1990. Under the Access to Information Act and the Privacy Act, commissioners are appointed by the Governor in Council under the Great Seal: "after approval of the appointment by resolution of the Senate and the House of Commons."

We have given notice of the two motions we would like to move today in the Notice Paper.

As the hon. members already know, the Privacy Act provides for the appointment of a Privacy Commissioner by Governor in Council under the Great Seal after the approval of the Senate and the House of Commons.

To obtain the House's approval, we put the following Notice on the Motion Paper on May 31, 1990:

> That, in accordance with subsection 53(1) of the Act to extend the present laws of Canada that protect the privacy of individuals and that provide individuals with a right of access to personal information about themselves, Chapter P-21 of the Revised Statutes of Canada, 1985, this House approves the appointment of Bruce Phillips as Privacy Commissioner.

• (1530)

[*Translation*]

I am sure that Mr. Phillips is not unknown to you, especially through his work as a Member of the Parliamentary press gallery. If I may, however, I should like to give a brief rundown on of Mr. Phillips' career to assist the House in its consideration of this motion.

[*English*]

For 35 years Mr. Phillips has been a nationally-respected, award-winning journalist. He became a familiar face to Canadians when, in 1969, he joined the CTV Network as its Ottawa Bureau Chief. Previous to that, he undertook assignments with Canadian Press, *The Calgary Herald* and Southam News Service.

Through his work as a journalist, Mr. Phillips has demonstrated a deep commitment to Canada and what it stands for. In the early 1960s, he received the prestigious National Newspaper Award for a series of articles on the attitude of Quebec towards Confederation. He was also the recipient of the Bowater Award for journalism for a series of articles on the Canadian economy.

In 1984, Mr. Phillips agreed to set aside his distinguished career in journalism to serve as the Minister for Public Affairs in the Canadian Embassy in Washington, D.C., and from April, 1987 to February, 1990 he served as the Prime Minister's Director of Communications.

[*Translation*]

In February 1990, his appointment as Assistant Privacy Commissioner made it possible for him to embrace with his usual vigour the cause of the individual's right to privacy. Working closely with the Privacy Commissioner, Mr. Phillips made a significant contribution to the study on Drug Testing and Privacy whose findings were tabled in the House last Friday.

[*English*]

Because of his distinguished journalism career, Mr. Phillips brought with him both knowledge of and experience with the delicate and difficult problem of balancing the public's right to know and the individual's right to privacy. He also brought with him the persuasive communication skills and independence of mind of a journalist.

This combination served the first Privacy Commissioner and the interests he advanced extremely well, as his seven year term attests. That they are shared by Mr. Phillips augurs well for the cause of privacy and the challenges which will face him as Privacy Commissioner.

Mr. Speaker: Are there questions or comments? The hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier.

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, I have a question. I notice that the government, through the Minister of Justice, has moved one motion ahead of the other. In the Order Paper for today, Wednesday, June 6, we see that the Minister of Justice's motion approving the appointment of John Grace as Information Commissioner came first. Yet, the minister chose—in her own judgment, or she was coached by

somebody—to move the second motion wherein the Minister of Justice asks for approval of the appointment of Bruce Phillips as Privacy Commissioner.

We have no objection at all to John Grace being appointed as the Information Commissioner. Why the did minister not call that appointment first and get it over with?

Ms. Campbell (Vancouver Centre): Well, Mr. Speaker, perhaps I wanted the hon. member to have an opportunity to debate while he was still fresh.

Mr. Gauthier: That is a very fresh remark, Mr. Speaker. However, the question is a serious one.

Why is the government not proceeding with something it knows it can get? It knows that it is going to prejudice the appointment of Mr. Grace by delaying it until, perhaps, later this month? Why is the government not proceeding now with Mr. Grace's appointment which causes no difficulties?

We know Mr. Grace, his reputation is well-known, and he has been seven years in the position of Privacy Commissioner. We are asking the government to give us the appointment now and we will approve it now.

Ms. Campbell: Mr. Speaker, I do not know why the hon. member objects to the particular order. As I say, if this appointment is one that will be debated and is contentious in the House, then I think it is appropriate to deal with it first so that we can have as full a debate as is possible and is appropriate.

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister of Justice to respond to the concern that has been raised regarding the appointment of Bruce Phillips, precisely because he did, in fact work directly in the office of the Prime Minister as the Prime Minister's Director of Communications. The minister has pointed out that other public officials, including John Grace, have distinguished backgrounds in journalism.

Inger Hansen, the former Information Commissioner, certainly has a distinguished background. She was previously Privacy Commissioner and, during part of that time, Commissioner of Corrections. I might say that the treatment of Inger Hansen by the government is appalling and unacceptable in the way that it has just dumped her without any form of respect or consideration. But that is a separate question.

I want to ask the Minister of Justice to respond to the specific concern that it is fundamentally important that this office, which after all is an officer of Parliament, should be seen by all Canadians as being completely independent. By appointing an individual who has been working directly in the office of the Prime Minister she taints that independence. As Professor David Flaherty has indicated, this completely diminishes the significance and the importance of this office.

Could the Minister of Justice respond to that particular concern about the close previous link between Bruce Phillips and the Prime Minister's Office? Does she not recognize that it is that link, in the eyes of the public, which disqualifies him from being seen as completely independent in this very important position of Privacy Commissioner?

Ms. Campbell (Vancouver Centre): Mr. Speaker, I think the link depends to a great extent on the characterization and the hon. member chooses to characterize it in the worst possible way, in a way that I do not think is fair.

As I pointed out yesterday, the current incumbent of the office of Privacy Commissioner was appointed by a previous Liberal government. He was appointed by a Liberal government to the CRTC and has close personal ties with senior members of the Liberal Party. It has never occurred to us that in any way impaired his ability to perform in a professional fashion. I have the good fortune to know him personally. I would be very surprised if he votes for my party, but that has never impaired his ability to perform in a very professional way. I have never assumed that reports coming from his office that were critical of our government were motivated by any partisan considerations at all.

I want to point out the implications of somebody in Mr. Phillips' position spending time in the Prime Minister's Office.

When I was executive director of the premier's office in British Columbia, we had a press secretary director of communications who was not a journalist. The members

of the parliamentary press gallery complained because, notwithstanding that this person was an enormously able and pleasant individual, her lack of journalistic credentials meant that she did not understand the constraints under which the press gallery worked. They complained quite severely about this. They felt that the premier should hire a journalist to do that job, someone who understood how they work and how they should be served. The director of communications in the office of a first minister is someone who is a liaison between those whose beat it is to cover the first minister and Parliament, who requires quick access to information, and who requires the provision of certain kinds of services and, of course, the first minister himself or herself.

After the premiership changed in British Columbia, the current premier in fact did hire a professional journalist to perform that job. Previous to Mr. Phillips taking that job in the Prime Minister's Office, as we know, Mr. Gratton held that position.

It is extremely important that members understand that that is a position that requires professionalism. It requires someone who understands how journalism functions in this country. If we are to say that any professional journalist who takes that job is thereafter tainted and cannot either, as Mr. Gratton did, return to journalistic life or take some other position without being tainted by what is in fact a very tiny part of his or her career, as opposed to the broad bulk of that career which has been an unimpeachable and award winning career in journalism, then I think that has very, very negative implications for the ability of governments to have the highest quality people serving them. Therefore, it is incumbent on those who wish to impugn Mr. Phillip's ability to provide some kind of evidence that he is not able to act with independence.

I would point out that in the period of time that he has been Assistant Privacy Commissioner, he has participated in putting together the report on drug testing that is very critical of the government. Mr. Phillips has clearly found it quite within his capability to take an independent view and provide and participate in the creation of a report that is critical of the government. Unless hon. members have some firm reason for suggesting that Mr. Phillips is unable to revert to that kind of independence—

• (1540)

Mr. Gauthier: His record is surely not very good. Look what he did during the election. He was a Tory hack and you know it.

Ms. Campbell (Vancouver Centre): When he worked in the Prime Minister's office, he was loyal to his employer and he did that job. The fact of the matter is that he has had a distinguished journalistic career for which he has been recognized by his peers in journalism. He has now moved on to a different stage in his career.

Mr. Milliken: Keep him moving!

Mr. Gauthier: Send him to the Senate.

Ms. Campbell (Vancouver Centre): I am sorry, but the hon. member's party has already filled up most of the seats in the Senate, so the Senate is not available.

Mr. Gauthier: There are 12 vacancies.

Mr. McDermid: He has a lot of nerve talking about political hacks.

Ms. Campbell (Vancouver Centre): In addition to being highly knowledgeable about the journalistic approach to information in need of secrecy, as is the current incumbent, he also has a very clear understanding of the government perspective as well. I think that balance will serve him well in the position.

It is extremely unsavoury to listen to members of the House of Commons impugn someone's character. As I mentioned yesterday, the hon. member for Burnaby—Kingsway's party probably does not have a realistic hope of forming a government, but those sitting right across from me do harbour that hope. The ability of a government to retain the services of professionals and to invite people, many of whom serve with great cuts in pay in order to provide public service. If everyone who comes to work for a government has to take with them the partisan label of that government, the pool—

Mr. Gauthier: He is working for Parliament, not government. That is the point.

Ms. Campbell (Vancouver Centre): I am speaking of Mr. Phillips' tenure in the Prime Minister's office. If everyone who agrees to work for government has to take with them the partisan taint of that government, the pool of people who would be willing to make their services

available will be small and it is the people of Canada who will suffer as a result.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): One very short question from the hon. member for York Centre, and that is it.

Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that this will be a brief question.

In the decision about Mr. Phillips' candidacy for this office, were other possible government patronage appointments considered? Was he offered any other government patronage appointments? Did he ask for any other government patronage appointments?

Ms. Campbell (Vancouver Centre): Mr. Speaker, if I were in a courtroom, I know what I would say about that question. In the House, I will simply say that it is impertinent and insulting and I do not think that I will dignify it with a comment.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Questions and comments are terminated. The hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier on a point of order.

Mr. Gauthier: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. There is such an amount of interest in this nomination, and we know the minister would like to answer further questions. I wonder if there could be unanimous consent to allow more members to ask more questions of this minister.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The hon. member for York Centre has the floor on debate.

Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about the appointment of Bruce Phillips, but I cannot resist replying to the minister for Brantford—

Mr. McDermid: Brampton! Get it right, if you are going to insult me.

Mr. Kaplan: —for Brampton who often comments that I find myself in the gutter when I take on the government. Well, I do find myself in the gutter when I take on the government because that is where the government operates.

Those questions that were asked during Question Period today about Route Canada, the questions that we have raised and that I am very proud to have spent a lot of effort raising, deal with one of the most fundamental weaknesses of the government. That is the government's lack of class and its repeated insult to the Canadian people in the way in which it has exercised, in so many respects, its high office and the high responsibilities of its office.

It must be a great personal disappointment to the Minister of Justice to have to identity herself on her first assignment in nominating an officer of Parliament to have to choose Bruce Phillips who is unsuited for this job.

Mr. McDermid: Nonsense! That's your opinion.

Mr. Kaplan: As a matter of fact, I was quoting from a newspaper headline. It is an opinion that I share, but it is also an opinion that is widely held across the country.

In saying that, I want to say that Bruce Phillips is a very competent individual. I have no qualms about recognizing his competence, his great ability, his distinction as a journalist, and the service he performed for his country and for his government with distinction in Washington. I do not want to take any of that away from him. He is one of the able people in this country and he is the kind of person we want to see take part in the public life.

What I think the minister really recognizes and why she must surely find herself in a difficult position is because she has to take this individual who has served his government well, who has served his Prime Minister well, and make him an officer of Parliament in a job which should not be filled by an individual with the background of Bruce Phillips in the office of the Prime Minister during the last election campaign.

This country is not so small and there is not such a shortage of qualified, competent people that we could not have in this House agreed upon a proper candidate to fill this office of Parliament. If an effort had been made—

Mr. McDermid: That would rule out Derek Burney as Ambassador to Washington then.

Mr. Milliken: He's not an officer of Parliament.

Mr. Kaplan: Derek Burney is doing a good job in Washington. He is a competent person to be down there.

Bruce Phillips played a highly partisan role in the Prime Minister's office in the last election campaign, to put it mildly. Someone had to do it. I am not saying that there is anything wrong with doing that. People do it. We have partisan people on our side, you have partisan people on your side.

The insult to the office of the Privacy Commissioner and the insult to Parliament is to take that individual and appoint him to a position where he now has to be a watchdog on the government, a watchdog on his pal for whom he fought so hard and in such a partisan way to keep in the office of Prime Minister of this country. That is what is unacceptable.

I cannot believe that the Minister of Justice does not recognize that. I am confident that the Minister of Justice wishes she had a better case to put forward than the case that this individual should now become an officer of Parliament, to stand up as a watchdog against abuses by the government of the very important achievement that we have in this country in our strict rules of privacy.

The Privacy Act, a very important and progressive piece of legislation in this country, is meant to ensure that the government does not abuse the privacy of individuals.

We know governments collect more and more information on individuals. The government knows about every person in this country through records that are part of the public domain, whether they have been seeing a psychiatrist, whether they have ever had venereal disease, whether they have ever had an abortion, whether they have ever been charged with any offence, acquitted or convicted. There is a lot of information out there.

As the computer age has progressed, governments have come to know more and more. However, we have developed a wise policy, as expressed in our Privacy Act and other acts, which is designed to make sure that all of this information against every one of us is not used by government or by others to abuse those individuals. To put it in a sentence, the law requires that information which is obtained by the government or which comes to the government for one purpose cannot be used, even by the government, for another purpose. It is the high calling of the officer of Parliament who is the Privacy Commissioner to ensure that no such abuse occurs.

• (1550)

I think that our Prime Minister could have come up with an individual more at arm's length from the success or failure of himself, from the hurly-burly of politics and of the government than Bruce Phillips.

I know the government could have come up with a half a dozen or a dozen people who would have been acceptable to us on this side of the House. The government did not try. As much as I respect Bruce Phillips, what is needed for this job is a person who will not be identified with the political success of the government and of the Prime Minister to the extent that Bruce Phillips is.

St. Francis Xavier University is not the largest university in the country. I know the Prime Minister favours its graduates. Even if he had just looked at graduates of St. Francis Xavier University, he could have found some among that number who would not have been so intimately identified and so committed to the personal success of the Prime Minister in his political life and to the success of the government, who could certainly have done the job just as well.

The Privacy Act is meant to provide individuals with access to their personal information held by the federal government. It protects their privacy by limiting those who can see that information and it gives individuals some control over the government's collection and use of the information.

I do not want the House to misunderstand what I am saying about Bruce Phillips. I am not suggesting that we will have an individual in Bruce Phillips who will deliver personal information about individuals to the Prime Minister for political use. I am not suggesting that he will do that. I take him to be a man of integrity. The problem is that he will have access to all that information. He will know and he will be able to find out personal information about every political enemy of the Prime Minister in this country, of every political adversary.

Mr. Crosby: Give us some examples.

Mr. Kaplan: Examples are not hard to draw. I am not going to give examples. But the Privacy Commissioner is in a position to have the most intimate details about the life of every Canadian, those in public life, their families,

those not in public life. So whether the character of the individual is such that he will run to his former boss and deliver the goodies on people the Prime Minister may like to embarrass is less the issue than the issue of the appearance that he is a person with that kind of a close, intimate relation to the Prime Minister and with a commitment to his political success. That is why we are entitled to worry about this appointment.

I cannot believe that the Minister of Justice does not see the sensitivity of this particular mistake and perhaps has not advised the Prime Minister that it is a mistake to take such a close buddy, someone who has been so identified with the career of the Prime Minister, with the success of that career, with the political campaign of that career and put him in a position where ordinary Canadians are entitled to be suspicious that abuses may occur.

Choose another person. Give us the opportunity to examine some other names from St. Francis Xavier University, or elsewhere. It is not only a matter of being a Conservative either. There are lots of Conservative appointments that this government has put forward of which we have approved and that we have acknowledged are good appointments. But this is not the job for a person who has had the background in the last few years that Bruce Phillips has had.

I urge the government to consider it again. I assure the government that every member of the opposition will be voting against this appointment. I ask the government to take our opinion seriously.

Hon. Kim Campbell (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a comment on the hon. member's statement. I have never heard anything so replete with innuendo and character assassination.

It is very difficult in this city to work without developing relationships with people who are elected members of Parliament. The hon. member has suggested that there is something about Mr. Phillips' relationship with the Prime Minister, as a result of his having spent about three years as a paid employee of the Prime Minister's office doing a job that directly related to his professional function, the career in which he spent most of life, that would in some way lead Mr. Phillips, who he regards as otherwise a man of integrity, to betray a lifetime of integrity and to betray the office of an officer of Parliament by providing what he describes as his "close buddy" with information to which the "close buddy" is not entitled.

I find that an absolutely extraordinary assertion. I would point out again that the current incumbent of that office is a close and intimate friend of the recently retired leader of the hon. member's party, a close intimate friend who probably wished well—

Mr. Gauthier: Was he in his cabinet?

Ms. Campbell (Vancouver Centre): The hon. member is suggesting that somehow this close intimate relationship with the Prime Minister, the commitment to the success of the Prime Minister, would lead someone to behave in a highly unethical fashion.

Mr. Mills: Not unethical, but partisan.

Ms. Campbell (Vancouver Centre): What I am saying is that there are many close relationships in this city that do not lead people to betray their integrity, just as it has never occurred to anyone in this House to suggest that the long, close personal relationship between the current incumbent of the office of the Privacy Commissioner and high profile, partisan people in this town would in any way compromise his ability to conduct the job with integrity. In some ways, perhaps it is better to have someone's relationships open and above board, because it makes it easier for the standing committee to subject them to scrutiny and to test them.

No one in a million years would suggest that there was ever any basis on which to impugn the integrity of Mr. Grace, and the relationship between Mr. Phillips and the Prime Minister is of so much less significance and importance. Mr. Phillips had a paid position in the Prime Minister's office. He has left that paid position. The Prime Minister is no longer his boss. He has shown a great ability already to be independent of mind in acting as assistant Privacy Commissioner in his participation in the recent study that has come out.

The hon. member's speech was an absolutely consummate example of character assassination by innuendo. It is very important to understand that, in this House, unless there is evidence to the contrary, we assume that people have integrity. Mr. Phillips has shown no evidence of not having integrity. In fact, the hon. member has said he believes he is a man of integrity.

We all change hats and we all have people who work for us with different perspectives who then go on and do other things. I have many people in my department who support me very strongly in what I do. I do not believe they necessarily vote for me, but they are able to make a distinction between the demands of their jobs and their personal alliances. I believe that we should expect no less of Mr. Phillips.

Mr. Kaplan: I would be happy to take some time, if it was available, to show the difference in the relationship between John Grace and John Turner, on the one hand, who as far as I know, have had no political association, although they have been friends through life, and on the other hand the relationship between Bruce Phillips and his career and his relationship with the Prime Minister.

As far as I know, John Grace has never worked for John Turner. I do not even know if he is a member of the Liberal party.

Mr. Gauthier: He's not. He's a Tory.

Mr. Kaplan: I would probably know by now.

I am accused of character assassination and maybe the minister thinks I am the only person who feels this way about the appointment. If that is the way her mind is working, let me just take a moment to quote very briefly from an article by Frank Howard that appeared in the *The Ottawa Citizen*. The whole article is under the heading "Bruce Phillips unsuited for job". So it is not just Kaplan in the gutter here, who thinks this is a mistake. There is a national concern about the motion the minister has moved in the House today. The article stated:

> The person who is put forward as the candidate for the privacy job should look like—

• (1600)

We are talking about appearances here, not the character or integrity of the individual only, but appearances.

> —he or she could stand up to the government of the day, not like somebody who is being rewarded for loyalty to the PM.
>
> The bureaucracies of the two offices, privacy and access, need a standard bearer, not a spin-doctor.
>
> On the level of appearances mainly, his appointment will demoralize the post and perhaps the office. Morale may or may not suffer, but the high moral purpose of the office will be less obvious.

Surely the minister sees that.

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, I might just note that in addition to the fact that the personal friendship between John Grace and John Turner is totally irrelevant to the issue of Bruce Phillips' previous employment in the office of the Prime Minister, there is another issue and that is that the member for Vancouver—Quadra is not the custodian of government information. Quite clearly, one of the reasons that concern has been expressed about the appointment of Bruce Phillips is that the Privacy Commissioner is an advocacy role and on more than one occasion he will be in a position of having to challenge directly the office of the Prime Minister with respect to either policies of the office of the Prime Minister or with respect to particular practices of that office.

The fact that Mr. Phillips was an employee of the Prime Minister, whether or not objectively he is tainted in that way or not, in the eyes of the public the perception—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I would hope the hon. member would comment on the speech of the hon. member for York Centre and ask him a question.

Mr. Robinson: Mr. Speaker, perhaps the member for York Centre would comment upon my observation with respect to the ability of the Leader of the Official Opposition to disclose information under the Privacy Act.

While he is on his feet, the member for York Centre might as well want to clarify the current position because the Minister of Justice has not yet indicated what the current status is of both John Grace and Bruce Phillips. As I read the Privacy Act, and as I read the access to information legislation, the government does have the power, technically, to appoint these individuals for a term not exceeding six months even before Parliament has considered and adopted the resolution.

The hon. member for York Centre might want to comment on this and indicate whether, to the best of his knowledge, the government has gone ahead and ap-

pointed Bruce Phillips and John Grace without even listening to the concerns of Parliament on this issue.

Mr. Kaplan: Mr. Speaker, these are excellent questions. I gather this will be a lengthy debate. I hope that during the course of the afternoon and evening we will have answers to those from the government which really is more in a position to answer.

Mr. Howard Crosby (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a brief comment in relation to the remarks of the hon. member for York Centre.

As I read the Privacy Act, it is all about the processes involved in the disclosure of information. It is not about the exact carriage of information. The member gave the impression to those who were listening that the Privacy Commissioner delves into banks of information and transmits information to other people. That really is not, in any serious way, the role of the Privacy Commissioner. The Privacy Commissioner looks at requests for information that is held in the banks controlled under the Privacy Act and decides whether those requests shall or shall not be granted.

To see the Privacy Commissioner as someone who, in his or her own personal capacity, has information at their disposal is wrong because in fact this information is gathered by other Crown officers. It is gathered by heads of departments and held in privacy banks and the Privacy Commissioner is not the only one with access to that information.

If the member's concerns were legitimate, he would be concerned with every person in the Public Service who has access to the information, not just the Privacy Commissioner. In that respect you have to rely on the honour and integrity of everybody involved in this system, not just one person.

Mr. Kaplan: Mr. Speaker, I certainly agree. I hope I did not create the impression that the Privacy Commissioner is a collector of information. Take, for example, a former inmate in a who prison wants to know whether his cellmate made certain statements about him which are on the records of Corrections Canada. I am speaking here of things I know from my own personal experience as a former Solicitor General. The Privacy Commissioner can go through the record of what stool-pigeons inside the prison have told officials about the the former inmate who is asking for the information.

So it could well turn out that the Privacy Commissioner will find out that a former inmate engaged in certain activities inside the prison. This may be someone who is pardoned now and that information, in some circumstances, can be of political interest. That is my point.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Questions and comments are now terminated. On debate, the hon. member for Victoria.

Mr. John Brewin (Victoria): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my friend from Burnaby—Kingsway, who would normally be our first speaker on this, permitting me to put my remarks on the record on this absolutely outrageous set of appointments.

The issue is not so much Mr. Grace's personal appointment, which this House can approve, but the effect this has on Inger Hansen who has served the position and the country well in her present position and has not deserved the treatment she has received from this government.

Far more outrageous is the appointment of Bruce Phillips and the way in which the government has been handling this. First of all, let us go back to 1983 when the appointments of both of these people, Inger Hansen and John Grace, were put to this House and received the unanimous consent of all parties.

In *Hansard* we see the late Walter Baker speaking enthusiastically on behalf of the Conservative Party for both of these appointments and my friend, the present member for Burnaby—Kingsway, speaking on behalf of our party. These appointments were made not only in consultation with all parties in this House, but with the agreement of all parties in this House.

The Minister of Justice will know from her experience in British Columbia that when it comes to the appointment of an ombudsman, the unanimous consent of even the fractiously partisan legislature of British Columbia is sought.

Here the government not only tries to foist its own particular view of who should have this job, in the name of Bruce Phillips, but the minister's justification indicates that she clearly fails to understand the importance of this position to the people of this country and to this Parliament.

The former minister of justice understood his responsibilities as Attorney General of Canada when he outlined the basis and rationale for the appointment. He exhibited his awareness of the extraordinary sensitivity of this position when he commented, in addressing the House on the appointment of the information commissioner, as follows:

> The Access to Information Act provides that any Canadian who has been denied access to a document he has requested under the Act, who has failed to obtain the requested document within the prescribed time, or who feels the fees charged are excessive, may lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner—I believe that this will happen in most cases and that no longer being required to institute an action at law will save Canadians both time and money. It will always be possible to appeal to the Federal Court in those cases where the problem has not been solved.
>
> Of course the Information Commissioner is an officer reporting directly to Parliament. Being entirely free of the executive, the Commissioner will be at liberty to recommend release of government information, criticize the actions of the executive taken under the Act, table her recommendations in Parliament and take government institutions to court herself to obtain the release of information.

Those comments were made by the Hon. Mark MacGuigan on May 27, 1983. He went on to note that the Privacy Commissioner had precisely the same responsibilities. In fact, the Privacy Commissioner took precedence over the Information Commissioner when it came to a difference between the two.

This appointment is of an officer of Parliament. It is as important as the Speaker. It is as important as a judge. It is as important, if I dare say it, as the chair of the Security Intelligence Review Committee, another appointment which this government botched because of its failure to consult.

• (1610)

Now it treats this as a common patronage appointment. It does so without any genuine consultation with the other parties in Parliament and it does so now without the approval of Parliament. It does so by moving a motion in a way which reduces the rights of Parliament to comment on the Estimates as they come through and to have a full discussion of those matters.

We then have the minister trying to equate this appointment with the friendship of Mr. Grace with the Leader of the Opposition. As my friend the member for Kingsway—Burnaby has pointed out, this dramatically underscores the complete failure of this minister to understand what she is doing in moving this motion. It is a terrible appointment that the minister is trying to foist on this House.

I do not know Bruce Phillips. I think that before this appointment should even come to this House it should go at least to the justice committee so that we have an opportunity to ask about and make some judgment about Bruce Phillips so that the House has the benefit of the views of the justice committee on this subject. If the minister prefers, let us have a special committee that can review it.

When the government is trying to ram through, with its majority, a partisan appointment of a very sensitive position of this kind, I would think it would at least give its own back-benchers an opportunity to put questions on Mr. Phillips' background.

What is Mr. Phillips' sin? It is not that he is a Conservative. I do not even know whether he is a Conservative. He has no sin at one level, but at another, for this particular position, he has served as the Prime Minister's communication director. He has helped the Prime Minister try to get elected. And in that position he allegedly played dirty tricks against the member for Vancouver Quadra during the last election. He apparently, according to a comprehensive story in *The Globe and Mail*, provided reporter friends of his with details of friends of Mr. Turner whom they could phone and find out what the gossip was about Mr. Turner during the election campaign.

That may be fair ball if you work for the Prime Minister during an election, but it is not the kind of conduct one would expect from someone who is going to be an officer of this House, reporting to this House on what the government has done.

Let us be absolutely clear what the Privacy Commissioner does. The Privacy Commissioner stands for the people of Canada in protecting their privacy against improper government intervention. That is a very sensitive position. The people of Canada are entitled to have in that position one of the 26 million or 27 million Canadians who at least all members of this House trust to do the job. We do not trust Mr. Phillips to do this job. That is why we are opposing it and it is wrong for the government to put him in the position.

The other side of the coin is what this government is doing to Inger Hansen. Inger Hansen is a distinguished Canadian public servant. Let me quote from the comments made by Mr. MacGuigan when he was moving her appointment, comments which were concurred in by all sides of this House. I quote from page 25797 of *Hansard* of May 27, 1983:

> Today, Ms. Hansen has earned the right to call herself Canada's senior ombudsman, having been in the field for ten years. In addition, she has built a solid international reputation for herself and for Canada in the ombudsman and data production fields. Over the past several years she has been active in the International Ombudsman's Association as a member of its planning committee. She is also a very active member of the International Association of Data Commissioners. She has chaired two of the latter group's recent annual meetings: in 1980 when Ms. Hansen hosted the meeting in Ottawa and again, by special request of the conference, in London this past summer. In all, Inger Hansen legitimately lays claim to a vast national and international network of friends and associates.

Mr. Baker was equally effusive. The member for Burnaby, as he was at that time, was equally effusive.

Inger Hansen, however, has apparently irritated the Prime Minister. She, in her job, has said that the government has failed to do its job under the Access to Information Act. As a result, not only was she not reappointed, according to public statements she was not even given the courtesy of a telephone call. She simply ran out her term. This government has failed to deal honourably with someone who has served this government, the people of Canada, and this Parliament for 18 years.

This is a bad appointment. The government should withdraw the bill and should engage in a process of fair and genuine consultation with all parties in this Parliament before proceeding further.

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, I would like to put a question to the hon. member. Since partisanship makes it impossible for people to be even handed later on, how does he feel about the appointment of Ed Broadbent and Ian Deans to two very important positions in which they are expected to be impartial and to fulfil the responsibilities required of them under the mandate of their particular agencies?

What qualities does he believe they have that enable them to put their partisan pasts behind them and operate in an even handed fashion fulfilling their responsibilities which are somehow unavailable to those who might attach their allegiances to this party for some brief period of their life?

Mr. Brewin: Mr. Speaker, the intervention from the House leader demonstrates the government's complete blind spot on this point.

No one would suggest for a minute, nor is this House suggesting it, that Bruce Phillips could not handle a hundred different jobs for the people of Canada. That is not the issue. He worked for the Prime Minister however, and he is now being put in a position in which he is expected to be critical of the government on behalf of the people of Canada and of this Parliament.

If the House had been asked about the appointment of Mr. Broadbent and there had been significant disagreement, perhaps that appointment should not have been made. If the House had been asked about Mr. Deans and there had been significant disagreement, the same may be true. However that is not the issue. They are not servants of Parliament. They are appointed by Order in Council to particular positions established under legislation.

This position is a position of Parliament. The precedent was established in 1983 that it was a unanimous appointment of this House. That precedent was a sound one, and it should have been followed in this case.

Mr. Russell MacLellan (Cape Breton—The Sydneys): Mr. Speaker, I do not see the connection of trying to link Mr. Grace and Mr. Phillips together. Mr. Grace was appointed seven years ago. Mr. Turner was not even a member of Parliament at that particular time. He came from the post of editor of *The Ottawa Journal* which certainly was not considered a Liberal newspaper. The fact is that he had that one appointment.

Here we are talking about Bruce Phillips. The Minister of Justice says that we have been hard on Bruce Phillips. I have not heard anyone being hard on Bruce Phillips. No one is questioning his integrity at all. In fact everybody is going overboard to be extra nice to Bruce Phillips.

The fact is that he has worked in the Office the Prime Minister. He has also received an appointment from the government to our embassy in the United States. This

would be his third government job, and the idea that this will leave in people's minds is of very great significance.

Could the member for Victoria and his constituents actually look upon Bruce Phillips as a person who could carry on the job without any shadow of a doubt of a legacy with this government?

• (1620)

Mr. Brewin: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his question. My constituents and people right across Canada will see this as a bad appointment, in part because we are making an issue of it. It is appropriate for us to do it because this appointment was not the subject of effective consultation and agreement on all sides of the House.

It seems to me important that all sides agree on a position as sensitive as this of an officer of the House. Only if we cannot agree after some extensive period of consultation on an appropriate name to go into this office should the government be forced to use its majority to ram somebody through.

However, we have not gone through that process. There has been limited discussion. The government said: "This is the appointment. Take it or leave it". Does the minister have an intervention or is she just mumbling to herself?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The minister does have an intervention. The Minister of Justice on a question or comment.

Hon. Kim Campbell (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I would like to comment on the remarks of the hon. member for Victoria. I am very pleased to hear that everybody is in consensus on Bruce Phillips' integrity.

I would also like to make a comment about Inger Hansen. The hon. member has suggested that the decision to appoint an Information Commissioner is in some way an offence to Inger Hansen. I think that is a very wrong conclusion to draw. Inger Hansen is a very distinguished individual. She is from British Columbia, and I can remember hearing her speak a number of years ago at UBC when she was the Privacy Commissioner. She served as Privacy Commissioner and then Information Commissioner.

I hope it is not a reflection of the fact that there was a shuffle at the end of February that the appropriate representations have not been made to Ms. Hansen about her service. From my perspective or that of any government members that I know of there is certainly no intention to be in any way disrespectful of her.

I do hope the hon. member will recognize that it is a prerogative of this House and governments to renew and change appointments. Mr. Grace is following in a sense the same path that Ms. Hansen took: to be first Privacy Commissioner and then Information Commissioner. I would not want to leave the House with the impression that anyone on this side of the House considered Ms. Hansen to be anything but a very distinguished Canadian and a very distinguished public servant.

As she has said herself recently, she is still young and full of energy and eager for new challenges. I hope that she will continue to have opportunities to express herself in ways that are of benefit to the Canadian people and fulfilling to her as a human being.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Would the hon. member for Victoria like to rebut?

Mr. Brewin: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate very much the comments the Minister of Justice has made about Ms. Hansen.

I may say frankly, and I hope it does not sound churlish, that it is long overdue. There have been questions about her reappointment for sometime. There were questions reported in *The Ottawa Citizen*. Frank Howard commented on it a week ago. It has taken until now for the minister to make the statement. Perhaps it is an oversight in the busy life, but now that they are on the record I am sure it is appreciated by Canadians that she finally made those fair and appropriate comments about Ms. Hansen.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I will recognize the member for Dartmouth, and then I will recognize the hon. member for Burnaby—Kingsway.

Mr. Ron MacDonald (Dartmouth): Mr. Speaker, it is clear that this is an inappropriate appointment. I think the member for Victoria said it clearly. On the one hand we have somebody in the person of Inger Hansen who did her job as the Information Commissioner and was critical of the government. She appeared before one of the standing committees of Parliament last year and was extremely critical of the government for not allowing the spirit of the act to come through in the actual actions of the government.

The person who did her job, who was independent from the government, and who was protecting the public interest does not get her term renewed. In effect she gets canned for doing her job. That is what the government did.

At the same time as the government is trying to tell us that these appointments are all above board and that there is absolutely no scent of political interference, after it kicked Inger Hansen out of her job, which most Canadians thought she was doing quite well thank you very much, it plucked from the trough Bruce Phillips.

I am not going to be as gracious as my colleague for Cape Breton—The Sydneys. Bruce Phillips may be the nicest man in the world; he might be one of the best journalists in the world, but the fact is that this is the third time that he has changed troughs. He was in one with the Prime Minister's Office where he was basically the propaganda officer for the Prime Minister.

The Minister of Justice said it. She said that Bruce Phillips, when he was in the Prime Minister's Office as the communications officer—and I am quoting and you can check it in *Hansard* tomorrow—"had a commitment to the success of the Prime Minister".

Ms. Campbell (Vancouver Centre): I didn't say that, I am sorry. Your own colleague said that and I was quoting him.

Mr. MacDonald (Dartmouth): Our colleague, the member for Victoria, indicated that Bruce Phillips was most recently a communications officer down in Washington, again a political appointment. Now he relies for his third job, on another political appointment by the Prime Minister of Canada. This time it is a political appointment as an officer of Parliament.

Does the member for Victoria agree that just as the old adage indicates, which I am just going to change a little, that these officers of Parliament, in this case Bruce Phillips and the office he has now been appointed to as the Privacy Commissioner, must not just operate outside the sphere of political influence but must also appear to operate completely outside the sphere of political influence?

Is that the primary concern of my colleague from Victoria? It is not so much that Bruce Phillips in this position is going to be spreading secrets and looking into personal files, but that as an officer of Parliament he must command the respect of the Canadian public to do his job as the Privacy Commissioner?

Is the member trying to say that he is a little concerned that some Canadians are going to find it very, very difficult to believe the line of the government that this is an independent appointment clear of politics?

Mr. Volpe: Yes will do.

Mr. Brewin: It is suggested, Mr. Speaker, that my reply should be a simple yes. I am going to add a phrase however because I do not entirely agree.

I am not simply concerned with appearances. I am concerned that we do not know enough about Mr. Phillips to justify the appointment. I believe that because he served in the Prime Minister's Office there is a very serious likelihood that he is not qualified for the position, because of this connection. However I do not know that for sure, and I believe the appropriate action is to have this matter referred to the justice committee.

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, I will be very brief. I wanted to ask the hon. member to comment on the concerns that have been expressed by perhaps one of the most respected international experts in the area of privacy. I am speaking of Professor David Flaherty of the University of Western Ontario.

The most recent report of the Privacy Commissioner, John Grace, refers to him as an internationally recognized authority on data protection who served as consultant to the justice committee in its review of the Privacy Act, who has been quoted extensively, and who has written extensively on this subject. Quite clearly Professor Flaherty is recognized as Canada's leading expert on privacy. He has no political axe to grind whatsoever.

Professor Flaherty has indicated that he is disgusted by the appointment of Bruce Phillips. He says that the appointment ruins the integrity of the Office of the Privacy Commissioner.

That is not the word of a member of this House; that is the word of Professor David Flaherty who as I say is a respected individual and probably knows more about privacy than anyone else in the country.

I want to ask the member for Victoria to comment with respect to—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The period for questions and comments has now expired. I believe the hon. member has made his comments.

Mr. Andre: Mr. Speaker, there have been discussions among House officers and I believe you will find agreement to adjourn now by consent the current debate on the motion to appoint Mr. Phillips and to resume the adjourned debate tomorrow during Routine Proceedings on Motions. That debate plus the debate, if there should be one, on the appointment of Mr. Grace to the position of Access to Information Commissioner will be terminated no later than 1 p.m. tomorrow.

• (1630)

Mr. Milliken: With one additional caveat. It is understood that members of the opposition alone will be recognized in debate for the two hours. If the government wishes to participate, we requested additional time. There was an indication there would be no government members rising in debate during the two-hour period tomorrow morning.

Mr. Andre: Hopefully, you are not expecting that hon. members will not have an opportunity, during the question and answer period, to ensure that the public has an accurate picture and to straighten out the misinformation that is presented during the debate.

Mr. Milliken: Mr. Speaker, certainly I was very careful in saying "rise in debate". Of course, I would expect members of the government to try to defend the indefensible and to try to twist around the straight-talking words of the members of the Opposition in putting the truth before the people of Canada. I was very careful in choosing my words, and I think that is the additional understanding in the circumstances.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is it so agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): So ordered.

Routine Proceedings

PETITIONS

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to present a petition pursuant to Standing Order 36.

The petitioners are from Kamloops, British Columbia. They point out their concern about the government's intention to proceed with the proposed goods and services tax in spite of the incredible opposition, and state a number of reasons why they oppose this tax.

I know they would want me to mention that they would like to call upon the Liberals in the Senate to do the honourable thing and defeat this tax in the Senate. After all, if the Liberals in the Senate wanted to defeat the GST, they could do so this afternoon. Apparently, they do not want to do that. They would rather vote themselves an increase of $153 of incentive funds to go to the Senate.

The petitioners are asking Parliament to reconsider supporting this, and they ask the government to go back to the drawing board and start all over.

Mr. Ron MacDonald (Dartmouth): Mr. Speaker, today, it is my pleasure to present a petition to Parliament, pursuant to Standing Order 36, signed by residents of Atlantic Canada, and more particularly, from various parts of Newfoundland.

The petitioners stand four-square and opposed to this government's proposed 7 per cent goods and services tax. They join over 750,000 people who have petitioned this Parliament for the same reason, to tell this government that the proposed goods and services tax is a tax that they believe to be unfair. They believe it to be a hidden tax, and they believe to be a gouge and screw tax on the taxpayer.

The petitioners are asking the government to, at once, reconsider this very regressive tax and go back to the drawing board.

Mr. Fred J. Mifflin (Bonavista—Trinity—Conception): Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege and honour to rise under Standing Order 36 to join my friend, the hon. member for Dartmouth who presented a petition, and present a petition from my riding. I am going to join him to get the numbers up from 15,000 to 16,000.

These are constituents from Spaniard's Bay, Bay Roberts, Harbour Grace, Clarke's Beach and that area of Conception Bay north. These people are very concerned about the goods and services tax adding to the already dismal burden of Newfoundlanders, with the various economic downfalls and dismal outlook that we have for the next year or so.

They are particularly concerned because, as middle and low income earners, they spend over 90 per cent of their incomes on consumables. They are looking at higher income Canadians who spend less than 50 per cent, and they really feel this is unfair. It is another addition to the already 31 taxes that have been levied since 1984.

These petitioners humbly pray and call upon Parliament to reject the proposed goods and services tax.

VIA RAIL

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present petitions on two different subjects.

First, these are petitions which have been signed by hundreds of residents of Burnaby—Kingsway and elsewhere in British Columbia, concerning a tax by the Conservative government on railway passenger service in Canada.

They point out that railway passenger service, as carried on by VIA Rail, is essential for many Canadians and has been a part of Canada for more than 100 years. They express their concern about cuts by the Conservative government of over $500 million in its operating grant to VIA. They point out that the effect of these budget cuts is to eliminate one-third of our national passenger railway system.

They therefore call on Parliament to maintain the existing VIA Rail network, to upgrade VIA equipment and to guarantee VIA sufficient support to carry out its mandate to provide passenger service.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, the second group of petitions, again signed by a wide variety of residents of British Columbia but particularly signed by hundreds of residents of my constituency of Burnaby—Kingsway, are petitions relating to the proposed goods and services tax, proposed by the Minister of Finance.

The petitioners point out that this is an unfair form of taxation because of its lack of regard for the taxpayers' ability to pay. They urge the government to come to its senses and reject the current proposal for a goods and services tax.

They urge the Senators in the other place to wake up and take their responsibilities seriously on the goods and services tax. I am sure they would urge that. That may not be explicit, but I am sure it is understood. They finally urge the government to cease its proposal which would shift the tax burden on to ordinary Canadians through a regressive consumption tax instead of through real tax reform. I hope that the government would heed the plea of these constituents and put an end to the goods and services tax.

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition signed by numerous residents of the province of Newfoundland.

I may say that the petition was gathered by my honourable and gallant colleague from Bonavista—Trinity—Conception and I believe that many of the persons who have signed this petition are constituents of his and they object to the goods and services tax.

They point out in their petition that this government has increased taxes 31 times since it has assumed office. As he so eloquently put it a moment ago, they, as residents of Newfoundland, have suffered unduly at the hands of this government that they look forward to the return of prosperous times with the election of a Liberal government in the forthcoming federal election. They call upon Parliament to reject the goods and services tax.

Mr. Joseph Volpe (Eglinton—Lawrence): Mr. Speaker, I too rise, pursuant to Standing Order 36, with a duly certified and correct petition both as to form and content.

This petition is from hundreds of residents of Newfoundland, from Carbonear, Harbour Grace, Spanish Point, Gull Island, Victoria, Rooche's Line, Spaniard's Bay and Bristos Hope.

They call on this Parliament to urge the government to withdraw the vicious goods and service tax, a tax which is going to wreak havoc on the economy of an already depleted region of Canada and will impose a very serious and grievous burden on those who are unaccustomed to paying an additional tax on services.

LOW-LEVEL FLIGHT TRAINING

Mr. Dan Heap (Trinity—Spadina): Mr. Speaker, it is my honour to present a petition, in accordance with Standing Order 36, from residents of Regina, Toronto and Calgary who are concerned with the government's carrying on of war training in Labrador and eastern Quebec.

They urge this House to join with the Assembly of First Nations and the Innu of Labrador and other aboriginal peoples of northern Canada in opposing the use of their lands for NATO and NORAD attack training. They demand that the Canadian government end all the NATO and NORAD low-level flight training in Canada, and they ask Parliament to redirect Canada's NATO and NORAD funding toward enabling Canada's aboriginal peoples to regain control of their lands and their livelihood and toward promoting sustainable development for all Canadians.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. Jesse Flis (Parkdale—High Park): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, it is my duty and honour to table more petitions on behalf of Mr. Leo, who has been arrested in Taiwan illegally for speaking out on human rights issues. These are additional petitions to what I tabled back on January 24, and March 5, 7 and 28.

Mrs. Leo, the wife of Mr. Leo, and the petitioners, are asking the government and the external affairs department to treat this as a human rights case, not a legal case.

• (1640)

They cannot understand why the government is referring this to the Canadian Trade Office and the Chamber of Commerce in Taiwan to monitor the case. These two organizations are there to further trade between the two countries. They will not get involved in any human rights issues.

It is frightening to think that a Canadian can be arrested and jailed for speaking out to uphold human rights principles. Yet, his country does nothing to help get him out of jail.

I appeal to the government. Mr. Speaker, you know the government must respond to these petitions within 45 days, and it has responded to every petition that I have tabled since January. Unfortunately, every response is identical, which means that the government has done nothing in six months.

* * *

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

(Questions answered orally are indicated by an asterisk.)

Mr. Howard Crosby (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the government House leader, the following questions will be answered today: Nos. 273, 286 and 296.

[*Text*]

SSEA—EXPORT CONTROL LIST

Question No. 273—**Mrs. Stewart:**

For the years 1988 and 1989, did the government authorize permits for the export of goods falling under Section 7 (military goods) of the Export Control List for any country and, if so (a) which countries (b) in each case, what was the total value of such permits?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): For the years 1988 and 1989, export permits were authorized for the export of military goods as described in Group 7 of the Export Control List (Group 2 of the new List as of spring 1989).

The following is a list of countries for which export permits for military goods were approved. As export permits are often issued in advance of sales contracts being negotiated and thus resulting in many permits not being used, the values are not representative of actual exports. For this reason statistics are not maintained on the value of permits issued.

AUSTRALIA
AUTRIA
BANGLADESH
BELGIUM
BRAZIL
CAMEROON
CHILE
COTE D'IVOIRE
CUBA
DENMARK
ECUADOR
EGYPT
FINLAND
FRANCE
GREECE
GUYANA
HONG KONG
INDIA
INDONESIA
ISRAEL
ITALY
MOROCCO
NETHERLANDS
NEW ZEALAND
NORWAY
OMAN
PAKISTAN
PERU
PHILIPPINES
PORTUGAL
SAUDI ARABIA
SINGAPORE
SOUTH KOREA
SPAIN
SRI LANKA
SUDAN
SWEDEN
SWITZERLAND
TANZANIA
THAILAND
TOGO
TRINIDAD

JAPAN
KENYA
KUWAIT
LUXEMBOURG
MALAYSIA
MALI
MAURITANIA
MEXICO
TURKEY
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
UNITED KINGDOM
VENEZUELA
WEST GERMANY
ZAIRE
ZAMBIA

GREAT LAKES WATER QUALITY

Question No. 286—**Mr. Caccia:**

With respect to each of the five general and twenty-two specific recommendations set out on pages 53 to 58 of the International Joint Commission's Fifth Biennial Report on Great Lakes Water Quality, is the government prepared to make a response at this time and (a) if so, what is it (b) if not, at what time will it be made public?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Part I of the Commission's report describes aptly the public concern about the future of the Great Lakes and the high priority put on meeting the objectives of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement. The Government of Canada shares these concerns and is fully committed to achieving the purpose of the revised Agreement.

The Secretary of State for External Affairs has asked his officials to study the five general and 25 specific recommendations to governments outlined in Part II of the Report. A detailed response to these recommendations will be provided at the end of this year in the second Canadian Report to the IJC on the implementation of specific annexes to the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement.

CHAMPLAIN BRIDGE

Question No. 296—**Mr. Edmonston:**

With regard to the Champlain Bridge in Montreal (a) for each of the last ten years, is the government aware (i) of the global annual cost of operating and maintaining the bridge (ii) in detail, what the money was spent on (iii) the annual revenue obtained by tolls on the bridge (iv) the annual deficit registered and, if so, what were they (b) over the past ten years, was there an accumulated deficit and, if so, what was it (c) for the next ten years, has the government forecast major expenses associated with the bridge and, if so, what are they?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): The Jacques Cartier and Champlain Bridges Incorporated, a subsidiary of The St. Lawrence Seaway Authority, advises as follows:

a) (i to iv) Yes, the government was made aware on an annual basis. See below.

b) Over the past ten years, there was an accumulated deficit amounting to $10,582,970.00.

c) For the next five (5) years, the government is forecasting major expenses associated with the Champlain Bridge. In its latest Corporate Plan, which was submitted to the government, the Corporation is forecasting a major maintenance program for the years 1990–91 to 1994–95 amounting to $69,131,000.00. Of this amount, a total of $32,625,000.00 is for that replacement of the main span of the Champlain Bridge.

THE JACQUES CARTIER AND CHAMPLAIN BRIDGES INCORPORATED
CHAMPLAIN BRIDGE
STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31

	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	Unaudited 1990	TOTAL
	$	$	$	$	$	$	$	$	$	$	$
REVENUES											
Tolls	5,254,475	5,500,478	5,458,613	5,641,056	6,028,129	6,515,257	6,948,975	7,642,908	7,874,963	7,978,204	64,843,058
Interest	669,741	610,277	426,468	280,614	316,187	260,720	264,453	224,100	319,887	324,503	3,696,950
Other	67,167	49,384	61,418	67,791	92,891	104,189	136,014	99,284	104,790	142,310	925,238
	5,991,383	6,160,139	5,946,499	5,989,461	6,437,207	6,880,166	7,349,442	7,966,292	8,299,640	8,445,017	69,465,246
EXPENSES											
Operation	2,357,026	2,882,121	3,176,823	3,208,538	2,778,888	2,862,485	3,075,752	3,344,251	3,240,883	4,104,499	31,031,266
Maintenance	3,008,217	1,990,097	2,366,539	1,544,095	2,053,484	3,337,889	3,027,467	3,782,671	6,891,857	9,107,955	37,110,271
Administration	802,025	1,015,044	1,070,669	1,140,463	1,180,563	1,232,322	1,479,589	1,558,813	1,542,354	1,551,523	12,573,365
Depreciation	1,026,012	1,040,188	1,040,808	1,042,917	1,045,096	1,038,888	1,031,781	1,042,939	1,052,230	1,048,217	10,409,076

Employee termination benefits	37,854	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	37,854
Interest	2,812,673	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,812,673
	10,043,807	6,927,450	7,654,839	6,936,013	7,058,031	8,471,584	8,614,589	9,728,674	12,727,324	15,812,194	93,974,505
NET LOSS	4,052,424	767,311	1,708,340	946,552	620,824	1,591,418	1,265,147	1,762,382	4,427,684	7,367,177	24,509,259
PARLIAMENTARY APPROPRIATION											
–Operation	220,885	(402,685)	658,327	(73,579)	(390,834)	506,995	250,078	735,746	3,338,642	6,270,041	11,113,616
WRITE-OFF OF INTEREST	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,812,673	0	0	2,812,673
NET DEFICIT	3,831,539	1,169,996	1,050,013	1,020,131	1,011,658	1,084,423	1,015,069	(1,786,037)	1,089,042	1,097,136	10,582,970

[*English*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The questions as enumerated by the Parliamentary Secretary have been answered. Shall the remaining questions stand?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

MOTIONS FOR PAPERS

Mr. Howard Crosby (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, again on behalf of the government House leader, I ask that all Notices of Motions for the Production of Papers be allowed to stand.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Shall all Notices of Motions stand?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY, S. O. 81—CONCURRENCE IN THE MAIN ESTIMATES FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING MARCH 31, 1987

Hon. Harvie Andre (for the President of the Treasury Board) moved:

That the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1991, laid upon the Table Thursday, February 22, 1990 be concurred in.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Since today is the final allotted day for the Supply period ending June 30, 1990, pursuant to order made Thursday, May 31, 1990, the House will go through the usual procedures to consider and dispose of a Supply bill.

In view of recent practices, do hon. members agree that the bill be distributed now?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 75—DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS

Hon. Harvie Andre (for the President of the Treasury Board) moved:

Motion No. 1

That Vote 75, in the amount of $90,704,000 under the Department of Communications—National Museums of Canada— Operating Expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1991 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

Some hon. members: No.

Mr. Gauthier: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, when we get a copy of the bill, we could probably comment on it.

An hon. member: We have a few opposition motions to be moved too.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I can hardly wait for the opposition motions.

I am just waiting for the bills to be distributed so the hon. members will have an opportunity to debate. Is the House ready for the question? There is nobody rising on debate. I am going to have to put the question.

Mr. Gauthier: Mr. Speaker, to make sure that I understand the proceedings, I do not see any number but I assume the Supply bill would have a number. Could the Table please inform me of the number of that bill? There is no number yet.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The bill will receive a number when it is introduced the first time. Question?

Some hon. members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

Hon. Harvie Andre (for Mr. de Cotret) moved:

Motion agreed to.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 1—PARLIAMENT

Hon. Harvie Andre (for the President of the Treasury Board) moved:

Motion No. 2

That Vote 1, in the amount $27,605,000 under Parliament—the Senate—Program Expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1991 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): On a point of order, the hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier.

Mr. Gauthier: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I take it the bill before us has been put to the House and has been printed and circulated.

The first question to be put was on the first proposed motion. I do not see the member for Mississauga South whose name was on the Order Paper as opposing the item. I would like to know if we are now going to proceed with that item at this time, or has he withdrawn it?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): We have just proposed that motion and it was carried on division. Now we are on debate. The hon. member for Kamloops.

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, I am actually looking forward to the debate on this issue, particularly from my hon. friend, the government House leader, who is suggesting that we provide funding for the Senate to continue its business. I find it to be most intriguing that, after days, weeks and months of bad-mouthing the Senate and criticizing what the Senate is doing, now the government is going to spend $27 million to allow it to continue.

I am looking forward to my hon. friend's presentation, and perhaps a number of presentations, to explain, now that the government has been given the opportunity to curtail the Senate's work—to bring it to an end, to cause it to wrap up, to eliminate the Senate in terms of being able to function—why the government is now enthusiastic and wants Parliament to concur in spending millions and millions of dollars to allow the Senate to continue.

Worse than that, we have had another blow just in the last few hours. The Senate has said: "We need an incentive to go to work". I have heard of a lot of incentives, but the Senate is saying: "We need an incentive now to go to work. We need to be encouraged and bribed"—I guess I cannot say "bribed", that would be in poor taste—"encouraged to go to work. We need $153 a day or else we will not go to work anymore. That is on top of all of the other benefits that we receive."

The government can say no to this today. The government can say, no, it is not going to provide $153 a day as an incentive for the Senators to go to work. After all, they do work very hard. They actually work three days a week now and, most days, they work two or three hours a day when they do work. I think it is up to 76 days a year that they actually manage to get a quorum to continue business. But that is not enough, so they need an incentive. I suspect with the incentive we will find the Senate holding committee hearings on Monday, and probably Fridays as well to round out their work experience. This is incredible.

Some days back when, on behalf of the New Democratic Party, I gave notice of opposition to this vote in the amount of $27,605,000 in the Main Estimates to enable the Senate to conduct its business, I asked why we would want to do that. Why would we want to allow the Senate to continue doing what it does? I thought we would ask what the Senate does do. What is it that the Senate does on our behalf allegedly?

This is where I have to come to some difference with my Liberal friends in the House of Commons. A few weeks ago my leader asked Mr. MacEachen, the leader of the Liberals in the Senate, to do the honourable thing now and defeat the goods and services tax.

I think it has become clear across the country that, in spite of what virtually every Canadian is saying, the Conservatives are saying: "We are going to go ahead with this tax anyway. We are going to jam it down Canadians' throats, whether they want it or not." That is what they are doing. I am sure my hon. friends do not think it is a good idea, but for some reason they are surging along here and going ahead with the 7 per cent goods and services tax on virtually everything that we find in our society. It is going to cost Canadians a lot of money and Canadians are against this tax—60 per cent, 70 per cent, 80 per cent, and up to 90 per cent in certain communities across the country. Does the Conservative government listen to that? Oh, no, it knows better than that.

I listen carefully and my hon. friends in the Liberal Party say: "We join with the New Democrats. We oppose this tax. We are not like the Conservatives." I listened carefully and, as individuals, they probably do.

An hon. member: We even have alternatives.

Mr. Riis: And they have alternatives, as we do. When the Liberals got together in caucus and came to the position that they oppose the GST, a lot of us made the assumption that they meant all Liberals—not just the ones in the House of Commons, but also included the Liberals in the Senate.

• (1650)

My leader then said to the Liberals in the Senate: "Listen, since the Liberals oppose the GST, why don't you folks in the Senate—because you have a nice majority at the moment—do the right thing and defeat the tax this afternoon? Or next week, or in the next couple of days, but do it soon."

The Liberals in the Senate say they want to hold hearings. Hearings into what? Whether this is a good tax or not? I thought we had months and months on that decision. It is perfectly clear what Canadians feel. So, the Liberals want to hold hearings. They want to collect $153 a day, because they know they do not defeat bills and they do not pass bills now. There is a whole pile of them in the Senate. They study them. They look into them. They hold hearings. They go on and on and, with a $153-a-day incentive, they may be inclined to go on for months studying this legislation.

I do think we have seen a change of heart here, at least, in some of the Liberals. While the Liberals in the House of Commons certainly oppose this tax, their Liberal colleagues in the Senate seem to like this tax. They seem to want this tax to go through. So we have to ask ourselves: "Do we want and do we need the Senate of Canada?" I think not.

It costs the taxpayers of Canada $40 million each year to support the senators. Just think what $40 million a year could do in terms of child care centres and day care spaces. Think what it could do to help a lot of small businesses across the country launch into new ventures and hire more people. Think what $40 million could do to enable women's shelters across the country to expand. Think what it could do in terms of programs to combat drug and alcohol abuse. Think what $40 million could do in terms of literacy programs to assist those who are struggling with illiteracy in our country. Think what it could do to reforestation programs or to help municipalities develop their municipal infrastructure to have better sewage and water facilities. We could think of a long shopping list of how to spend the $40 million it costs now to keep the Senate in place. I cannot figure out what on earth the Senate does for us.

What it does is it creates a lot of jobs. Jobs, jobs, jobs, for certain folks. There are 33 Conservatives in the Senate now, and they will soon be joined, I suspect, by 12 new ones because there will be some opportunities to make new appointments. A number of people will find new careers in Canada's Senate, at least until we have a chance to reform it.

Looking back at the record we see that between 1960 and 1982 the Senate addressed 1,000 pieces of legislation. That is the number of pieces of legislation moved from the House of Commons to the Senate. Mr. Speaker, do you know how many it amended of those 1,000 pieces of legislation from 1960 to 1982? It managed to provide amendments to 35 of those bills. Thirty-five out of over 1,000 pieces of legislation the Senate actually amended. The House of Commons accepted 30 of those. Of course, as far as I am able to determine, the Senate did not defeat any legislation in that period at all. They do have the constitutional authority to do so, but they did not.

I could go on and talk about the Senate. As we go through these estimates today, we have a chance to send a very clear message to the Senate as to what we think. The government on many occasions has raled on about how the Senate is holding up legislation, such as changes to the UI legislation and the clawback provisions where the government now has abandoned universality for

pensions, and so on. They are holding up progress on quite a list of legislation.

The government gets aggravated and says that the Senate should not do this. The government actually introduced legislation some months ago to limit the power of the Senate. I thought for a moment that we were now going to get serious about dealing with the Senate. The government actually tabled legislation, but what happened to the legislation? It went nowhere. It disappeared. It was never discussed in the House again.

When the government says that it wants to reform the Senate, curtail what it is are doing or change the Senate, I say: "When you actually introduced legislation to do that, you ignored it."

Here, we actually have a chance today to end the Senate. We can say to the Senate that it can pass all the little goodies it wants, pay itself $153 a day, or $553 a day—it doesn't matter. We are not going to give it the money to do it. That will send a pretty clear signal to the folks in the other place.

We look at the actual cost of the Senate and find, although it only sits the odd day a week, and just for an hour or two a day on average, that it costs the taxpayers $40 million a year which comes to about $435,880 per Senator. When we consider what that $40 million would provide to the people of Canada in real service, or to reduce the debt of the country on a regular basis, we would be hard pressed to find out why we should do this, why we should follow the government's advice and give these millions of dollars to allow the Senate to continue.

I think it is appropriate for me, Mr. Speaker, to take my seat shortly to allow my colleagues on the government side particularly to indicate why it is they want to move on this motion today and provide these millions and millions of dollars to allow the Senate to continue. I would ask my hon. friend, the government House leader, that the government reconsider this position that it is taking now and send a clear message to the Senate. Tell them: "We have had it with your antics. We have had it with what you are doing. We do not feel you are doing any good any longer because–"

Mr. Milliken: How can you say that?

Mr. Riis: My hon. friend asks how I can say that. I thought we could give them a chance to show they are worth something, that they are actually representing the people of Canada on a very important issue. We chose the goods and services tax because it is virtually unanimous in opposition across the country. We said to the Liberal-dominated Senate: "Will you do the right thing, defeat this legislation, and kill this bill?"

Mr. Mills: You have to do it responsibly.

Mr. Riis: You have to do it responsibly, my hon. friend from Toronto says.

Anyway, what became clear is that the Senate has no intention of killing the GST legislation. The government has no intention of not supporting the Senate. Why is it dragging out the agony? If it was determined to do that, it would. But I have a sneaky feeling, Mr. Speaker, a sneaking suspicion, that the Liberals are trying to get it both ways. They can give the illusion that they oppose the GST, but given due time and so on, the old Senate will let it through around Thanksgiving. The tax will be in place and the old printing press, the old gravy train is there for taxation. Maybe some day in the future, if and when the Liberals ever return to office, this whole process would be done. Who would take the flack? Well, the government would take the flack. The Conservatives would take the flack for introducing this. But who would have introduced it? The Conservatives would have introduced it and passed it through the House of Commons because of their majority. They have already passed it at second reading after a very short debate. That is the principle of the bill. At second reading we discuss whether or not we believe in the principle of this bill.

I note with interest that the Liberals in the Senate agreed with the principle of the bill. They said: "Yes, we agree with a goods and services tax of 7 per cent on principle." All I am saying is that is what we have seen so far, agreeing in principle. Yes, it was quickly done, with very little debate. Now we have to allow a little bit of time so that the Liberals can get a new leader in place and so on. Then we will let this thing slip through a little bit later.

That is why I think we should forget the bloody Senate. What have they done for us anyway? This is our opportunity, not only to forget the Senate, but essentially to abolish the Senate by not giving them the necessary operating funds to allow them to continue. That is what this initiative has done on behalf of the New Democratic Party, and I am proud of it. They have demonstrated clearly that they are not operating in the best interest of Canada. They are accountable to no one. They are an aberration in a democratic society. They are a parliamentary obscenity when you look at how this process operates. This is the chance to not support this motion by my hon. friend, the Conservative House Leader, to allow the Senate to continue indefinitely or at least give them money for another fiscal year.

• (1700)

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, there are all kinds of ironies in this motion. The hon. member has been around for a while. He may recall where this procedure of objecting to a particular item in the Estimates arose. Then the President of the Treasury Board is obliged to bring forward a motion specifically identifying the vote to which objection has been raised.

He may remember that the government House leader at the time this procedure was devised is currently the leader of the opposition in the Senate, the famous Senator MacEachen.

I may have a point of privilege here. Here I am, forced by procedure invented by Senator MacEachen to move on behalf of my colleague, the President of the Treasury Board, a motion to restore the funds they need for their operation.

If ever a minister or member of Parliament deserves accolades for duty above and beyond the call, it is for having to undertake these actions. I am almost speechless at having to ask the hard-working taxpayers of this country to give up $27 million of their funds in order to provide Mr. MacEachen and his friends with the comforts to which they have become accustomed. It is one of the toughest things I have ever had to do.

I do have a question for the hon. member for Kamloops, the House Leader of the New Democratic Party, who talked of his contempt for the Senate and how he thinks that we should deny them funds. Of course last Friday—mind you he wasn't here and I would have been away too had I been in his position, too embarrassed to be here—when his colleague the member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca moved a motion suggesting that we send a message to the Senate asking that it kill the GST legislation.

On the one hand he wants to deny them the money needed to operate, but on the other hand wants them to operate in a way that frankly is unconstitutional. I wonder if the member for Kamloops could tell me when he went through the change of heart, or change of mind, and when his party changed its policy. In the fall of 1987 when we were debating C-22, amendments to the Patent Act respecting pharmaceuticals, there was a lot of opposition in this House and when the bill was sent to the other place the Senate refused to accept it, amended it, and kept sending it back. It was doing much the same as we are doing now with C-21.

At that time the hon. member for Kamloops was asked for a comment by a reporter and as reported in *The Ottawa Citizen* of October 30, 1987, he said: "Quite frankly I am very disappointed with the Senate because I do not think it has the right to be holding up legislation."

Now could the hon. member tell me what has happened over the last three years to cause his judgment to so fail, his principles to so desert him that now he would be calling upon the Senate to in fact kill legislation currently before it? What has caused this once fine, upstanding commitment to democracy as demonstrated by this quote of October 30, 1987, to have so deserted the hon. member that he would now stand up and proclaim the appropriateness of the other place taking the kinds of unconstitutional, immoral action he seems to be asking of them.

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, I want to respond to my hon. friend and say that he ought to consider what action would occur if the government did not move on the motion before us.

Mr. Andre: We wouldn't get the appropriations bill.

Mr. Riis: I know he has an obligation to bring it forward, but does he have an obligation to actually move on it and support it? I raise it as another question for him. My hon. friend has referred back to last Friday when we called upon the Senate—

Mr. Milliken: On Monday.

Mr. Riis: Excuse me. —on Monday of this week when we called upon the Senate to kill a bill. We filed the motion on Friday reminding the Senate that it does have the constitutional authority to reject, to kill legislation, to kill bills. I do not believe we should have a Senate with its present powers, answerable to no one, accountable to no one. That is my personal sort of point of view. We should not have the Senate at all.

Mr. Boyer: Sort of view; that's right. Sort of view.

Mr. Riis: I will take back the sort of—we should not have the Senate at all making these kinds of decisions. It has no place in a democratic society. However, the

reality is we have a Senate. There are a lot of things that I do not care for. There are a lot of things the government does that I do not care for, but we have to live with these things. We have to live with the Senate. So, let us give the Senate an opportunity to prove itself. It has the constitutional authority to kill legislation. That is reality. I might not like it, I might not endorse it, I might not support it, but that is reality.

My leader asked the Senate to do something responsible for once and rather than simply review legislation, hundreds and thousands of pieces of it, do something that the people of Canada want it to do as senators, and defeat the goods and services tax. It failed to do that. It is not doing that. It gives no indication that it has any intention of listening to the people of Canada. That is why, today, we bring forward this motion which states we should not provide funding to allow the Senate to operate any longer. In other words, not give it the $27-plus million they require to carry on.

This would essentially abolish the Senate. Nelson Riis today, on behalf of the New Democratic Party, is putting forward this initiative to abolish the Senate. We cannot be any clearer than that in terms of how we feel when it comes to this particular Senate and the way it operates. The reality is that it exists and I am providing an opportunity for my friend, the government House Leader, and for the government, to do the right thing and not concur in this motion to provide operating funds to allow the other place an opportunity to continue for another fiscal year.

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, to say that I was amazed in listening to the hon. member for Kamloops would be putting it mildly. I can only say how glad I am he has come back to the Chamber. I know he was away Monday when the motion his party put forward was debated. I looked forward to his participation in that debate.

The hon. member is now saying he wants to abolish the Senate. He now says that is party policy. Yet, on May 10 in the House, he told us the NDP policy had changed. He made an announcement that apparently at the December convention the NDP decided to scrap the policy of abolition. The hon. member for Edmonton East apparently had not grasped that fact. That became obvious on Monday. There may be dissension in the NDP about what their policy really is. Some seem to think it is still abolition, some say it is not. It is a personal view of his that abolition is still—

Mr. Boyer: It is a personal view.

Mr. Andre: It is a personal sort of view.

Mr. Milliken: The government House leader says it is a personal sort of view. But, somehow, we do not know what NDP policy is on this.

An hon. member: You never do.

Mr. Milliken: On the one hand they say "we want to abolish the Senate". Some of the members seem to think that. Apparently their official policy is to look at other options. That is what the hon. member for Kamloops said on May 10. On Monday they were saying how the Senate really was very important and should exercise its constitutional rights and block government bills willy-nilly. It was right there in the motion.

I am sorry the hon. member for Kamloops did not participate in that debate because I am sure he would have supported that motion. It was his party's official position. Or, perhaps the hon. member Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca went off on his own and dumped this motion on the Order Paper by mistake on Friday afternoon. We do not know what happened, but I wish the hon. member for Kamloops had clarified that for us in his remarks on the Senate. We would appreciate hearing his views. Nevertheless, having moved this motion on Monday saying that it supports the Senate, today we now have the hon. member for Kamloops trying to take away the Senate's money so it cannot do what the NDP wanted it to do on Monday.

• (1710)

What is the NDP position? What is the hon. member for Kamloops really saying? Are some of the members of the NDP in favour of abolition and others not? Do some think the Senate should block this legislation and some not, or is he simply playing a game and trying to blame the Liberal Party for the passage of this bad tax that this Tory government has introduced? Is that what he is really trying to do? If so, does the New Democratic Party, being a party of principle, not think that politics is a naughty thing to do and it should not be engaging in such silliness?

Mr. Riis: Mr. Speaker, imagine politics in the House of Commons. What is going to happen next, politics in the Parliament of Canada? I guess I have to admit that, from time to time, politics does rear its lovely head in here.

In response to my friend, I have two points. Yes, I was trying to point out the fact that the Liberals in the Senate are passing the GST. I must confess to that. They are passing the GST, just like the Conservatives in the House of Commons passed the GST. To clarify for my hon. friend, the motion on Monday read as follows:

> That a message be sent to the Senate reminding the Senate that it has the constitutional right and the power to defeat any bill coming from the House of Commons.

Anybody who understands how Parliament works would agree that the Senate has the authority to do just that, so that is a given. It is just a reminder, I suppose, to my hon. friend that that is the reality of our parliamentary system, that the Senate has the power and the authority to defeat any bill.

All we were asking on Monday was that the Senate do what we would expect it to do, in terms of listening to the people of Canada and defeat the bill. The Senate has failed to do that. We have given it ample time to indicate if it intends to defeat the goods and services tax, but the Senate obviously does not. The Liberals in the Senate plan, as they already have voted in favour of the tax once in the Senate, to take a little bit of time but eventually pass it one way or the other. Probably a lot of people will be sick on that day, or away or whatever and their incentive plan will not work to bring in the senators. Eventually they will muster up a majority and probably pass it on division so it will not be clear who it was who supported it, but it will pass the Senate.

To answer my hon. friend's question: What is the NDP's position in terms of the Senate? I will read, specifically, from party policy, because I think my hon. friend asked a very important question. As far as the Parliament of Canada is concerned, it states that "The NDP will continue to fight for further changes, including the abolition of the Senate". As of the last party convention in 1989, Motion 30 reads, "and that the proposed committee on the Canadian Constitution examine options to promote better regional representation in the Parliament of Canada including, but not limited to, proportional representation, an elected Senate, a House of the provinces and territories, as well as the abolition of the Senate", in other words, a number of options.

All I can say is that the NDP has been consistent. We do not change our policy by the day. We develop our policy at the grass roots at party conventions and we support that. What we are doing is completely and totally consistent with party policy; it is totally consistent with initiatives that we have taken on Friday of last week, on Monday of this week and certainly today when we have asked for the abolition of the Senate.

Mr. Peter L. McCreath (South Shore): Mr. Speaker, it is a great pleasure to have an opportunity to make a few remarks in this debate. I have given a great deal of consideration as to how I might usefully contribute to the discussion. However, after listening to my hon. friend opposite, the hon. member for Kamloops, I must confess I am left a little bit confused as to exactly where the New Democratic Party stands with respect to the subject of democracy. If I understand correctly, what I have just heard the hon. member calling for is the other place to defeat legislation that, in the case of the GST, has been approved by this House. He is calling for the other place, the non-elected other place, to defeat that legislation and I find that a remarkable bit of confusion.

The hon. member says that that defeat should take place because of democracy, I believe that was the term; that the will of the people should prevail. I have lived with the understanding, perhaps it is a delusion, that the way we practise democracy in this country is that every so often Parliament is dissolved and we have an election and the people make their choices. It is, I believe, what is referred to as a representative democracy. Both in 1988 and in 1984 the people of Canada made their choice and gave an overwhelming mandate to this government to govern the country. Indeed, during the course of doing so, the government, through its elected representatives in the House of Commons, reflecting the perceptions of the will of the people, brings forth legislation that addresses the serious problems of this country and attempts to prepare Canada to move into the 21st century.

That is precisely what this government has been doing and has done in introducing the GST. My goodness gracious, changes in taxes are not popular things but sometimes they are necessary in a democratic country. We need a government that has the courage, the integrity, the honesty and a mandate from the people to get on with the business of the nation. I hear my hon. friend opposite suggesting that a non-elected body

should stop the will of the people, the will of the people as freely expressed in a democratic way at the polls.

We have had, in my opinion, an absolute travesty of democracy for the last several months in this country as we have seen the other place not once, not twice, but three times flaunt the will of the elected people of this country in passage of Bill C–21. This bill is a long overdue revamping of the unemployment insurance system in this country, a bill that is in fact going to take our unemployment insurance from being a passive approach to making it an active approach. Among other things, it is going to make changes that are tremendously beneficial to the people of this country.

Thinking in terms of my own South Shore riding in southern Nova Scotia, I think of the crisis that we are facing right now because of the downturn in the Atlantic fishery. I think of the fact that fish plants are closing far more frequently than we might want.

Thanks to the fact that C–21 is not in place, those people now have to work 20 weeks to qualify for unemployment insurance. If they would get that bill through, the number of weeks required to qualify for unemployment insurance would be down where it should be. Seasonal workers like fish plant workers would benefit because the repeater provision of the unemployment insurance system would be removed. Yet the other place, ignoring democracy, has refused to pass that legislation. That is something which should be a matter of grave concern to Canadians.

We have now passed Bill C–43 dealing with the contentious issue of abortion. That has caused anguish to Canadians from coast to coast in this country. What are the senators saying? They are not sure what they are going to do about Bill C–43. Perhaps they will hold public hearings on the subject. Goodness, gracious, is there anything left to be said on that particular subject and can we not get on with the governance of this country?

I must not allow myself to get waylaid by the confusion as to what democracy is or is not in the minds of what is called euphemistically the New Democratic Party. I must get on with my own comments about the other place. I happen to think it is a tragedy that the other place has strayed from what it was supposed to be. If we think back 125 years to the origins of our country, and we think of the concept that existed at that time, of modelling a separate chamber, a chamber, if one reads the confederation debates, one sees was intended to provide what is referred to as a sober second thought. One does not know exactly what the state of sobriety that always might have existed in that or any other place, but nevertheless, the idea was that you had the elected people who essentially were charged with the responsibility of legislating for and governing the country, but you had this second body that would provide a second look that could enhance and contribute to the legislative process in Canada.

The idea was that very distinguished Canadians would be identified and asked to serve in that other place and that it would be a showcase of outstanding Canadians. I was perusing the latest issue of, I forget what it is called, something like the parliamentary guide. It gives little biographies of all the members of this Chamber and the other. I could not help but think to myself that indeed, sitting in that other place are a number of very distinguished Canadians; people who hold the Order of Canada and people who represent various vocations and professions in this country. I was thinking to myself what a tragedy it is the way that place has been abused, the way the credibility of that place, as an institution that could contribute with great value to this country, is being destroyed in the minds of Canadians.

• (1720)

Indeed, it is being destroyed in the minds of all people who believe in the democratic process and who believe that representative parliamentary government is the basis of democracy as we approach the end of this century.

Instead, what we have is gamesmanship being played by people of the Liberal Party who once sat in this place. I think of the distinguished gentleman who for many years represented my province in this place and now sits in the other chamber as Leader of the Opposition. I cannot help but wonder what he would have said when he sat here as House leader or Deputy Prime Minister. What would he have said if the opposition in the other place had done with his legislation what he is now doing with legislation that has been brought in after careful consideration to benefit Canadians from coast to coast? What a tragedy.

What has it come to? Where is it leading? In this country for the last several weeks, and in particular for the last three or four days, we have seen intensive discussion on the subject of Senate reform. We should not need Senate reform. The Senate is not what it is supposed to be. The people there are distinguished Canadians who do not recognize their proper role.

As my hon. friend from Kamloops said, legally and technically the Senate has the right to block legislation here. We also have convention. I am mindful of 1981 and 1982 when constitutional changes, on which there was failure to receive accord of all the Premiers of the country, were being proposed. Contrary to the convention of this country, the government proceeded without the support of the province of Quebec in implementing the constitutional changes of 1982. This is, perhaps, one of the main reasons that we find ourselves in the state in which this country has been for the last few months.

Convention allowed Quebec to oppose that constitution. Propriety and wisdom would have said: "You do not do it until you get everybody to come together." We now have the same attitude, value and ethic being used in the other place, not surprisingly, by the very same people who had no more respect for propriety and convention when they sat over here than evidently they have in the other place today. In my judgment, that is a most regrettable thing.

The outcome of all of this, in my opinion, could be that increasing numbers of Canadians will end up drawing the same conclusion as the conclusion my hon. friend from Kamloops suggested. In fact, it is the position of his party, that is, that the Senate should be abolished.

Clearly, if the Senate is unable to perform the valuable role it can play for this country and if the role of the Senate *de facto* is going to be to disrupt the carrying on of democracy, then indeed there is no alternative except to get rid of it. I, for one, think that would be a most regrettable state of affairs if that happened.

Instead, I would rather see the other place and the leadership of the Liberal Party in the other place recognize the difference between propriety and abuse of position. I would rather have it recognize the will of a democratically elected government in this country with the courage to lead and the common sense to get on with what the needs of Canada are for the 21st century. Then, Canadians would be well served. Indeed, all members of this House would be most enthusiastic in supporting measures that will provide the financial basis for them to operate in the other place.

I do not want to transgress for too lengthy a period of time on the House, but I will say in conclusion that I urge all members of the House, and in particular I urge all members of the Liberal Party in the House to go to their colleagues up the hall and tell them that it is time they had respect for the democratic process of the country. It is time they had respect for propriety and convention, so that the country can get on with its own business as it should. Canadians would have confidence in parliamentarians at both ends of this hall, as should be the case.

Mr. Fred J. Mifflin (Bonavista—Trinity—Conception): Mr. Speaker, I have just a very brief comment.

I listened with great intensity and interest to the hon. member from South Shore. I am sure what he had to say was technically correct, but he glossed over a few points which I think I should certainly raise.

Whether it is in defence of the Senate or not, my particular issue is with some of the comments he made on Bill C–21, which is an issue of some concern to those of us on this side of the House and particularly those of us from the Atlantic region.

My hon. friend talked about the extension beyond the usual 10 or 12 weeks, whatever it is in the particular UIC region that has been charted out, up to as high as 20 weeks in my riding from 10 to 14 weeks. I am sure anybody watching this debate on television would have been very conscious of the comment that was made by the hon. member for South Shore.

Just to refresh his memory, Mr. Speaker, unemployment insurance was brought into this country about 50 years ago by the Liberal Party as a protection for those who did not have jobs and could not find jobs in tough times so that they would not be hungry.

It was a practice by both governments since 1977 to pass what was called a variable entrance requirement. This, in effect, recognized the areas of higher unemployment, reduced qualifying time, and gave extended

periods of benefit in accordance with the requirements and in direct relationship to the rate of unemployment.

This happened every year since 1977 on an annual basis and almost as a matter of course and, I believe I am correct in saying, almost without debate, until Bill C–21 was introduced in this House last April by the hon. Minister of Employment and Immigration, debated in the House of Commons and, indeed, debated across the country.

Bill C–21 included the variable entrance requirement. Without using unparliamentary language I think it is safe to say that Bill C–21 was held hostage, as was indeed the variable entrance requirement, to the whole procedure. In other words, the drill was if you do not pass C–21 you will be punished and you will not get the variable entrance requirement.

The other place being discussed here in very negative terms, the place of second sober thought, had the wisdom, foresight, integrity, and courage just before Christmas last year, in fact moments before this House adjourned for the Christmas break, to reintroduce Bill S–12. This was the variable entrance requirement, the very measure that the hon. member talked about so despicably and which he voted against along with his other members.

How can he possibly blame the Senate for that? In fact, I hope he will remember that he voted against this when we break during the summer because people will remember.

I just want to wrap this up by saying we talk about democracy. A great man, Abraham Lincoln, talked about democracy as being "by the people, of the people, and for the people".

Well, I have to remind you, Mr. Speaker, 300 committee items, various people, teams, individuals, appeared before groups of the Commons committee and the Senate committee when they went across the country. Ninety-five per cent of those disagreed with Bill C–21 and, indeed, 90 per cent were very much against it.

That may be democracy "of the people" but I do not think it is "by the people" and it certainly is not "for the people".

Mr. McCreath: Mr. Speaker, I am more than pleased to respond to my hon. friend though I must confess that I think the House has seen an absolutely extraordinary thing happen here. We have invoked the name and the distinguished Gettysburg Address of Abraham Lincoln, the sixteenth President of the United States, to defend the absolute abrogation of propriety and democratic principles by the people up the hall.

My hon. friend knows perfectly well that he speaks with his tongue in his cheek when he says what he has just said in this place with respect to Bill C–21 and the variable entrance requirement. It is interesting.

• (1730)

I call to his attention what happened in this very Chamber in 1977 when Bill C–27 was moved by the previous government. It was a bill not dissimilar in much of its intent to Bill C–21. It brought in a number of changes. In fact it was the one that introduced for the first time the variable entrance requirement.

It brought in a number of other similar changes. It was hotly debated in this Chamber. In fact the government of that day, which by the way was a government formed by the same people who now sit on the other side of the floor in this Chamber, brought in time allocation to impose that bill on this House at that time.

I wonder what they would have thought if the people down the hall had said: "We are going to take our time with this piece of legislation". Interestingly enough, many of those same principles were debated before that bill had been put through this place with time allocation. What happened to that bill when it got down the hall? The bill was introduced on August 2, 1977 and reported without amendment the following day, August 3, 1977. What of the principles in the other place? The same people had the majority in that place. It is interesting to check the record.

We see that the following year Bill C–14 was introduced in this place dealing with the subject of unemployment insurance and a number of very contentious issues including, I might point out, that it would result in a saving of $885 million in UI benefits, a remarkable achievement. What happened to that bill? That bill was similarly dealt with in a very contentious manner in this place. What happened? Were they worried about it in the other place? It passed through the other place and received Royal Assent in one day, on December 22, 1978.

Our friends down the hall, with respect to Bill C-21, said they had to go out and hear from Canadians. Yet if my hon. friend would check the record, and I invite him to do so, it is interesting to note that as they went on their grand tour of Canada to hear witnesses they heard from 54 of the same witnesses who appeared before the C-21 legislative committee of this House.

While I enjoy my friend's eloquence, as always, I am not sure exactly what his question was. His question had to do with a bill originating in the other place.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I think the hon. member for North Island—Powell River has a question for the member.

Mr. Raymond Skelly (North Island—Powell River): Mr. Speaker, I am astounded not only at the activity in the House right now but by the hon. member's incredible speech in that it totally missed the point of the motion. I am not surprised he did not understand the question from our Liberal colleague. It is my hope that the member for Kamloops can stand up once again and with more patience and concern draw the hon. member a picture so he understands what is going on.

My colleague from Kamloops, through his motion and debate; painted a picture of the hypocrisy of the Liberal Party in the other place and of its candidates for leader who want to pass the GST.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): There is one thing that we in the House must do. It is to have a little more respect for the other place, whether we like to or not. It is in the rules. I hope the hon. member will have a little more respect for the other place and will direct his comments to the speech made of the hon. member for South Shore.

Mr. Skelly (North Island—Powell River): Thank you for your kind and judicious guidance, Mr. Speaker.

Did the hon. member completely miss the point? The concern was the fact that the Liberals in the Senate do wish to pass the GST, but they do not wish to appear as if they want to pass the GST.

The member argued in his speech that it was some nefarious act to block and oppose what 90 per cent of Canadians want destroyed, that is the GST bill.

What we need here is a comment. This is no longer a representative government. Its popularity is now lower than the interest rate.

Will the hon. member admit that if the popularity of his government and the Prime Minister drops below the level of his IQ his party has lost its right to rule?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The hon. member for South Shore has a minute left in questions and comments.

Mr. McCreath: Mr. Speaker, I am not sure whose IQ my hon. friend was referring to, so I will not of course comment on it.

I realize that the time is nearly done. I think it is interesting that the New Democratic Party believes that the Government of Canada should be driven not by the needs of the country, not by what is right for Canada, but by the public opinion polls of the day.

I can go on at some length describing to him the fact that, for example, 85 per cent of Canadians once supported capital punishment at a time when his party totally opposed capital punishment. Where do we stand?

To come back to the remarks of the hon. member for Kamloops, it seems to me the bottom line is that a democratic system is one in which the people elect governments and they elect governments to govern.

What I hear from my friends in the New Democratic Party is that they want the non-elected, appointed people to make the decisions, to reflect the will of Canadians, when in fact Canadians have spoken. Canadians have spoken in 1984. They have spoken in 1988. They have made it plainly clear in which group they have confidence to govern this country. I invite my hon. friend to wait until 1993 when he will find for the third straight time that this party will be re-elected.

Mr. Brian L. Gardiner (Prince George—Bulkley Valley): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be able to enter the debate this afternoon, especially before the member for South Shore explodes.

For people who are watching today on television and for those in the gallery, the debate that we are seeing among the Liberals, the Conservatives, and the New Democrats is interesting. The debate is on where these various parties stand on the question of the Senate.

The New Democratic Party's House leader, the hon. member for Kamloops, made it very clear in reading our party's policy from our recent convention in Winnipeg, at which we elected our new leader, the member for Yukon, that the New Democratic Party has always had a

strategic and forward thinking policy when it comes to the Senate.

Why do I say that, or why can I say that? The reason I can say that is that we do not have the hidebound approach to dealing with the Senate of our friends in the Liberal and Conservative parties. Let us take a look at history. Let us look at the historic debate that we are having today, that we had as well on Monday, and that the First Ministers are having down the street today.

We all know the history of the Senate. All those who go through school and university have probably written at least one essay on the Senate and how it should be abolished. It represented the classes with property. It gives a sober second look at legislation from the House of Commons, from the commoners. Property was a requirement to be appointed to that place. I believe, if I have my history right that, the right hon. member for Yellowhead was the Prime Minister who appointed one of his friends to the Senate who had to buy a condominium in Ottawa in order to be eligible to accept his appointment to the Senate.

I recall debate in the House at one time when the current Prime Minister asked in this House the then Leader of the Opposition, the right hon. member for Vancouver Quadra, if he would agree on the spot, that day, to legislation to abolish the Senate. We agreed. Our leader, Mr. Broadbent, the former member for Oshawa, agreed with the Tories that day that the Senate should be abolished then and there.

However who was it, which party was it that refused the necessary consent to abolish the Senate that day? You guessed right, Mr. Speaker. It was the Liberals again. Why?

It is pretty clear from the debate today and the debate we have heard in the House, particularly over the goods and services tax, that the Liberals are in favour of preserving the Senate as much as the Conservatives are. Of course the debate around that has been around the goods and services tax.

It was revealing when our House leader just mentioned to this House that in fact Liberal senators of the Liberal dominated Senate have actually now given second reading to the goods and services tax legislation. It is on its way to becoming law. It is becoming law with the co-operation and assistance of the Conservatives in the House of Commons and the Liberals in the Senate.

• (1740)

It is clear from the attitude exhibited in the House by the Liberals that they feel confident that they are going to walk into office in the next election, just as the Conservatives feel so confident that they will be able to pull it off at the last minute and get re-elected. However the Liberals want to try and have it as many different ways as they can. When that legislation goes through—and all Canadians know the kind of tax grab the goods and services tax is—the Liberal Party of Canada cannot wait to get its hands on that money.

We know as well that even the leadership candidates for the Liberal Party are not clear on where they stand on the goods and services tax. We have had a couple of alternatives put forward from the Liberals. There has been the flat tax proposal.

Mr. Mills: The single tax.

Mr. Gardiner: The flat earth proposal. The New Democrats have presented clear and consistent policies when it comes to alternatives to tax policy in this country.

Today we are giving the Liberals and the Conservatives the opportunity in this House to join with the first ministers in starting to take a look at what we should do with the Senate.

Monday was an historic day. We said in our policy that it is a tool that can be used. We said: "If you are so opposed to the GST then stop the legislation now. Use your power now to do that".

What did they do? We know what is happening with the Liberals senators and the GST. They are trying to pass it.

The motion today gives a chance to government members to send a clear signal to the Liberal senators: "Stop delaying our legislation. We have a right to pass it". The Conservative members should vote for our motion, thereby doing in the Senate which can then go along and pass the legislation.

They can give it a try. We will oppose it in this House as we always have. Here is the chance for the Conservatives to send a very clear signal to the Senate of Canada to understand the importance of the kind of legislation it

will or will not support. I think that is the importance of this motion today.

Let us look at what the Senate does. It cost taxpayers $40 million a year for that unelected body, our senators. They work Tuesday through to Thursday. They have an 800 number so that Canadians can give them a call.

In my province, in my area, if we closed down the Senate for five years we would come close to having enough money finally to plant some trees. I think we could do more good for British Columbia and our environment by planting some trees rather than keeping the Senate going for a couple more years when who knows what it is doing.

The motion put forward by our House leader, the member for Kamloops, is part of a strategic policy platform. It is a forward thinking policy that our party has had, a policy which developed out of our convention in Winnipeg. We foresaw the debate that is going on now with the First Ministers with respect to how to change the Senate. Is it going to be changed or abolished? What are we going to do with the Senate? We are waiting just as all members and all Canadians are, to see what the first ministers come up with on the Senate.

We do not know what is going on, of course. It is a closed shop debate right now. I think we would all be interested to see exactly what the future of this country is going to be.

I wonder if the members of the Conservative Party in this House really know that their Prime Minister is saying down the street with the First Ministers. I wonder if they know what the Prime Minister is talking about when it comes to the Senate. Probably not. We have already heard some interventions by members to get in there and state their views, which is what all Canadians are arguing for.

These are historic days for the Senate in terms of its reform or its abolition. As well, I think that the motion that we have brought forward here today sends out a clear signal. My guess is that the Conservatives will probably be supporting our motion today because they want to send a clear signal to the Liberal-dominated Senate as well. I think we will have some support from the Conservatives with our motion so that we can send that signal.

In conclusion, politicians being what they are in their various chambers—and I suppose we and the Senate are not alone, and nor are other legislative chambers—sometimes cause Canadians to wonder about what it is we are doing. The latest example will become a new symbol. It is a $153 symbol just for showing up for work, on top of your normal pay because you show up for work.

The next button that will be a best seller in Canada will be a button showing $153 with a red line through it. It will become a symbol of exactly where we are with the Senate. Canadians are going to be outraged by that particular measure. They are going to be outraged by senators who now suggest that they need another $153 a day just to show up for work.

As the member for Kamloops said, maybe we will actually have a couple of extra days when senators will show up in Ottawa. Planes will be full of senators rushing back to Ottawa to try and collect their $153 a day. It has become an important symbol.

Before I sit down, and to put that symbol into meaning, I move:

> That the motion be amended by deleting the sum of $27,605,000 and replacing it with the sum of $27,604,847.

That motion symbolizes that $153 the senators now want to pay themselves.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Questions or comments. The hon. member for Halifax West on a question or comment.

Mr. Crosby: Mr. Speaker, let me first tell the hon. member—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The hon. member for Kamloops is rising on a point of order.

Mr. Riis: Mr. Speaker, my hon. friend for Prince George—Bulkley Valley just presented an amendment to the motion. Perhaps we should determine whether that is in order before we proceed with questions and comments.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): He did not do the amendment.

Mr. Riis: We were waiting for a Page to come to pick it up.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Yes, I will accept the amendment.

There will be questions and comments first. The hon. member for Halifax West—

• (1750)

Mr. Gauthier: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

I have a question of procedure here. Since there is a new motion before the House put by the previous speaker, the floor now belongs to someone else to discuss that motion. I do not think we want to put questions and comments to a speech on something else. I just wondered if we could have a decision on that.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The hon. member for Prince George—Bulkley Valley has lost his turn as far as debate is concerned. However, we will allow questions and comments on the member's amendment and his speech.

The hon. member for Halifax West.

Mr. Howard Crosby (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, I have a comment and then a question.

First, I want to tell the hon. member, because he mentioned tree planting in British Columbia, that this very day my son is in Prince George—Bulkley Valley planting trees on behalf of the people of Canada.

Dealing with the motion respecting the vote for the Senate, I think the member probably realizes that there is a constitutional obligation on the Parliament of Canada, the House of Commons, to provide funding for the Senate. This method of undermining the Senate would not really be acceptable, but I think members know that. That is why I want to ask the member for Prince George—Bulkley Valley this question. It is becoming very apparent from the dialogue that this is really an argument between the New Democratic Party and the Liberal Party and has very little to do with the vote for the Senate.

As I understand it, the New Democratic Party is saying: "You cannot trust the Liberals. They are in fact in favour of the GST and are going to approve the GST through the instrument of their majority in the Senate". The New Democratic Party is just pointing out to the House of Commons and to all the people of Canada that the Liberals are less than honest about the position on the GST.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Crosby: They actually think it is a beneficial tax, one that will provide viability and fiscal capability for Canada for many years in the future. You might say in that respect that they agree entirely with the government party that the GST is basically an appropriate instrument of taxation and one which they really in fact support despite their posture in the House of Commons, and that it will be approved in the Senate.

I gather that is the point that the New Democratic Party is making. Of course, on the other hand it is continuing its unrealistic opposition to the Senate. As the member for Kamloops said, he has to deal with reality. I never thought I would hear a socialist say that they would have to deal with reality, but the reality is that the Senate is there, and members of the New Democratic Party recognize that. They have made this arcane appeal, knowing that the appeal is going to be denied and that the GST is going to be approved. It is simply to show that the Liberal Party in fact supports the GST.

Could I ask the member this? Have I understood correctly the position of the New Democratic Party?

Mr. Gardiner: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to see that the member's son is out planting trees in the great north of British Columbia. A number of other members have sons and daughters doing just that. We are glad they are making that contribution to the country.

The hon. member got part of the message right, not the whole of it. We are saying in this debate, as we have throughout all of the debate on the goods and services tax that, in the member's words, the Liberal Party has been less than honest about its real intentions on the goods and services tax.

It has already passed second reading the Senate, as you know, Mr. Speaker. I think most Canadians will be surprised to hear that that has actually happened.

Yes, part of the message in the debate we are having today is about the honesty of the Liberal Party on the GST.

Mr. Dennis Mills (Broadview—Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, I have a short question for my friend.

During his speech he made the comment that we sometimes do things in this House that Canadians must

wonder about. I realize that it is the New Democratic Party's opposition day. But, as the member from Halifax mentioned earlier, by constitution we must at this point in time let the Senate carry on. I am not going to get into whether I am for or against the Senate at this moment, but I will tell hon. members what really irritates me. The hon. members has pricked my conscience when he talks about Canadians wondering what we do here.

By the way, the Senate has not passed the GST. It is going to committee now. Do not mislead the people of Canada by saying that the Senate has rubber-stamped or passed the GST. But that is not the point I want to make.

The point I want to make is that I really think that we in this House today must look like idiots. Interest rates are going through the moon. There is a housing crisis. There is a crisis of confidence in this country. Yet we have spent the last three hours talking about the Senate of Canada. We should be using this place to focus on the real problems that exist in this country.

Mr. Boyer: He is grandstanding for the cameras.

Mr. Mills: I am not grandstanding. I am telling hon. members right now that this is enough to drive people crazy. There is a crisis of confidence in this country right now.

Now I will turn to my question. The hon. member referred to doing things here about which Canadians must sometimes wonder. Would he not consider that the way we are carrying on here today about the Senate and this $27 million might also qualify in that category?

Mr. Gardiner: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate some of what the member for Broadview—Greenwood has had to say. I think we all know what is going on in the Liberal Party now. I guess some of us know, or we read between the lines. The member has made some sincere attempts to convince his leadership candidates of some of his proposals and ideas. I would say that that is probably good. Most of the leadership candidates have been a little loosey-goosey when it comes to saying exactly where they stand on some of their policies, particularly the GST.

I know my hon. friend has been pursuing one particular tax policy idea, to his credit. He is working hard at trying to convince his colleagues to adopt that approach and policy.

He expresses some chagrin about the debate in the House today. I would say very sincerely that from time to time, as I said earlier and he agreed, that Houses such as ours, and others, do things or debate issues about which Canadians might wonder.

Mr. Speaker has been quite helpful for the people who watch our proceedings on television. From time to time he takes a second or two to explain exactly what we are doing.

What we are doing in the House is using opportunities to debate issues, which is what we are doing now. This is not a frivolous motion. The debate about the future of the Senate is as serious in this Chamber now as it is down the street where the First Ministers are having their say about the future of the Senate.

We are talking about a motion which concerns $27 million or $40 million a year. What will be even sillier is that some time tonight we are all going to say yea or nay to this vote. By our yeas or nays we are going to pass over $27 million with nary a debate. I am thankful that our party had the forethought to bring this motion before the House today so that we could have some debate about the future of the Senate.

Mr. Douglas Young (Gloucester): Mr. Speaker, I just want to ask my colleague a question. In his speech he made a number of comments about the position of leadership candidates of the Liberal Party and the Liberal Party itself on the GST. Several spokespersons for the Liberal Party have clearly indicated our opposition to a regressive tax. We know that the Senate is indicating very clearly that it will provide Canadians with an opportunity to review the tax, because there are many changes occurring in this tax, even since it was passed by this place. The Senate will be providing that forum for Canadians.

• (1800)

I have a specific question for my colleague. He has grave concern for positions and alternatives to the government proposal on GST. Both the Canadian Labour Congress and the New Democratic Party, in briefs presented to the Standing Committee on Finance of the House of Commons, indicated that they sought a royal commission and that there should be tax reform based on a royal commission. I wonder if my colleague would be kind enough to explain why the NDP puts forward the thesis that it has a position on the goods and services tax if it is asking the people of Canada to foot the expense

for a royal commission to find an alternative to the government proposal?

Mr. Gardiner: Mr. Speaker, I would be pleased to respond to that question because it is an important one. I hope and trust that my reply will give an indication of just how seriously we have thought out the approach which we want to take to taxation policy in the country.

First, yes, we have made allegations about Liberal leadership candidates and how loosey-goosey they are when it comes to GST policy and other tax policies. They are playing politics and some of the front-runners do not want to be pinned down to one particular policy or another because then immediately positions are formed up. We all know in the House what that is all about. I guess it is about how sincere one is going to be and what about those frontrunners and exactly where are they going to stand. Our friends in the Liberal Party have tabled petition after petition calling on the Conservatives to stop and end the GST now.

Suddenly, the GST legislation is in the Senate. It has passed second reading and it is on to committee. Why are they not now urging and encouraging the Senate to stop the GST legislation right at this moment? There are some serious questions that people have raised about Liberal leadership candidates and whatever their strategy is when it comes to the goods and services tax.

The question from the member about a royal commission on tax policy is a good one. Our proposal is a package of 18 to 20 significant alternatives and suggested tax measures dealing with the goods and services tax. One of them is the call for a royal commission into taxation policy. Aside from, along with, and parallel to the tax measures that we are suggesting, it is important to bring in the Income Tax Act every now and then, put it up on the hoist and take a good look at it, quite like we are supposed to do with the Bank Act. We have reached a pivotal time for tax policy and a good close look at our taxation policy should be taken. We have suggested that it should be done through a royal commission. I think that is a credible and responsible approach to take and this would include our other tax policies, when it comes to alternatives to the goods and services tax.

Mr. John R. Rodriguez (Nickel Belt): Mr. Speaker, I was sitting here and minding my own business—

An hon. member: I don't believe that.

An hon. member: He was minding the nation's business.

Mr. Rodriguez: I was minding my business. My friend, the hon. member for Broadview—Greenwood, pricked my conscience. I have great respect for him. He is a thoughtful member of Parliament, very thoughtful. He puts it all on one page. Any member of Parliament who can put all of his thoughts on one page, I respect.

He suggested that with the big issues facing the nation, Canadians must be wondering what we are doing in the House talking about the Senate and they must think we are crazy. He is absolutely right.

I want to tell him and all Canadians that Canadians right across this land who are not wealthy are absolutely shocked that an unelected group of people can sit over there and vote themselves a $153 a day. That is to show up. They still get their $62,000 a year along with their $10,000 tax-free allowance. They now get $153 a day tax free to show up. It is absolutely outrageous. Do you know that there are poor people in the country who live for a week on $153?

Of course, they need an incentive to show up for work. God knows they find very little time to show up. A $153-a-day incentive. Do people understand the estimates that we are voting today? I tell my hon. friend from Broadview—Greenwood to look at what I see in expenditure: $1,525,000 for the construction of committee rooms in the Senate.

This is a time when we are asking Canadians to tighten their belts. We are asking them to make sacrifices. We are asking them to pay taxes on taxes on taxes. When it is not the federal government reaching into their pockets, it is the provincial governments, the school boards, municipalities, or hydro commissions. Everybody is into their pockets.

Is this not important to Canadians? Already I have received phone calls in my riding office because people heard on the news that the Senators voted themselves $153 a day. To whom are the senators accountable?

I was invited into a school the other day to talk about government. Here is a question that young people posed

to me: What does one do to get into the Senate? There is a tough question. I really have to think about that one.

First, one has to go to St. Francis Xavier University or the same kindergarten as the Prime Minister. The only way to get into the Senate is to be a friend of people in high places. The Senate is a resting home for all those who have served the Conservative Party and Liberal Party well. The Senate has become a hiving ground for all the flicks, flacks, and hacks of both the Conservative Party and Liberal Party. That is how one gets into the Senate.

This Senate is not elected. Therefore, there is no accountability. Lo and behold, senators can actually vote themselves $153 tax-free.

An hon. member: That is for showing up.

Mr. Rodriguez: That is the incentive. The other thing is this business of a $1.5 million to renovate the committee rooms. If they show up, Madam Speaker, there has to be committee rooms for them.

The other question that the young people raised was: What does a Senator do? I have never been able to answer that question in all the 17 years that I have been involved in federal politics. Quite frankly, I have never seen a real live senator. In fact, the other day the cleaning people were cleaning up, a senator was there and he keeled over. She said: "Oh God, he is dead." She ran out to get the head of the cleaning staff who said: "Don't worry. He has been dead for years. He has been sitting there." I do not know what a senator does. I really don't.

The Senate is supposed to be a Chamber of sober second thought.

An hon. member: Does the NDP want the Senate to hold up the GST? That was your policy yesterday.

• (1810)

Mr. Rodriguez: We will get to that.

What we have is a second chamber, not elected, not accountable, and suddenly now revived. The Senate became the issue around which the future of Canada was to be decided. Can you believe this moribund place suddenly became the focus around which the future of the country would be decided. I cannot believe it.

I think our proposal is a very simple one. If the government supports the motion of the hon. member for Kamloops to eliminate the $47 million, *voilà*, the problem is resolved. The government's headaches are finished. The solution is one of the hitches in the Meech Lake Accord is eliminated. Then, without a Senate, we can start to look at how to reform the House of Commons on a proportional representation basis. We can build into the elected chamber representation from the regions of the country, over and above the elected members.

An hon. member: You were doing well until a minute ago.

Mr. Rodriguez: No. If you follow me. I really—

An hon. member: The responsibility is over there at the railway station.

Mr. Rodriguez: No, the responsibility is ours, right here. We are faced with an opportunity to resolve it.

I heard the government House leader the other day when Bill C-21 came back to the House. He made a speech in which he raled against the fact that the Senate was unaccountable and dominated by ex-Liberals who got a second coming over there and somehow are dictating policy for this House. I heard the government House leader say that.

An hon. member: They are still Liberal die-hards.

Mr. Rodriguez: They are still Liberals, yes, in different clothing. But there they are over there. I heard the government House leader rale against the Senate because of what it did to Bill C-21.

The obvious solution to that problem is not to stack it with more Tory hacks to outvote the Liberal hacks. The solution to the problem is to cut the tree down. Go right to the roots and pull it out. Take it right out. That is the solution to the problem. We, today, have given the government an opportunity to solve its headache. Just think about it. If the government does what we ask it to do, it solves it here and it solves it across the street, in the Conference Centre. It is simple. No problem. No problem at all.

On the other hand, I am caught on the horns of a dilemma because I do recognize that a Senate can be useful. I know the problem. Even we sometimes would want a Senate where we could put all the people who give us particular problems in the NDP. Then, the question logically extends, do we really need to have them here on the Hill? I do not think so. We could set them up in some sort of a hole and send the cheques. We

do not have to ring bells for them. We do not have to have people come knocking on our door here to invite us down. We do not have to have all of that stuff.

Now, what is rumoured from across the street? They want to increase the numbers in the Senate. They want to increase them.

An hon. member: There is an opportunity.

Mr. Rodriguez: I am not preaching for a call, brother. I am quite happy here.

The problem that we are trying to help the government through is to pass the motion of the hon. member for Kamloops. I do not think that one can justify to the Canadian people an unelected body which thwarts the wishes of the elected members of Parliament. That is my position. That is our position. We believe that. But if the government persists in supporting the Senate and you want to keep it on our backs, then for heaven's sake we are going to use it against you. We are prepared and have put it in writing that if you want to cut it out, we will cut it out. But if you vote us down and foist this unelected group of party hacks and flacks on us, then we are going to use them. Why not? Absolutely, we should use them.

We socialists not only have principles, we are practical. And if you do not like those principles, we have others.

Madam Speaker, how can we be practical? I think the best way is to vote for the motion of the member for Kamloops and cut off their money supply.

The point is that this is our principle, to kill the Senate. We put a motion to do that. Now if the government votes it down as we know they will, I hope you vote with us and if we are defeated, so be it. We have achieved a policy that our party has established in convention, the elimination of the Senate.

We have not rescinded. In fact, Liberals and Conservatives constantly get together to support the other place, and we are practical. Until you defeat it we recognize that we have to use it. And we are going to use it against you. We are going to use the Senate as we are using it with the GST, to say to them: "If you are sincere Liberals, simply vote against the GST, defeat the GST, do not send it back".

Now a greater principle than that is the principle that there should be no unelected, unaccountable group of men and women sitting in the other place who deny the desires of the elected group. That's not democratic. In fact they not only deny the right of the elected body to pass legislation, but they turn around and impose more taxes on the people of Canada to the tune of $153 a day. That is a tax. It is a tax on the Canadian taxpayer and it is tax free to all those poor, poverty-stricken Senators over in the other place.

Look at them. If Senator Molson does not get that $153 a day, you know what will happen. The whole empire will dissolve. There will be no *Hockey Night in Canada*. It will be gone. Just think about it!

In fact, all they have to do is check in with the Clerk, walk in through the front door, walk to the back, and they get their allowance.

Brother Lawson was appointed by the Liberals and I assume that Liberals appoint only Liberals. Therefore he is really a Liberal. In fact these people sit over in the Senate, good Liberals and Tories, and all we have now is Allan MacEachen leading the Liberal forces in the Senate.

Of course, the Tories want to get the majority in the Senate. There is a rumour around that the Prime Minister is going to name 11 Senators and then he will have the majority so he can pass all these bills.

• (1820)

The Canadian people must ask in wonder, how can this lower House, the House elected by the people of Canada, countenance and stand and vote for what is being placed on their backs. I know how the member for Mississauga South is going to vote on this because those are his fat-cat friends and he is going to support them right to the hilt. He knows his day is coming, but it had better come before 1993. I think there is a good possibility that the member for Mississauga South will end up in the Senate. I think you would make a fine senator—

An hon. member: High Commissioner to Uganda.

Mr. Rodriguez: If ever there was a reason for putting a stop to the Senate right now, it is the thought that the hon. member for Mississauga South would end up in the Senate.

An hon. member: What about support?

Mr. Rodriguez: He wants my support, Madam Speaker. Who am I? I am a member of Parliament opposed to the Senate. Why would I support you? We have denied Canadian people the opportunity for a guaranteed annual income, and these people sitting over in the other place have a guaranteed annual income to 75 years of age. Those who were there before the 75 year deadline came in or those who were grandfathered, some of them can go on forever.

An hon. member: Some of them do.

Mr. Rodriguez: We are saying to the Canadian people, we cannot give you a guaranteed annual income. But to some people who are friends of those in high places, you could get into the Senate and in fact, you can actually get a guaranteed annual income to age 60 and after the seventy-fifth year get a nice pension. You could get an beautiful pension because there is an allowance for the pension in the Estimates and we are going to pass that.

It does not end at age 75. It continues and that pension is fully indexed because they are over 75. Yet we have said to old age pensioners in this country, we can't fully index your pensions. Isn't that something? Now we have a partial indexation. We cannot fully index the GST tax credits, for God's sake, we cannot fully index that. But, by golly, we can give $153 incentive a day to go to work. To go to work! Imagine what any trade unionist would give. He would give his eye tooth for an incentive over and above his hourly wage—

An hon. member: Or a single parent.

Mr. Rodriguez: Or a single parent. In this country we nickel and dime poor people to death. We have all sorts of forms to fill out to see if you qualify with your income. You have to qualify, but people like those in the Senate have *carte blanche*. In closing, I call on members of this House to vote for the motion that eliminates the $47 million from the Estimates which then would put an end effectively to the flicks and flacks and other kinds of characters in the other place.

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Madam Speaker, I listened with great attention to the discourse of our colleague and the profound words he just shared with us but I wonder whether Brother Lawson in the other place was listening attentively.

I want to ask my colleague from Nickel Belt that when he says he wants to cancel the budget of the Senate, and therefore abolishing it, is this the same Senate that was asked by his colleague for Yorkton—Melville when he said on the steps of Parliament Hill, on May 7, that he wanted that Senate to abolish the GST? Is this the same Senate he is referring to or is this something else and am I misunderstanding it? Second, the Premiers and the Prime Minister are meeting right now to reform the Senate, and hopefully they may have arrived at a successful conclusion. I think all Canadians wish that. They want to amend the Senate and if they arrive at this unanimous agreement of all premiers and the Prime Minister to change the Senate, but nevertheless to continue having a Senate, does that mean that he wants to remove all the funding for that body of Parliament which may have today already received the unanimous consent of all the Premiers and the Prime Minister? I wonder if that is the specific proposition that he is entertaining. Perhaps he could clarify that for us.

Mr. Rodriguez: I thank my colleague for the questions. I will answer the second one, first. He is too good a politician not to recognize that what will come out from across the street, from everything I have heard so far, is not that they will agree to include that idea of a Senate within the Meech Lake Accord. They are saying that that is an idea that might be discussed at a later time. That is my impression. I do not have the facts but I do not think that is the way it is. I do not think any of that will happen now. Meech Lake is not going to be amended to include the kind of Senate which you have just described.

We cannot get caught in the same trap again with respect to whether we are going to have a second chamber and how it will operate. It seems to me that the lesson we have learned from Meech Lake is that we need to hear from the Canadian people.

First of all, do we want the second chamber, how is it going to operate and what powers is it going to have or should it have? How will the representation from across the country be in the Senate? Will it be by region, constituency or by proportional representation? I think the Canadian people have to be consulted on that question. We are not going to have the same process again where 10 premiers and a Prime Minister sit around in a room and decide the form of parliamentary democracy for the next 50 generations. We are not going to go through that again. That is number one.

What I am suggesting is that we are helping to resolve this problem, because if the Senate was killed and we had to start from scratch, that would be the best way to go. Everybody talks about a triple-E Senate, but if you are going to elect the Senate, then it has to have power. And where is it going to get the power? Obviously, you are going to have to take the power from the House of Commons to give to it. Then you are going to end up with a system where you have to have a check and a balance and *voilà*, we have harmonized into the American congressional system.

I do not know where you come from, but I cannot imagine this in my own head space that we could go ahead and let these men sit in the building across the way and develop this concept of a Senate without the Canadian people having an input. Surely, we are not going to do that again. Surely, that is the lesson of Meech Lake.

The first question the hon. member asked about our asking the Senate to kill the GST. The reality is that we have a policy and our aim is to work, wherever we get the opportunity, to get the Senate eliminated. We are taking this opportunity today to try to get the government to vote with us to abolish the Senate, but the Senate is a reality, it is there and it is dominated by Liberals. The Liberal Party in this House has said it is opposed to the GST and it voted against it. The Senate Liberals are members of the caucus of the Liberal Party in the House and surely the Senate Liberals have got to be consistent with the Liberal Party. That is what we are challenging you to do. That is the challenge, but the greater issue is to get rid of the Senate and we are taking the opportunity today.

An hon. member: Would you prefer to get rid of the Senate or get rid of the GST?

Mr. Rodriguez: Well, we are killing two birds with one stone.

An hon. member: All Canadians are birds.

• (1830)

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Madam Speaker, all Canadians have heard that the NDP prefer getting rid of the Senate to getting rid of the GST.

I want to ask a supplementary question of our NDP colleague. Notwithstanding the Meech Lake Accord and the unanimity clause of the Meech Lake Accord, which means that the Senate cannot be abolished or changed without the consent of all provinces, the NDP position right now is to breach the accord, even before it is fully passed by everybody, and get rid of the Senate notwithstanding everything else. That is the twofold statement that we heard.

One, it is better to get rid of the Senate than to get rid of the GST is the new NDP proposition which we have just heard right now through presumably their official spokesman on such issues. Second, notwithstanding the unanimity required under the Meech Lake Accord to get rid of the Senate, the NDP wants to do it unilaterally.

I do not think that my colleagues and I would agree with either one of those propositions.

Mr. Rodriguez: I will try to draw the picture for my friend.

The first opportunity that the Senate had to deal with the GST was second reading. Everybody knows that second reading is in principle. If I recall, the Liberals in this House on second reading spun out the debate. They absolutely fought the GST in this House with us, toe to toe, jowl to jowl, body to body. Together we fought the GST at second reading because in principle we believed it was a flawed tax. That is what they said, a flawed tax.

Now, lo and behold, the first opportunity the Senate had to deal with the GST was at second reading. What happened? It went in there at 11.30 in the morning and second reading was finished at 11.45 a.m. on the same day. There was not one debate on principle on the GST in the other place, which is the most disastrous tax ever in the history of this country.

I am repeating what the Liberals said in this House. They have sent a message to Canadians. They have said that secretly they agree with the principle of this tax and maybe all they are going to do is patch it up here and patch it up there. So they showed their hand that in fact they do support the GST; it is just a matter of some cosmetics to fix it up and fix it up there.

Second, without a doubt, one of the problems that we have discovered about changing the institutions of government in this country are constitutional ramifications. Surely, the people of Canada have a right to participate in the form of government that will be in place. Surely,

that is a principle. Surely, that is something that we have learned from the Meech Lake experience.

The form of the other House, if there is to be another House, has to be dependent on what Canadians think. It has to be modelled on what Canadians think. We cannot go back to having 10 people and a prime minister sit down in one place and decide the form of government.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order. The time for questions and comments has now expired. Resuming debate with the hon. member for Regina—Lumsden.

Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina—Lumsden): Madam Speaker, I have listened with interest to this debate. As a 40–year member of the democratic socialist movement in this country, I was very pleased with the motion moved by my colleague for Kamloops, and the speech by my friend for Prince George—Bulkley Valley. He is a couple of years younger than me.

The abolishment of the Senate has been a matter of history since the second convention of the CCF in 1935, and we have never wavered from that position. Our party has been consistent in that position for close to 55 years. So let us set that matter to rest now.

Our caucus, our party, and our leader have called upon the Senate to exercise its constitutional authority to delay, stop, or amend legislation that comes from the House of Commons. That is the reality. There is nothing we in this caucus can do about that.

What we have said is that it is about time the Senate earned its keep. It has a golden opportunity to add to what was said in this place, and said by about three–quarters of the Canadian people, on the goods and services tax. Since there is nothing we in our party can do about the constitutional authority and rights of the Senate until the Constitution is changed, all we have done is called upon the Senate to get off their backsides and do what they are supposed to do.

My colleague, the hon. member for Nickel Belt mentioned the second thoughts. My problem is, when did they ever have a first thought on the GST at second reading? Goodness knows if they will ever come up with a second thought.

I suppose I was under some delusion that the government would like this amendment moved by my colleague, the hon. member for Kamloops. I listened to the Prime Minister, the government House leader, several other cabinet ministers railing away over the last number of months about a Senate of appointed bodies usurping the rights of the supreme body, namely, the House of Commons, an elected body, by delaying, amending and otherwise compromising government legislation. Well now, isn't that sad?

However, I thought that the motion by my colleague from Kamloops would make the government most happy. If members want to put an end to what the other place is doing to government legislation, pass this motion of my colleague from Kamloops tonight and cut them off at the pass, and that includes their $153 a day on any days they might show up.

I know a lot of senators and I have regard for them personally. Some of them have spent many years in public life, in parties different from mine. I have never questioned their loyalty to the country. I have never questioned their motives. I have questioned their sanity lots of times and they do the same to me and that is fair ball.

But if there is any one principle in a parliamentary democracy, and this is why I worry about what was going on across the road yesterday and today, the whole principle of representation by population is so fundamental and basic to a parliamentary democracy that there should not be any question about it.

• (1840)

If one reads some Canadian history going back to the conferences in Charlottetown 1864 to 1866, and a few other places, it was agreed to have a second chamber. It may not be common knowledge, but its primary responsibilities were twofold: one, so–called sober second thought; two, the protection of property. That was built into the reasons for having an appointed second chamber. The problem has been that there is nobody in the other place protecting the property of Canada, in other words, protecting this country.

As I said at the outset, I stand for the abolition of the Senate. I think it is an anachronism, at best. I am not trying to demand that the policy of my party should be implemented yesterday. I recognize the reality. The Senate is there and if we cannot get it abolished, we will get it elected. However, if it is going to be elected, then somewhere in the scheme of things the principle of

representation by population has to come into play. Typically Canadian, we compromise here and there on the size of constituencies, the amount of population in each one right across the country. That takes into account and recognizes our geography and where our people are located and we provide a margin of above or below the average. If we cannot get the Senate abolished, then we have to arrive at that compromise.

In fact, many years ago my beloved former colleague, the then member for Winnipeg North Centre, turned pale and went into shock when a former colleague of mine went into his office and said that we need to have two NDPers accept an appointment to the Senate. He asked: "Why would you want to do that?" and we said: "There will have to be two NDPers in the Senate to move and second a motion to abolish the damned thing, otherwise it will never happen". So, I am tempted to volunteer and maybe my good friends the hon. member for Kamloops or the hon. member for Brant would be willing to join me so we could get something started in the Senate to abolish it.

I mentioned earlier that I have listened to government members in this government, and even members of the previous Liberal government, complain vociferously about the activities of the Senate. It is more particularly germane to today's debate. Repeatedly, the Prime Minister, the government House leader, other cabinet ministers and members on the back-benches of the government have complained about the abuse of parliamentary democracy by unelected members of the Senate. Cutting off their funding puts an end to that abuse, to put it purely and simply.

Unless there are a lot of hon. members on the government side or in the Liberal caucus who are preaching for a call and an appointment to the Senate, surely they can do no other. I maybe should exclude the members of the Liberal caucus, but certainly the members of the government caucus who are outnumbered in the other place at the moment, which they will correct some time in October or November, if worse comes to worst. It is perfectly legal and constitutional; they will have a majority and they will get their bills through.

What has that got to do with a parliamentary democracy? It is just a continuation of what has been going on since 1867. They are not there to represent the ordinary people of this country. They are there supposedly to supply second thoughts. They are something like some of the born again Christians that I have run into. They did not learn any better the second time around; their second thoughts, so much for that.

They are also there to protect property. I get phone calls from people who are losing their house or losing their farm because of what the banks are doing, or even what an agency of this Parliament, the Farm Credit Corporation, is doing to farmers in my province and all other parts of Canada. I have small businessmen phone or ask me to drop around and see them. Where is the Senate? It is there to protect them and have been since 1867.

I doubt if any of these words in this Chamber today are going to get across the road, Madam Speaker, but you never know. They might. I think the First Ministers better think again. This is my own personal opinion because it is not party policy. However, I have the right in my caucus to express my personal opinion on this issue and others. All three parties better think again about the whole principle of representation by population, and margins can be made below and above the average in every province or every region of Canada.

I have listened to all three political parties in several provinces over the last 40 years complaining about the gerrymandering and the unbalanced representation in provincial constituencies, for example, if one provincial riding had 7,000 population and the other one had 12,000 or 15,000. I have listened to all three political parties complain about that *ad nauseam* in province after province, always when they were in opposition.

We negate the principle of representation by population at the peril of a parliamentary democracy, unless we keep in place the paramountcy of the House of Commons. If that is not there, I do not care what kind of Senate reform is brought in we lose the power of the commoners, we lose the authority of the commoners and the government of the day, even if an unbalanced Senate were elected. We have hit very hard at the foundations

of a parliamentary democracy. If there is nothing else we have inherited from the British and the French, it is that.

• (1850)

I object to resorting to copying the United States congressional system. God knows they are good neighbours and good friends, but I think the flaws in their system are a heck of a lot worse than the ones in ours.

I for one do not want to adopt the kind of system where a province like mine has *x* number of senators and another province with four or five times the population has the same number. If they are elected, what does that do to the foundation of a parliamentary democracy?

I have more faith in the Canadian people. Whether they come from Ontario, Newfoundland, or Saskatchewan their basic instincts of decency, civility, getting along together and keeping this country united will always come through. The problem has not been with our own people, except when we fail to provide some leadership and statesmanship. That is where the problem has been too many times in my 22 years here and years before that in active participation in the political process.

If nothing else I hope, because the government could bring in another motion tomorrow and carry it, that it gives a signal to the other place to cut the mustard or it is shut down. It has a constitutional right presently to defeat a government bill, amend it, or delay it. That has always been there. That is the reality, but, by the gods of war, if it wants to survive for at least four, five or six years—I predict that is about the limit of its life—it better start earning its keep.

That is why the NDP demands that members of the Senate stop the GST. They do not have to worry about polls or their own political parties. They can do whatever they want. They talk a good fight. Now is their chance. If they want to do something just for once to present some evidence that justifies their existence, then they better do it now. I think we should cut them off at the pass, tonight. Whatever the First Ministers come up with across the street that they agree on and that will implement Meech Lake, God bless them. I know it will be a big improvement, if they agree, over what we presently have.

I think no harm is done to this House or to this country if we cut off the funding for that other place, because as a famous British parliamentarian said "for what you have done for as long as you have been here, you can do no more. In the name of God, go".

Please, Madam Speaker, I ask this House to pass the motion of my hon. friend for Kamloops.

Mr. Larry Schneider (Regina—Wascana): Madam Speaker, I sat here and listened to my highly respected and hon. colleague from Regina—Lumsden. I have also sat and listened to the comments and questions made by others in relation to earlier speeches. I could not help but think that if we could induce the public to listen to the debate that has gone on over the last hour, indeed the spirit and essence of the debate would be such that we would be leaving the public totally confused.

On the one hand we have a group arguing that it is essential to abolish the Senate tonight. On the other hand we have another group arguing that the Senate should be in a position to stop completely and totally the goods and services tax legislation before it.

We have the argument from those who are proponents of abolishing the Senate that for them to ask the Senate to abolish the goods and services tax is in effect supporting the existence of the Senate.

It is a totally confused message that the public and those who care to take the time to listen to this debate tonight are receiving.

There is another interesting aspect to this issue too: if we were to support the motion of the member for Kamloops, which would effectively pull out the funding from the Senate, this would, I suppose in a practical sense eliminate the Senate. Further, if you carry this logic to its next conclusion, this automatically means the passage of the goods and services tax because without the Senate or the other place for the House of Commons to send its business for the so-called sober second thought, the goods and services tax bill would be a *fait accompli*. We would have the matter before us.

We have one argument to cut the funds from the Senate because we do not need the Senate. On the other hand, we are asking the Senate, although we do not believe in it, to discontinue its apparent support up to this time. There has been some argument about whether or not there was support for the goods and services tax at the second reading stage. We have people saying to eliminate the budget for the Senate, which will bring the Senate down and cause senators to have no place to

come to work. This would mean the passage of all these bills that are deemed so controversial.

I am totally confused by what message it is that we are intended to have conveyed to us. There are likely some people who are taking parts of my sentence and saying that the hon. member is probably confused most of the time. For those who only pick that out of my comments, I would say to listen to the entire sentence.

I offer some sympathy to my colleague, the hon. member for Regina—Lumsden. While he has conveyed to us that he is given the opportunity to speak freely with an open mind on any subject that he wishes whether or not it addresses his party's policy, he is caught between the proverbial rock and a hard place.

Does he really mean—and I say this in all sincerity—that the Senate, should not have any funds, which will mean the automatic passage of the goods and services tax? Is that what they really want? Or, do they really want the Senate which they do not believe in to step in and annihilate the goods and services tax? By the way, it is a tax about which members of the opposition have spent much time and effort in passing along half-truths to the public so that they are, as is most of the public, totally confused and baffled and object to the imposition of what is perceived to be a new tax?

I present that proposition to the hon. member. Does he not find himself on a shaky fence? I do not mean that he has placed himself there but, by virtue of the motion the hon. member for Kamloops has placed before us this evening, does it not leave him with a bit of a contradiction in principles?

Mr. Benjamin: I thank my colleague and friend from Regina—Wascana. I did not want to repeat the argument that has been put up numerous times today and in the previous few weeks.

We have stuck to our guns on a policy that goes back 55 years on abolishing the Senate. All we are doing is facing up to what we have to face today and over the last 55 years. The Senate is there. The majority of people supported the present government and the previous one on maintaining the Senate, so we lost. I am not complaining about that. In spite of that, a large body of opinion in the country says either do something about it or get rid of it. I hope the latter point will gain sway.

Given that reality—and I said it in my remarks and I say it to my hon. friend—for once will they earn their keep? They are there to provide second thoughts. Just for a change they should protect the property of homeowners and farmers from the GST. They should protect the businesses of small business people by the thousands all over this country. Why do they not protect that property for a change instead of the property of the corporate few? I am not interested in those kinds of bodies being in a first or even second chamber of this place. We do not need it. They have victimized the people of this country for decades and they continue to do so.

• (1900)

May I remind my hon. friend what is going on among financial institutions these days. The Senate is silent about the farmers, the little store keepers and the homeowners in my riding and his as well. But when it comes to the property of the wealthy or the Toronto Stock Exchange, the bondholders, oh my goodness, that is their idea if protection of property. The Senate has failed to understand the reason and purpose for its existence, if there ever was one.

I make no apologies for the position my party has taken since 1935 and the position we are taking today. They either put up or shut up or we get rid of them, one or the other.

Mr. Howard Crosby (Halifax West): Madam Speaker, I do not want to unduly irritate the member for Regina—Lumsden so I hope he will keep calm. I just want to point out something to the House. We understand the nature of the debate on the amendment to the motion and we understand what the New Democratic Party is attempting to accomplish here.

However, I want to point out to my hon. friend and to other members of the House that he has perhaps misinformed himself on the effect of defeating this $27,605,000 item. He said in his speech that we should cut the Senate off at the pass and that this would destroy the Senate. That is not in fact the case. There is another vote applicable to the Senate of some $10 million which provides the salaries, allowances and other payments to the Speaker of the Senate and the members of the Senate. So I am afraid that if we were to defeat this vote

for $27 million we would still be left with the Senate of Canada. We would still be left with the members of the Senate receiving their allowances, which the member from Nickel Belt detailed and complained of, and we would not really accomplish anything.

I just want to point out that while it is a very interesting debate, it will not accomplish the end which the members of the New Democratic Party have suggested. We will still be looking at the Senate the day after tomorrow.

Madam Deputy Speaker: A short comment, the hon. member for Regina—Lumsden.

Mr. Benjamin: Madam Speaker, I appreciate the remarks of my friend from Halifax West. At least he was better today than he was yesterday.

If we only have to pay $10 million for the Senate, that is a hell of a lot better than another $27 million. If that is for severance pay and to retire the Speaker and whatever else, we got by cheap, we saved a lot of money. All we are trying to do is get a message through to them.

By the way, as I understand the rules, if this piece of the Estimates were defeated tonight, the government could bring in a new motion tomorrow and round up the troops and defeat it. I have listened to the speeches of my hon. friend the government House leader about how terrible those terrible senators are. We are trying to be helpful. We are trying to help him get rid of these nuts that are delaying or hurting the government's bill. We would like a little thanks and appreciation from my friend from Calgary. We are just trying to help him out and help out the government. I do not understand the logic of kicking the hell out of the Senate and then providing all the money for it.

We could tell the rest of the country, the municipalities, the business corporations and whatnot, that if they want to keep a Senate they can put up the money, but we won't.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

Madam Deputy Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

Madam Deputy Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

Madam Deputy Speaker: In my opinion the nays have it.

And more than five members having risen:

Madam Deputy Speaker: Pursuant to Order made Tuesday, June 5, 1990, the recorded division stands deferred until 10 o'clock p.m. this day.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 25—PUBLIC WORKS

Hon. Harvie Andre (for the President of the Treasury Board) moved:

Motion No. 3

That Vote 25, in the amount of $1,883,690,000 under Public Works—Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation—Budgetary Expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1991 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

Hon. Alan Redway (Minister of State (Housing)): Madam Speaker, I would like to speak in support of the motion before the House.

[*Translation*]

I welcome the opportunity today to address the impact of the Main Estimates on housing. There have been allegations that the federal government has lost interest in housing and is letting the disadvantaged find for themselves. Nothing could be further from the truth.

[*English*]

As the Minister of State for Housing I ask all members of this House to support the approval of the Main Estimates for 1990–91. With respect to the $1.884 billion included in these spending estimates with respect to housing, I must point out to the House that over 90 per cent of the total included in Vote 25 is associated with commitments made in prior years.

These moneys are required as a result of the contractual obligations entered into by this government and former governments. These are obligations to provincial housing agencies and their reimbursements for expenses

which are being incurred as a result of these continuing commitments.

Within the remaining 10 per cent or less, most of the expenditures relate to planned 1990 social housing commitments in accordance with agreements between the federal government and the provinces that have been in place since 1986.

Approval of Vote 25 is essential if we are going to honour the commitments that we have made in the context of our current federal-provincial agreements, and if we are to allow the many non-profit groups to develop and proceed with the needed housing for low-income Canadians.

Finally, in the housing support expenditures that we have planned, the Estimates include some $32.3 million against $33.9 million in fiscal year 1989-90. I should point out that there has been no increase in this proportion of CMHC's expenditures for several years.

• (1910)

Although planned new activity has been cut by some 15 per cent, many people do not realize that the budget is actually continuing to grow. In fiscal year 1989-1990, it is estimated that the federal government contributed some $1.7 billion in social housing assistance. In fiscal year 1990-1991, our total budget will increase almost $91 million.

We will not be able to increase the supply of assisted housing as far as we had planned, but we are still going to provide almost $90 million for new social housing in 1990.

Since forming the government we have been very upfront about the belief that the deficit must be reduced. If Canada is to enjoy a strong and growing economy, one which will increase the opportunities for all Canadians, we must demonstrate our readiness to manage effectively.

In the housing area we have made great strides since 1984. Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation has exemplified the the kind of good management that we need throughout all of the government. For example, the Mortgage Insurance Fund had a deficit of some $786 million in 1984 when the government came into office. Today that has been turned around to a position where it is solvent for the first time in a decade.

CMHC has made some very significant reductions in manpower as well, with a decrease of over 1,000 staff years since 1984, while at the same time improving its performance in a wide range of other areas. As a result of the last expenditure review, CMHC will have reduced its administrative costs associated with government programs by $3.5 million by 1991. In area after area, we have demonstrated the ability to reduce spending, to use assets more efficiently and to provide increased help where it is most needed.

[*Translation*]

Before 1984, federal government policies provided programs designed for various income levels. Two out of three households receiving federal assistance could afford housing on the private market. In the private sector, a series of intermittent programs cost hundreds of millions of dollars in subsidies which were found to be both ineffective and inequitable and even caused some distortion on the market.

[*English*]

The two main principles of our housing program since 1986 have been to direct social housing assistance to those most in need and to support rather than interfere with the effective functioning of the private housing markets.

Over the four preceding years, some 80,000 assisted housing units were produced, but only about 40 per cent of those were directed to those in need, perhaps some 32,000 households. In the four years since 1986 we have assisted some 75,000 low-income households, that in comparison with only 32,000 low-income households in the previous four years that the former government was in office.

In 1984, there were less than 135,000 housing starts in Canada. Since then we have averaged over 200,000 housing starts in this country each year. Preliminary numbers for May show that housing starts have actually not fallen this year but have stabilized somewhere around the 200,000 mark, and that in spite of the slowing down of the economic situation that we have seen in recent weeks. We could expect that there will be some drop-off in the number of housing starts, obviously in reaction to current interest rates, but this has not yet materialized and we are still in the neighbourhood of some 200,000 a year.

It is clear that we have provided more opportunities both in assisted housing and in the private market. But that certainly does not mean that the job is complete. In my travels across the country over the past year I have met with representatives of provincial, territorial and municipal governments, with members of the native community, members of the academic community, with people in every aspect of the housing industry and with people who are in real need.

[*Translation*]

I have listened to single parents who have trouble making a living; to native people in remote areas living in very difficult conditions; to higher income senior citizens and even to young couples who are working very hard to give their children a good start in life.

[*English*]

I have listened to the concerns these people have and to their ideas. I have seen the deplorable conditions that many face, even in a country as rich as ours.

Affordability is the most immediate concern, one which clearly cannot be resolved by the federal government acting alone. Canada is a vast country with very different regional environments in terms in both geography and history. The complexity of the situation is illustrated by the fact that a single municipal by-law could frustrate the efforts to provide affordable housing in any given area. I could have millions or billions more dollars in my budget and one single municipal by-law could destroy the effectiveness of that funding as far as affordable housing is concerned.

If all Canadians are to enjoy adequate and affordable housing, we require a concerted effort by all levels of government working together and working with the home building industry.

At the federal level we have been building on a strong foundation of our two guiding principles to address the shelter needs of low-income households within our social housing programs and, in the private market, for renters and aspiring homeowners.

Although there is still much to be done, we really have much to be grateful for here in Canada with respect to housing. We have a very mature home building industry which has met the challenge of housing for a growing population. In the short period of some 40 years, from 1941 to 1981, the number of dwellings in Canada was increased from about 2.6 million to over 8.2 million. That is quite an achievement.

What is more, the percentage of homeowners has increased to the point that 62 per cent of households now own their own homes. That puts Canada ahead of most other developed countries in the world as far as giving its citizens an opportunity to acquire an equity hedge for their retirement years. This accomplishment is all the more dramatic when you consider that these mean a seven-fold growth in owner-occupied dwellings in our cities.

Over the five-year period since 1985, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation has provided mortgage insurance on almost three-quarters of a million dwellings, allowing people to obtain a home of their own with a down payment as low as 10 per cent. This includes many first-time home buyers who were able to achieve the dream of homeownership only through the CMHC mortgage insurance program.

Canada has also developed a large supply of assisted housing providing shelters to some 637,000 households. This portfolio provides decent shelter and affordable rents in settings where the residents can enjoy security of tenure. Over the lifetime of each of these 637,000 dwellings, they will provide a home to many households in time of need. This portfolio is a major component of Canada's social safety-net. It represents a federal commitment this year alone of $1.8 billion in annual subsidies.

• (1920)

Our emphasis now is on preserving this societal asset and in utilizing it more effectively. Now we are looking for ways to serve more low-income households within our existing supply of assisted housing. In part, we are encouraging the project sponsors of projects committed under previous programs to fill vacancies with households in need.

I firmly believe that we need not only to provide decent shelter to low-income families and individuals, but to ensure that these people have the maximum opportunity to take hold of their housing needs, to shape their own communities, and to experience the pride of self and place which so many of us take for granted. Many of the residents of public housing have shown their readiness to play a greater role in the management of

their own projects and to contribute to the building of strong and safe communities.

The Doone Street project in Fredericton, New Brunswick, is just one example of what residents can do want they join forces. Not only did they create a drop-in unit headed by a local policeman, but they were able to get rid of community violence and intimidation in the project. At the same time, they were able to take on the exterior maintenance work for their own project, creating work for teenagers who to live in that project. They are also organizing spring clean-up programs in which the entire community joins with help from the project management.

That is just one example of many exciting ways in which tenants in public housing projects across the country have started to involve themselves in the actual management and running of those projects. We are doing our very best to encourage much more of that.

Recently, I wrote to my provincial colleagues, asking them for their co-operation in encouraging more of this kind of effort. I believe that the residents of public housing are ready, willing, and able to play meaningful roles in their own projects, homes, and environments.

I am pleased that most of the provincial response has been very positive to that. Already we have announced a set of initiatives to encourage increased resident participation in New Brunswick and I expect that we will be following that up very shortly with other similar announcements and similar efforts in all of the provinces where the provincial governments agreed to co-operate.

We have a lot to be proud of in our housing, but there are still areas of concern. Young families just starting out are finding that ownership is getting beyond their reach. The cost of homes is escalating much faster than they can afford to save.

Several factors are involved in this situation. One is that we are continuing to produce larger homes which attract second-time buyers but are unaffordable to those purchasing their first home. This is, in part, a reflection of the zoning in place in many areas of the country.

Another problem is that in some of the major centres, such as Toronto and Vancouver, there is a shortage of serviced land that is suitable for housing. We have built up large areas of suburban sprawl that result in extensive travel to and from work, expensive and under-used service infrastructure, and often under-populated city cores.

[*Translation*]

The federal government has taken steps to deal with these problems. We have freed surplus government property in Toronto and Vancouver. In the Toronto area, for instance, this means developing new communities that will accommodate from 12,000 to 16,000 residents. Many of these new units will be affordable housing.

[*English*]

A few weeks ago I announced plans to redevelop some 16 properties in the Kitsilano area of Vancouver which are owned by CMHC. This initiative will ensure more appropriate housing to the existing tenants, many of whom are getting on in years, while it frees up land for other uses. It will be a hallmark of our commitment to both consultation and making better use of our land resources. I am sure that we are going to see many more residents utilizing that great federal asset than have in the past.

I have also announced our plans to redevelop the very land on which the CMHC Toronto branch is situated. That is another case of using what we have more effectively. Other sites are under active consideration at the present time.

Just last week I turned the first sod for the redevelopment of a major 43-acre site in the district of Burnaby, in British Columbia, where we will soon see the first new dwellings being built in what will become a new and integrated community of up to 1,200 people.

As I have said, the federal government cannot do all this alone. I am pleased to see that the mayors of Canada's major cities, in their caucus in the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, have recently joined in my call for a more concerted effort to address the housing affordability issue. This is why I have initiated the establishment of joint committees of all three levels of government to identify other potential lands and to overcome some of the roadblocks to meeting the needs for affordable housing. Such committees are already operating in a goodly number of urban centres across the country.

I mentioned the role of zoning and by-laws. Important as they are, we cannot allow them to be cast in stone so that they can prevent the realization of needed housing and the implementation of new approaches to better serve emerging needs. That is why earlier this year, I announced a program called ACT, Affordability and Choice Today. This is a co-operative program of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, the Canadian Home Builders, and the Canadian Housing and Renewal Association, funded by the federal government through CMHC.

The objective of ACT is to encourage reform of our system of by-laws to better reflect today's needs and to reduce the delays which can add so much to the cost of housing without adding any value.

We believe that consultation is the answer to many of our housing problems. We believe that with consultation we can benefit those who need housing. This is evident in our continuing work on developing housing options for seniors. Recently I have undertaken to have a series of housing conferences for seniors across the country. These are just some of the things that we have undertaken with respect to housing initiatives at the federal level over the last year.

The $1.8 billion in the Main Estimates for federal housing programs are absolutely essential if we are going to continue to meet the social housing commitments we have made over the years and if we are going to be able to produce even more social housing and help more Canadians to be housed better in this coming year. I urge the House to support the motion and vote to make sure we can assist the federal government to do a better job to house Canadians in the coming year.

• (1930)

Mr. Dennis Mills (Broadview—Greenwood): Madam Speaker, I thank the minister for his remarks. I know he cares deeply about the very serious problem we have in the country today with affordable housing.

I want to ask him two questions. Right now young people cannot get the down payment required on many new large homes being built, especially in major markets. I would cite my own market, Toronto, as one prime example. Not only do they not have the money for the down payments, they also find when they do get a mortgage it is only for three or five years, and with the fluctuation in interest rates there is no long-term stability. It is very frustrating for them and promotes a lot of insecurity in families.

Because this is a very trying and difficult time, would the minister consider asking Canada Mortgage and Housing to supply up to 100 per cent of the financing? At the same time, what is the longest period that Canada Mortgage and Housing is providing for mortgages with the current formula? It was not that long ago that you could have a mortgage for 15 and 25 years. I wonder why we could not get back to that.

Mr. Redway: Madam Speaker, I appreciate the comments and remarks of the hon. member for Broadview—Greenwood. I know he too has a deep interest in making sure that Canadians have affordable housing, particularly in his and my city of Toronto. He specifically asked questions with respect to the amount of down payments or mortgage insurance which might be available and also the term of a mortgage.

I will start with his second question first and say there really is no limit on the term of a mortgage that Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation will insure. If a buyer of a home wants to commit to a mortgage with a long term, they can very well commit to that and there is no problem providing insurance as was common a number of years ago.

Unfortunately, because of the interest rate situation and the fluctuations in interest rates over the last few years, many people gamble that they will fall and so accept shorter term mortgages, sometimes as short as six months. As the hon. member points out, sometimes three years or five years but not the longer term mortgages we used to see. It is not because it is not available, it is that the actual borrowers are interested in getting their interest rate as low as possible and then lock themselves into a longer term commitment.

In the last four years we have provided a new program called "mortgage backed securities". A mortgage backed security allows for an investor in securities to sell those securities and provide a secondary market for the securities, which were not available prior to four years ago when the mortgage backed security form was introduced by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, the federal housing agency.

At the time, it was hoped that the MBS, the mortgage backed security, would allow investors to feel they could give longer term mortgages, because they could always be sold. There would be a secondary market for their mortgages, and they would feel protected.

The mortgage backed securities have been very successful and billions have been put on to the market. It is a very well accepted program. Unfortunately, in spite of all that, the actual borrowers, the home purchasers or home buyers by and large have been unwilling to commit to longer term mortgages. I suspect it is because they feel that, while interest rates may be "x" today they will be "x minus y" tomorrow. They want to get in and take advantage of the lower interest rates.

I am not sure that answers completely the hon. member's question with respect to the term of mortgages, but I will be announcing shortly some further details with respect to a housing financing conference this fall. We will be looking at all aspects of housing financing, particularly for first time home buyers. We will be examining all the various options that anybody has ever thought of that might be available, to see if there is not a way we can improve the situation with respect to the financing aspect.

The hon. member also asked a question about 100 per cent insured mortgages. As he is aware, now one can obtain an insured mortgage with a down payment of up to 10 per cent. We are exploring this very carefully, and hopefully before too long we will have a 95 per cent insured mortgage with a 5 per cent down payment in place. Quite frankly, there are many people who feel concerned with down payments that are as low as 5 per cent. I guess it is against that concern that one has to balance off the thought of having a 100 per cent insured mortgage and a zero down payment.

Those things have been tried in the past. However, I think it is important that there be some personal commitment by the people buying a home so that they know they have their own stake in the home and it is not just the stake of the taxpayers involved. Still, we are pursuing very vigorously the concept of a 5 per cent down payment and 95 per cent insured mortgage. We are going to be holding this conference on financing housing this fall, which I am sure the hon. member will find very interesting.

Mr. Dan Heap (Trinity—Spadina): Madam Speaker, I thank the minister for a very able presentation of his motion.

The presentation of his motion is more able than the government's performance. I am sure he will be able to comment on figures that were presented to us by the Canadian Home Builders' Association concerning what it thinks is the main cause for the disastrous decline in housing starts, which it finds in the interest rate rise.

The Canadian Home Builders' Association commented that first time home buyers who could afford 10 per cent mortgage rates number about 96,000. It requires an income of $51,500, and that includes 24 per cent of all buyers. When the mortgage rates went up to 14 per cent and the income required was $67,500, instead of 96,000, there were less than half. There were 40,500 who could afford it. This is 10 per cent of all potential buyers.

I am wondering what the hon. minister can tell us about the government's plans to relieve the situation of home buyers, home builders, construction workers, furniture makers, material suppliers and all the other many thousands who depend on the building of homes, either to use them or to produce them. If a rise in mortgage rates from 10 per cent to 14 per cent cuts the number of possible buyers to less than half, can the minister assure us, either that the interest rates will soon come down and enable people to buy homes again or that the schemes he has been telling us about will, in spite of the high interest rates, be able to bring the percentage who can afford to buy a home up from 10 per cent to 24 per cent.

• (1940)

Madam Deputy Speaker: The hon. minister. There is very little time left.

Mr. Redway: Madam Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for Trinity—Spadina for his question. As the hon. member is aware, there are a number of factors involved in the question of affordability of housing. One factor is the amount of the monthly payment and that is impacted by interest rates. Other factors relate to the price of the house itself.

Recently, many people have been saying that Canadians should really be applauding the fact that housing prices are now starting to fall and indicating that perhaps it was necessary that we have a situation like that if we are going to avoid a real disaster in the future, so that we can make sure that for future generations housing will be

affordable. When housing prices go up, they cause problems. When housing prices come down, they cause problems. All of this, unfortunately, does not help the situation for people who want to buy houses.

At the same time, I would like to assure the hon. member that many of the programs that we have now under way, including the development of surplus federal government lands for first time home buyer housing in the metropolitan Toronto and the Vancouver areas, other initiatives that we hope we will have on stream before too long such as the 5 per cent down payment, all will help the affordability situation and will certainly help people to be able to buy homes, people who cannot buy them now.

Mr. Joe Fontana (London East): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to rise and talk about a very important matter, the question of affordable housing. In the Estimates the government is seeking approval of some $1.8 billion. I do not believe this truly represents the situation in Canada today with respect to those people who are seeking affordable housing, be it the home owner, the people in rental accommodation, people wanting to renovate their homes, the single parent, people of social assistance, seniors, or the physically challenged, who are finding it more and more difficult in respect of housing affordability.

While I applaud the efforts of my friend, the Minister of State for Housing, it is the government's lack of a sense of urgency and lack of commitment to housing which troubles me and troubles Canadians generally. I want to say that the stark reality of what is happening in this country cannot be disregarded any longer. While the minister paints a picture that would suggest, "Don't worry, be happy, although we are going through some difficult times, the situation is not as bad as it looks".

Let me deal first with the question of home ownership and what it means to those people who want to keep that dream of owning a home. My colleague spoke of the situation in Toronto and other centres. CMHC has projected that the industry will continue to build something like 200,000 homes this year. In fact, not only has the minister said that, but the former minister and the Minister of State for Privatization have spoken about the fact that the situation is stabilizing, that there is no need to get too excited about the fact that there seems to be a slowdown in the construction industry.

The Toronto home builders and the Canadian home builders have tried to tell the government that 14.5 per cent interest rates are killing their industry. It is not only killing the dreams of people but killing the industry. Not 200,000 homes will be built in 1990–91 but only somewhere between 160,000 to 170,000 homes will be built in the next year. What that means is you have a lot of people who cannot buy these homes because they have become unaffordable as a result of high interest rates. Second, the construction industry and other related industries from window manufacturers to durable goods manufacturers are all starting to lay off people.

The industry is trying to tell the government, CMHC and the finance minister that 25 per cent to 30 per cent are already being laid off. The minister would want you to believe that don't worry, be happy, 200,000 homes will be built next year, the fact is that people cannot afford to buy the homes and the industry is declining very quickly. I hope that CMHC and the minister will meet with these people at the earliest possible opportunity to get the facts right because housing is not only good economics, it is good social policy.

I want to cover a number of topics, especially as they relate to the $1.8 billion that this government commits to people and social housing. I can tell you that if you look at the stark statistics of what is happening in this country, you will see that there are over 1.3 million households in the country that are paying more than 30 per cent of their income toward housing. There are close to 600,000 Canadians across this country paying over 50 per cent of their income toward housing.

Mr. Speaker, I do not have to tell you that is not only a serious economic problem for Canadians but a serious social problem as well. If Canadians cannot afford to pay their rent, or have to pay more rent, they will have to deprive themselves of certain things such as clothing and food. That is why you have over 500,000 people going to food banks each and every day, because it is too expensive for them to live.

I want to deal with this government's commitment to social housing. While the minister has paraded around the country saying: "Give my government hell so that I can do my job and get some more money to help people and so that the non-profit groups and the co-operative

groups get more money so they can build more units", every time he comes out of the cabinet room, he comes out with less for housing.

In this year alone there was 15 per cent less for social housing. In the next five years there will be $165 million less for social housing. Over the past four or five years, the government promised the co-operative sector to build 5,000 units to help the thousands of people on waiting lists from B.C. to Newfoundland to Ontario. Every province has waiting lists and people looking for affordable housing.

The co-operative sector was a way of being able to achieve affordability. In 1986 the government promised 5,000 units a year. We are at the end of the five-year term and in not one year did the government provide enough funds to build those 5,000 units. This year it will only be able to fund 1,500 units. Last year it funded 2,000. The year before it may have funded 2,500. What happened to the commitment to the 5,000 units each and every year for co-op housing and for the people who want to share in collective ownership? The government's commitment has been worth absolutely nothing. The whole program is threatened with cancellation because the minister and CMHC is reviewing the co-operative program.

I attended the meeting of the Co-Operative Housing Federation in Edmonton on the weekend. They are seriously concerned that this government will kill co-op housing and kill the opportunity for thousands of people across the country to have affordable housing.

• (1950)

Mr. Speaker, it is also very clear that in this country the homeless and people seeking affordable housing want a government that is responsive to their needs. As I have said, over the past four or five years, we have had a government that talks a good line but in actual fact has shifted the responsibility of housing more and more in each and every year to the provinces and the municipalities. In fact, the minister says tonight that governments cannot interfere in the private market-place. However, they are interfering in the market-place, especially when they will not do anything to lower interest rates.

When the Minister of Finance and other ministers say that it is essential to keep high interest rates to deal with inflation, the fact remains that people paying 14.5 per cent interest rates are potentially going to lose their homes. I think it is important for this government to realize that it can be a full partner in the housing issue. It should realize that it has the provinces, the municipalities, the non-profit sector, the co-operate and private sector which are all working together, and can essentially deliver affordable housing if there is a willing partner in the federal government.

The federal government cannot continue to say to Canadians that it is not its responsibility, that is the responsibility of the provincial government to do something. It has a prime responsibility, as it has in the past. CMHC is the federal agency that produced many homes after the war and worked with provinces and municipalities to achieve the housing objectives that we have for this country. Yet, slowly but surely since 1984, this government has taken itself out of the true partnership that must exist to deal with the housing problems.

We believe that if you house people and give them the opportunity for affordable housing, you will not increase the deficit, you will not have to increase government expenditures but in actual fact, you may decrease them. We know for a fact that subjecting people to inadequate housing or the problems of high-cost housing causes social and family problems. It causes crime and drug problems. In turn, that will cost not only the federal but provincial and municipal governments millions of dollars in extra expenditures. Providing a decent home for every Canadian in this country is the best way to deal with not only shelter, but social problems. We believe the two have to work in tandem.

We as a party some year and a half ago travelled across the country and talked with homebuilders, co-operative people, the non-profit sector, tenants, municipalities, and provincial governments. Across the country we went and essentially the message was clear. Everyone was saying that the federal government must become more involved, must exercise its leadership in housing, be prepared to bring in those programs and be prepared to work with the other levels of government and the other sectors to bring affordability back to housing. We have not seen that.

Our party laid out in our task force report some 25 recommendations that deal with how we believe the housing problems can be solved in this country. They talk about forging those new partnerships which are important and looking at ways of changing those financial instruments with generation mortgages, long-term mortgages, lower interest rates and getting rid of the GST that is going to add at least 2 to 2.5 per cent on the cost of a house, even after the rebates. There are a number of things that can be done to bring affordability back into the equation. We would like the commitment of this government to continue co-op programs with at least 5,000 units per year. We want more social housing built in combination with perhaps the private and non-profit sector working together. We also believe there needs to be recognition for the working poor and people on social assistance. Perhaps their income is not adequate to cover the expenses of their home. There needs to be some consultation and co-ordination with the provincial governments for topping up provisions of income, especially when you have the supply side problem and you are not able to build enough units. There is an opportunity to help those people who are paying more than 30 per cent, or more than 50 per cent of their income, on shelter.

There is another opportunity to deal with the private sector more effectively. The Canadian Homebuilders' Association and other homebuilders across the country should be freed from some of the red tape that exists at the municipal, provincial and federal levels of governments so that they can in fact start to produce the homes that people want and can afford to buy.

We also have to recognize that not everybody wants to buy a home. They have to live in rental accommodation. We know what interest rates are going to do to the supply side and to rental accommodations. Builders will not build. Investors will not invest in buildings when they know that interest rates are 14.5 per cent and climbing. Fewer rental buildings and apartments will be built, exacerbating the problem and the existing waiting lists.

We also believe that this government has shown callous disregard in the renovation market for the existing rental stock. We used to have a fantastic program, RRAP, but it has now been cut by this government. That was one way of being able to rehabilitate our existing stock so that people could have affordable housing. Again this government has cut the housing budget. At the same time it wants us to believe that it is sincere and sensitive to the plight of the people in this country and yet it cut these worth-while programs which in fact provided affordable housing.

Our report and our consultation with Canadians has indicated that we need the reinstitution of the RRAP. We believe there is an opportunity for existing stock to be rehabilitated.

We believe that financial institutions have a very big part to play in delivering affordable housing, possibly the development of innovative mortgage instruments. We also believe that the government, while it talks a great line about Crown lands, essentially has done too little with respect to putting those Crown lands in the hands of the non-profit sector or co-operatives.

Rather than selling that land at market prices, we suggest that the government look at long-term leasing to the co-operatives and to the non-profit sectors, thereby taking the exorbitant land costs out of the total housing construction equation.

We believe that this could be an opportunity to reduce the rent subsidy that might be required. We also believe there is an opportunity for the government to look at community land trusts so that within a co-operative or a non-profit area equity participation or capitalization could be added so that those groups can in fact generate internal capital for other projects.

There are a number of great opportunities in housing but we believe that this government needs to be committed. I do not question the commitment of this minister whose background in municipal government is well known. But I do question the commitment of his government which, over the past four or five years, has slashed budgets, removing responsibility from the federal government and trying to pass it off to the provincial and perhaps the municipal governments.

Finally, I want to speak again of something important. It is not only a question of money and housing.

• (2000)

The minister recognizes full well that if we can use the talents of and involve the private sector, the non-profit sector, the municipalities, and the provincial governments working together to solve the housing problems—and I agree it is complex and not simple—we can get back to the principle of housing affordability. We can give each and every Canadian the possibility of keeping alive the dream of owning a home in their lifetime and give those people who are now in apartments or homes the decent affordable housing they need.

Our seniors need help. They are living in homes, for instance, they cannot maintain because their incomes are not enough. Perhaps reverse mortgages might be the answer for that segment of the population.

I do not have to tell you, Mr. Speaker, that our physically challenged people need to have better opportunities so that they can be full participating members in our society by living in communities and not be relegated to one apartment here or another apartment there. We need to support the handicapped by allowing RRAP to meet their needs and to have them as full participating members in co-operative housing, non-profit housing, and in the private sectors.

I hope this minister and this government really do get serious about housing and get back into the game of making sure that they are doing their fair share.

Hon. Alan Redway (Minister of State (Housing)): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate all the comments of the hon. member for London East. I felt, however, that we should make sure that the record is straight with respect to the co-op housing situation.

The hon. member well knows, as do I, that five years ago the government and the co-op housing movement entered into discussions aimed at arriving at a program which would produce, both sides hoped, some 5,000 units of co-op housing a year. That arrangement was based on certain assumptions with respect to the mortgage vehicle being used, the ILM mortgage vehicle, and assumptions with respect to the real interest rate that could be achieved. The real interest rate anticipated by the Co-op Housing Federation of Canada was some 4 per cent.

The amount of money that was put into that program by the government at the time was an amount which both sides agreed could produce 5,000 units of co-op housing a year, with a real interest rate on an ILM mortgage of 4 per cent. Unfortunately, as the executive members of the co-op housing movement quite readily agree, we have been unable to achieve that real interest rate of 4 per cent on ILM mortgages. That is the reason we have been unable to reach the target that was agreed upon of 5,000 co-op housing units each and every year.

If we can get the real interest rate on a co-op mortgage down by just 1 per cent, we can increase by 20 per cent the number of co-op housing units that the same number of subsidy dollars will provide.

One of the problems with co-op housing with respect to the government's policies, the policy of targeting all of its funds to the core needy people, is that by definition co-op housing is not core needy people exclusively but is also a range of people so as not to ghettoize poor people all in one place. It does have a range of incomes, which means people with a range of incomes are benefiting from some form of government subsidization.

The program is up for review this year, it being the fifth year of the commitment, as the hon. member knows. Are the hon. member and his party fully committed and supportive of continuing a co-op housing program in this country?

Mr. Fontana: Mr. Speaker, of course our party is fully supportive of the co-op program. I would like to remind the minister that it was the Liberal Party which, some 22 years ago, introduced the whole concept of co-operative housing in this country.

I must remind government members that between 1980 and 1984, 30,000 co-operative units were built in this country—6,000 units a year for five years. We lived up to our commitment to the co-operative housing movement of some 30,000 units.

I can assure the minister that he will not have any difficulties from this side of the House when the budget comes down next year, hopefully, and co-op housing is very much a part of it. If he wants to commit 5,000 units on behalf of the government to the co-operative housing movement, he will not get any complaints from this side of the House. I am sure he will not get any complaints from the NDP either.

I should point out to him that I am happy to see that he is committed to co-op housing and that he is looking at ways to improve the ILM instrument so that in fact it can be the mechanism by which to provide those housing

units. However, if in fact it cannot be because of high interest rates, and if the real interest rates cannot be 4 per cent once inflation is taken into account, I hope that this minister will look at other ways of being able to come up with the money so that 5,000 co-op units can be built in the next five years.

Mr. Don Blenkarn (Mississauga South): Mr. Speaker, I note that the motion would remove $1.883 billion and some odd from the Estimates for housing. I was wondering if the member did not understand that almost all that money, at least $1.7 billion, was spent before the Estimates were even filed by the government honouring its commitment to build some of those 6,000 units each year that the previous government built but did not pay for.

It was a great program—build houses and don't pay for them, put them on the cuff. For the next 30 years or 35 years we will have these houses on the cuff, paying interest on interest on interest.

Does he really think that was a good program? Does he really think that we should default on that obligation that is in the terms of his motion? Or, would he like to withdraw the motion completely because it makes no sense?

If he really believes in housing and really wants the minister to do something, surely he will withdraw his motion. What would happen if we told our creditors that we are not going to pay our bills? What does the hon. member think would happen? We would not build anything.

Surely the member wants to withdraw his motion.

Mr. Fontana: Mr. Speaker, the member should realize that there is no motion on the floor in which we have said that they have to scrap the $1.8 billion. What we have said is that it does not reflect the real needs of this country. It was the minister who moved the motion for $1.883 billion.

Mr. Blenkarn: No, sir, notice is hereby given of opposition.

Mr. Fontana: Yes, of course. I have already explained what our opposition is. It is that that figure does not reflect the true needs of the country.

I am sure the member for Mississauga South would like to relegate those poor people, those hundreds of thousands of people who cannot afford their homes, to living under stairwells—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Questions and comment are now terminated.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Allan Koury (Hochelaga—Maisonneuve): Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to rise in the House tonight to address a subject that concerns many Canadians who are waiting for government assistance.

I am referring to individuals, families and senior citizens who are looking for affordable housing, people who depend on government to provide them what many of us consider normal; people who, like us, want to live decently, with dignity; people who, without our assistance, will have to make incredible sacrifices to give their children a roof over their heads; people who without assistance may not even be able to make these sacrifices and thus will not have a home.

Every day, members rise in Parliament to announce that a given industry, province or city needs help. Every day, the government explains how it establishes priorities and what its strategy is. In many ways, the situation of a single mother who is looking for decent housing for her children is similar to that of someone who has lost her home or job.

There are also many analogies between senior citizens coping with rent increases and workers who earn little and are hard pressed to make both ends meet. These people have in common a need for a government that cares.

Mr. Speaker, my colleagues and I are concerned about what will happen to these people. We feel the need to give them a hand, and we do that, but not as often as we would like.

• (2010)

That makes us mad. Mad because in spite of all the resources this great country has to help the needy, the government—the government of all Canadian—must cut down its expenditures as a result of the ill-conceived programs and unpaid bills which the previous administration left behind when it was turfed out.

The government is prepared to lend a hand, but it has difficult decisions to make about the numerous demands

made on the public treasury. That is responsible government. Had this kind of leadership prevailed earlier we would not find ourselves in the financial mess left after two decades of unsound budget management.

As I followed the proceedings of the Charest Commission I was deeply touched by the remarks of a witness who recalled his childhood as a Metis living in Saskatchewan, in a shed. He struck our heartfelt emotions as Canadians. Mr. Speaker, what that man had to say means more to me than all the learned arguments about the constitutional basis of federal spending powers. As I listened to him I came to understand that these powers were rooted not only in the law of the land but also in its heart. In its heart because as he was speaking I was saying to myself that never again should he and his children have to bear the cross of poverty and that Canada should continue to offer housing programs which give the less fortunate among us the opportunity to live in dignity and to become productive citizens.

Mr. Speaker, the measures which this government has been taking since my colleague, now Minister of National Defence, addressed this House at the end of 1985 are aimed at those most in need of government assistance. The aim of the measures taken by the government when it revised its housing policy remains unchanged. The government is determined to pool the resources of all levels of government and community groups so they can be used to help the needy.

We are trying to find ways to respond more quickly to the needs of poor families and do a better job than the Liberal government that preceded us. And we are doing just that. During the past four years, since we announced our new policies we have managed to help 75,000 low-income households, while the Liberal government assisted only about 32,000 during the last four years of its term. Mr. Speaker, that is an improvement. It means 43,000 households more than the Liberal, over the same period of time. It means 43,000 households, families, single mothers, people on modest incomes, native people living on or off the reserve, handicapped Canadians and senior citizens.

Perhaps some of my colleagues, those who challenged this government's performance in the housing sector, are already aware of these developments but would rather not talk about them.

Mr. Speaker, I certainly do not intend to ignore the government's performance in the housing sector. In fact, the important thing is not necessarily what the government has done but the fact that it did so at a time when so many other major issues tended to focus public concern.

There is a lot to be said about this government's achievements in the housing sector. As a start, I would like to mention a situation that tells us a lot about this government's leadership. I am thinking of families living in large urban centres like Toronto, Montreal, Halifax, Vancouver and Winnipeg, as well as those living in smaller centres or rural regions; I am thinking of families with children, single-parent families, families on welfare and low-income families.

Mr. Speaker, these families now have increased access to subsidized housing. The present government, whose performance in the housing sector is being challenged, has used its influence to get provinces, municipalities and community groups to agree to focus more attention on the needs of the disadvantaged.

This government, which is being accused of lack of leadership, has managed to convince all parties concerned about easing the burdens of those who are in need to join forces and give these people access to more affordable and safe housing of the right size and quality. You won't read about this in the papers, but it's a fact. That is one example of the kind of leadership we provide.

Another example, Mr. Speaker, is native people. In many ways, they deserve our greatest attention. I was referring to them when I said that families should no longer have to live in poverty. As never before, these people have the attention of this government and its action in the field of social housing. Nearly half the housing provided in rural areas under the housing program for rural and native people is now used to meet the urgent needs of natives who live outside the reserves. That is an example of our commitment. Think of how successful the program for native people in urban areas is and of the money for natives living on reserves.

Mr. Speaker, I think hon. members do not want to hear about our successes. Neither do they want to hear that our government has shown enlightened leadership, a sign of effective and responsible management.

This commitment to work with native people, to offer them the best programs to meet their special needs, continues while the government holds wide-ranging consultations with native communities.

In the speech he gave to the House this evening, the Minister of State for Housing reiterated his commitment and this government's commitment to better housing for Canadians. The initiatives he has taken in the past and the energy he devotes to the housing portfolio clearly show his deep conviction that the government will find a solution to Canadians' housing problems.

But the minister does not boast about his achievements. In my opinion, that is the very essence of leadership. A leader does not spend his time recalling his successes and his accomplishments but he looks to the future, considers new challenges and shows the way.

• (2020)

There is no lack of challenges. In fact, the Minister of State for Housing has met them head on. Some examples are the exhaustive search for suitable housing for senior citizens; joint committees of all three levels of government set up by the minister across Canada, in order to take a collective approach to improving housing affordability; the new ACT program based on eliminating barriers and reducing delay in this area; the minister's efforts to release surplus federal land for housing purposes; his commitment to involving tenants in the management of subsidized housing; and his efforts to promote the tertiary sector. If we look at the facts, we have to admit that the poor have never been better served, and I really have trouble with claims that the government has failed to show leadership in the housing sector. I say that the people who make these claims have no idea of the meaning of the word leadership, and that they either do not know the facts, or, for obvious political reasons, prefer to ignore them.

Mr. Speaker, at the beginning of my speech this evening, I pointed out that our government was committed to helping the needy but also had to balance its concerns because of the urgent need to control government spending and put the government back on a sound financial basis. I can already hear members accusing us of every possible evil; of being guilty of fighting the deficit at the expense of the poor. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Consider the amount we expect to spend on subsidized housing during the current fiscal year: nearly $1.8 billion, or $90 million more than last year. If an increase of this magnitude means reducing the deficit at the expense of the poor, perhaps my colleagues owe the House an explanation of their concept of mathematics.

But they might say that their real concern is that spending is not rising as fast as it should, but then how fast should it rise?

Mr. Speaker, that is not how to run a government. A responsible government balances its needs, takes into account its financial obligations and creates wealth that will make it possible to continue and, who knows, to improve the programs we will require.

We hear that the 15 per cent reduction in spending growth announced by the finance minister in his latest budget is not justified. But when will we hear them explain that in spite of this reduction, our government's ability to reach more needy families and seniors will continue to exceed the levels reached under the policies supported by the Official Opposition? We will not hear such comments, Mr. Speaker, because my hon. colleagues know that they would hurt their own cause.

Mr. Speaker, our government's housing record is beyond reproach and we have in front of us tangible proof that everything is being done to make the best use of the available financial resources.

Our country maintains noble and exciting principles but has come to recognize that to pursue these lofty goals effectively, it must have a sound economic foundation and forever vigorously ensure that it obtains good value from its programs.

That is precisely what our government set out to do in 1985 when it announced a new direction for social housing policy. This turned out to be the right choice and our government has shown beyond any doubt that these new policies are the surest and fastest way to serve those in greatest need and let them know that their government cares about them.

[*English*]

Mr. Redway: On a question, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): There are three or four speakers we would like to get in before nine o'clock on the hon. minister's motion.

I will recognize the Minister of State for Housing on a short comment or question.

Hon. Alan Redway (Minister of State (Housing)): Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the hon. member for his comments. I know that he came to this House from his riding in the city of Montreal as a great advocate for housing and as one who is deeply and personally involved in making sure that social housing is built in Montreal.

The hon. member is aware that in the past few days we have launched a housing conference for senior citizens' housing in the city of Montreal. I was there yesterday.

As he is aware as well, we have assisted the University of McGill to develop the new Grow Home in Montreal, a very inexpensive kind of housing that can be built for some $65,000.

The hon. member knows as well that recently the CRESSOM program was announced for southwest Montreal which included a housing component of $6.5 million.

As the hon. member knows as well, I will be with him in a short time for the opening of several new co-op housing projects in Montreal in the Angus lands with which the hon. member is well associated.

I would like to ask the hon. member if he would give us a brief description of all that wonderful housing that he and the federal government have been responsible for on those Angus lands.

Mr. Koury: Mr. Speaker, I will be very pleased to give you an array of the accomplishments on that particular site.

Of course it all started back in 1975. But the realization of the program came into being in 1985. Thanks to this government 3,000 housing units are now almost completed.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koury: There is about 600 or 700 more units to go. We will have achieved a 15-year project within a six-year span, as I said, thanks to this government which implicated itself to put in local and charitable housing, low-cost housing, the HLM co-ops and, of course, all the low-cost housing which houses something in the order of 1,400 or 1,500 families that are on the site and who are thankful to this government.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Questions and comments are now terminated.

On debate, the hon. member for Trinity—Spadina.

Mr. Dan Heap (Trinity—Spadina): Mr. Speaker, the motion before us is a motion to delete $1,883,690,000 from the budget of the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

Obviously, it was a tongue-in-cheek motion put forward by the member for London East and his colleagues since they do not seriously expect that it would be possible for this government—nor would they want it—to default on its mortgage payments which constitute 90 per cent of that amount. Thus it will be necessary to vote in favour of the motion so as not to worry the banker friends of the Liberal and Tory Parties.

It is really difficult to defend the government's program. The fact is that under this government the housing program has declined, and the previous minister responsible for housing was quite explicit about it. When he called for consultation, he did not say about what, he just said: "Give me your views". People told what kind of housing they thought was needed and then he said, "Well, there is going to be less" and he started reducing the social housing program in particular.

• (2030)

At that time, the home builders' association said, "That's fine, just leave us alone. We don't want subsidy for profit housing." Of course, the government was glad to take it at its word. Now we are having the further word from the home builders' association, which I will touch on in a few minutes.

The fact is that this government has been, year by year, retreating from providing housing to people for whom the market does not provide. There simply is going to be no program at all very soon. The government has excused these retreats as being necessary in order to help the core need housing, housing for those who fit their criteria as being needy. However, the core need programs, this year, were cut by 15 per cent and there is

good reason to fear that there will be more cuts in the years to come.

The government also cut the rental RRAP program, the program for rehabilitating old housing that low-income people can afford. On the whole, this government has shown that it wants to hand over the responsibility for housing to the provincial and municipal levels of government and get out of it itself.

That is interesting because its alleged reason for doing that is a shortage of money. Even the minister admitted that he would have liked to have more social housing, but he suggested there was not enough money for it.

There is, of course, enough money to increase the military budget by well over $500 million dollars. There is enough money to increase the budget for the secret police, CSIS, by $33 million. When it is for guns for white men, there is money. When it is for housing, especially for lower-income women and children, all of a sudden we seem to be running out of money.

Even as it stands, there is still left, perhaps, $180 million to assist with needed housing. With the money that it is giving to the military budget instead, including the arms manufacturers, the high-profit industry, the government could have increased that by two or three times easily, but that is not the government's budget priority. In fact, the record of the government has been watched, through these years, by the Canadian Housing and Renewal Association. On February 21 it stated, and I quote:

> Despite the budget papers assurance that funding for social housing has grown substantially over the last five years, average expenditures in social housing as a percentage of total federal housing expenditures actually fell by almost 20 per cent in the second half of the decade compared to the 1980-84 period.

The minister has referred to the problem of high real interest rates. If he really feels that is a problem, I wish he would consult with his colleague, the Minister of Finance. We have been telling him all year to bring interest rates down. The comedy is that he gives the same answer as his predecessors gave. When I came to the House, in 1981, my first question was whether the government would bring the interest rates down. We were told the government was keeping the interest rates up in order to fight inflation. Nine years later, we get the same nonsense. Keeping the interest rates up in order to fight inflation is like burning a house down in order to make room for housing. It just does not get you any housing.

The fact is that as the Canadian Housing and Renewal Association has said:

> Now we are faced with increased pressure on provinces and municipalities to come up with social housing assistance funds.

This is only one aspect of many programs on which the federal government is passing on its social responsibilities to the governments that have the lower ability to tax. This government prefers to fund the more high profit enterprises such as arms manufacture.

I mentioned that the Canadian Home Builders' Association has given us some figures on this matter in their brief entitled "A Crisis of Confidence". It is about the housing industry crisis. It points out that in Toronto, new home sales are collapsing. There are only 85,000 sales expected in 1990, which is down 80 per cent from the 40,869 sales recorded in the peak year of the current cycle, 1986. In fact, it is 63 per cent below the average annual sales during the entire decade of the 1990s.

There are people who do not live in Toronto who think everything is all right there. They should come and look at the people who are literally sleeping on the streets, in stairwells, in transit shelters, or in subways. Those are some of the people who have not left town.

A couple of years ago, the employees of Toronto Hydro went on strike and gave one fine reason for it. They wanted to be able to live in the town that they helped to build and maintain. They wanted to be paid enough for providing electric services to live in the city to which they provide the services. They were tired of commuting, perhaps an hour or two hours each way, in order to live in a cheaper place outside the city and come into it to work. The city would not allow them to live there because it would not pay them enough for housing.

The housing problem in Toronto is quite severe. The problem is not only in Toronto, of course, but it is most severe in Toronto of all Canada.

The majority of people in Toronto do not live in dwellings they own. The majority of people are tenants, so we could look at the rental field. CMHC did a survey and, in 14 out of 27 markets, it found that the vacancy rate is less than 3 per cent. That is getting pretty tight.

The government is doing nothing to help with rental housing.

I want to emphasize the point, because 3 per cent may sound very good in some places. In Toronto, the vacancy rate is 0.7 per cent; in Hamilton, 0.9 per cent; in St. Catharines, 1.9 per cent; in Kitchener, 1.3 per cent; and in Sudbury, not exactly a metropolis, but a hardworking town of miners and other producers of natural resources, people are having difficulty providing or finding housing. Sudbury has the lowest vacancy rate, 0.6 per cent. In Oshawa, it is 1.6 per cent. In Oshawa, a General Motors town, people cannot find enough housing to provide rental at a reasonable rate of turnover and a reasonable vacancy rate.

In Ottawa–Hull, the vacancy rate is 2.3 per cent; in Vancouver, 0.9 per cent; and in Victoria, 0.7 per cent. There simply is not enough rental housing available, not only in Ontario and not only in Toronto.

The problem is not only a shortage of decent housing for people to live in, it is also a shortage of employment.

• (2040)

The homebuilders' association pointed out that, at the peak of the recent housing cycle, 1987, there were 165,000 person–years of employment generated by housing in the Toronto area. But for 1990, it is barely half of that, with 88,000 fewer person–years of employment. In fact, that is a little less than half.

For this year, it is expecting less than half the jobs that there were three years ago directly and indirectly generated by housing. It would be the lowest year since the recession year of 1982. On the 1990 projected sales of only 8,500 units, it expects a good deal fewer jobs in 1991. One cannot get much tax revenue from people—whether it is income tax or the goods and services tax loaded more heavily on the low income—if they do not have income. When those housing jobs drop off, it is going to be felt in the revenues.

The homebuilders' association is quite explicit about what it thinks is the principle cause of this downturn. It is the interest rate policy of the government which is hurting the building industry. The association has been warning about it and their brief now gives fairly sharp figures.

It can be argued that there are other costs as well. Of course, land costs are something that both this government and the Ontario government are willing to allow to grow out of reason. They are not willing to impose a tax on speculation which was done for three years in the mid–seventies by the Ontario government and it was quite successful in cooling down land prices. Generally speaking, it is the cost of building a house that is becoming prohibitive.

The homebuilders' association points out in a chart that, when interest rates are at 8 per cent, 34 per cent of people can buy houses. When they jump to 10 per cent, only 24 per cent of the people can buy houses. At 12 per cent mortgage rates, only 16 per cent of people can buy houses. At 14 per cent—and we have gone beyond that now—only 10 per cent of the people can buy houses. When they go up to 16 per cent—and there is no reason to assure us that they will not go up—only 7 per cent will be able to buy houses.

The homebuilders have pointed out that this 14 per cent mortgage rate more than halves the number of potential first–time buyers able to afford a $150,000 home in the Toronto area. Mr. Speaker, I can tell you there are not very many $150,000 homes in the Toronto area. That is a relatively cheap home in Toronto. Therefore, it is the government's policy of high interest rates which is the chief factor in reducing the supply of housing and the supply of housing employment.

The homebuilders' association points it out in a different way. It has a chart that is too small to display and, of course, displaying it would be contrary to the rules of the House. I will point out that in 1981 and 1982, when the interest rates were high, the new home sales were low. Then through 1983–84–85, the interest rates came down and new home sales went up. In 1986–87–88, the new home sales were fairly high while the interest rates stayed low, except for one dip in the middle of 1987.

Since 1988, the interest rates have been climbing and the new home sales are declining. Interest rates are up and home sales are down. That is the pattern shown very clearly on this chart. The future is not very bright either in this matter. Gordon Thompson, the President of the CHBA, the Canadian Home Builders' Association, has predicted:

> —that what happened in Canada in the early 1980s could happen again.

He is referring, of course, to the recession which he maintains was caused partly by the high interest rates on housing, and I remember that. There happened to be a by-election in Spadina in 1981 and I was hearing daily about people who were forced out of their homes. When the interest rate jumps and a working person goes to renew the mortgage on a home and finds that the payments have jumped by one-third or one-half over what they were before, but his or her salary or wage has not jumped by one-third or one-half, it means that he or she loses, not only the home but all the money that was put into it.

Mr. Thompson goes on:

> The decline in housing sales led to layoffs, many firms left the industry, and land development slowed to match the level of demand. When demand recovered in the second half of the 1980s, shortages of labor, materials and land all combined to produce a serious escalation in housing prices.

The minister has commented on rising costs that are not directly the matter of interest, but what Mr. Thompson is pointing out is that the wild fluctuations in the housing market that were generated in part by the interest rate, themselves were a cause of shortages of labour and material which then, in better times, produced higher housing prices, too high housing prices. Mr. Thompson goes on:

> Sales of new housing have dropped in all parts of Canada in the first four months of 1990—In Toronto and Vancouver sales of resale homes have fallen by 44 and 35 per cent respectively compared to last year.

His final point is:

> —that all levels of government suffer from high interest rates because they take substantial revenues from homebuilding.

He maintains that in 1987 the federal government alone collected $2.5 billion in revenues from new housing construction. It is very short-sighted of this government to be cutting back the money for new housing.

The hon. member from Etobicoke was very righteously saying that they had to pay for the housing that had been built by the previous government, that is to say, on mortgages with assistance from CMHC. There is something more short-sighted than building houses on mortgage money and that is, not building houses. That is what this government is bringing about with its high interest rate which, not only the housing industry but many others have pointed out is very likely to hasten a recession, the very thing this government claims it is trying to avoid.

It will be necessary to vote for this money, for the payment of the debts on the existing housing built by CMHC. However, it is very sad that this government is slowly running its housing program into the ground. I hope that this year the government will begin to consider both that it should be bringing down the interest rates so that ordinary people can again consider buying homes or at least so that rental housing may be built, and second, that the government will recognize that it has an obligation to provide housing.

Housing is a necessity, at least in a northern climate. We do not live in the land of palms and sunshine. Housing is a necessity here; it is a right. It is not a privilege that should be given only to those who are well to do. The government has these two duties: to bring the interest rates down and to provide much more substantial assistance to the housing for low-income people.

• (2050)

Mr. Larry Schneider (Regina—Wascana): Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest to my colleague from Trinity—Spadina who I regard as being very sincere and conscientious.

He proclaimed that it would be of interest to everyone in Canada if the government were to unilaterally reduce interest rates, almost implying that that is a situation that is easily controlled. I want to convey to him a situation that I found myself in a few years ago. I wonder if he would care to comment, giving his observations with respect to it.

The situation was this. My wife and I had put our life savings together and bought a 12-suite apartment block. In that era, it was generally conceived that if one had a 25 per cent down payment on an investment like this, it would generally carry itself. As a result, we did not think it was a silly economic excursion. We thought it made some sense. Both of us worked on weekends and in the evenings to try to make things go. As well, we had to pay the city taxes for the facility out of our own pocket, because there just was not enough cash flow in it.

We bought the place with a 10 per cent interest rate. Shortly thereafter, we found that inflation had risen to 13.5 per cent. Also, we found that interest rates were being used in an attempt to bring inflation rates down. Interest rates caused themselves to take off. Interest rates on our property rose to 20 and 22 per cent. We

could no longer afford it. In fact, it was going to break us if we hung on to it, therefore we had to dump it.

It is interesting that we sold it to someone who could afford to make the cash payment and who was not burdened by the high interest rates at the time. The justification that that person had to go to the tenants to raise the rental rates on the property was the increased interest rate situation that we saw in the area.

Does the hon. member for Trinity—Spadina really feel that interest rates and inflation are not closely related? Does he not feel that one controls the other?

Mr. Heap: Mr. Speaker, in part, I agree with the hon. member for Regina—Wascana.

Certainly interest rates and inflation are related, but the relationship is not simply in one direction. Inflation does not simply cause high interest rates. If that were the only cause, then the hon. member would not be able to account for the increasing spread of real interest rates.

The hon. member and I can remember when there were things like 6 and 7 per cent mortgages. The difference between the inflation rate and the interest rate was usually about 1 or 2 per cent. Now, it is 4, 5, 6 and 7 per cent.

An hon. member: It is 10 per cent.

Mr. Heap: Somebody says it is 10 per cent. In other words, the gap between the inflation rate and the interest rate is not a clean take, but a pure take. It is a simple take by the money lenders. In fact, I think what the hon. member's experience that he recounted to us shows is that high interest rates benefit only those who have a great deal of money.

This is why it is so shameful that the government keeps promoting high interest rates. It blames them on inflation, but it keeps the interest rates far above inflation. That benefits the kind of person who is able to pick up the property that the hon. member and his wife had to drop. I think people who have had the experience that the hon. member recounts ought to consider that a interest rate of only 1 or 2 per cent above the rate of inflation is much healthier for most people in the country than the kind of rate that the government is promoting at present.

Hon. Roy MacLaren (Etobicoke North): Mr. Speaker, I wonder whether the hon. member would clarify to which of the three Etobicoke members he was referring.

Mr. Heap: Mr. Speaker, it is the hon. member who is chairman of the finance committee.

Ms. Margaret Mitchell (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, I was very interested in my colleague's comments on the situation in housing in Toronto. I could not help but do almost a checklist of similar problems we face in Vancouver.

Recently the mayor of Vancouver led a delegation appealing to the minister for help and reinstatement of some of the federal government's past programs. They were particularly concerned about the cut to rental RRAP. I know in my community it would be a great advantage, not only to older people, but also in adapting affordable housing with rental suites.

The federal government has given up its responsibility for social housing. We got about 100 units last year in Vancouver. We do not know where to go for new developments. We have all the Expo lands waiting to be filled and certainly do not want them to be expensive downtown housing. We want some affordable housing. The federal government does not seem to be able to do anything about that.

I want to ask a couple of things of my colleague. Does he feel that there are federal lands not being used extensively for housing? I am thinking, for instance, of some of the DND-owned lands. Has he any ideas on CPR lands? I think the CPR should be investigated. They were given all kinds of potential wealth in lands by the people of Canada and now Marathon Realty is charging outrageous prices in areas where we need affordable housing.

Finally, I would like to ask him if Toronto, like Vancouver, is becoming a city of adults where children are not wanted and not made welcome because of the housing situation?

Mr. Heap: Mr. Speaker, on the last point, the planning statistics in Toronto do show that there are less children in the centre than in the rest of the city, less children in the city than in metro Toronto, that is less children per adult, and less children per adult in metro Toronto than

in the province of Ontario. It is clear that the pyramid housing prices in Toronto are forcing children out of the city.

As to government lands, the government did sell a little bit of DND land for housing a couple of years ago for people who could pay $700,000, $800,000 or $900,000. That did not do much for most of the people in Toronto.

The second most scandalous case was the railway lands in which the government recently declined to intervene to ensure that housing, if it were built for the 1996 Olympics, would then be turned over to low-income people in Toronto who need it. The government has the power to do that through the CNR with those lands and they refused to do it. The most scandalous case was the waterfront. This was bought by the previous government but its mismanagement was carried on vigorously by the present government. Land that should have been used, in part, for low-income and family housing was instead sold to developers who produced luxury housing and other facilities like that. In other words, the plan which the city of Toronto had made in the early 1980s for a mixed community with access to the water on government owned land was simply ripped up by the management of that land under federal government supervision.

Hon. Alan Redway (Minister of State (Housing)): Mr. Speaker, I was most interested in the hon. member's comments with respect to interest rates. I read recently in *The Toronto Star* comments by Mr. Jack McArthur on interest rates. He said the following:

> There was no chance for substantially cheaper money until the heat went out of the housing prices and demand. They were a major cause of the inflationary dangers that shaped federal monetary policy and kept interest rates high.
>
> Canadians should applaud the news of falling prices for housing.
>
> High prices, often a result of huge increases in the late '80s, were creating trends that were highly disturbing. They couldn't continue for many years but the longer they did, the more shocking the eventual adjustment would be.
>
> In particular, it threatened to victimize future generations with extremely heavy personal costs for accommodation.

• (2100)

I wonder if the hon. member would agree with those comments.

Mr. Heap: Mr. Speaker, just two brief points. I certainly do not defend over-priced housing. When my wife and I sold the house that we had bought and lived in for 21 years, we sold it at a non-profit price so that it could be used for people who have very low incomes. We still got our full enjoyment out of that house. We do not need to follow the extortionate prices.

However, high interest rates are one of the prime causes of these extortionate prices, and interest rates that are 5 per cent or 10 per cent over inflation, which is what this government enforces, do nothing but make the rich richer and the poor poorer.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Questions and comments are now terminated. On debate, the hon. member for Regina—Wascana.

Mr. Larry Schneider (Regina—Wascana): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to rise in support of our government's continuing commitment to provide affordable housing. All too often I have heard misguided criticism of the government's efforts in the area of housing. I would like to take this opportunity to ensure that all hon. members are aware of the significant advances made in the delivery of social resources over the past few years.

Over all, Canada is a well housed nation. The quality of our housing stock is generally high and our home ownership rate is among the highest in the world. The housing market is working well in most areas of the country, although we recognize that actions need to be taken to promote more affordable housing. I maintain that this government is providing support in this area. This is a seemingly endless task.

I had occasion to visit Europe not too very long ago and while visiting Berlin, the downtown core of a fairly large city, I found that individual home ownership was a hopeless dream, if in fact a dream at all. As a matter of fact, the people we stayed with occupied an apartment in downtown Berlin, or at least the periphery to the core, and they told us that in order to acquire this apartment they had to virtually inherit it from the previous person. I was somewhat concerned with the condition of the apartment in that it seemed as though there were certain things that had to be maintained to make it acceptable to what I thought would be the standards that these people would accept. They said that they took this apartment "as is" from the deceased person's estate in a rental situation, and if they wanted any improvements to the property, they had to provide them themselves. I think

we take for granted something the major populations of Europe to whose standards we sometimes compare ours have long since forgotten.

However, there is one segment of our population who require assistance and we are going to give it to them as best we can. They require assistance in meeting their every day housing needs. Those are the households around the core housing areas, our seniors, the disabled, single parent households, low income families, and singles, generally. There are the native people living in difficult situations in Canada's north and the urban dwellers attempting to struggle with the cost of living in high cost urban environments.

As a member of Parliament, I have had a number of opportunities to visit with and discuss the most pressing issues of the day with a number of citizens over the past few years. Of particular significance in these discussions was the desire of our constituents for equitable social programs and policies and assurance that long term planning will continue to make Canada a well housed nation. Housing programs and initiatives introduced by this government have gone a long way in achieving this end.

More specifically, actions on the part of my colleague, the hon. Minister of State for Housing, and his predecessors have resulted in a number of bold, new housing initiatives introduced in the 1980s with many more areas of progress identified for the 1990s. These areas of innovation and change have resulted in housing dollars being more finely targeted to households in need, created a new sense of partnership between all players in the housing arena, and introduced a renewed commitment to social justice and social housing policies. It is for these reasons that I stand today in response to opposition criticism of the Main Estimates for housing.

With regard to the equitable targeting of federal housing resources, it was clear to all who assumed responsibility for the housing portfolio in 1984 that major changes were required to ensure that the best possible use of social housing dollars was occurring.

After extensive review and consultation, a number of significant housing policy changes were introduced to the federal Parliament which resulted in a more equitable distribution of federal housing dollars to those households truly in housing need. These households, including the poor, the elderly and the disabled, are the clear housing priority of our federal government.

These consultations involved all of the interest groups in the field of housing, as well as all levels of government. There was broad support at that time that housing assistance should be targeted to the most needy in our society, those who were unable to help themselves. When housing dollars are limited as a result of the current federal deficit we are faced with, our debt situation, many Canadians are opposed to the federal government spending tax dollars on housing that is not fully targeted to the most needy.

The federal government has adhered to a number of basic principles in the development of social housing policies in the 1990s. These include social housing allocations being directed to clients in core housing need and, second, all client groups in the country must have equal access to federal assistance. This ensures that citizens of our far north and rural areas are equitably served.

In conjunction with these principles, the federal government has developed a mix of programs which effectively address all types and forms of housing needs in the country. Families with affordability problems, the disabled, the disabled who may require wheelchair access, all can find housing relief in the federal group of programs.

This government has taken a number of decisive actions to ensure that inefficiencies of past programs are not repeated nor interfere with the equitable targeting and delivery of social housing resources.

Having discussed the importance of effective targeting of our housing resources, I would like to say a few words briefly concerning the manner in which the government has proceeded to involve all players in the housing field in the consultation and delivery process, and of how this process has resulted in maximizing the number of households receiving assistance under the federal group of programs.

In 1986 the government entered into agreements with the provinces and territories to jointly fund, plan, deliver

and administer housing programs. These agreements have resulted in thousands of more units being delivered to needy households through cost-sharing forumulae and a reduction in the administrative duplication from competing social housing delivery networks. This means thousands more low-income families with a solid roof over their heads and thousands more children with a warm place to sleep at night.

In recognition of the specific needs of Canada's native peoples, the federal government has designed programs which involve native peoples in all aspects of the programs. Native organizations perform an important function in the delivery of rural social housing programs in that they provide a fee-for-service delivery for the programs. This feature of the rural programs ensures that the native population is directly involved in the determination of housing program planning and delivery in each of the provinces and territories.

But we cannot solely depend on the federal government alone to solve all the problems. Housing is complex, and shared objectives and co-ordinated actions are required.

Recently, my colleague the hon. Minister of State for Housing, initiated a series of local committees which consist of the federal, provincial and local governments to address problems of housing affordability at the local level. These committees, in a number of cities from coast to coast, are dealing with impediments to the supply of affordable housing in their own communities, ranging from land availability and servicing to development approvals, all of which should assist in keeping a lid on housing costs and allow for effective use of housing dollars.

Having been associated with a municipality, I have another observation that causes me to express tonight the hope that municipalities will recognize the ongoing need for inner-city housing. While we encourage them to make the necessary zoning changes to accommodate those needs, if required, I would like to encourage them this evening to recognize this long term need and ensure that they provide long term residential zoning to maintain the residential integrity of our city cores. All to often while a plan of this kind might come in place, it seems that with the increased value of downtown properties, we find that housing stock falls to the wrecker's ball and some office building is located in its stead.

If the cities were to recognize this long-term need, it would serve their cities well and would serve to protect the necessary social infrastructure that is required to be put in place to maintain these inner-city developments.

Co-operative and non-profit organizations, our third sector, are another major group which our government looks to in the area of housing. For many years, the vital component of the Canadian housing scene has been a principal actor in using federal funds to provide services to needy households. In recognition of this role, the government recently increased the fee schedule for resource groups in the third sector to ensure necessary financial returns for their work. I believe that with this initiative, these groups can continue to effectively contribute to the housing of the nation. With their knowledge of housing development and management, they have already been involved in work on non-profit co-op housing, in many areas across our country.

• (2110)

Up until this time, I have been focusing on the partnerships this government has built with other governments and third sector housing organizations. But first and foremost are the individuals to whom housing solutions are addressed. Our government is committed to the involvement of each and every citizen of the country in the determination of how their shelter needs will be addressed. In this regard, for example, regional forums are being conducted to allow for input by seniors into the development of future programs specifically designed to meet their housing needs. This government can be extremely proud of its record of open consultation on housing policies since 1985, much to the benefit of households across this land.

Another area of note in the ongoing consultation of this government with the citizens of Canada is the residential participation initiative for clients residing in our public housing stock. Every person seeks the opportunity to influence their environment, including their particular housing situation. No one wants to sit passively by while others shape their surroundings. This is as true for people living in public housing as for anyone. For low-income families, it is often doubly important that they have the scope to enhance their skills so that

they may reach beyond their circumstances and play a fuller role in the broader community.

The interest expressed by public housing tenants in becoming involved in the day-to-day operations of their housing was identified in a public housing evaluation conducted by CMHC. The hon. Minister of State for Housing recently announced a set of initiatives aimed at expanding the opportunities public housing residents have to get involved, to contribute in their own way to improving and maintaining their quality of life.

The mention of community involvement brings me to my last area of comment, and that is the importance of achieving a sense of social justice with all our social programs, including housing. It is in this regard that current housing initiatives are providing a cornerstone to our future.

Approval of housing budgets by this Parliament will allow for the further development of a number of important initiatives which affect the quality of life of a great many Canadians into the 21st century. Included in this package are policies and potential housing program designs which more effectively address senior citizens, single parents and native client group needs. In addition, research efforts are continuing on a number of fronts pertaining to housing and the environment, an important area that must be given immediate priority.

One example of forward planning and research is the ongoing investigation of indoor air quality, perhaps something we could use in this House of Commons. However, CMHC not being involved with the House of Commons as its area of jurisdiction, as you well know, has a long record of involvement in the particular area of indoor air quality in residential housing stocks. I thought I had better make that clear.

In recent years, investigations have focused on specific pollutants such as methane and radon gas which enter basements from the soil. The primary focus has been on finding ways to protect housing from hazards in the soil and ensuring that remedial measures do not adversely affect other aspects of the housing unit. Performance research of this nature must continue if we are to be able to assure our children of safe, secure living environments in the future.

I would ask Parliament's support in the approval of the plans for this government to implement its much needed housing policies. As mentioned earlier, current programs and delivery practices have been significantly improved from the early 1980s with a very clear focus being given to households experiencing the most severe housing needs.

In addition, an efficient and effective federal-provincial delivery network has been developed to allocate and manage our scarce resources. Housing funding for the 1990 period will also allow for the innovative work to continue to ensure our housing future into the 1990s and into the next century.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): On debate, the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre.

Mr. David Walker (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I have been listening with great care to the speakers on the government side for the last couple of hours defend their policy. In defence of the government policy on housing, they miss the point. The point is that since 1984 the federal government has totally withdrawn from urban Canada. That can be measured in many ways. Perhaps we could attack directly the role of the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation because it is the signal to every Canadian that the government no longer cares about the price of their housing, the suitability of their accommodation or the availability of different types of housing stock.

I would like to speak directly about one particular city, Winnipeg, which is having a great deal of difficulty in dealing with the housing crisis as a result of the withdrawal of the federal government.

A lot of people look at the prices of houses in Winnipeg and say "You are very lucky to be from Winnipeg because it is one of the most affordable housing cities in this country". On the contrary, that is an illusion because the quality of the housing stock has dropped dramatically in that the federal government is no longer involved in programs.

For example, in Winnipeg North Centre, four out of ten families live below the poverty level, which is double the rate for the rest of the city. Within this context, at one time the federal government provided a great deal of housing through RRAP and the neighbourhood improvement program in the 1970s, and the infrastructure was built.

One of the neighbourhoods, North Point Douglas, was the most accomplished example of urban reform in North America. When Canadian government officials went elsewhere to talk about housing projects, they always pointed to North Point Douglas in Winnipeg as an example of how the three levels of governments could work together.

As a follow-up to the neighbourhood improvement programs, in 1980 Winnipeg entered the core area initiative with the two levels of government, again with this commitment to urban renewal.

I raise this in the context of the housing programs because when you are trying to do urban renewal you are trying to stabilize in part the housing structure. You are not only concerned with the construction of newer houses, which is very important for low-income families, for disabled persons and for the elderly, but you also have to take a look at the existing housing stock.

In cities again such as Winnipeg and Winnipeg North Centre where most people are renters, the quality of the house is not only dependent upon their own efforts, but also dependent upon the efforts of the landlords. Winnipeg used rental RRAP more extensively than any other city in the country.

Mr. Redway: And Montreal.

Mr. Walker: And Montreal. Of course those are the two cities which stood up to the government and asked that that program be continued. The silence of the minister on that issue last year is well remembered. Toronto has another set of problems. We are asking you to deal with the problems of Winnipeg tonight.

As the minister has taken an interest in this point, he will know that rental RRAP was very successful in downtown Winnipeg.

As Winnipeg housing stock continues to age, the fact that renewal has not taken place, the fact that there are no market dynamics which cause people to invest in housing in a substantial way, and the fact that there is no access to programming make it even more difficult for families and individuals to begin to redevelop those houses.

The reason this debate comes at a very crucial time is that the core area initiative, the second phase of it, is coming to a close next year. There have been no measures put on the table by the federal government to renew that. Not only do we have Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation on its own withdrawing from the city of Winnipeg, we now find that the federal government as a group—all the ministries whether it is employment, transport or the ERDA agreements—is withdrawing its support for the older neighbourhoods in Winnipeg.

As a result, people who are working in housing projects in North Winnipeg, those who are trying to see what they can do about North Point Douglas, those who are looking at the question of the homeless or North Main, and those who are trying to figure out ways of repairing homes in the Woolsley area are turning to their political leaders at all three levels of government and asking: "Why aren't you helping us this time?" Each level of government is turning to the other looking for a signal of support, looking for somebody who will stand up and say: "All right, let's begin to reconstruct these neighbourhoods".

It is a total package to make a neighbourhood work. It requires improved policing and streets. It requires the city to spend a lot of money on infrastructure. It requires the provincial government to make sure that its programming in areas such as welfare are in proper condition. It is also requires the federal government to step forward with the needed capital so that the individual units are also in good shape.

Of particular concern in downtown Winnipeg is the plight of our many aboriginal peoples. It is estimated that within my constituency alone there are more than 20,000 aboriginal people. One of the areas that this government has cut back the greatest amount of money is moneys available for aboriginal groups to develop housing projects in an urban environment. Because of that these groups are unable either to access capital, expertise, or land. None of the components needed for housing projects are available to them.

• (2120)

As the quality of housing and rental units continues to decline because of rental RRAP no longer being available, and as individual families because of lack of jobs cannot buy their own homes and begin to fix them up, the cycle of decline has been accentuated. People are turning to the government right now and saying: "Give us some hope. Give us some reason to expect that in the next couple of years we will see a renewal of the core

area initiative in Winnipeg and a redevelopment of our neighbourhoods".

Winnipeg in this respect is the best image for understanding the decline of urban Canada as affected by housing policy. In one extreme, a city like Toronto, where affordable housing escapes middle class and working class families—

Mr. Mills: Or is non-existent.

Mr. Walker: "Or is non-existent", as a member from Toronto properly points out. Then Winnipeg is the opposite extreme on the continuum, having absolutely no access to capital to renovate those homes and rebuild the neighbourhoods.

We have asked the government to listen to these points today and to consider that it has a proper role. Over the years people have come to expect the federal government to understand the impact it has on our cities through its housing, employment, transportation, and regional development policies. It is part of the infrastructure, and because it is not contributing to the infrastructure it is contributing to the problems. As people get more anxious for support, they lose hope when they see the federal government refusing to intervene or get involved.

I ask the minister to reconsider the hardships he is creating for people in Winnipeg and to participate more fully in programs such as the core area initiative and other programs which will provide housing for all Canadians.

Hon. Alan Redway (Minister of State (Housing)): Mr. Speaker, I listened intently to the hon. member's comments, particularly his comment that since 1984 the federal government had been withdrawing from housing in urban Canada. I have to tell you and the hon. member that those comments are absolutely wrong. The fact is that since 1984 when this government came to office some 70,000 new units of social housing in urban Canada have been provided with assistance from this government.

In the previous corresponding period of time under the former government, supported by the hon. member, only some 36,000 units of housing were put in place for assistance.

When this government came to office the federal budget for housing was $1.4 billion. Today it is some $1.8 billion. At least I hope it will be that amount after tonight. The hon. member and his party have put a motion forward this evening, which if he and his party vote for it, could very well mean that there will be no money for housing at the federal level this year as a result of that motion and that vote.

Does the hon. member intend to vote to support the motion that his party has put forward and to strike out all federal money for housing this year?

Mr. Walker: Perhaps the minister, coming from municipal government, is unfamiliar with the House rules and how one proceeds to challenge the government. The purpose of our motion is to challenge the inadequacy of the programs. Of course I will make every effort to challenge the government and support my party in this challenge.

We spent the last year going across the country on a housing task force. Although the minister likes to pick up his pieces of paper and read off how many housing units he has provided and so forth, did we find any Canadians whatsoever coming to our task force and saying: "You guys are on the wrong track. I cannot believe how much money this government is providing. I cannot believe how they have made it easy to buy a house in Toronto. I cannot believe how easy it is to get an apartment fixed up". Nobody came.

This is typical of the comments we received. For example, the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations stated: "The federal government has not adequately carried out its trust and fiscal responsibility regarding shelter for Indian people. The history of policy shifts and funding mechanisms leads one to believe that conditions will not change unless serious consideration is given to a long-term strategy with input on policy development by Indian people".

That is the testimony of one group. I could stand here like the minister would like us to do and read from documents and reports, but the spirit of commitment is not there. That is what people are telling us and that is what the people have asked us to express through this motion in the House. They want us to make the government aware that although it might be content and might want to think that it is doing a lot, the reality is that it is not doing anywhere near enough to help out the people of Canada.

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, I listened attentively to the comments of my colleague. I was behind the curtain a few moments ago when he made an excellent speech to all of us, which we fully appreciated, including the minister across the way. I know the minister, being as partisan as he is, cannot compliment my colleague the way he should, so I will do so on his behalf and on behalf of all of members

here tonight in the truly objective way in which you would want me to, of course.

I want to ask my colleague about the effects of the goods and services tax on housing. My colleague, who is very knowledgeable in the area of housing, will know that the goods and services tax will add approximately $2,000 to $3,000 to the cost of an average home. This is according to the Canadian Home Builders Association. Depending on the actual cost of the home, it could even be significantly more as other groups have intimated. My very distinguished and learned colleague from Thunder Bay indicates to me that it could actually be in the area of $5,000.

The question that I want to ask my colleague who spoke previously is the following one. The minister says through the propaganda—I am sorry, Mr. Speaker, not through the propaganda; that was a slip of the tongue and I apologize for it. He says through the information leaflets that have been sent out by his government that there will be no impact on housing affordability.

I ask my colleague whom he thinks we should believe: the Canadian Home Builders Association that knows what it is talking about, or the government across the way with its propaganda?

Mr. Walker: That question gets to the heart of the matter and the difference in the strategies developed by this party over the years as compared to the government.

For example, in the early 1980s when we were faced with inflationary pressures we developed what we called the six and five strategy. The member here remembers that strategy very well and we very quickly got the situation under control.

The strategy here is what I call the 14–7 strategy: 14 per cent mortgage rates, 7 per cent GST. If that is their response to inflationary pressures it will in fact ruin the housing market even more than it is.

For the average family trying desperately to accumulate savings from perhaps two people working together, trying to save $5,000, $10,000 or $15,000 to get started and trying to maintain monthly payments, it is going to be an incredible expense to them. I cannot imagine a more difficult situation than trying to counsel a young family of 25–year–olds to 30–year–olds with a couple of children trying to figure out how to put together a house. I would be almost remiss if I could give them any sense of hope with this government in place. I think I would be telling them a falsehood to say that it would be possible for them to do it. They will have to wait until there is a change of heart, and I think a change of heart will only come when there is a change of government.

Mr. Boudria: Let's do it now.

Mr. Walker: The sooner the better. Perhaps this vote tonight will be an opportunity for Canadians to indicate to this government just how angry and how frustrated they are. People deserve housing. They deserve food. They deserve to be looked after. They deserve a government that wants to look after them. I do not see it. I do not think any member on this side sees any willingness on the part of the government to look after people. I look forward to seeing a change.

Mr. Dennis Mills (Broadview—Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, I listened attentively tonight as we started with the Minister of State for Housing. He made remarks on how he has travelled across the country and listened to single parents, natives, young couples, and seniors. He recognized that there are difficulties. As I listened to his speech I got the feeling that he did not really understand that it is one thing to listen to these people but what are we going to do about the crisis that we are involved with right now in housing?

• (2130)

The member knows that there is a crisis because if you come from Toronto you cannot help but feel the pain, the frustration and the worry. In the city of Toronto today the price for an average home is around $275,000. Young people today are almost ready to throw away the thought of ever owning a home. We do not measure the social costs of this frustration that is building up within our community.

Our caucus, led by the member for London East, met with the Toronto Home Builders Association because we knew we would be having this debate in the House tonight and we wanted to speak directly to those in the community who were involved directly with the home building situation. We can listen to just our own constitu-

ents but then we get a view from only one particular part of the community.

We met today with the leaders of that industry. The fact of the matter is that the housing industry in the greater metropolitan Toronto area has almost totally collapsed. One of the most revealing facts we heard from them today was that Canada Mortgage and Housing statistics are about six to eight months behind. The minister talked about a projection of 200,000 units, but these senior officials today from the Toronto Home Builders Association said that it was more like 100,000.

We know that the Governor of the Bank of Canada bases his interest rate policy on numbers he gets from various departments of government, including Statistics Canada and Canada Mortgage and Housing, from which he develops his models. So the whole premise upon which this government is setting its interest rates is based upon a false set of numbers.

The next thing we know, the Governor of the Bank of Canada is saying that the problem is not as bad as we on this side of the House are saying, so the government continues with its financial plan and the Governor continues with his. In the meantime, something different is really happening.

Right now the situation in the city of Toronto is such that 75 per cent of the people in the home building industry, trades and sub-trades, have not hired any new employees in the last six months. In fact, almost 90 per cent of these people are laying off. They said to us today that the housing crisis is far worse today than it was in 1981-82.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, this will not affect only the home building industry. This will ultimately affect the furniture industry and have a chain effect all the way through the system. Every sector of our economy is affected by the home building industry.

Another affect of the crisis in Toronto today is that many of the fabulous craftsmen who are building beautiful homes go into other sectors when an industry collapses like this. They go into the service sector. When the market recovers, we no longer have those skilled craftsmen. As a result we have to retrain at a tremendous cost. That tremendous cost will again be added on to the cost of our housing.

I know that our time is short here tonight. The bottom line is that this government should not be patting itself on the back for the current housing program that it is unveiling. I know this Minister of Housing is sincere but, as he mentioned in his speech, beyond the economic responsibility this a social responsibility to which we have to attend. This minister has to go back to his cabinet colleagues and be a lot more forceful in terms of his requirements.

The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation is not meant to be a passive operator. Right now it is virtually an organization in mothballs. It needs to be taken out of mothballs. It needs to be much more aggressive. The minister said in his speech that there are municipalities where single by-laws are holding up some of the good intentions and goodwill that he wants to put forward. The national government has many instruments to activate municipalities to move more quickly if the national will of this government is to make sure that affordable housing is available.

Another problem that we have in this country, especially in the greater metropolitan area, is the lack of serviced land. We need to give our municipalities much more help in terms of infrastructure so that serviced land is made available.

I do not shy away from the responsibility of deficit and debt, but at the same time, having people out of work is going to put a tremendous strain on the support systems of this government. That is not going to allow it to keep to its financial plan. The Minister of Housing knows that the best way to get the financial plan of this government in order is to make sure that everybody is working, and he should start with the housing industry.

The Minister of Finance talked today about unit labour costs. His theme this week is unit labour costs. He is really worried about the fact that our unit labour costs are going up. Of course they are going up. If there is no sense of fairness, if one does not get a sense that the job is going to be there for a long time, productivity falls off. The Minister of Finance has stopped listening to the grassroots people in this country. He is not only listening to the technocrats in his own department, he is following those models that are being built in the office of the Governor of the Bank of Canada which are 20 years outdated.

They say that there is not a problem in Toronto. I can tell you that there are bankers who are scared silly because of people who are walking away from deposits on homes. Some are walking away from deposits of as much as $40,000 and $50,000. If we do not put a tighter

focus on this housing crisis, we are going to lose two or three trust companies.

I am not suggesting for a minute that this is an easy problem to solve. However, I am suggesting that this is a problem that needs almost as much attention as we are putting into the other problem being discussed over at the Conference Centre tonight. We should make sure that we never let this issue be taken off the front burner until we get our interest rates back down to around 11 per cent, so that we can make sure that we have affordable housing and full time jobs are back again.

Hon. Alan Redway (Minister of State (Housing)): Mr. Speaker, I was most interested in the hon. member's comments with respect to the home building industry and his meeting today with its representatives. I was most interested as well in his comments with respect to interest rates.

• (2140)

Recently a writer in *The Toronto Star*—a newspaper which I am sure the hon. member reads on a regular basis—Mr. Warren Potter, had some comments with respect to that. I would like to have the hon. member's comments with respect to Mr. Potter's thoughts on the issue. He said:

> It's easy to guess why serious buyers are holding back. They use the high mortgage interest rates as a rationale, but they are really hoping that the falling house prices will tumble even further.
>
> Builders are crying the blues, but some of them have only themselves to blame.
>
> They've misjudged the market. They've kept on building these monster homes for the Yuppies.
>
> The builders who are really hurting are those who, like the sellers of resale homes, refused to believe that the housing boom would end.

I wonder if the hon. member has some thoughts and comments with respect to that point of view on the housing situation.

Mr. Mills: Mr. Speaker, first of all I want to tell the hon. minister that I do not read *The Toronto Star* regularly. I am not familiar with the specific article to which he refers, but I think that Warren Potter is correct to the extent that the province and the municipalities have made a mistake in the plan of subdivisions they have been approving in the last three or four years in the greater metropolitan Toronto area.

When I drive up Bayview Avenue in Richmond Hill just south of the Aurora area I see homes that cost $700,000 or $800,000 and yet I hear of projects like Queensville Properties north of Queensville where they are trying to produce close to 5,000 affordable units at $150,000 apiece but are having problems getting their sewage allocation and zoning. I think there is something wrong with that.

My point is that the national government, with its levers, its resources and its access to various instruments, should come in and correct those situations. It can control the cash to the provinces and to the municipalities. It can use all those instruments. That is how Canada Mortgage and Housing came into being.

I have no problem with cutting back on some of those $700,000 and $800,000 units in Toronto because they are not serving anyone.

Mr. Joe Comuzzi (Thunder Bay—Nipigon): Mr. Speaker, this may be the single most important debate that the people in Canada who are watching this debate this evening and thinking of purchasing a home will view this year and for years to come.

I want to compliment my friend and colleague from London East who moved the motion today in order that we could get into a debate on the vital area of housing and the crisis of housing in Canada.

I looked several times towards the Chair as members on this side of the House were speaking, Mr. Speaker, and I am sure that you were as impressed as I was with the wealth of knowledge and depth of information that the member for Winnipeg North Centre and the member for Broadview—Greenwood have on this vital issue and the crisis in which we find ourselves in the housing situation and the housing industry in Canada today. I am sure that after my short intervention you will be as impressed with our member for Eglinton—Lawrence who has some very important words on this issue.

We have heard a lot about the problems that have faced our housing industry since 1984. I want to reiterate some of the things I have heard in this House since this debate began which really show the crisis we face. One point three million Canadians are paying well over 30 per cent of their combined incomes for shelter. As you know,

30 per cent is the maximum they should be paying and they are paying 40 per cent, 50 per cent and sometimes 60 per cent just to provide shelter for themselves and their families.

Forty per cent of single parents are living in accommodation which is below the minimum standards acceptable in the country.

We have talked about caring for our seniors. Forty per cent of our single seniors spend their final years spending in excess of 50 per cent of their income just for accommodation.

In Ontario alone, as the member for Broadwood—Greenwood stated, 54,000 families in Ontario are waiting to find some form of affordable housing. Today, with the economy that the government has created, the interest rate is soaring to such a rate that the rate on a one-year mortgage exceeds 15 per cent. That takes so many people out of the market. Their dream of owning a home has to be set aside for the next few years until the Liberals take power and bring in a more acceptable program for affordable housing so that our young people can afford to realize their national dream.

Those are just some of the issues that I am sure you are interested in hearing, Mr. Speaker. I wish I had more time to expand on them.

Let me close my few remarks by talking about what I consider to be the national dream for all young Canadian families, young couples who are married with children. Their dream is to own a home. In the economy that has been created by the government since 1984, there is not a chance that they can own a home, given that the average three-bedroom bungalow now costs about $140,000 and interest rates exceed 15 per cent. When most of us buy a home, we have to mortgage it. The payments far exceed that young couple's combined income.

Your generation and mine, Mr. Speaker, and perhaps some of the other generations in the House, have created an economy that requires two incomes in order to purchase a home. This government has failed to provide proper daycare services to enable both husband and wife to go out to work so that they can afford a home.

These are the issues that are facing our country today that are so vital to young married couples in our communities with young children who require, not a home, but basic shelter so that they can live in comfort and dignity, as all Canadians should, and realize their Canadian dream. It is the actions of the government that are depriving them of this dream.

Hon. Alan Redway (Minister of State (Housing)): Mr. Speaker, I was most interested to hear the hon. member's comments with respect to the way his party hopes that it would have the opportunity to manage the economy in the coming years.

I think back to the days prior to the 1984 election and the inspiration that brought me to run for office federally. I remember, for instance, under the former Liberal government, astronomical inflation shooting through the roof, followed by astronomical interest rates with mortgage interest rates reaching 23 per cent. This was followed by devastating bankruptcies and double digit unemployment. That is compared to the unemployment rate that we have today which is very low, one of the lowest in years.

Is this the kind of management of the economy that the hon. member would like to bring back to the country?

Mr. Comuzzi: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the hon. minister's question. It really zeroes in on exactly what I said earlier in my remarks.

What the hon. minister was talking about in the early 1980s was a world economy. What was happening in Canada was being paralleled in every other country in the world. Canada was not alone. The United States was experiencing the inflationary trend and the high interest trend. England was going through the same type of economic revolution. Every free country in the world was going through the same situation.

The difference today, in answer to my friend, is that Canada is going through this terrible period of high inflation, high prices, and high interest rates, but our friends in other parts of the world are not experiencing this. That is the big difference. That is where the mismanagement of this economy comes in.

• (2150)

Mr. Joseph Volpe (Eglinton—Lawrence): Mr. Speaker, I, too, want to add my voice to those of my hon. colleagues who have spoken most eloquently about the deficiency in the housing market in Canada, and most especially in the Toronto area.

I want to compliment my colleague from Broadview—Greenwood who highlighted a very serious problem in the city of Toronto and southern Ontario.

It is no wonder that the problem is as serious as it is when we look at the government's record of cutbacks in CMHC and funds available for the stimulation and development of the housing market. We have inventory of some 200,000 first-time buyers in Canada. In Ontario, we have a prediction of only 52,000 new homes for this year when the Treasurer of Ontario had predicted at least 29,000 more.

This is a very serious problem, most especially in the Toronto area. When one looks at some of the figures and the incomes, one is tempted to say that this is fat-cat city, that people are well-off, and that there is not a problem. However, in Toronto, the average mortgage and taxes for a typical family amount to some $31,829 per annum, when the Canadian average is only somewhere around $17,500. In Toronto, the average percentage of income for financing a house is 49.8 this year, compared to the Canadian average of 35.3 per cent. In 1981, in Toronto that percentage was only 33.1. There has been an increase of well over 15 per cent. In Canada, that average has been maintained at about 34 per cent.

The average family in Toronto can only afford a house in the vicinity of $159,000, yet the average price is well over $100,000 more than that. There are over 500,000 tenant households in metro Toronto, with 372,000 of them considered potential first-time buyers. Yet, there will be 29,000 fewer new homes than predicted by the Treasurer of Ontario.

There is a dual problem with that. The dual problem is that the lethargy in the construction industry has spin-offs, all of them negative, for what is happening in industry as whole.

Of Ontario's workforce, 12 per cent, or some 552,000 men and women, in 1989 were employed in the construction industry. That industry is expected to grow by only 1.3 per cent in this coming year. That is well below the growth rate of all other industries. In the Toronto area, 35,000 workers, as my colleague pointed out, have lost their jobs and many more will join them. This is 35,000 in the construction industry, in skilled trades, where the average salary is somewhere between $25 and $29 per hour.

I know that the minister will agree with me that the big problem stems from the government's financial and interest rates policies. In fact, every increase of 1 per cent in interest rates between 9 and 14 per cent—and we are well in that range—eliminates 100,000 potential first-time home buyers. Every increase of one per cent in interest rates decreases the construction industry's output by 2.5 to 3 per cent and results in the loss of some 40,000 jobs. We are well in that range already.

This government has got to change its policies.

Mr. Ken Monteith (Elgin): Mr. Speaker, I realize that my time is short, but I am pleased to address this House tonight on a matter which concerns a large number of our fellow Canadians who look to their government for help.

I refer to the individuals, families, and seniors in search of affordable housing: people who look to their government for what most of us in this House take for granted, people who like all of us aspire to live decently and in dignity, people who without help will need to make untold sacrifices so that their children do not go without a roof over their heads, people who without help may not even be able to make these sacrifices and will go without a place they can call their home.

Every day this House hears about the need to assist this industry, that province, or this other town. Every day this government explains how the competing needs of the people of this land are weighted and the strategies that are in place. In many ways there are several analogies to be made between the single mother seeking a decent home for her children and the person who lost a job, between the senior facing rising rents and a low income worker unable to make ends meet. The common thread between these people is the need for a caring government.

My colleagues and I feel for these people. We feel a need to reach out to them and we do, but not to the extent we would like to. This is when we become angry because with all the resources that this country should be able to draw on to help those experiencing hard times, the government of all Canadians must at the same time practise fiscal restraint because the legacy of the previous government has been a series of ill-conceived programs and unpaid expenditures.

The government reaches out but must play the delicate balancing act between competing demands on the public purse. This is responsible government, the type of government which if it had been in place earlier would have avoided the financial mess bequeathed by over two decades of mismanagement.

When I watched the proceedings of the Charest Commission I was touched by the words of Mr. Jim Sinclair when he recalled his childhood as a Métis in Saskatchewan living in a barracks. He touched the fibre of what being a Canadian means to most of us. What Mr. Sinclair related meant more to me than any of the learned dissertations about the constitutional basis for the use of federal spending powers. When he spoke I understood that the powers were not only rooted in the law of the land but also in his heart and the country's heart. When he spoke I told myself that neither he nor his children should again experience the violence of poverty and that Canada should continue to offer the type of housing programs which offer the poor and less fortunate among us a chance to live in dignity and to become productive citizens.

The measures that this government has taken since my colleague the present Minister of National Defence stood in this House late in 1985 were and continue to be measures to serve those who need the government's help most.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): It being ten o'clock p.m., it is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 81(16) and order made Thursday, May 31, 1990, to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the business of supply.

• (2200)

[*Translation*]

The House will now proceed to the deferred division on Mr. Gardiner's amendment to Motion No. 2.

Call in the members.

The House divided on the amendment (Mr. Gardiner), which was negatived on the following division:

(*Division No. 276*)

YEAS

Members

Althouse
Blackburn (Brant)
Brewin
Gardiner
Hunter
Benjamin
Blaikie
de Jong
Heap
Kristiansen
Langan (Mission—Coquitlam)
Mitchell
Nystrom
Riis
Skelly (North Island—Powell River)
Stupich
Whittaker—23
McLaughlin
Murphy
Parker
Robinson
Skelly (Comox—Alberni)
Taylor

NAYS

Members

Allmand
Andre
Baker
Berger
Bertrand
Blackburn (Jonquière)
Blenkarn
Bouchard (Roberval)
Bourgault
Brightwell
Cadieux
Campbell (South West Nova)
Cardiff
Catterall
Champagne (Champlain)
Clark (Brandon—Souris)
Cole
Comuzzi
Cooper
Côté
Crawford
Crosby (Halifax West)
Darling
Della Noce
Dick
Dobbie
Dorin
Duplessis
Epp
Feltham
Ferland
Flis
Fontana
Friesen
Gagliano
Gibeau
Greene
Guilbault
Harvard
Hawkes
Hockin
Holtmann
Horning
Hughes
Jelinek
Jordan
Kempling
Koury
Layton
Leblanc (Longueuil)
Lewis
Lopez
MacDonald (Dartmouth)
MacLaren
Maheu
Manley
Marleau
Masse
Mazankowski
McDermid
McGuire
McLean
Mifflin
Mills
Moore
Nowlan
Parent
Anderson
Atkinson
Belsher
Bernier
Bird
Blais
Bosley
Boudria
Boyer
Browes
Callbeck
Campbell (Vancouver Centre)
Casey
Chadwick
Clancy
Clifford
Collins
Cook
Corbeil
Couture
Crosbie (St. John's West)
Danis
DeBlois
Desjardins
Dionne
Domm
Duhamel
Edwards
Fee
Ferguson
Finestone
Fontaine
Foster
Gaffney
Gauthier
Gray (Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine)
Grey (Beaver River)
Harb
Harvey (Chicoutimi)
Hicks
Hogue
Hopkins
Hudon
James
Johnson
Kaplan
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)
Langlois
LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso)
Lee
Littlechild
MacAulay
MacDougall (Timiskaming)
MacLellan
Malone
Marin
Martin (Lincoln)
Mayer
McCreath
McDougall (St. Paul's)
McKnight
Merrithew
Milliken
Monteith
Nicholson
O'Kurley
Peterson

Phinney
Plourde
Pronovost
Prud'homme
Reid
Richardson
Robichaud
Schneider
Scott (Hamilton—Wentworth)
Soetens
Speller
Stewart
Tétreault
Thompson
Tremblay (Rosemont)
Tremblay (Lotbinière)
Valcourt
Van de Walle
Vézina
Vincent
Walker
Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek—Assiniboia)
Wilson (Etobicoke Centre)
Worthy
Plamondon
Porter
Proud
Redway
Ricard
Rideout
Saint-Julien
Scott (Victoria—Haliburton)
Siddon
Sparrow
Stevenson
Tardif
Thacker
Thorkelson
Tremblay (Québec-Est)
Turner (Halton—Peel)
Vanclief
Vankoughnet
Vien
Volpe
White
Winegard
Young (Gloucester)—181

Madam Deputy Speaker: I declare the amendment lost.

[*English*]

The next question is on Motion No. 2 standing in the name of Mr. de Cotret. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

Madam Deputy Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

Madam Deputy Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

Madam Deputy Speaker: In my opinion the yeas have it.

And more than five members having risen:

Madam Deputy Speaker: Shall I dispense with the ringing of the bells?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:

(*Division No. 277*)

YEAS

Members

Allmand
Andre
Baker
Belsher
Bernier
Bird
Blais
Bosley
Boudria
Boyer
Browes
Callbeck
Campbell (Vancouver Centre)
Casey
Chadwick
Clancy
Clifford
Collins
Cook
Corbeil
Couture
Crosbie (St. John's West)
Danis
DeBlois
Desjardins
Dionne
Domm
Duhamel
Edwards
Fee
Ferguson
Finestone
Fontaine
Foster
Gaffney
Gauthier
Gray (Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine)
Grey (Beaver River)
Harb
Harvey (Chicoutimi)
Hicks
Hogue
Hopkins
Hudon
James
Johnson
Kaplan
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)
Langlois
LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso)
Lee
Littlechild
MacAulay
MacDougall (Timiskaming)
MacLellan
Malone
Marin
Martin (Lincoln)
Mayer
McCreath
McDougall (St. Paul's)
McKnight
Merrithew
Milliken
Monteith
Nicholson
O'Kurley
Peterson
Plamondon
Porter
Proud
Redway
Ricard
Rideout
Saint-Julien
Scott (Victoria—Haliburton)
Siddon
Sparrow
Stevenson
Tardif
Thacker
Thorkelson
Tremblay (Québec-Est)
Turner (Halton—Peel)
Vanclief
Vankoughnet
Vien
Volpe
White
Assiniboia)
Winegard
Young (Gloucester)—182
Anderson
Atkinson
Bellemare
Berger
Bertrand
Blackburn (Jonquière)
Blenkarn
Bouchard (Roberval)
Bourgault
Brightwell
Cadieux
Campbell (South West Nova)
Cardiff
Catterall
Champagne (Champlain)
Clark (Brandon—Souris)
Cole
Comuzzi
Cooper
Côté
Crawford
Crosby (Halifax West)
Darling
Della Noce
Dick
Dobbie
Dorin
Duplessis
Epp
Feltham
Ferland
Flis
Fontana
Friesen
Gagliano
Gibeau
Greene
Guilbault
Harvard
Hawkes
Hockin
Holtmann
Horning
Hughes
Jelinek
Jordan
Kempling
Koury
Layton
Leblanc (Longueuil)
Lewis
Lopez
MacDonald (Dartmouth)
MacLaren
Maheu
Manley
Marleau
Masse
Mazankowski
McDermid
McGuire
McLean
Mifflin
Mills
Moore
Nowlan
Parent
Phinney
Plourde
Pronovost
Prud'homme
Reid
Richardson
Robichaud
Schneider
Scott (Hamilton—Wentworth)
Soetens
Speller
Stewart
Tétreault
Thompson
Tremblay (Rosemont)
Tremblay (Lotbinière)
Valcourt
Van de Walle
Vézina
Vincent
Walker
Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek—
Wilson (Etobicoke Centre)
Worthy

NAYS

Members

Althouse
Blackburn (Brant)
Brewin
Gardiner
Hunter
Langan (Mission—Coquitlam)
Mitchell
Nystrom
Riis
Skelly (North Island—Powell River)
Stupich
Whittaker—23

Benjamin
Blaikie
de Jong
Heap
Kristiansen
McLaughlin
Murphy
Parker
Robinson
Skelly (Comox—Alberni)
Taylor

Madam Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

[*Translation*]

The next vote is on Motion No. 3 (Mr. de Cotret). Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the said motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

Madam Deputy Speaker: All those in favour will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

Madam Deputy Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

Madam Deputy Speaker: In my opinion, the yeas have it.

And more than five Members having risen:

Madam Deputy Speaker: Shall I dispense with the ringing the bells?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

• (2240)

The House divided on the motion (Mr. de Cotret), which was agreed to on the following division:

(*Division No. 278*)

YEAS

Members

Althouse
Andre
Belsher
Bernier
Bird
Blackburn (Jonquière)
Blais
Bosley
Bourgault
Brewin
Browes
Campbell (Vancouver Centre)
Casey
Champagne (Champlain)
Clifford
Collins
Cooper
Côté
Crosbie (St. John's West)
Danis
DeBlois
Della Noce
Dick
Domm
Duplessis
Epp
Feltham
Fontaine
Gardiner
Gray (Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine)
Guilbault
Hawkes
Hicks
Hogue
Horning
Hughes
James
Johnson
Koury
Langan (Mission—Coquitlam)
Layton
Lewis
Lopez
Malone
Martin (Lincoln)
Mayer
McCreath
McDougall (St. Paul's)
McLaughlin
Merrithew
Monteith
Murphy
Nowlan
O'Kurley
Plamondon
Porter
Redway
Ricard
Riis
Saint-Julien
Scott (Victoria—Haliburton)
Siddon
Skelly (Comox—Alberni)
Sparrow
Stupich
Taylor
Thacker
Thorkelson
Tremblay (Québec-Est)
Turner (Halton—Peel)
Van de Walle
Vézina
Vincent
Whittaker
Winegard

Anderson
Atkinson
Benjamin
Bertrand
Blackburn (Brant)
Blaikie
Blenkarn
Bouchard (Roberval)
Boyer
Brightwell
Cadieux
Cardiff
Chadwick
Clark (Brandon—Souris)
Cole
Cook
Corbeil
Couture
Crosby (Halifax West)
Darling
de Jong
Desjardins
Dobbie
Dorin
Edwards
Fee
Ferland
Friesen
Gibeau
Greene
Harvey (Chicoutimi)
Heap
Hockin
Holtmann
Hudon
Hunter
Jelinek
Kempling
Kristiansen
Langlois
Leblanc (Longueuil)
Littlechild
MacDougall (Timiskaming)
Marin
Masse
Mazankowski
McDermid
McKnight
McLean
Mitchell
Moore
Nicholson
Nystrom
Parker
Plourde
Pronovost
Reid
Richardson
Robinson
Schneider
Scott (Hamilton—Wentworth)
Skelly (North Island—Powell River)
Soetens
Stevenson
Tardif
Tétreault
Thompson
Tremblay (Rosemont)
Tremblay (Lotbinière)
Valcourt
Vankoughnet
Vien
White
Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek—Assiniboia)
Wilson (Etobicoke Centre)
Worthy—151

NAYS

Members

Allmand
Bellemare
Boudria
Callbeck
Catterall
Comuzzi
Dionne
Ferguson
Flis
Foster
Gagliano
Harb
Hopkins
Baker
Berger
Caccia
Campbell (South West Nova)
Clancy
Crawford
Duhamel
Finestone
Fontana
Gaffney
Gauthier
Harvard
Jordan

Kaplan
LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso)
MacAulay
MacLaren
Maheu
Marleau
Mifflin
Mills
Peterson
Proud
Rideout
Simmons
Stewart
Volpe
Young (Gloucester)—55

Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)
Lee
MacDonald (Dartmouth)
MacLellan
Manley
McGuire
Milliken
Parent
Phinney
Prud'homme
Robichaud
Speller
Vanclief
Walker

Madam Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

CONCURRENCE IN MAIN ESTIMATES

Hon. Harvie Andre (for the President of the Treasury Board) moved:

That the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1991, laid upon the table, Thursday February 22, 1990, except the items disposed of earlier this day and less the amounts voted in Interim Supply, be concurred in.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

Madam Deputy Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

Madam Deputy Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

And more than five members having risen:

Madam Deputy Speaker: Shall I dispense with the ringing of the bells?

Some hon. members: Dispense.

The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:

(*Division No. 279*)

YEAS

Members

Anderson
Atkinson
Bernier
Bird
Blais
Bosley
Bourgault
Brightwell
Cadieux
Cardiff
Chadwick
Clark (Brandon—Souris)
Cole
Cook
Corbeil
Couture
Crosby (Halifax West)
Darling
Della Noce
Dick
Domm
Duplessis
Epp
Feltham
Fontaine
Gibeau
Greene
Harvey (Chicoutimi)
Hicks
Hogue
Hudon
James
Johnson
Koury
Layton
Lewis
Lopez
Malone
Martin (Lincoln)
Mayer
McCreath
McDougall (St. Paul's)
McLean
Monteith
Nicholson
O'Kurley
Plourde
Pronovost
Reid
Richardson
Schneider
Scott (Hamilton—Wentworth)
Soetens
Stevenson
Tétreault
Thompson
Tremblay (Rosemont)
Tremblay (Lotbinière)
Valcourt
Vankoughnet
Vien
White
Assiniboia)
Winegard

Andre
Belsher
Bertrand
Blackburn (Jonquière)
Blenkarn
Bouchard (Roberval)
Boyer
Browes
Campbell (Vancouver Centre)
Casey
Champagne (Champlain)
Clifford
Collins
Cooper
Côté
Crosbie (St. John's West)
Danis
DeBlois
Desjardins
Dobbie
Dorin
Edwards
Fee
Ferland
Friesen
Gray (Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine)
Guilbault
Hawkes
Hockin
Horning
Hughes
Jelinek
Kempling
Langlois
Leblanc (Longueuil)
Littlechild
MacDougall (Timiskaming)
Marin
Masse
Mazankowski
McDermid
McKnight
Merrithew
Moore
Nowlan
Plamondon
Porter
Redway
Ricard
Saint-Julien
Scott (Victoria—Haliburton)
Siddon
Sparrow
Tardif
Thacker
Thorkelson
Tremblay (Québec-Est)
Turner (Halton—Peel)
Van de Walle
Vézina
Vincent
Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek—
Wilson (Etobicoke Centre)
Worthy—127

NAYS

Members

Allmand
Baker
Benjamin
Blackburn (Brant)
Boudria
Caccia
Campbell (South West Nova)
Clancy
Crawford
Dionne
Ferguson
Flis
Foster
Gagliano
Gauthier
Harb
Heap
Hunter
Kaplan
Kindy
Langan (Mission—Coquitlam)
Lee
MacDonald (Dartmouth)

Althouse
Bellemare
Berger
Blaikie
Brewin
Callbeck
Catterall
Comuzzi
de Jong
Duhamel
Finestone
Fontana
Gaffney
Gardiner
Grey (Beaver River)
Harvard
Hopkins
Jordan
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)
Kristiansen
LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso)
MacAulay
MacLaren

MacLellan
Manley
McGuire
Mifflin
Mills
Murphy
Parent
Peterson
Proud
Rideout
Robichaud
Simmons
Skelly (Comox—Alberni)
Stewart
Taylor
Volpe
Whittaker
Maheu
Marleau
McLaughlin
Milliken
Mitchell
Nystrom
Parker
Phinney
Prud'homme
Riis
Robinson
Skelly (North Island—Powell River)
Speller
Stupich
Vanclief
Walker
Young (Gloucester)—80

Madam Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

[*English*]

CONCURRENCE IN SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES (A), 1990-91

Hon. Harvie Andre (for the President of the Treasury Board) moved:

That the Supplementary Estimates (A) for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1991, laid upon the Table Tuesday, May 22, 1990, be concurred in.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: On division.

Mr. Riis: Madam Speaker, we are not passing this on division. We would like to force a vote on this motion.

Madam Deputy Speaker: May I dispense with the yeas, the nays, and the ringing of the bells?

Point of order, the hon. member for Calgary West.

Mr. Hawkes: Madam Speaker, the House might save some time. It is my understanding that the majority of the members of the House will be voting for this motion on Supplementary Estimates. Is that correct?

I wonder if we were to give an opportunity for anybody who wanted to vote against it to be recorded and the balance of the members who voted on the previous motion be recorded as voting in favour. That might save the House some time.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The House has heard the suggestion made by the hon. member for Calgary West.

Some hon. members: No.

Madam Deputy Speaker: There is not unanimous consent.

The House divided on the motion which was agreed to on the following division:

(Division No. 280)

YEAS

Members

Allmand
Anderson
Atkinson
Bellemare
Benjamin
Bernier
Bird
Blackburn (Jonquière)
Blais
Bosley
Boudria
Boyer
Brightwell
Caccia
Callbeck
Campbell (Vancouver Centre)
Casey
Chadwick
Clancy
Clifford
Collins
Cook
Corbeil
Couture
Crosby (Halifax West)
Darling
de Jong
Desjardins
Dionne
Domm
Duhamel
Edwards
Fee
Ferguson
Finestone
Fontaine
Foster
Gaffney
Gardiner
Gibeau
Greene
Harb
Harvey (Chicoutimi)
Heap
Hockin
Hopkins
Hudon
Hunter
Jelinek
Jordan
Kempling
Koury
Langan (Mission—Coquitlam)
Layton
Leblanc (Longueuil)
Lewis
Lopez
MacDonald (Dartmouth)
MacLaren
Maheu
Manley
Marleau
Masse
Mazankowski
McDermid
McGuire
McLaughlin
Merrithew
Mills
Monteith
Murphy
Althouse
Andre
Baker
Belsher
Berger
Bertrand
Blackburn (Brant)
Blaikie
Blenkarn
Bouchard (Roberval)
Bourgault
Brewin
Browes
Cadieux
Campbell (South West Nova)
Cardiff
Catterall
Champagne (Champlain)
Clark (Brandon—Souris)
Cole
Comuzzi
Cooper
Côté
Crosbie (St. John's West)
Danis
DeBlois
Della Noce
Dick
Dobbie
Dorin
Duplessis
Epp
Feltham
Ferland
Flis
Fontana
Friesen
Gagliano
Gauthier
Gray (Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine)
Guilbault
Harvard
Hawkes
Hicks
Hogue
Horning
Hughes
James
Johnson
Kaplan
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)
Kristiansen
Langlois
LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso)
Lee
Littlechild
MacAulay
MacDougall (Timiskaming)
MacLellan
Malone
Marin
Martin (Lincoln)
Mayer
McCreath
McDougall (St. Paul's)
McKnight
McLean
Mifflin
Mitchell
Moore
Nicholson

Nowlan
O'Kurley
Parker
Phinney
Plourde
Pronovost
Prud'homme
Reid
Richardson
Riis
Robinson
Schneider
Scott (Hamilton—Wentworth)
Skelly (North Island—Powell River)
Soetens
Speller
Stewart
Tardif
Tétreault
Thompson
Tremblay (Rosemont)
Tremblay (Lotbinière)
Valcourt
Van de Walle
Vézina
Vincent
Walker
Whittaker
Assiniboia)
Winegard
Young (Gloucester)—202
Nystrom
Parent
Peterson
Plamondon
Porter
Proud
Redway
Ricard
Rideout
Robichaud
Saint-Julien
Scott (Victoria—Haliburton)
Siddon
Skelly (Comox—Alberni)
Sparrow
Stevenson
Stupich
Taylor
Thacker
Thorkelson
Tremblay (Québec-Est)
Turner (Halton—Peel)
Vanclief
Vankoughnet
Vien
Volpe
White
Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek—
Wilson (Etobicoke Centre)
Worthy

NAYS

Members

nil/aucun

Madam Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

• (2310)

Mr. Riis: Madam Speaker, I believe there are 13 more supply votes. I wonder if you would not find unanimous consent to deem it that we have leave to introduce, that we have first reading of the supply bill, that we have second reading of the supply bill, that we go into committee of the whole and have eight votes. Then we report the bill with no amendment and that we deem it to have been concurred in, we deem it to have been read for the third time and we apply the same vote as we applied on the main concurrence motion.

Mr. Hawkes: Madam Speaker, that is acceptable to members on the government side.

Mr. Gauthier: Same thing here but get it in writing, Madam Speaker.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Let me see if I get it right. Accordingly Bill C-75, an act for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of money for the Public Service of Canada for the financial year ending March 31, 1991, is deemed read a first time, deemed read a second time and referred to a Committee of the Whole, deemed reported back to the House without amendment, deemed concurred in at the report stage and deemed read the third time and passed.

Mr. Andre (for the President of the Treasury Board) moved that Bill C-75, an act for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of money for the Public Service of Canada for the financial year ending March 31, 1991, be read the first time.

The House divided on the motion which was agreed to on the following division:

(*Division No. 281*)

YEAS

Members

Anderson
Atkinson
Bernier
Bird
Blais
Bosley
Bourgault
Brightwell
Cadieux
Cardiff
Chadwick
Clark (Brandon—Souris)
Cole
Cook
Corbeil
Couture
Crosby (Halifax West)
Darling
Della Noce
Dick
Domm
Duplessis
Epp
Feltham
Fontaine
Gibeau
Greene
Harvey (Chicoutimi)
Hicks
Hogue
Hudon
James
Johnson
Koury
Layton
Lewis
Lopez
Malone
Martin (Lincoln)
Mayer
McCreath
McDougall (St. Paul's)
McLean
Monteith
Nicholson
O'Kurley
Plourde
Pronovost
Reid
Richardson
Schneider
Scott (Hamilton—Wentworth)
Soetens
Stevenson
Tétreault
Thompson
Andre
Belsher
Bertrand
Blackburn (Jonquière)
Blenkarn
Bouchard (Roberval)
Boyer
Browes
Campbell (Vancouver Centre)
Casey
Champagne (Champlain)
Clifford
Collins
Cooper
Côté
Crosbie (St. John's West)
Danis
DeBlois
Desjardins
Dobbie
Dorin
Edwards
Fee
Ferland
Friesen
Gray (Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine)
Guilbault
Hawkes
Hockin
Horning
Hughes
Jelinek
Kempling
Langlois
Leblanc (Longueuil)
Littlechild
MacDougall (Timiskaming)
Marin
Masse
Mazankowski
McDermid
McKnight
Merrithew
Moore
Nowlan
Plamondon
Porter
Redway
Ricard
Saint-Julien
Scott (Victoria—Haliburton)
Siddon
Sparrow
Tardif
Thacker
Thorkelson

Tremblay (Rosemont)
Tremblay (Lotbinière)
Valcourt
Vankoughnet
Vien
White
Assiniboia)
Winegard

Tremblay (Québec-Est)
Turner (Halton—Peel)
Van de Walle
Vézina
Vincent
Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek—
Wilson (Etobicoke Centre)
Worthy—127

NAYS

Members

Allmand
Baker
Benjamin
Blackburn (Brant)
Boudria
Caccia
Campbell (South West Nova)
Clancy
Crawford
Dionne
Ferguson
Flis
Foster
Gagliano
Gauthier
Harb
Heap
Hunter
Kaplan
Kindy
Langan (Mission—Coquitlam)
Lee
MacDonald (Dartmouth)
MacLellan
Manley
McGuire
Mifflin
Mills
Murphy
Parent
Peterson
Proud
Rideout
Robichaud
Simmons
Skelly (Comox—Alberni)
Stewart
Taylor
Volpe
Whittaker

Althouse
Bellemare
Berger
Blaikie
Brewin
Callbeck
Catterall
Comuzzi
de Jong
Duhamel
Finestone
Fontana
Gaffney
Gardiner
Grey (Beaver River)
Harvard
Hopkins
Jordan
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)
Kristiansen
LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso)
MacAulay
MacLaren
Maheu
Marleau
McLaughlin
Milliken
Mitchell
Nystrom
Parker
Phinney
Prud'homme
Riis
Robinson
Skelly (North Island—Powell River)
Speller
Stupich
Vanclief
Walker
Young (Gloucester)—80

Madam Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Bill read the first time.

Mr. Andre (for the President of the Treasury Board) thereupon moved that the bill be read the second time and referred to the Committee of the Whole.

The House divided on the motion which was agreed to on the following division:

(*Division No. 282*)

YEAS

Members

Anderson
Atkinson
Bernier
Bird
Blais

Andre
Belsher
Bertrand
Blackburn (Jonquière)
Blenkarn

Bosley
Bourgault
Brightwell
Cadieux
Cardiff
Chadwick
Clark (Brandon—Souris)
Cole
Cook
Corbeil
Couture
Crosby (Halifax West)
Darling
Della Noce
Dick
Domm
Duplessis
Epp
Feltham
Fontaine
Gibeau
Greene
Harvey (Chicoutimi)
Hicks
Hogue
Hudon
James
Johnson
Koury
Layton
Lewis
Lopez
Malone
Martin (Lincoln)
Mayer
McCreath
McDougall (St. Paul's)
McLean
Monteith
Nicholson
O'Kurley
Plourde
Pronovost
Reid
Richardson
Schneider
Scott (Hamilton—Wentworth)
Soetens
Stevenson
Têtreault
Thompson
Tremblay (Rosemont)
Tremblay (Lotbinière)
Valcourt
Vankoughnet
Vien
White
Assiniboia)
Winegard

Bouchard (Roberval)
Boyer
Browes
Campbell (Vancouver Centre)
Casey
Champagne (Champlain)
Clifford
Collins
Cooper
Côté
Crosbie (St. John's West)
Danis
DeBlois
Desjardins
Dobbie
Dorin
Edwards
Fee
Ferland
Friesen
Gray (Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine)
Guilbault
Hawkes
Hockin
Horning
Hughes
Jelinek
Kempling
Langlois
Leblanc (Longueuil)
Littlechild
MacDougall (Timiskaming)
Marin
Masse
Mazankowski
McDermid
McKnight
Merrithew
Moore
Nowlan
Plamondon
Porter
Redway
Ricard
Saint-Julien
Scott (Victoria—Haliburton)
Siddon
Sparrow
Tardif
Thacker
Thorkelson
Tremblay (Québec-Est)
Turner (Halton—Peel)
Van de Walle
Vézina
Vincent
Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek—
Wilson (Etobicoke Centre)
Worthy—127

NAYS

Members

Allmand
Baker
Benjamin
Blackburn (Brant)
Boudria
Caccia
Campbell (South West Nova)
Clancy
Crawford
Dionne
Ferguson
Flis
Foster
Gagliano
Gauthier

Althouse
Bellemare
Berger
Blaikie
Brewin
Callbeck
Catterall
Comuzzi
de Jong
Duhamel
Finestone
Fontana
Gaffney
Gardiner
Grey (Beaver River)

Harb
Heap
Hunter
Kaplan
Kindy
Langan (Mission—Coquitlam)
Lee
MacDonald (Dartmouth)
MacLellan
Manley
McGuire
Mifflin
Mills
Murphy
Parent
Peterson
Proud
Rideout
Robichaud
Simmons
Skelly (Comox—Alberni)
Stewart
Taylor
Volpe
Whittaker
Harvard
Hopkins
Jordan
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)
Kristiansen
LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso)
MacAulay
MacLaren
Maheu
Marleau
McLaughlin
Milliken
Mitchell
Nystrom
Parker
Phinney
Prud'homme
Riis
Robinson
Skelly (North Island—Powell River)
Speller
Stupich
Vanclief
Walker
Young (Gloucester)—80

Madam Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Bill read the second time.

Accordingly, the bill was deemed considered in Committee of the Whole and reported back without amendment.

Mr. Andre (for the President of the Treasury Board) moved that the bill be concurred in.

The House divided on the motion which was agreed to on the following division:

(*Division No. 283*)

YEAS

Members

Anderson
Atkinson
Bernier
Bird
Blais
Bosley
Bourgault
Brightwell
Cadieux
Cardiff
Chadwick
Clark (Brandon—Souris)
Cole
Cook
Corbeil
Couture
Crosby (Halifax West)
Darling
Della Noce
Dick
Domm
Duplessis
Epp
Feltham
Fontaine
Gibeau
Greene
Harvey (Chicoutimi)
Hicks
Hogue
Hudon
Andre
Belsher
Bertrand
Blackburn (Jonquière)
Blenkarn
Bouchard (Roberval)
Boyer
Browes
Campbell (Vancouver Centre)
Casey
Champagne (Champlain)
Clifford
Collins
Cooper
Côté
Crosbie (St. John's West)
Danis
DeBlois
Desjardins
Dobbie
Dorin
Edwards
Fee
Ferland
Friesen
Gray (Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine)
Guilbault
Hawkes
Hockin
Horning
Hughes
James
Johnson
Koury
Layton
Lewis
Lopez
Malone
Martin (Lincoln)
Mayer
McCreath
McDougall (St. Paul's)
McLean
Monteith
Nicholson
O'Kurley
Plourde
Pronovost
Reid
Richardson
Schneider
Scott (Hamilton—Wentworth)
Soetens
Stevenson
Tétreault
Thompson
Tremblay (Rosemont)
Tremblay (Lotbinière)
Valcourt
Vankoughnet
Vien
White
Assiniboia)
Winegard
Jelinek
Kempling
Langlois
Leblanc (Longueuil)
Littlechild
MacDougall (Timiskaming)
Marin
Masse
Mazankowski
McDermid
McKnight
Merrithew
Moore
Nowlan
Plamondon
Porter
Redway
Ricard
Saint-Julien
Scott (Victoria—Haliburton)
Siddon
Sparrow
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Thacker
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Vézina
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Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek—
Wilson (Etobicoke Centre)
Worthy—127

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Heap
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MacDonald (Dartmouth)
MacLellan
Manley
McGuire
Mifflin
Mills
Murphy
Parent
Peterson
Proud
Rideout
Robichaud
Simmons
Skelly (Comox—Alberni)
Stewart
Taylor
Volpe
Whittaker
Althouse
Bellemare
Berger
Blaikie
Brewin
Callbeck
Catterall
Comuzzi
de Jong
Duhamel
Finestone
Fontana
Gaffney
Gardiner
Grey (Beaver River)
Harvard
Hopkins
Jordan
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)
Kristiansen
LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso)
MacAulay
MacLaren
Maheu
Marleau
McLaughlin
Milliken
Mitchell
Nystrom
Parker
Phinney
Prud'homme
Riis
Robinson
Skelly (North Island—Powell River)
Speller
Stupich
Vanclief
Walker
Young (Gloucester)—80

Madam Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Mr. Andre (for the President of the Treasury Board) moved that the bill be read the third time and passed.

The House divided on the motion which was agreed to on the following division:

(*Division No. 284*)

YEAS

Members

Anderson
Atkinson
Bernier
Bird
Blais
Bosley
Bourgault
Brightwell
Cadieux
Cardiff
Chadwick
Clark (Brandon—Souris)
Cole
Cook
Corbeil
Couture
Crosby (Halifax West)
Darling
Della Noce
Dick
Domm
Duplessis
Epp
Feltham
Fontaine
Gibeau
Greene
Harvey (Chicoutimi)
Hicks
Hogue
Hudon
James
Johnson
Koury
Layton
Lewis
Lopez
Malone
Martin (Lincoln)
Mayer
McCreath
McDougall (St. Paul's)
McLean
Monteith
Nicholson
O'Kurley
Plourde
Pronovost
Reid
Richardson
Schneider
Scott (Hamilton—Wentworth)
Soetens
Stevenson
Tétreault
Thompson
Tremblay (Rosemont)
Tremblay (Lotbinière)
Valcourt
Vankoughnet
Vien
White
Assiniboia)
Andre
Belsher
Bertrand
Blackburn (Jonquière)
Blenkarn
Bouchard (Roberval)
Boyer
Browes
Campbell (Vancouver Centre)
Casey
Champagne (Champlain)
Clifford
Collins
Cooper
Côté
Crosbie (St. John's West)
Danis
DeBlois
Desjardins
Dobbie
Dorin
Edwards
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Ferland
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Hawkes
Hockin
Horning
Hughes
Jelinek
Kempling
Langlois
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Worthy—127
Winegard

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Kaplan
Kindy
Langan (Mission—Coquitlam)
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MacDonald (Dartmouth)
MacLellan
Manley
McGuire
Mifflin
Mills
Murphy
Parent
Peterson
Proud
Rideout
Robichaud
Simmons
Skelly (Comox—Alberni)
Stewart
Taylor
Volpe
Whittaker
Althouse
Bellemare
Berger
Blaikie
Brewin
Callbeck
Catterall
Comuzzi
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Grey (Beaver River)
Harvard
Hopkins
Jordan
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)
Kristiansen
LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso)
MacAulay
MacLaren
Maheu
Marleau
McLaughlin
Milliken
Mitchell
Nystrom
Parker
Phinney
Prud'homme
Riis
Robinson
Skelly (North Island—Powell River)
Speller
Stupich
Vanclief
Walker
Young (Gloucester)—80

Madam Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Bill read the third time and passed.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Prud'homme: Point of order, Madam Speaker.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Saint-Denis on a point of order.

Mr. Prud'homme: Madam Speaker, I think this is the first time in the history of Parliament that we have obtained something, which I wish to point out to my colleagues, especially those whose language is French. I see big smiles on those who do not know exactly what I am going to say. I think that we should congratulate the Clerk and the House for having kindly agreed to a proposal that I have been making for years and that I repeated twice publicly: finally in the appendix we have "Alphabetical" in English on one side and "Alphabétique" in French on the other for items in alphabetical order. That was never done before. We had been told

that it was totally impossible. And for those who want to follow, and some here may be interested in following what happens occasionally, we finally have a working document that makes sense and is understandable. The only suggestion I would make is that the items under each heading could also be in alphabetical order. But I want to say that for the first time we can work in either language.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I wish to thank the hon. member for Saint-Denis who for many years, I know, has made this request in the House. I also want to congratulate him for pointing out that it has finally been done. We are all very proud of it.

It being 11.12 p.m., the House stands adjourned until 11 a.m. tomorrow, pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

The House adjourned at 11.12 p.m.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, June 7, 1990

The House met at 11 a.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*English*]

PETITIONS

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Madam Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's responses to several petitions.

[*Editor's Note: See today's Votes and Proceedings.*]

* * *

[*Translation*]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

BILL C-39—TABLING OF THE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Geoff Scott (Hamilton—Wentworth): Madam Speaker, I have the honour of tabling, in both official languages, the report of the legislative committee on Bill C-39.

[*English*]

This is an act to apply federal and provincial laws to offshore areas and to amend certain acts in consequence thereof, with amendment.

FINANCE—SEVENTH AND EIGHTH REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEE

Mr. Murray W. Dorin (Edmonton Northwest): Madam Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the seventh and eighth report of the Standing Committee on Finance on Bill C-52, an act to amend the Income Tax Act and related acts.

The seventh report contains the bill as amended. The eighth report contains other information which is relevant to this bill that has been arrived at with co-operation of all three parties of this House, along with officials from the Department of Finance and others.

I would also like to acknowledge the outstanding contribution of a former member of this House, Mr. Paul McCrossan, who was finally assisted in bringing a resolution to this matter which has been of concern to this House since well before I got here.

Mr. McDermid: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I would just like to add that I have had the opportunity to examine the eighth report of the Standing Committee on Finance.

The contents of this report have also been discussed by the finance department officials and representatives of the finance committee. I wish to confirm that income tax regulations will be drafted to give effect to the measures outlined in section 2 of the report. In addition, the finance department will report back to the committee, as requested, on the three issues set out in section 3 of the report.

Mr. Riis: Madam Speaker, I appreciate the intervention by my hon. friend, the minister, on this critical matter.

It is a timing situation. I wonder if the minister could be a bit more specific or at least give us some indication of the timing in terms of when the regulations would actually be made available to the committee.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Does the hon. minister have an answer?

Mr. McDermid: No, Madam Speaker, I cannot give the member a definitive time. It will be as soon as possible. We have just made our agreements with the finance committee, as the hon. House leader of the New Democratic Party knows. We will have them available for the committee as soon as possible.

As the hon. member also knows, this bill does not come into effect until 1991, although there are a great deal of arrangements that have to be made with pension firms and companies that have pension plans. We want to have them as soon as possible so that they can get their house in order to have this come into effect on

January 1, 1991. We have made the commitment to the committee, to its chairman, and its members that we will get that to them as quickly as possible.

[*Editor's Note: See today's Votes and Proceedings.*]

* * *

• (1110)

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS

AUTHORIZATION FOR SUBCOMMITTEE TO TRAVEL

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Madam Speaker, I have a couple of motions for which Your Honour will find unanimous consent. The first one is a travel motion and reads:

> That three members of the Subcommittee on International Human Rights, representing each party, be authorized to travel to Copenhagen from June 9 to June 16, 1990, in order to participate in the Conference on Security and Co-Operation in Europe and meet with representatives of international human rights organizations, and that 2 staffs do accompany the subcommittee.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Does the parliamentary secretary have leave to move the motion?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to.

* * *

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Madam Speaker, I have a second brief motion which deals with tomorrow's business. There is also unanimous consent for this motion. It reads:

> That on Friday, June 8, 1990, during Government Orders, dilatory motions and calls for quorum not be receivable by the Chair.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Does the parliamentary secretary have leave to introduce the motion?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to.

* * *

ORDER IN COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS

APPOINTMENT OF PRIVACY COMMISSIONER

The House resumed from Wednesday, June 6, consideration of the motion of Ms. Campbell (Vancouver Centre):

> That, in accordance with subsection 53(1) of the Act to extend the present laws of Canada that protect the privacy of individuals and that provide individuals with a right of access to personal information about themselves, Chapter P-21 of the Revised Statutes of Canada, 1985, this House approves the appointment of Bruce Phillips as Privacy Commissioner.

Mr. Gauthier: Madam Speaker, I thought the motion was going to be read into the record but, if it is not going to be taken off my time, I would like to read the motion as follows:

> That, in accordance with subsection 53(1) of the Act to extend the present laws of Canada that protect the privacy of individuals and that provide individuals with a right of access to—

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Kamloops.

Mr. Riis: Madam Speaker, because of the agreement we had yesterday and without any intention of reducing the length of time for debate, I wonder if there would not be unanimous consent just to take a few more minutes and complete Routine Proceedings before we move on to the motion before us.

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: No.

Madam Deputy Speaker: There does not seem to be unanimous consent to complete Routine Proceedings. The hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier.

Mr. Gauthier: Madam Speaker, because of the limited time, I think there could be an agreement that at three o'clock we continue with Routine Proceedings and finish Routine Proceedings at that time instead of going to Orders of the Day. That would be acceptable to us.

Mr. Cooper: Madam Speaker, I do not really want to get involved with this little lovers' quarrel that is going on across the aisle. I can assure the House that we on this side are quite happy to complete Routine Proceedings at this point if they prefer and revert to motions, by consent. We would give our unanimous consent for the House to do that or, if the House chooses, we can pick up the end of Routine Proceedings at three o'clock. We are comfortable, either way.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is there unanimous consent that we revert to Routine Proceedings at three o'clock?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Madam Deputy Speaker: We are under Motions. The motion was put yesterday, but it can be reread into the record.

[*Translation*]

Moved by Ms. Campbell (Vancouver Centre), and seconded by Mr. Andre:

> That, in accordance with subsection 53(1) of An Act to extend the present laws of Canada that protect the privacy of individuals and that provide individuals with a right of access to personal information about themselves, Chapter P-21, Revised Statutes of Canada, 1985, this House approve the appointment of Bruce Phillips to the position of Privacy Commissioner.

Debate resumes. The Hon. Member for Ottawa—Vanier (Mr. Gauthier) has the floor.

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Madam Speaker, this debate shows once again that parliamentary democracy is strengthened when the House of Commons reaffirms its right to advise the government concerning appointments to important positions, such as officers of Parliament. We wish to protest such appointments today by requesting a debate on the appointment of the nominee for the position of Privacy Commissioner, Mr. Bruce Phillips.

Madam Speaker, we do so today with much regret, because the consultation which should have taken place, or which was indeed conducted was a one-way process. The government has indicated, at least to the Official Opposition, that it wanted to appoint Mr. Bruce Phillips. We said that the caucus which I represent might object to this appointment, and that it might be possible to negotiate or to arrive at a compromise. There was no mention of any leeway and, since the government did not wish to negotiate anything or consult on anything other than the appointment of Mr. Bruce Phillips, this debate is taking place. I think it is good, in a democracy, that the people of Canada should state their positions clearly and that in the case of such an important appointment as that of the Privacy Commissioner, a commissioner to protect the privacy of Canadians, Parliament should take time to reflect on the matter. In raising this issue, Madam Speaker, it is not in any way our intention to pass judgment on Mr. Bruce Phillips personally. We do not intend to question Mr. Phillips' integrity or honesty, nor his ability as a journalist, which he was for many years. We simply wish to remind the House of important elements to be considered by all when selecting a Privacy Commissioner.

When privacy is under attack, individual human dignity is under attack. That is why it is of the utmost importance that the members of this House should be able to discuss the appointment. As I said earlier, parliamentary democracy is strengthened when we can discuss in such an open and democratic manner.

We feel, Madam Speaker, that the role of the Privacy Commissioner, the public's perception of this role and of the person performing it, and the Commissioner's ability to act on behalf of all Canadians are most important and that is why we wish to raise objections to Mr. Bruce Phillips' appointment.

The Privacy Commissioner is appointed for seven years, as we all know, and he is empowered by the Privacy Act to receive complaints from Canadians and to investigate and report to the House on issues under his purview. He also reports regularly on the following five or six points: a refusal to provide personal information concerning an inmate in a federal institution; secondly, a request to correct or annotate a record of personal information, which is turned down by a federal institution, thirdly, when a federal institution has not provided within 30 to 60 days the personal information requested, the Privacy Commissioner can be asked to lodge an appeal.

• (1120)

Where the description of a record of personal information shown in the directory of personal information is not adequate, a correction can be requested.

Where a federal institution has used personal information in a manner not provided for in the directory of personal information, one may seek correction and justice.

Finally, Madam Speaker, when a federal institution has not carried out the collection, conservation or retrieval of personal information concerning an individual in accordance with the act, the commissioner can again be asked to act on behalf of Canadians.

Therefore, not only has the commissioner the right to consult records held by the government, that is personal information records, he also has the responsibility of checking their content and, occasionally, of seeing that they are amended. The commissioner, Madam Speaker, is the ombudsman, the master and the defender of privacy in Canada. He is a most important person in a democracy, a person in whom we must all have total confidence.

[*English*]

Yesterday, the Minister of Justice shared her reasons with the House for the proposed appointment of Mr. Phillips. In doing so, she tried to draw a parallel between the outgoing commissioner, Dr. John Grace, and the proposed new commissioner, Mr. Bruce Phillips. I do not know Mr. Bruce Phillips. I have never met him in my life, but I might take this opportunity to reflect on the careers of both men, thereby establishing once and for all that comparing Dr. John Grace and Mr. Bruce Phillips is like comparing apples and oranges. It cannot be done.

Dr. John Grace has served as Privacy Commissioner for seven years. Previous to that, he served the CRTC as a public servant. Yes, he was a distinguished journalist. He was editor-in-chief of *The Journal*, a very respected newspaper in Ottawa that had to close down a few years ago because of reorganization of newspapers in Canada. Dr. Grace was the editor-in-chief of that paper, and it was not a Liberal paper. It was a well known Tory newspaper.

Mr. Grace did his job seriously and competently. For years, he was very involved in the community of Ottawa. He has our respect. He has proven over the last seven years as Privacy Commissioner that he could do the job well and in the interest of all Canadians. Therefore, he has our absolute confidence, and we will support the nomination when the motion to appoint Dr. John Grace as Information Commissioner is brought forward.

We oppose the nomination of Mr. Phillips. Let us look at his career. From 1984 to 1987, he was the Minister of Public Affairs at the Canadian Embassy in Washington. He was there to filter information from the Government of Canada to the Americans. In 1987, he was brought to the front line of the Prime Minister's Office as Director of Communications for the Prime Minister. As we all know, he was responsible during 1988 for the message that went out from that office. Mr. Phillips was in charge of the PMO press office. He controlled the media's access to the Prime Minister. His partisan allegiance was well known.

It was quite evident to us that during the campaign Mr. Phillips was even in charge of what some newspapers alleged to be the dirty tricks campaign. He never denied *The Globe and Mail* articles we have and could read into the record which showed that Mr. Phillips was doing a job for the Prime Minister. We do not object to that.

Mr. Phillips was playing a political role. He was a competent journalist being put into a communications job to give Canadians the point of view of the Prime Minister. We do not object to that, but is it reasonable to ask Mr. Phillips to stand on guard today for Canadians on the privacy dossier and to stand up to the government which, in many cases, is the institution that is being questioned by Canadian individuals in regard to privacy?

Are we to buy, to approve or to rubber stamp the nomination of somebody who we know has been very partisan and who we know worked for the Prime Minister who surrounds himself with Tory hacks? We know that. Why should we accept that one of those go to a position of importance in Canada, Privacy Commissioner? He could be put into another job by Order in Council, even to the Senate if they want to. We would not mind that. Why not?

Mr. Kaplan: He would get $153 a day.

Mr. Gauthier: He would get an additional $153 a day just for showing up.

We do not object to that, but we object strongly that Parliament, both Houses, the House of Commons and the Senate, be called upon to approve the nomination of a person who we all know is very partisan, who would have access to information on the opposition members of Parliament, into the privacy of every one of us. He will

be able to go into the records and see how we are doing. I do not want that. I do not think I can accept that.

I do not think he would be very objective in that regard. I do not think he could stand up here at the bar or anywhere else and defend the integrity of his impartiality in respect of opposition members, because he has over the years shown that he is not an impartial person. He is a very partisan individual.

That is all right. We do not mind that. We have some partisan people. I am a partisan individual, but I would not expect to be named Privacy Commissioner. I do not think the Tories over there would agree to that. They would certainly object, and I would agree.

Mr. McCreath: How could you ever appoint anybody Governor General then?

Mr. Gauthier: You do not do that by Order in Council. That is the problem.

There are many appointments here. I put the question to the Speaker on Monday of this week, asking what the difference is between an officer of the House and an officer of Parliament. There is no straight answer to that question.

I know that there are many, many positions. For example, the Auditor General, appointed by Order in Council. He answers to the House of Commons, not to the Senate. There is absolutely no way that you would agree that he is not working for Parliament. The Auditor General is a nomination of this House and of this House exclusively, not of Parliament. Yet he is responsible for public surveillance of the expenditures of the government.

It would not be appropriate to name the Minister of Finance to the position of Auditor General of Canada. I have a lot of respect for the Minister of Finance and his competence, even if I do not always agree with everything he does. I think it would be unacceptable to us if he was named Auditor General of Canada.

Needless to say, we have many articles in the press about Mr. Bruce Phillips' appointment. I will read an article here from Frank Howard on June 4, 1990. This is interesting. It states:

> Bruce Phillips has had so many different appearances over the last few years that it is asking too much from the public to accept this latest persona of probity, impartiality and conscience.

The sensitive nature of this post is such that we cannot have a reasonable doubt as to the probity, the impartiality and conscience of the Privacy Commissioner. There must be no doubt that he is absolutely above any reproach. We have hesitations and serious doubts.

I find the words of the outgoing Commissioner, John Grace, in his annual report of 1983–1984, interesting. He defines privacy as follows:

> Privacy is not simply a precious and often irreplaceable human resource; respect for privacy is the acknowledgement of respect for human dignity and the individuality of man.

If nothing else, I would hope that all members of this House would want to provide this definition and apply this definition to the Privacy Commissioner. As I said, privacy is dignity. It is essentially what one has and once one has lost it, one has lost his dignity. We would like to reinforce the view that we would have somebody who has probity, impartiality and, of course, is perceived as being a person who will in all cases apply his judgment to these principles.

• (1130)

[*Translation*]

Madam Speaker, we are not the first to raise the question of the importance of the choice of a Privacy Commissioner. I could find you quotes from debates on access to information right from the start, in 1981—lots of quotes, from practically every member of the present cabinet, and here is one from the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Clark), when he was Leader of the Opposition, back in 1981, and he said, "Those who have the information have the real power".

In the case we are concerned with today, not only does the government have the information, a great deal of information, but into the bargain it is putting in charge of that information a person who was for a long time responsible for government propaganda. Now they are putting him in charge of information, which as we know is held by the government, sometimes to the detriment of Canadians.

Madam Speaker, at a time when Canadians' confidence in their government is at its lowest ever, I have trouble understanding how the government can persist in an appointment like this one. What Canada needs, Madam Speaker, is a watchdog, not a lapdog! We want

someone in this position who will do a job that all Canadians can approve. And given that the Office of the Privacy Commissioner is an administrative tribunal—because in a sense that is what it is—it must be, and be seen to be, objective and absolutely impartial.

Madam Speaker, I could cite you quotes from Professor Patrice Garant, who in his *Précis de droit des administrations publiques* (summary of the law on public administration) says, "In our constitutional tradition, the quasi-judicial act is in the same category as the judicial act, and it must issue from a body protected from any political control or interference, as our courts of justice are."

The test, Madam Speaker, is this: should this position be protected from any government interference? We believe so, very strongly. The people of Canada must not feel that the government has any influence or might bring any pressure to bear on the Commissioner's office. This rule is all the more important for the administrative tribunals that make decisions affecting the public at large. For example, as far as the positions of Privacy Commissioner and Information Commissioner are concerned, we want them to be seen as totally and absolutely separate from this or any other government.

[*English*]

It has to be at arm's length. It has to be so far out there that they cannot touch him. He must be seen to be and perceived by Canadians to be totally independent of government. That is going to be very difficult for Mr. Phillips to do. It will be very difficult for him to meet the criteria that I just put.

I cannot see why he would want to, unless he has got something that I do not understand. How can he wash, clean up, and possibly eliminate his reputation of the last six or seven years as a Tory hack in charge of certain programs. We do not object to that. We have Liberal hacks too.

Mr. Crosbie: Quite an admission.

Mr. Milliken: There is no such thing.

Mr. Gauthier: Sure, there is one sitting over there. He changed, remember, the minister there. He was once a Liberal and now he is a Tory. They change according to circumstances.

Mr. Crosbie: You are a Liberal quack!

Ms. Clancy: Is that onomatopoeia, John?

Mr. Gauthier: I will end this short exposé, Madam Speaker, by saying that we would like this debate to come to an end. We know there is an agreement. We have agreed that we will vote on this. This caucus will vote against the nomination of Mr. Phillips, with regret.

I would like to end with one last comment. Frank Howard, in his article of June 4, 1990 in *The Ottawa Citizen*, said: "The person who is put forward as the candidate for the privacy job should look like he or she could stand up to the government of the day, not like somebody who is being rewarded for loyalty to the Prime Minister".

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alex Kindy (Calgary Northeast): Madam speaker, I would like to put a few questions to the hon. Member for Ottawa—Vanier.

Mr. Phillips, who is going to be appointed by the government to the position of Privacy Commissioner, has a responsibility which is extremely important. As the person in charge of the government's propaganda during the last federal election, it seems to me that he is in no position to have a sound opinion on what ought to be protected and what information ought to be made available to the public.

As you know, confidential Cabinet documents are protected for at least 20 years. In 1987 a recommendation was made by the Standing Commitee on Justice and the Solicitor General, on which I had the honour of sitting at the time. Our recommendation at that time dealt with the question of reducing the period during which more or less important documents, such as draft bills, for example, should be available to the public.

How can draft bills, which have to be debated by Parliament, be subject to confidentiality until they are tabled in the House? How can we as MPs discuss draft bills if they are kept confidential?

Mr. Phillips will certainly have every inclination to keep all these bills, all these documents, secret. I do not think he will be able to make a valid recommendation to the House once he has been appointed, because he will want to protect the government.

I would like to put this question to the Honourable member for his comment.

Mr. Gauthier: Madam Speaker, I covered that aspect of the Honourable Member's question in my opening remarks when I said that we in the Official Opposition were not satisfied with Mr. Bruce Phillips' impartiality.

On the basis of the perception we have of this individual, even if we do not know him, but the perception of the information available to us, the perception of having seen Mr. Phillips act for the Prime Minister for seven or eight months, as information officer in Washington, or here in the Prime Minister's office during the last election, we all, including the hon. Member, know that Mr. Bruce Phillips, during the 1988 federal election used his position to tell the media what we say were untruths about the conduct and relationships of the Leader of the Opposition, to destroy in many cases his credibility—it was his job, but he destroyed the credibility of our leader, the hon member for Vancouver Quadra.

[*English*]

I have a quote that I would like to put on the record. It is from the first annual report of John Grace, the present Commissioner of Privacy, and it states: "Unlike trees or oil, information can indeed be renewed. Better computers linked to better communications systems can renew and expand information almost to infinity. But human privacy is not renewable, once lost to an indiscreet computer, a person's privacy is gone forever. The computer never forgets".

We are into an era of computerized information access. I, for one, am very nervous about naming a person who would have access to all government information when I know that he is less than objective in regard to his political affiliation.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Marcel Prud'homme (Saint-Denis): Madam Speaker, I think this could be a interesting debate for my colleague, because the man who has just spoken is certainly, among all the MPs, one of my best friends. So I shall try, while making one small comment, not to disagree wih him too much.

• (1140)

But during my political career, which after all has lasted some time, and even before as a student, I have observed this phenomenon. I have studied and observed this phenomenon which is still referred to as political partisanship. I have seen in Canada, for example, Supreme Court Justices who had been very partisan politicians, and yet who became great Supreme Court Justices. The question about Mr. Phillips, since it does seem that he will be appointed—I do not know at this time how I shall vote—but I do know what will be expected of him once he has been appointed to such a sensitive position, such an important position, and that is that he should be aware that he enjoys the protection of the House of Commons. He will not only have to be extremely prudent, but he will also have to renounce all political partisanship as we have seen in the past when certain individuals were appointed to high positions, such as the Bench.

And it is of the utmost importance for appointees to the Bench to know that they are fully protected by the law precisely to make sure that they are no longer political partisans. I find it unfortunate, since one may dream— and when I look at my colleague for Ottawa—Vanier, I like to think that maybe someday, if I had been the Prime Minister, he might have been—and I look at him as he is otherwise occupied—but if there is anyone that I would recommend as Commissioner of Official Languages, for instance, he is the one. Everybody will say no, he is a political partisan! Yet, if there ever was a man who is competent and qualified for this position—

Mr. Saint-Julien: Senator— Hear, hear!

Mr. Prud'homme: The member is getting excited again.

Indeed, I wish to make an early announcement to the effect that if ever this position were to become vacant

and if he were to decide to end his political career, I would certainly agree to sponsor my honourable friend from Ottawa—Vanier—

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Prud'homme: As you can see, you already enjoy the support of all political parties, and yet my friend is very well-known in that regard.

In a nutshell, then, I repeat that this gives us an opportunity for which I thank you, Madam Speaker, to reflect once again as parliamentarians on the true meaning of political partisanship and to inform the people we appoint to such sensitive positions. And in that regard I agree with my colleague that we should make sure, since it does seem that Mr. Phillips will be appointed— I know him, he is a friend of mine, I am neither afraid nor ashamed to say so, I have known him for a long time. But I want to be certain that he understands the message of the House, which has been voiced by many members, not by myself, but by my esteemed colleague; now that it seems he will be appointed to this sensitive position, he will have not only to renounce all political partisanship but also to be seen as having done so. And I think he will understand quite well this message from my esteemed colleague and friend and from myself.

Mr. Saint-Julien: Congratulations, Marcel!

Mr. Gauthier: Very briefly, Madam Speaker, my colleague from Saint-Denis obviously still has a knack for comparing the incomparable. When you compare a judge with an officer of Parliament, I think there is still a difference. He is a lawyer. He knows there is a great difference between a Supreme Court Justice and an officer of Parliament, since one is appointed for seven years while the other is appointed for life. There is a time limit, and there is also a limit to the duties of those two persons. Such a comparison may appear valid to the Member, but I do not find it acceptable.

As concerns Mr. Phillips' purification, once he has been appointed—because the fact is that the government has a majority and will likely carry the vote—I shall be the first to applaud if he does. But he has a lot, really a lot of purification to do, Madam Speaker.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The period provided for questions and comments is now over. Resuming debate. The hon. member for Kingston and the Islands has the floor.

[*English*]

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Madam Speaker, I am a reluctant participant in this debate. In my view, this is a debate that ought not to be happening in the House.

I do not claim to have been here a long time, by any means, but it is the first time I can recall that an appointment by resolution of the House of Commons has had to be debated in the House. Normally, the subject of these appointments is by all-party agreement. Instead, we have this jackboot tactic from the government in proceeding unilaterally to impose its will on the House and the people of Canada in appointing someone who is a Tory hack to a position as an officer of Parliament. It is a disgraceful way to proceed. It is contrary to all the precedents. It is contrary to all past practice.

The normal procedure in making appointments to parliamentary posts is to consult with all the other parties and agree. In this case, it was obvious there was no agreement. In spite of that, this pig-headed government is proceeding with this resolution in the House.

As I say, I am reluctant to debate this kind of resolution, but I feel it is incumbent upon those of us who object to this appointment to make clear our reasons for so doing.

I have heard the hon. member for York Centre and the hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier make very useful contributions to the discussion. I am not going to repeat all their remarks, but I will say at the outset that we on this side, as the others have said, have no dispute whatever with the distinguished career in journalism that Mr. Phillips brings to this job. In our view, that is not the issue.

I know some members may have reservations about columns that he has written or disagree with things he has said on the air, or whatever he may have done. That may be so. But we accept that that is part of journalism, that is the way it works, even though we do not always agree.

If the government had come forward with someone like Mr. Jeffrey Simpson, who is also a distinguished journalist as a nominee for this post, we would not object. But I would say right off that he writes columns that look like pamphlets for the next Tory campaign and he has been doing that for years. It is not the bias that we are concerned about in this case, it is the fact that this gentleman, Mr. Phillips, occupied a post in the Prime

Minister's office that necessarily involved him in highly partisan activities.

As I said before, I would have no objection to someone like Mr. Simpson, who writes for a Conservative newspaper, one that has become a sort of phoenix of the Ottawa *Journal*, which was one of the most Tory papers you could ever find in Canada. It was dreadful reading from our perspective. You could hardly find a picture of a Liberal in the paper; it was a dreadful thing.

The Globe and Mail seems to have taken over that role now and writes this apology for the government constantly, trying to justify the government's ill-conceived policies. Mr. Simpson writes these columns, as I say, that could easily be used as pamphlets for Conservative candidates in the next campaign, and my hon. friend from Halifax says they probably will be.

I am not going to argue that the gentleman is disqualified on the basis of partisanship. It is the fact that he has occupied a post that is beyond journalism, that in fact he was working in the Prime Minister's office as a party hack, as my hon. friend for Willowdale puts it so eloquently.

Yesterday in her speech, trying to justify this ridiculous appointment, this travesty, this outrage on the Canadian people, the Minister of Justice made some points that I want to deal with.

Mr. Reid: The outrage is that you have the guts to stand up and say this.

Mr. Milliken: The hon. member for St. John's East might listen. He might want to vote against this appointment at the appropriate time.

Ms. Clancy: Yes, he might, but it is not likely.

Mr. Milliken: I hope they are going to have a free vote on this issue in the House. I think we would find out what the Conservative back-benchers really think of this appointment.

Mr. Peterson: Since free trade, you will never get anything free.

Mr. Milliken: The Minister of Justice said, "If we are to say that any professional journalist who takes that job is thereafter tainted and cannot—take some other position without being tainted—that has very, very negative implications for the ability of governments to have the highest quality people serving them".

Is that fact, Madam Speaker? I say it is not. That is nonsense. The government can have Mr. Phillips serving it in any capacity it wants, and I stress the word "government". What we are talking about in this appointment is Parliament and Parliament is not the government. Parliament is not just the government; it is more than the government. Parliament is all the members of this House; it is all parties in this House. It is supposed to be the representative of the aspirations of all the people, not just the governing party.

The government is saying, "We would like Mr. Phillips to serve us as a government worker doing the job in Parliament". In other words, instead of representing all the people, it is putting him in as a government appointee as though this were a government job.

They could name him deputy minister. Maybe the Minister of Justice would like to have him as her deputy minister. She can make him that and we will not be in a position to stop it. The Minister of State for Finance might want to have him as his deputy minister. Fine. They might want to appoint him as head of the CRTC. They might want to make him chairman of any board or commission. There are lots of jobs and they are all full of Tory hacks. But they choose not to. They want to put him in a parliamentary job instead. That is what we on this side object to and our objection is one that is fundamental and it is fair. The minister also stated: "Therefore it is incumbent on those who wish to impugn Mr. Phillips' ability to provide some kind of evidence that he is not able to act with independence". What nerve the minister has in making that statement.

• (1150)

First, we have no obligation whatever to provide any evidence that he is not able to act with independence. That is not our job. Second, we are not impugning his ability. We are impugning his capacity—and there is a difference—to do this job. This is a quasi-judicial position. This position involves exercise of judgment, discretion, and exercise of considerable decision-making power over other people. The incumbent in this position must be seen to be acting impartially. Mr. Phillips will

not be seen to be acting impartially. He will be seen to be acting as a party hack.

Third, the minister stated: "I would point out that in the period of time that he has been Assistant Privacy Commissioner, he has participated in putting together the report on drug testing that is very critical of the government". She seemed to suggest that because he had been critical once, we could assume that he would be critical whenever it was necessary. That is not evidence of impartiality. I am surprised that the Minister of Justice, as a lawyer, would even suggest that it was such evidence, yet that seems to be what she is putting forward. It is the only evidence that she has got.

The other tactic that the government has tried to use in this case came from the Minister for International Trade. I am glad he is here because perhaps he will want to bellow again. On Tuesday during Question Period he had quite a lot to say when very proper questions were being put by the hon. member for Burnaby—Kingsway.

The hon. member for Burnaby—Kingsway was trying to ascertain certain facts about this dreadful appointment and the Minister for International Trade sort of exploded. There is no other word to describe it. He started to bellow from his seat and this is what he yelled, as recorded on page 12291 of *Hansard*:

> What about Broadbent? What about the rest of you socialist horde?

I know he was not addressing our party.

> What about what's his name, Lewis, who we appointed to the UN? What about that turkey? You don't protest about him. What about buddy down on the civil service board? What's his name? Ian Deans, what about him? That was all right. If Phillips was a socialist it would be all right.

It just shows the distorted thinking of the government ministers on this. I hope this is not a unanimous nomination. I hope it is just the Prime Minister, because if the other cabinet ministers agreed to this they have put their foot in it in a big bad way.

The fact is that these socialists were appointed to these positions and I am not, of course, agreeing necessarily with the words, the intemperate language used by the Minister for International Trade in describing some of the appointments. After all, he made the appointments. He and his cabinet made these appointments and they have to accept that responsibility. If they put turkeys into the jobs, they cannot complain to us in the opposition about that. But there they are calling their own appointees turkeys. It was not very complimentary of the minister, I must say.

But the fact is these appointments are not to parliamentary jobs. These are government jobs. These are outside the purview of Parliament. They are appointed by the government by Order in Council. They do not come to this House and ask for a resolution of the House.

The Privacy Commissioner is different. The Auditor General is different. The Information Commissioner is different and the Chief Electoral Officer is different. Each of those posts are appointed by resolution of this House and then a subsequent Order in Council. If that is the way the appointments are done, then it seems to me there is an obligation on the government to come to this House and say we want all-party support for the appointment, not ramming some party hack down the throats of the Opposition. That is what is going on in this case.

For the Minister for International Trade to suggest that because they have appointed some socialists to government jobs, and I stress that, "government" sinecures, not parliamentary jobs and, therefore, somehow we should not criticize this appointment because this happens to be a Conservative, is rubbish. It has nothing to do with the issue that we are confronted with here which is whether or not Parliament is going to appoint some party hack to a position under the control of Parliament.

The Ottawa Citizen, which is hardly a newspaper said to favour the Liberal Party, has published today an editorial on this subject. I will only read part of it for the benefit of the hon member for St. John's East and perhaps the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader who I suspect too would want to vote against this appointment. It states:

> The honourable men and women MPs of the Progressive Conservative Party will carry out a dishonourable act today if they approve Bruce Phillips as Canada's next Privacy Commissioner.

That is *The Ottawa Citizen* writing. They make it clear that the distinguished career that he has had as a journalist is not the problem. It is his close association with the Prime Minister's office that disqualifies him from an appointment to a parliamentary post.

The importance and independence of this position is evident from the fact that the appointment is to be made by Order in Council after resolution of both Houses. The appointment is for a seven-year term. This is not a short-term one or two-year appointment. This is a seven-year term and it is designed to ensure continuity in the job and independence in the appointee.

The government is dishonouring the post and this House in using its majority, if that is its intention and it is not going to declare a free vote on this issue, to thrash this unpopular nomination through this House of Commons.

I suggest that the appropriate course is for the government to withdraw this motion at once and come back and discuss it with the opposition parties—I know the New Democratic Party shares our view on this—and allow us to agree on an appointee worth putting into the job.

What the ministers have done is appoint people they are going to subsequently call turkeys, as the minister did the other day, and then try to say, look we have appointed these people, it is all right for us to go ahead with the others. We have allowed some of your people into jobs, so you have got to agree to ours.

That did not work with the New Democratic Party. They are still opposing this, in spite of the threats and bullying tactics of the Minister for International Trade. They cannot use that argument on us because they have not appointed the good Liberals to the jobs that they might go to.

I have one point of disagreement with the hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier. I do not believe there are Liberal hacks. There is no such thing in the definition book, and the Minister for International Trade knows that and I think that he would agree with me on that point.

In conclusion, I urge the government to withdraw this motion at once and allow us to discuss the matter of this appointment in the usual way and come to an agreement. We are not disagreeable, but we have been given no alternatives. This was the only name put forward and I believe that it is inappropriate.

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Madam Speaker, I would like to make several comments and ask the hon. gentleman for his opinion. I do not know why there is all this emphasis on hacks. Hacks are essential to the political process, whatever a hack is. Our people who want to assist in public service are being denigrated, attacked and scorned by having appellations such as the name "hack" applied to them—

Ms. Clancy: Like poor Ian Deans?

Mr. Crosbie: The person who I suggested was a turkey is somebody in public life and there are many turkeys in public life, as we all know, but I am now addressing myself to somebody who has been called a hack.

My experience with the person under discussion is that he is a person who did a first-class job when he was a public commentator. When he was in the communications field on television, he was a perceptive observer of the Canadian political scene and fair and impartial in his comments.

Does the fact that he accepted a government appointment and then worked for the Prime Minister have him categorized, after a lifetime in the communications and other businesses, as some kind of a hack who is not capable of performing the duties of the office that we are now discussing? The course of action of the present Official Opposition is deplorable in this instance.

It is hardly relevant, of course, that they appointed, during their years in office, all sorts of persons who came with the same kind of background who had served them briefly or otherwise, and with that experience they should not be up with hypocritical remarks like this today. It is difficult to understand. One can understand the NDP because hypocrisy is a part of their make-up and they really do not know when they are being hypocritical and when they are not. I want to ask the hon. gentlemen who just made these remarks whether he agrees that Bruce Phillips is an outstanding person with a long background in public life, well able to understand and to enforce rights such as those he will have to enforce or comment upon during the next seven years that he would be in office, and that he is therefore a fine and suitable person for this office.

• (1200)

In ending, I want to put this piece of poetry forward for the consideration of the House.

Why take the track of Colleen Hack?
Why don't they just go quack, quack, quack?
All that is happening is just the fact
This action follows their well-laid track.
The NDP as ever, quake and shake
With indignation completely fake.
They never quivered, shivered or shook
When Ian Deans was given the hook.
The Public Service labour boards
Only wanted the NDP hordes
Appointed to important posts
By we PC governmental hosts.

Gratitude not an NDP virtue.
Forgotten now are Broadbent and Lewis,
Still going forward to put screws to us.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Milliken: Madam Speaker, I will not attempt to emulate the minister's poetic skills.

An Hon. Member: You are not from Newfoundland.

Mr. Milliken: I am not from Newfoundland, that is true, but that is not the only reason I would not sink to emulate the hon. member's poetic skills. He reminds me of the great poet, McGonigal with his doggerel—I think it would be properly referred to.

To answer his question, no, I do not agree. I think he knows the answer to the question. He was simply taking advantage of the question and comment period to huff and puff a little. I am surprised, frankly, he did not apologize for his intemperate remarks that I quoted on Tuesday, insulting as they were, to the appointees that his government put forward. It was not the Liberal government that appointed these socialists to these posts. It was a Conservative government. It was not our responsibility to pass judgment on the quality of those appointments. They were done by the government on its own.

I want to say that we do not agree that this is a good appointment. I do agree with the minister when he says that Mr. Phillips is a very distinguished and competent journalist. That we have stated throughout and I do not think any member on this side has suggested otherwise. What I do say is that his past work in the Prime Minister's office disqualifies him from taking a job as an employee of Parliament. I stress that. The minister keeps missing that distinction. If he wanted to have Mr. Phillips on the Human Rights Commission or some other judicial body, that is the government's sole concern. What we are dealing with here is an appointment by this House and that is not just the government, it is all parties in this House. Surely the minister understands that distinction and he should cease trying to blur it because all the ministers on that side can do is blur that distinction and say we are doing exactly as we would normally be doing with any other appointment.

The three he has named and the socialists they have appointed have been named to government jobs not appointed by Parliament by resolution in this House. There is an important distinction and the minister should bear it in mind.

Mr. Jim Peterson (Willowdale): Thank you, Madam Speaker. May I address a question to the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands.

This government, as we all know, has taken patronage to a new art form. The public finally rebelled. Even the journalists brought this to the attention of Canadians because they could not stomach it anymore.

An Hon. Member: That is right.

Mr. Peterson: So what did the government do? It appointed the three socialists to say: "Oh, we are non-partisan". Then they call these socialists turkeys. Are they saying that all of their other appointments are worse than turkeys because they tried to clean up their act by appointing turkeys? This is obviously what this government is attempting to do. It has finally admitted to Canadians that its appointments throughout that rampant run of patronage were worse than turkeys. Does this mean that the government is going to recall all those appointments, ask for their resignations and make sure that we get a clean barnyard at least?

Mr. Milliken: Madam Speaker, the point taken by the hon. member for Willowdale is a very good point. I was tempted in my remarks to cover the wide range of patronage for which this government has become so famous. Really, its disgraceful record of appointments since it took office in 1984 has left any past record of any prior government in tatters. This has really been a shocking, shocking orgy of patronage and that from a Prime Minister who in a national debate in the election campaign in 1984 protested his outrage at the 10 or 12 or 21 or 22 appointments, whatever the numbers were, that the Liberal government made just before that election. For this government to suggest that the three socialist appointments make up for the complete outrage it has perpetrated on the Canadian public is ridiculous.

I agree with the hon. member for Willowdale when he says that the minister is really letting the cat out of the bag in calling these three appointments turkeys, because these were the three star appointments. Every time we

accuse the government of being biased in its appointment process, it points to these three as examples of how pure it is, how virtuous it is, how non-partisan it is in making appointments. Now we are told by the minister that these three are turkeys. One wonders what the others are. Perhaps, when the minister makes another contribution he could enlighten us on that subject, perhaps with another poem about some of the other appointees.

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Kingsway): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise on debate with respect to these motions. Before commencing my remarks and putting this in a bit of an historical context, I do want to just set the record straight with respect to any suggestion that any of the three very distinguished appointees, about which the Minister for International Trade was bellowing and braying in the House when I questioned the Minister of Justice, could properly be described as turkeys. Surely, nothing could be further from the truth. These three individuals have served and continue to serve the country with great distinction. I know that the hon. minister would not want to associate himself in any way with the suggestion that these individuals might be fowl of any description.

I also want to express my shock and surprise at the comments of the member for Kingston and the Islands. I know that member was not a member of this House in 1984, as I was. I was here, as was the member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce and the member for York Centre, and I remember well that incredible orgy of patronage in June 1984. I know the member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce and others were embarrassed and humiliated by that. When the member for Kingston and the Islands stands up in his place and says that the Conservatives have taken patronage to a new art form and so on, they merely learned from the masters; of course, the masters being the former Liberal government that appointed every former hack and flack and carrier-on and bag-person and member of Parliament who was terrified of facing the electorate. It put them all into juicy positions of one sort or another. I do not think the Liberal Party of Canada has any lessons to teach anyone about the debasing of the political coinage in this country through patronage.

Let us look at the appointment that Parliament is being asked to deal with today, because this is a very serious question. The Minister for International Trade has made light of it. The Minister of Justice in her extraordinary defence of this appointment has come up with arguments that boggle the imagination. She suggests that the fact that the Information Commissioner, John Grace, is a good friend of the former Leader of the Opposition would somehow mean that it is okay to appoint Bruce Phillips as Privacy Commissioner. What an absurd leap of logic.

The reality is that by appointing Bruce Phillips to this position, Bruce Phillips who had a highly partisan political job in the office of the Prime Minister, the government and the Prime Minister in particular are degrading and debasing the office of Privacy Commissioner.

Some people might say: "What is so important about the office of Privacy Commissioner?" I think we have to look back at the history of this appointment. I had the honour of serving on the justice committee which passed the legislation on protection of privacy and access to information. I believe the member for Willowdale was in the House in those days as well. He did not get appointed from 1984 to 1988 to one of those positions that his colleagues were appointed to, but he was here during the debate on that important legislation.

• (1210)

An essential element of the legislation was that the individuals, the men and women who were appointed to these positions of Privacy Commissioner and Information Commissioner would not simply be named by the Prime Minister or by the Minister of Justice. They would be appointed following a resolution of the House of Commons. The clear understanding of the purpose for that appointment process was to ensure that those appointments met with broad approval in this House, and that they not be foisted upon the House and the country by a government seeking to pay off its political friends. That is what has happened in this case. It is a very generous pay-off, I might add.

The Privacy Commissioner is a seven-year appointment with a salary of about $140,000. It is a nice way for Bruce Phillips to end a career in the Public Service. The pension is very generous indeed. But today, the purpose of dealing with this motion is to express our anger and sense of betrayal that the government would abuse the

powers that it has in terms of numbers in this House to railroad this appointment through Parliament.

I want to point out that the threats to privacy in Canada are very real. In fact, in the most recent annual report of the Privacy Commissioner, John Grace, who has been moved to Information Commissioner, said just a couple of weeks ago: "The exponential growth of public and private data bases risks open season on Canadians' personal information".

"The last decade of the century," Grace said, "represents a rapidly closing window of opportunity, if the dignity of individuals is to be rescued from the voracious jaws of uncontrolled information and biotechnologies."

Who has the Government of Canada decided to appoint in this last decade of the 20th century to protect the privacy of Canadians? Who has it chosen to appoint to challenge the Prime Minister when he attempts to attack the privacy rights of Canadians? Why has it chosen to appoint a former officer from the Office of the Prime Minister, a former hack, a former political crony of the Prime Minister?

No one is questioning the credentials of Bruce Phillips as a journalist. That is not the issue. What we are saying is that in this appointment perception is as important as reality, and that the perception of those Canadians who are deeply concerned about the protection of their privacy against attacks by the government and the erosion of their privacy, is that a person who comes out of the Prime Minister's Office and goes into that position is not going to effectively stand up and defend his or her privacy.

This is not just any position. This was not a low level appointee in the Office of the Prime Minister. Bruce Phillips was the Director of Communications in the Office of the Prime Minister. He played a very active partisan role during the 1980 election campaign. In fact, Bruce Phillips admitted that during that campaign he called a lot of reporters and did whatever he could to attempt to get them to write articles and columns that were critical, such as hatchet jobs on John Turner.

That was the role that was played by Bruce Phillips who is now being proposed by this government as the guardian of privacy against the Prime Minister and against the Conservative government. It is unbelievable that the government would actually appoint a person with that kind of partisan, political background in the Office of the Prime Minister to such a position. As the member for Kingston and the Islands has pointed out, this position is an officer of Parliament.

Politicians can stand in their places and be critical of this appointment, but I think the most effective criticism of this appointment comes from a very distinguished professor who has been acknowledged as an internationally respected expert on privacy. I am speaking, of course, of the very distinguished professor from the University of Western Ontario, David Flaherty.

I will quote what John Grace had to say about David Flaherty in his annual report:

> Professor David Flaherty of the University of Western Ontario is an internationally recognized authority on data protection. He served as consultant to the Justice and Solicitor General Committee's review of the Privacy Act and he has been reported before in (reports of the Privacy Commissioner).
>
> He has written one of the internationally respected texts on privacy called *Protecting Privacy in Surveillance Societies*.

What does Professor David Flaherty have to say about the appointment of Bruce Phillips, the Prime Minister's buddy, to this position of Privacy Commissioner? Professor David Flaherty said that he was disgusted by this appointment. Professor Flaherty, by the way, is certainly no socialist. I understand he may even be a red Tory. His credentials in the area of privacy are recognized throughout the world. He may be as red a Tory as the member for Rosedale. I am not sure if that is possible, but he certainly is a respected privacy expert. He said that he was disgusted by the appointment. He went on to say that this appointment of Bruce Phillips ruins the integrity of the Office of Privacy Commissioner.

I would have hoped that hearing those words from this respected professor, this international expert on privacy law, the Minister of Justice might come back into this House and say: "Yes, I have made a mistake. The Prime Minister made me do it; the Prime Minister forced me to do it. I had no choice, but I am not going to carry through on this appointment. I respect the fact that Professor Flaherty and others have said that this is an unacceptable appointment".

Even the hon. member for St. John's East, I know, is cringing in embarrassment at this appointment. I would

have hoped that perhaps the Minister of Justice might come back and say: "Okay, I am prepared to withdraw the appointment". Or, at the very least she could accept the reasonable suggestion that has been made on a non-partisan basis that this appointment be referred to a parliamentary committee.

The Standing Committee on Justice and the Solicitor General or another committee would then have an opportunity to call witnesses, for example Professor Flaherty or Ken Reuben, another very respected commentator in the field of privacy law, who has also expressed deep concerns about the appointment of Bruce Phillips. The committee could call Bruce Phillips himself before the committee and ask him just what it is in his experience in the Prime Minister's Office that qualifies him for this very important position.

I cannot over-emphasize the significance of this position in Canada today, the position of Privacy Commissioner. One has only to read the most recent annual report of the Privacy Commissioner to know the range of issues which are dealt with. We know that the Privacy Commissioner has tabled a number of important reports in the area of random testing for drugs, for example, and the whole area of AIDS and the importance of dealing sensitively and compassionately with privacy concerns in the area of AIDS.

We also know that there will be occasions when the Privacy Commissioner will be called upon to challenge directly the Office of the Prime Minister. We know and we remember all too well the fact that the Information Commissioner Inger Hansen has issued a number of very serious criticisms of the role that the Prime Minister's Office played in attempting to screen and vet information which was released to the public.

I might just say on that point that the treatment of Inger Hansen, an outstanding public servant, a woman who has contributed a great deal to this country as Information Commissioner, in her previous capacity as Privacy Commissioner and as the corrections ombudsperson has been shabby and beneath contempt. To treat a woman of this calibre and with this kind of distinguished record of service to her country in the way that this government has treated her is absolutely unbelievable.

We know that she has been critical of the government. In fact in a number of speeches she has been particularly harsh in her criticism of this government's failure to move forward in respect of openness and accountability in government. In 1988 she said: "Investigations often reveal a picture of a government that uses every opportunity to say no or, if that fails, to delay the process."

• (1220)

In September 1988 she said: "With few exceptions, there is no longer any clear message from the government, whether from the politicians or the bureaucracy, that Canadians have a legislated right to access and that the law ought to be obeyed in a willing, forthright and timely fashion."

Inger Hansen spoke out independently, not always perhaps as strongly as some of us might have liked, but she spoke out independently and was prepared to take on the government.

The concern of Canadians is that the appointment of Bruce Phillips signals that instead of putting into place a strong and effective watch dog for the privacy of Canadians, we are getting a docile lap dog that will do what the Prime Minister's Office wants and will not challenge in any effective way decisions which are made by that office.

The debate today gives us an opportunity to voice our concern about this abuse of the appointment power of the Prime Minister to put into this sensitive and important office one of his former political colleagues. I would hope that this House might take the opportunity, when this comes to a vote as indeed it will, to issue a stern rebuke to the Prime Minister and to the Minister of Justice to tell them that this position, which after all is an appointment of Parliament, is too important to debase by appointing an individual who was a political crony of the Prime Minister.

I would hope that members of this House would recognize that we can send a clear message to our constituents and to all Canadians that we believe strongly in the protection of the privacy of Canadians. The most effective way of doing that is by putting into this important office an individual who is seen to be independent, strong, effective, and not in any way tied to the Prime Minister's Office or to the government of the day.

Bruce Phillips does not meet those criteria; in fact quite the opposite. It is for that reason that I am rising in my place to oppose this appointment, to urge the government to withdraw this appointment, and to urge all members of this House to show their disgust and their revulsion at the Prime Minister and the Minister of Justice in their decision to politicize this appointment by voting against it when the opportunity comes in a few minutes.

Mr. Ross Reid (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Madam Speaker, I hesitate to enter this debate, but I have been drawn into it by both my friend here from Burnaby—Kingsway and my friend from Kingston and the Islands.

Perhaps I am in a unique position in this House, having been a political hack myself for a number of years, having worked with Mr. Phillips in the Prime Minister's Office, and having had to deal with Mr. Phillips supposedly as a Tory journalist. He was a most difficult, terribly unco-operative person. I can remember the 1979 budget when all we asked was that they not go until the Minister of Finance had read his speech. This Tory laughed me out of his office.

This man was a journalist, a respected journalist in this city and across this country. When he was asked to serve his country in our embassy in Washington, one of our most important embassies, he decided to do it not unlike a number of other people who have done exactly the same thing. Like a number of public servants and others, he then accepted an appointment in the service of the Prime Minister of this country.

There is no question, absolutely no question that one assumes some political responsibility, but as in many cases people return to the Public Service.

Having been a hack, a word I have used myself, I absolutely resent the concept and thesis that one cannot continue to serve one's country after a political life whether in the service of Parliament or in the service of the government. Whatever party we are from now or in the future I resent that we are all absolutely tainted with partisanship. It is offensive to me and to everyone else who served in the political system for whatever party he or she is in.

Mr. Robinson: Madam Speaker, the hon. member may attempt to make up in volume what he lacks in substance to his argument.

The reality is that the hon. member for St. John's East who is generally a thoughtful and learned member of the House has fundamentally missed the point in this instance. No one is suggesting that Bruce Phillips has disqualified himself from continuing to serve in a whole range of other occupations.

However, what is being suggested in this instance is that because the Privacy Commissioner is an officer of Parliament and because that position must be recognized as being fundamentally independent of any attachment whatsoever whether past, present, or future to the Office of the Prime Minister, it is a fundamentally different situation.

As the hon. member for St. John's East has indicated, Bruce Phillips has served his Prime Minister with distinction. Indeed he played a very vigorous role during the federal election campaign. That is fair ball. He has served his country in our embassy in Washington, but this office is an office that reports directly to Parliament. It is an office that is charged with the responsibility of protecting the privacy of Canadians from ever encroaching demands on their privacy. For that reason it is essential that there not be the slightest suggestion that the holder of that office have any tie whatsoever with the Office of the Prime Minister.

It is like the hon. member for St. John's East. After the next federal election he will be looking for a job. No one would suggest that he should not be in a position of serving his country in a variety of capacities, given his lengthy service to the public. I am sure that Prime Minister McLaughlin will keep that in mind.

What must be understood clearly is that if there were any suggestion at the end of the term of Bruce Phillips that the hon. member for St. John's East were to be appointed to that position despite his very strong and distinguished credentials, it would be seen as unacceptable. I doubt whether he would suggest that somehow his experience in the Prime Minister's Office or as a member of the House, albeit for one term, would qualify him for that position.

As Professor Flaherty has said—I remind the House that he is not a politician— this appointment ruins the integrity of the office of Privacy Commissioner. It is not because Bruce Phillips has in the past served his country. It is because of the fact that he is being appointed to this office that this appointment is fundamentally unaccept-

able to not only us in the opposition but to all Canadians I am sure.

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Madam Speaker, I want to congratulate the hon. member for Burnaby—Kingsway on his speech and on his reasoned comments.

I must say that the hon. member for St. John's East is beginning to sound like his counterpart, the hon. member for St. John's West in his intemperate outbursts. My question for the hon. member for Burnaby—Kingsway will be more reasoned and sensible.

In the last few days, in fact most of this week, the New Democratic Party has been stressing the importance of the Senate under our Constitution. It has urged the Senate to exercise its constitutional right to stop government bills. I know this new-found interest in the Senate represents quite a change of heart because their policy had always been to urge the abolition of that chamber of sober second thought. We witnessed the spectacle of them having moved a motion on Monday, pointing out the Senate's powers, and last night voting against paying the Senate any of its money so they could continue to do their work. It was something of an amazing feat and gives some credence to the comments that the Minister for International Trade made earlier.

• (1230)

Leaving all that aside, I wonder if the New Democratic Party today is urging the Senate, when it considers its resolution in respect of this appointment to block this appointment. Is it part of the New Democratic Party policy to urge the Senate to stop this appointment by refusing to pass the counterpart of this resolution in the other place? I would be interested in the hon. member's views.

Mr. Robinson: Madam Speaker, I am pleased that the member for Kingston and the Islands has given me an opportunity to voice the sense of outrage that Canadians from coast to coast are feeling about Liberal senators voting for themselves $153 a day just for showing up in the Senate.

The hon. member for Kingston and the Islands, I know, is probably as embarrassed and as ashamed by the actions of his Liberal colleagues in the other place, at getting up and tottering to their seats and raising their hands and saying, "Yes, yes, I want $153 a day just for showing up". It is damned outrageous.

That is the position that Liberal senators, each and every one of them in the other place, have taken. It is shameful. I think Canadians from coast to coast are recoiling in revulsion at this spectacle of Liberal and Conservative senators. Liberal senators have the majority, and if the Liberal senators had the intestinal fortitude and the spine to stand up and say no, that they were not going to vote themselves $153 a day just for showing up, things might have been different.

When we talk about hyprocrisy, I suggest that the member for Kingston and the Islands and the member for Willowdale, go down the hall to the senate chamber and talk to the Liberals senators and beg and plead with them to reverse this decision to grant themselves $153 a day. Canadians are appalled by this kind of Liberal wallowing at the public trough.

Mr. Jim Peterson (Willowdale): Madam Speaker, I have listened to the unctuous outflow of words from the member for Burnaby—Kingsway. My hon. colleague for Kingston and the Islands asked him a very simple question, a question that the member from Kingston and the Islands even felt that he might be able to understand.

Mr. Milliken: He didn't answer it.

Mr. Peterson: He was afraid to answer. It was a simple question. If, in all his outrage, he is prepared to say Canada does not deserve Bruce Phillips as our Privacy Commissioner, will he ask the Senate to scupper this appointment?

Mr. Milliken: That's right, why won't he do it?

Mr. Peterson: Why will he not come clean and confess that he is being a hypocrite on this issue?

Mr. Milliken: He is waiting for Audrey.

Mr. Peterson: What does he want? Is he waiting for instructions from his new leader? Does he only want to criticize the Senate, but not use it in an instructive way? Is he suggesting that the country should be burdened with the goods and services tax even if the Senate has a possibility of stopping this iniquitous tax from going through? Is this what he is saying? He would refuse to answer that question.

Let us return to the issue of Bruce Phillips as Privacy Commissioner. First we have to make the record very clear. On this side of the House, we believe that Mr. Phillips has been a distinguished Canadian journalist.

Second, he has served with distinction his own party, the Tories. Third, because of point number two, he is disqualified from serving in any one of four posts.

Our position is that anyone who has served the government or any other party in such a partisan way, is disqualified from only four government appointments. One of those is the Auditor General, the person charged with overseeing on a non-partisan basis the expenditures of government.

The second office for which he would automatically be disqualified because of his past, is that of Chief Electoral Officer, again an appointment of Parliament, a servant of Parliament and not of the government.

The third position for which he would be disqualified to serve would be Information Commissioner, a person charged with ensuring that Parliament itself has access to all the relevant information.

The fourth position is the one to which this government is appointing him, the Privacy Commissioner, dealing with the rights to privacy of all Canadians and again, a servant not of the government, but of all Canadians through all members of Parliament.

We are saying there are only four positions that we feel a person in Mr. Phillips' position is not qualified to serve in. This is not to denigrate from the individual, but this appointment is taking to the height of partisanship what should be an appointment totally beyond reproach.

Let us look at this government's record of appointments. We remember before the 1980 election when there was a certain prominent Tory in this country who talked about the beauty of getting one's snout into the trough; another barnyard analogy taken to new heights by the member for St. John's West. There was also that statement when this particular leader of Canada was asked if he would ever appoint a Liberal to any government position, to any Order in Council appointment? The answer was: "Not as long as there is one living Tory".

We saw a spate of appointments which were an embarrassment even to the most partisan of Canadians. We saw the appointment of one person to the board of Air Canada. This person was asked about qualifications to serve on the board of Air Canada: "What do you know about transportation?" The response was: "I drive a car".

An Hon. Member: Really! Profound!

Mr. Peterson: This was the quintessential type of appointment that was made for so many years by this government. Finally, it was so revolting to even members of the Tory party that they smartened up. They started to make some non-partisan appointments so that they could say their hands were clean. They appointed three prominent NDPers, socialists, to high positions. I must say I do not criticize those appointments because I thought all three of those NDPers had served their country with great distinction before those appointments were made, and are doing so or have done so in the posts to which they were appointed.

Was it out of a genuine interest in filling these posts with distinguished Canadians that they appointed Mr. Lewis to the UN, Mr. Broadbent to his position, and Mr. Deans to the Public Service Commission? Was this out of a sense of wanting to fill these posts with the best people? That was not their motive, even though they might have inadvertently made fine appointments. Their motivation was to attempt to cleanse their bloody hands from the past record they achieved of taking patronage to an all-time art form.

Mr. Milliken: An orgy of patronage.

Mr. Peterson: An orgy of patronage, as the member for Kingston and the Islands says. This did not just bring only the Tory party into disrepute. I must say that I think it cast all politicians in a bad light. When one politician does not act with the best interest of Canada in mind, Canadians do not say that it is just another Tory stunt, I think all of us suffer and are diminished in the minds of Canadians.

• (1240)

As elected representatives of whatever political stripe become diminished, we lose the ability to lead Canadians. We lose our ability to encourage Canadians to pull together. We have critical roles to play in order to make Canada great. We must be united as Canadians. We must work together to tackle global markets, rather than fracturing and fighting among the provinces, among sectors and among regions. When we as politicians make this call for Canadians to act together, but some politicians have misbehaved, we have lost our credibility. This

is the tragedy of the Tory record of downgrading politics in Canada, through terrible appointments based strictly on patronage.

I am not saying that governments prior to when the Tories took over some six years ago always made appointments based totally on merit. However, when I look at appointments we made such as Gordon Fairweather, a prominent Conservative—

An Hon. Member: A cabinet minister.

Mr. Peterson: —cabinet minister who Prime Minister Trudeau appointed to head up the Human Rights Commission. The fact that he was a Tory did not enter into the issue at all. There was a human being whose record on human rights, before he went into that post and before he was appointed, qualified him as the most pre-eminent Canadian to fill that post and Canadians rejoiced. They did not have to ask about his political stripe. It was an appointment of distinction and merit.

I can think of lots of examples where the same type of non-partisanship was followed; Mr. Duff Roblin, Ernest Manning, and Premier Smith to the Senate. These were appointments that brought distinction to the institution to which they were appointed. It brought distinction to the government that appointed them and it brought distinction to all politicians because we are all part of a process which was regarded as being higher than the levels to which this government has brought us through its grovelling in the trough of patronage.

Bruce Phillips is a journalist of distinction and a person who has served his party with distinction, albeit in a highly partisan way. We are saying that there are only four offices for which that individual cannot be qualified because of his former partisan activities; Auditor General, Chief Electoral Officer, Information Commissioner and the Privacy Commissioner. Every other government Order in Council appointment office would be open to this individual.

That does not mean we would not reserve the right to criticize an appointment were he not qualified to fulfil that task. We no longer want the qualifications for serving on the board of Air Canada to be the response: "Well, I know how to drive a car".

Let us, as politicians from every side of the House, think about how our constituents, the people of Canada, look on us. What are the highest possible standards they can expect from us?

[*Translation*]

What would Canadians' reaction be if it could be said that this man or this woman was the best qualified for the position, the best qualified of any Canadian, with partisan considerations completely set aside, no importance given to his or her political affiliation? The government must, for the first time, become a leader. A leader that can set an example with its appointments to these very important posts. It would be very simple for the Prime Minister to say to Mr. Bruce Phillips, "I'm sorry, I made a mistake in asking you to take on this job. We have something else for you. But the Parliament of Canada must be safeguarded, it must be protected, and we must appoint people who have not previously been partisan." For four positions, that is all.

[*English*]

We are looking for leadership from the government. All it has to do, not only in order to win the respect of Parliament, but to give a new attitude to Canadians, is to say to Mr. Bruce Phillips: "I am sorry. This one post is not open to you. We will give you something else and then we will judge based on qualifications."

I think Canadians expect more of their government. They expect more of all politicians of whatever stripe. If we are going to start winning back their respect so that they will listen to us, is this not a marvellous opportunity, by a simple act, reversing a partisan appointment which is an abuse of Parliament? This can be done by reversing one simple nomination. Bruce Phillips does not have to suffer because of that, because he can be named to some other post for which he is better qualified. It is a simple act of reversing this one nomination, therefore restoring the integrity of this institution and restoring the faith—

[*Translation*]

—the faith of Canadians in our government, in our system of government, in the Parliament of Canada.

Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (St. Boniface): Madam Speaker, I would like to put two questions to my hon. colleague. I should start out by saying that I greatly appreciated his speech, his comments. My first question is this: I wonder if he remembers the debate in 1984 about this important issue, and the commitments Mr. Mulroney had made at the time. What was it that he supposedly intented to do? You will remember, I am sure, that he made some serious commitments. What

serious commitments. What bothers me is that I have the impression that his commitment in this important area, which affects the very soul of politics in Canada, seems to be just like all the other commitments—what is said and what is actually done are two different things. I would like you to elaborate on that.

My second question is the following:

[*English*]

Could the hon. member not only elaborate on the promise that was made during that debate, but perhaps say a few words about the record of the government in terms of what the commitment was then? I think that is rather important. In fact, I think it is critical and I think Canadians want to know what was said and what was done.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jim Peterson (Willowdale): Madam Speaker, those are both good questions. The first related to what the Prime Minister said during the 1984 election campaign. He said two things to the people of Canada. He promised that there would never be any patronage, that his would be an open, an honest government.

• (1250)

He said a new era was opening up for Canadians as far as government appointments were concerned: appointees would be qualified people, experienced people, good people. That is what he said to Canadians.

But this is what he said to the Quebec Conservatives when he was asked if he would appoint a Liberal to any position—he said, "Yes, but not if there's even one Conservative still alive". So he said two things.

But what he did, as my hon. colleague from Manitoba has suggested, what he did after the election was something else entirely.

[*English*]

We saw exactly what happened. There was a spate of appointments and competent people who had served in posts with distinction were "unappointed". I will give you a very good example.

The Hon. Barney Danson, who had been our distinguished Minister of Defence, had been appointed to serve in a top post, representing Canadian business in Boston in the United States. It is not an incredibly important post in terms of the posts that are created, but the Hon. Barney Danson went to Boston with his wife and they created a whole new set of industries involving Canadian trade because he knew how to promote Canada. The Dansons worked hard at that post helping to put forward Canadian interests. What happened? A person with unquestioned competence, integrity, and ability did not get re-appointed so that the post could be filled by someone else.

There were so many appointments it started to gall Canadians. Every day the headlines read: "Another snout in the trough". Even Conservatives were embarrassed after 1984, through 1985 and 1986, by the appointments that were being made.

The hon. member, my esteemed colleague from Manitoba, points out that the appointments made after 1984 were not in accordance with the promise made to Canadians. However, perhaps we can give the Prime Minister the benefit of the doubt; they were precisely in accord with the promise he had made behind closed doors to Conservatives in Quebec.

What we have seen is an attempt by the government to clean up its act and its image by appointing some prominent NDPers to posts.

Mr. Crosby: How would that clean up the act?

Mr. Peterson: The hon. member from Halifax asks how that would clean up the act. The Prime Minister has cited those as being great appointments, but obviously the member from Halifax is disagreeing with his own leader. I have never seen such *lèse-majesté*.

We have behind me here a member from Calgary who was kicked out of that caucus for a lesser disagreement and one of greater principle than what the member for Halifax West exclaimed right now.

If the member for Halifax West is saying that he disagrees completely with the appointment of the three socialists made by his Prime Minister, then I submit that, if he does not resign from the Tory caucus right now, it is greater cause for being drummed out of caucus than the member from Calgary sitting behind us on this side who resigned on principle simply because he refused to support the GST.

An hon. member: Because he listened to the people.

Mr. Peterson: The member for Halifax West might have a point, because the member for St. John's West earlier called these three appointments, which the Prime Minister has lauded and touted throughout Canada, the appointment of turkeys. I assume that the member for Halifax West and the member for St. John's West are in agreement that their Prime Minister was wrong in making these appointments. They are now publicly criticizing their own Prime Minister for having made these great appointments.

I would hope they would do the honourable thing and submit their letters of resignation to the Prime Minister. They could do a joint letter signed by Halifax West and St. John's West. They could say: "We do so because we disagree with your appointment of those three socialists to these posts, appointments that were made in an attempt to cleanse our image even though, before Canadians, our hands are still bloodied. Like Lady MacBeth, these hands the multitudinous seas would incarnadine."

I suspect they will be sending this letter to the Prime Minister, doing the honourable thing, because the Prime Minister tried to clean up his act by making some non-partisan appointments.

I suspect that the hon. members opposite are happy with this appointment of Bruce Phillips. I am talking about only two members, the member for St. John's West and the member for Halifax West. They must be happy with this appointment of Bruce Phillips because they feel that other appointments by the Prime Minister have been wrong, when he appointed socialists. Bruce Phillips is obviously not a socialist. He has been there in the troops with them, he has been there in the forces, and he has been in the trenches. He was manipulating the fifth estate on their behalf in order to give the spin that the Tories needed in order to bring home victory to them in 1984. He was doing it afterward and he has been good for them.

All we are saying is that Mr. Phillips, a distinguished journalist, a strong hack for the Tory Party, has disqualified himself, because of his previous partisan activities, only from serving in four posts which are parliamentary and not government.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I was trying to get order in the House to allow the hon. member to conclude and I knew he was having some difficulty with one of his colleagues. The hon. member for Willowdale.

Mr. Peterson: Madam Speaker, the only difficulty I have ever had with my colleagues is, they are such great team players and they are so full of integrity, ideas, and enthusiasm for forming a new government and getting the country going, that we sometimes have trouble getting to bed before one or two in the morning.

I am so impressed with my colleagues on this side of the House and Canadians are as well. Look at the polls, Madam Speaker: 15 per cent on your right-hand side, and at least triple that on this side of the House. We are the government-in-waiting. We are the people who have to bring new directions to Canada, including the integrity of our very institutions which can best be demonstrated by the Order in Council appointments which are so fundamental to the operation of our government, to our Parliament, and to democracy in this country.

Madam Deputy Speaker: It being one o'clock p.m., pursuant to order made Wednesday, June 6, 1990, it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the motion now before the House and of the proposed motion standing on the Order Paper in the name of the Minister of Justice for the appointment of John Grace as Information Commissioner.

• (1300)

The question is as follows. Ms. Campbell (Vancouver Centre), seconded by Mr. Andre moved:

> That, in accordance with subsection 53(1) of the act to extend the present laws of Canada that protect the privacy of individuals and that provide individuals with a right of access to personal information about themselves, Chapter P-21 of the Revised Statutes of Canada, 1985, this House approves the appointment of Bruce Phillips as Privacy Commissioner.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: No.

Madam Deputy Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some Hon. Members: Yea.

Madam Deputy Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some Hon. Members: Nay.

Madam Deputy Speaker: In my opinion the yeas have it.

And more than five members having risen:

Madam Deputy Speaker: Call in the members.

The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:

(*Division No. 285*)

YEAS

Members

Anderson	Andre
Atkinson	Bird
Blackburn (Jonquière)	Blais
Blenkarn	Bosley
Bouchard (Roberval)	Brightwell
Browes	Cadieux
Campbell (Vancouver Centre)	Cardiff
Casey	Chadwick
Champagne (Champlain)	Charest
Clark (Brandon—Souris)	Cole
Collins	Cooper
Corbeil	Côté
Crosbie (St. John's West)	Crosby (Halifax West)
Danis	Darling
DeBlois	Desjardins
Dick	Dobbie
Domm	Dorin
Duplessis	Edwards
Epp	Fee
Feltham	Fontaine
Gibeau	Gray (Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine)
Greene	Guilbault
Harvey (Chicoutimi)	Hawkes
Hicks	Hogue
Hudon	Hughes
James	Jelinek
Johnson	Jourdenais
Koury	Layton
Leblanc (Longueuil)	Lewis
Littlechild	Loiselle
Lopez	MacDonald (Rosedale)
MacDougall (Timiskaming)	Marin
Martin (Lincoln)	Mayer
Mazankowski	McCreath
McDermid	McDougall (St. Paul's)
McKnight	McLean
Monteith	Moore
Oberle	O'Kurley
Plourde	Pronovost
Redway	Reid
Richardson	Roy-Arcelin
Saint-Julien	Schneider
Scott (Victoria—Haliburton)	Siddon
Soetens	Sparrow
Stevenson	Tardif
Tétreault	Thacker
Thompson	Thorkelson
Tremblay (Québec-Est)	Tremblay (Lotbinière)
Turner (Halton—Peel)	Vankoughnet
Vézina	Vien
Vincent	Weiner
Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek—Assiniboia)	
Wilson (Etobicoke Centre)	Winegard
Worthy—106	

NAYS

Members

Allmand	Althouse
Angus	Assad
Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing)	Barrett
Bellemare	Benjamin
Blackburn (Brant)	Boudria
Brewin	Callbeck
Campbell (South West Nova)	Catterall
Clancy	Crawford
Dionne	Duhamel
Edmonston	Finestone
Flis	Fontana
Foster	Gaffney
Gagliano	Gauthier
Gray (Windsor West)	Harvard
Harvey (Edmonton East)	Heap
Hunter	Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)
Kindy	Langan (Mission—Coquitlam)
Lee	MacAulay
MacDonald (Dartmouth)	MacLellan
Maheu	Manley
Marleau	McGuire
Mifflin	Milliken
Murphy	Nystrom
Parker	Peterson
Phinney	Proud
Rideout	Riis
Robinson	Rodriguez
Skelly (North Island—Powell River)	Stupich
Taylor	Vanclief
Whittaker	Young (Gloucester)—60

• (1320)

Madam Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

[*Translation*]

The next question is on the following motion in the name of Ms. Campbell (Vancouver Centre).

Hon. Kim Campbell (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada) moved:

That, in accordance with subsection 54(1) of the Act to extend the present laws of Canada that provide access to information under the control of the Government of Canada, Chapter A-1 of the Revised Statutes of Canada, 1985, this House approves the appointment of John Grace as Information Commissioner.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Gauthier: Madam Speaker, I will be very brief and merely wish to say, on behalf of our caucus, that we endorse the appointment of Dr. John Grace as Information Commissioner. For seven years, Dr. Grace has been known as a competent and absolutely impartial—

Madam Deputy Speaker: I think we should avoid getting into debate.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Riis: On division.

Motion agreed to on division.

Mr. Prud'homme: Madam Speaker, on a point of order.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Saint-Denis, on a point of order.

Mr. Prud'homme: I merely wish to say, Madam Speaker, that I was in the House for the previous division but decided not to vote.

Madam Deputy Speaker: It being 1.29 p.m, I do now leave the Chair until two o'clock this afternoon.

At 1.29 p.m. the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S. O. 31

[*English*]

NATIONAL UNITY

Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, I would like to read a message which I received from the students of St. Boniface Diocesan High School. They met the day before yesterday in front of the legislative building in Manitoba to show their commitment to national unity.

I quote parts of this letter:

> We, the undersigned, are proud of who, where and what we are. We are proud of Canada's unique identity as a friendly nation that extends from sea to sea, but more importantly, as a country capable of sustaining two separate cultures in relative harmony.
>
> The present situation has brought, perhaps, the beginning of the end of our concept of Canada.
>
> Those in Quebec have been exposed to some very inaccurate representations of English Canadian feelings towards French Canada. The media have shown isolated incidents involving anti-French rallying and have continued to dwell on the negative. It is the purpose of this letter to show that positive feelings do exist and that we are very worried about the unity of our country.

They go on to give an example of the sharing of the school between St. Boniface Diocesan High School and École Precieux Sang. The letter continues:

> We are feeling that, perhaps, the people of Quebec do not realize just how much support they have in the west. To reinforce our confidence in the strength of Canada, we publicly proclaim our support of Quebec and a united Canada.

[*Translation*]

I ask all young Canadians throughout Canada to express their feelings right away on this extremely important issue and to show that they really want a strong united country.

* * *

[*English*]

LOCKEPORT HIGH SCHOOL

Mr. Peter L. McCreath (South Shore): Mr. Speaker, I wish to commend and congratulate the students of the grade 10 English class in Lockeport High School and their teacher, Cliff MacKay.

These students collectively wrote a play entitled "The Lockeport Story: Past, Present, and Future". It tells the story of their town and its difficulties in recent years with the trials and tribulations of the fishing industry. This play which was collectively written by the 24 students and their teacher was performed before over 300 people in three performances.

The play reflected the heart, the soul, and the character of the town of Lockeport, a town in which people recognize that they are the best ones to deal with and solve their own problems. The recent history of Lockeport has been one of trial but with the type of leadership and self-reliance demonstrated by these students of Lockeport, I am confident that the Lockeport story will have a happy ending very soon.

* * *

AIRLINE INDUSTRY

Mr. Iain Angus (Thunder Bay—Atikokan): Mr. Speaker, analysts of Canada's airline industry are sounding warning bells. There is every chance that only one of our two major airlines will survive this decade.

New Democrats warned the government of this issue. Symptoms of serious illness in this industry are now undeniable. Air Canada posted a $13 million loss this year in its first quarter, for the second year running. It would have been even worse had it not sold off $21 million in assets.

Canadian Airlines is in no better shape and may well be doing worse with PWA haemorrhaging cash, 1,600 lay-offs since the Wardair purchase, and 1,900 more jobs slated for the axe in the near future.

The signs are there that soon there may be only one airline, and the government must be ready. That means preparing to protect consumers from monopoly price gouging and preparing to protect communities from service cuts.

I do not want to cry wolf, and perhaps some miracle may yet happen, but the government has a responsibility to Canadians to be prepared for a shrinking industry, especially when it helped to bring it about by deregulation.

* * *

[*Translation*]

CITIZENSHIP CEREMONY

Mr. Marcel R. Tremblay (Québec-Est): Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to tell my fellow Canadians in Québec-Est about a wonderful event that will take place in our riding on July 1.

Mr. Speaker, as part of Canada Day festivities, we will have the honour to celebrate the citizenship ceremony at the François Charon Centre in Quebec City.

Since this rehabilitation centre symbolizes humanitarianism, dedication and generosity in all respects, I think it is the ideal place to show our new Canadian citizens the spirit and determination that characterize our people.

Thanks go to the president and general manager, Louis Champoux, for the receptivity and eagerness he showed in granting this request. I look forward to attending this most important celebration soon.

* * *

[*English*]

UKRAINIAN CANADIANS

Mr. Joe Fontana (London East): Mr. Speaker, between 1914 and 1920, approximately 8,500 Ukrainian Canadians were interned in 26 concentration camps across Canada. Just because they came from an area of the world under the Austro-Hungarian empire, they were used as forced labour in internment camps and had their property confiscated and never returned.

In October 1988, the Ukrainian Canadian Congress submitted a proposal to the Canadian government for the acknowledgement of and the symbolic redress for this injustice. This three-page proposal has taken over 18 months to study, and still this government is incapable of a response.

This is a legitimate concern and this government has the responsibility to respond. This is an issue about fundamental civil liberties, and it is important to all Canadians. This government must show a commitment to addressing these concerns by responding with action instead of silence.

Canadians must right a wrong. The federal government must right that wrong for them.

* * *

NEW HORIZONS PROGRAM

Mr. Larry Schneider (Regina—Wascana): Mr. Speaker, there seems to be some misunderstanding, and I hope not purposely, by members of the New Democratic Party. They are saying that the Department of Health and Welfare has cut $4 million from the budget of the New Horizons Program.

I would like to take this opportunity to set the record straight. Fifteen million dollars was allocated to New Horizons projects in the main estimates. Of that, $4 million was temporarily set aside, not cancelled, pending a review of the program.

The purpose of the review is to see how the money could be better spent on projects within the New Horizons Program. As part of this review, senior citizens across the country will be consulted. I believe this is a positive step in ensuring that the taxpayers' money is spent on worth-while programs and that within those programs it is put to its best possible use.

This statement is made necessary in an attempt to negate the scare mongering that I attribute to those who use their information selectively.

SEX OFFENDERS

Mr. John Brewin (Victoria): Mr. Speaker, last week I asked a question of the Solicitor General on the issue of treatment of sex offenders, and he said that he was still studying the subject.

This week, a new book was published called *Criminal Neglect: Why Sex Offenders Go Free*. It is a horrifying account of the epidemic of sex offences and abuse in this country. I do not know whether the issue has always been around and is just becoming public, or whether there is a particular rise in the issue.

What is clearly documented here is the failure of society in general to respond to this problem, and the particular failure of Correctional Service Canada and the Government of Canada to deal effectively and fairly with the problem of sex offenders.

I urge the House and the public to take a look at this important book.

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Francis G. LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso): Mr. Speaker, this is Canadian Environment Week. I would like to pay tribute to Stora Forest Industries Limited of Port Hawkesbury, Nova Scotia for its bold initiative in environmental awareness.

Earlier this year Stora launched an environmental awareness program for all 1,000 of its employees, as well as more than 200 woodlands contractors and related personnel. The program, the first of its kind in the pulp and paper industry in Canada, enabled participants to educate themselves on global and local environmental issues, on forest management, and on what Stora as a pulp and newsprint producer was doing in the area. Through these workshops employees participated in the development of an environmental policy for the company.

On Monday I participated in this workshop, along with 21 other media, educators and community leaders. The session was engaging, informative, and frank. Stora admitted that it was not perfect but was honestly committed as a corporation to conducting its affairs consistent with the principles of sustainable development and of sharing its successes and failings openly with the wider community.

This is responsible corporate citizenry, and I urge industry across Canada to follow Stora's lead.

* * *

BRAVERY AWARDS

Mr. Doug Fee (Red Deer): Mr. Speaker, tomorrow morning at Rideau Hall His Excellency the Governor General will present bravery decorations to 13 Canadians for acts of heroism. The recipients have each demonstrated the strength and courage that we each like to have in times of trial.

One example of the unselfish heroism that will be recognized occurred last year north of Drumheller, Alberta. Eighteen-year old Derrick Wilson watched from the ground as his uncle Dale's crop dusting plane slammed into a field and burst into flames. Without apparent thought for his own safety, Derrick ran to the upside down plane, pulled his semi-conscious uncle free, and extinguished his burning clothing.

Derrick will be recognized with the Medal of Bravery but more important is the knowledge that his unselfish act saved his uncle's life. When interviewed by the media he was quoted as "not wanting to brag about it".

• (1410)

On behalf of this House, I would like to congratulate Derrick and the other 12 recipients of the bravery decorations. They are Canadians we can all be proud of.

* * *

[*Translation*]

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Guy Saint-Julien (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, after some intense negotiating, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities managed to bring the GST for municipalities down from 7 per cent to 3 per cent.

The Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) said that the FCM had been very diligent and effective in its defence of the interests of municipalities, and that all parties had to show some flexibility in order to deal with a number of complex issues and obtain a satisfactory GST rebate for municipalities.

The government's goal, said the minister, was to ensure that after the sales tax reform was ratified, municipalities would not take up a heavier tax burden than the one they have now.

Mr. Speaker, we want to thank the Minister of Finance who made a major concession and reduced the GST to 3 per cent for Canadian and Quebec municipalities.

* * *

[*English*]

FISHERIES

Mr. Joe McGuire (Egmont): Mr. Speaker, on April 17, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans stated:

> Fishermen need safe, accessible harbours as much as they need serviceable vessels and gear.

The fishermen of my riding of Egmont and the other three ridings of P.E.I. would very much like the minister to translate his statement into action.

Across the island wharfs are collapsing because minimum maintenance has been neglected for several years. Fishing boats are running aground because harbours are being blocked by silt and dredging is not being carried out.

Many harbours are overcrowded because facilities which should have been expanded have actually diminished. Requests from fishermen have been ignored. Warnings from fishermen have been ignored. Fishermen's boats have been damaged and fishermen's lives have been put in jeopardy.

Fishermen of P.E.I. want this government to do its job: get the dredging done, get the wharfs repaired, and give the fishermen of Tignish, Alberton, Miminegash, Howards Cove, and Higgin's Wharf a chance to do their job and do it in safety.

* * *

NATIONAL UNITY

Mr. Ken Hughes (Macleod): Mr. Speaker, we all know that there exists those sceptics, those whose vision is short and whose aspirations are narrow who believe that Canada does not have a future united.

Do not believe these wistful dreamers. Let Canadians of good faith show by their actions that the vigour and the vitality of our nation is unimpaired, that our determination is to uphold the spirit of Canada, that our voice of reason shall be heard in the councils of the world, and that we remain a strong, a vibrant, a modern and a generous nation, one which is accepting of all Canadians.

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Rex Crawford (Kent): Mr. Speaker, how many toxic waste dumps are there in Canada? The government does not have a clue.

There is no complete inventory of toxic waste sites due to budget cuts in 1984. Across the nation there is a wide disparity in classification and even definition of toxic waste, so some provinces have become pollution havens with laws full of loopholes.

The rules and regulations for toxic waste under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act are gutless. Each province is held responsible under CEPA, but no equivalency agreements have been signed.

Why can this government not realize that strong national standards are the only effective way to clean up the environment? Today we have an unravelling patchwork of provincial regulations. Illegal dumping continues, water supplies tainted, and toxic waste produced by the tons, and yet green plan public relations is costing nearly $1 million already, while we are told to wait for action.

Where are the government's priorities? In fact, where is the government?

* * *

THE SENATE

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, talk about hypocrisy in this House.

Early yesterday the Minister of Finance and other members of cabinet called the Senate's $153 bonus for showing up for work inappropriate. Others call it ridiculous, some call it scandalous, others call it unacceptable, and others call it contemptible.

Yet, later in the day, who voted in favour of supplying the Senate with money to provide the $153? The Minister of Finance, the government House leader, the deputy government House leader, the chairman of the finance committee, and the chief government Whip. As a matter of fact, all the Conservatives voted to support

the Senate and all of the Liberals voted to support the Senate as well.

When it comes to telling the truth, let us face it, what they say is one thing but what they do is another. Shame on you cabinet ministers and shame on you Conservative Party members.

* * *

KOREAN–SOVIET SUMMIT

Mr. Bill Vankoughnet (Hastings—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington): Mr. Speaker, with the dramatic changes in eastern Europe and the excitement of the Gorbachev visit to Canada and the United States, almost lost in this excitement was the Korean–Soviet Summit between Mr. Gorbachev and the South Korean President Roh Tae-woo in San Francisco on Monday.

The two leaders agreed to exchange visits and are likely to hold ministerial talks on opening ambassador-level diplomatic ties this year.

This will end a gap in relations between the two nations that has lasted 86 years.

Mr. Speaker, this is further evidence that the cold war is thawing globally, and hopefully will lead to positive change in Asia.

This unprecedented meeting is another significant step to improved relations on the divided Korean peninsula and relations between South and North Korea.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[*English*]

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Douglas Young (Gloucester): Mr. Speaker, I will direct my question to the Minister of Finance.

There is not a single economist in the country outside of the government service, nor is their a business leader in the country who will stake their reputation on the projection of the Minister of Finance in his February 20 budget that interest rates for the calendar year 1990 will average 11.1 per cent. Nobody in the country believes that.

Does the minister know if there is any chance of reaching the target of 11.1 per cent and, if not, will he introduce the corrective measures that he discussed this week in his appearance before the finance Committee where he said the government would take major corrective measures if those were in fact required? Does he not believe that they are required now?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, the interest rates have come down today by 20 basis points. The bank rate was just announced. That is on top of another drop which I believe was about one–eighth of one per cent last week. I would not, if I were the hon. member, jump to as fast and as hard conclusions as he has.

I indicated that the interest rate levels are higher than we had anticipated at the time of the budget. That obviously has the effect of putting upward pressure on the deficit, but since then we have announced the budget deficit number for last year which is $1 billion lower than what we had previously been expecting. That is the fourth time in a row that we have come in under our projection, I might add. That is because there have been higher revenues last year and those higher revenues are continuing into this year. We have two counterbalancing forces.

As I indicated to my hon. friend in the committee earlier this week, we will be reviewing this on an ongoing basis. If it is appropriate for us to take mid–term corrections then we will do so.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Douglas Young (Gloucester): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary for the same minister.

This week, when the Minister of Finance appeared before the Finance Committee, he said that uncertainty about the constitutional question had been a factor in increasing interest rates in this country.

Since the bank rate went down by 20 points today, I want to ask the Minister of Finance whether in view of his statement this week before the Finance Committee about the Meech Lake Accord, the minister can give Canadians the assurance that, if the constitutional impasse is resolved, interest rates in this country will continue to show a significant downward trend.

[*English*]

Mr. Speaker: The minister may want to answer that question, but it was a hypothetical question and I just point that out.

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, thank you very much. I was going to caution my friend in drawing too fast conclusions again in his second question.

There is some element of risk premium in interest rates in recent weeks as a result of the uncertainty surrounding the Meech Lake Accord, but the fundamental problem our country is facing that is causing interest rates to be as high as they are is the inflationary pressures, which I have discussed at great length in the House to date.

• (1420)

What I have pointed out to colleagues is that the underlying cost pressures in the economy, as measured by unit labour costs, increased from 4.9 per cent at the start of 1989 to 6.9 per cent at the end of 1989, at the same time as those of our major competitors were staying steady at 5 per cent or less. These are the pressures that are causing the higher interest rates. If we are able to get these inflationary pressures under control, if we can see them turning down, then we will be able to see lower interest rates.

Mr. Douglas Young (Gloucester): Mr. Speaker, Laurent Thibeault of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association says the government's monetary policy is going to perhaps permanently cripple Canadians' ability to compete in the international market. Steel industry representatives came in and talked about an 80 per cent drop in their profits in their latest quarter compared to last year.

George Petty of the pulp and paper industry called for the resignation or the dismissal of the Governor of the Bank of Canada because of his high interest rates and the artificially high dollar.

I know that the Minister of Finance is not prone to listen to advice from members opposite, but will he now listen to a wide variety of Canadian business leaders who are telling him that the high Canadian dollar is killing the manufacturing sector in this country and he must change his policy?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Well, Mr. Speaker, I think my hon. friend would be the first to admit that he is selective in the witnesses that he has chosen to quote. Yes, my hon. friend is acknowledging with the shake of his head that that probably is a correct statement.

The point that I want to make is that other witnesses before the Finance Committee have acknowledged that the monetary policy of the government is the right policy to follow, precisely for the reasons that I have suggested. That is, the competitive pressures in the economy are strong, the upward pressure on competitive costs is strong and we must continue this policy.

I point out that Mr. Rubin of Wood Gundy who is the author of the study that was quoted in the *The Globe and Mail* on Tuesday, is also very supportive of the monetary policy that this government has been following.

* * *

ROUTE CANADA

Mr. Joe Comuzzi (Thunder Bay—Nipigon): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Minister of Transport suggested that the cabinet had no dealings with Manfred Ruhland, and I quote from *Hansard*:

> It was sold as a going concern to the Fingold brothers. That is exactly the way it happened. Any other suggestion is absolutely incorrect.

I have here a copy of a sworn statement given on December 22, 1988, to the Official Receiver in Bankruptcy. The question asked by the Official Receiver: "Who represented CN in the negotiations and sale of Transport Route Canada Inc.?" The answer given by Manfred Ruhland included, amongst others representing CN, the name of the then Minister of Transport, the present Deputy Prime Minister.

Will the minister now want to reconsider the statement given to the House yesterday?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, my hon. friend, as a lawyer, will know that he should also have suggested as to exactly what time my friend was referring to. Were they discussions he talked to before or after the agreement of purchase and sale was signed?

Mr. Joe Comuzzi (Thunder Bay—Nipigon): Mr. Speaker, a supplementary, if I may.

On June 4, the Minister of Transport advised the House that CN Route was sold on an arm's length transaction with advice coming to the government from CN. The same sworn statement seems to state that that is not quite correct, when the then Minister of Transport was involved with the negotiations, as stated in this sworn document, given to the Official Receiver in

Bankruptcy on December 22, 1988. I wonder if I could have a comment on that.

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, under different circumstances, we could probably try the entire case here, but that is not what Question Period is all about. I quote from CN's letter which says. "CN and no one else decided to sell its subsidiary after discussions with more than 30 companies beginning in 1985. Our negotiations on the sale were held directly with David Fingold, representing himself and his brother Paul as principal purchasers. Their financial credentials were very solid".

* * *

FISHERIES

Mr. David D. Stupich (Nanaimo—Cowichan): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans.

The Fisheries Act amendments introduced yesterday called for increased fines for those found guilty of dumping fish at sea, misreporting catches and for the alteration or pollution of fish habitat.

However, what assurances can the minister give the House that his department intends to do any more than pay lip service, given that officials in British Columbia region stated in a memo dated November 15, 1989: "DFO friendly corporations will enjoy relative immunity from the Fisheries Act"?

Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, was that a question or a statement?

If the hon. member, in a socialist way, is trying to make Canadians believe the acts of Parliament apply only to the poor fishermen and not to the big corporations, I invite him to check the facts.

The proposed amendments to the Fisheries Act are laid out in the bill. If he wants to be truthful to Canadians—socialists love to be truthful—he should tell Canadians that for the first time officials of companies, licence holders and big corporations will be liable, for the first time, to be prosecuted under the amendment to the Fisheries Act.

Mr. David D. Stupich (Nanaimo—Cowichan): Mr. Speaker, under the Coastal Fisheries Protection Act, today, foreign vessels can be fined $500,000 for illegal entry into Canadian waters and $750,000 for illegal fishing.

In his final report, Dr. Harris said: "In practice, penalties have not even approached those levels". Will the minister explain why anyone should expect that the new penalties will be imposed when the existing ones are being ignored?

Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member may want to reflect on the judges who are appointed to the courts in Canada. That is up to him. The Parliament of Canada is empowered to set what the fines can be, and it is left to the judiciary to apply the law.

If the hon. member is suggesting that the executive branch should infringe upon the powers of the judiciary, we do not share that view.

Mr. David D. Stupich (Nanaimo—Cowichan): Mr. Speaker, may I just remind the hon. minister that it is not the New Democrats who appoint the judges.

According to the Fisheries Council of B.C., the ability of the federal government to protect the groundfish fishery is totally ineffective. Press reports tell of federal authorities routinely ordering the dumping of hundreds of tonnes of groundfish in order not to exceed DFO quotas. The destruction of the resource which has crippled the Atlantic industry is, with the connivance of the federal government officials, beginning to occur on the Pacific coast.

How will this legislation do anything to correct mismanagement on the part of federal government officials?

Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, again the socialists are trying to blame the government officials for what is happening to the fishery.

The fact of the matter is that the act empowers the government to pass regulations.

When the hon. member speaks about discarding fish, it is not something that we advocate. We do not want to see

our fish resources depleted. We are in the process of looking at ways wherein we can ensure, for example, that people are not encouraged to discard fish at sea.

This is why the amendments that I introduced to the Fisheries Act yesterday will provide for the first time the minister of the Crown to make regulations for observers on those vessels where they will be enabled by law to take the necessary steps and measures to ensure that the awful things that the member sees do not happen anymore.

* * *

• (1430)

ROUTE CANADA

Mr. George S. Rideout (Moncton): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the minister responsible for privatization. It is bad enough that after Route Canada was taken over money was wasted on European vacations, luxury yachts, and private jets, and that 2,000 workers lost their jobs, but to add insult to injury, company assets and pension plans were used to attempt to finance an American trucking firm takeover.

Since the government was actually involved in this transaction, what policies has the government put in place to prevent this type of leverage buy-out in the future?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, my hon. friend knows very well that there is a full investigation being carried out by the RCMP. As well, this is also before the courts as a matter of bankruptcy. At this point, I am not prepared to comment on anything that is either under investigation or before the courts.

Mr. George S. Rideout (Moncton): Mr. Speaker, my question was simply one of asking what the government policy is, but obviously there is not any.

My supplementary question is directed to Minister of Transport.

We know that the government got its friends to do the dirty work in getting rid of 2,000 CN Route employees. We know that the government dealt directly with Manfred Ruhland. It is not good enough for the minister to try to wash his hands of this matter. When will the minister take his responsibility for the 2,000 jobs that he helped to destroy, and what is he going to do about it?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, earlier we had mention of the gentleman my hon. friends were complaining about yesterday, and today evidence was introduced using an affidavit by this same individual. I am not sure they are exactly certain in their own party as to where they stand with this individual.

Here is where CN stands with the employees. It stated: "We negotiated special agreements to help ease the impact on employees not required to operate the new company profitably. We have met every one of our commitments to employees, pensioners, customers, and communities, including the payment of $23 million for separation and related costs of former CN Route employees".

* * *

[*Translation*]

MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, for five days, the 11 First Ministers have been meeting behind closed doors to try to find a solution to the constitutional impasse over the Meech Lake Accord. Given Canadians' great interest in this subject and the concern that still prevails, I wonder whether the Deputy Prime Minister could give the House an up-to-date report on the negotiations and perhaps also tell us a little about the issues that are now in dispute.

[*English*]

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, all I can say to my hon. friend and to the House is that the First Ministers are still meeting and working.

There is, I am told, step-by-step progress. There is a mood of co-operation and trust. However, there are a number of difficult issues that still remain unresolved. Consequently, there is not an agreement on a total package and, until such time as there is agreement on a total package, they will continue to meet.

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, I thank the Deputy Prime Minister for that answer.

I want to know if the government would commit today to tabling all the documents that were used or distributed by the federal government for the consideration of the federal-provincial conference as soon as the confer-

ence comes out of the meetings in secret and is made public? I would like to get a copy of these documents for the House.

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, my understanding is that an exchange of various documents is taking place as a part of the discussions. Before I undertake to do that, obviously, it would require the consent of the First Ministers as well.

At this particular time, as long as progress is being made—and I know my hon. friend and his colleagues hope to see this evolve to a satisfactory conclusion—it is very important to let the process work. At the appropriate time, there would obviously be a desire on the part of everyone involved to ensure that the public is informed as fully as possible.

For the time being, I simply want to reiterate that, as long as discussions continue and as long as progress is being made, there is always a ray of hope.

* * *

ROUTE CANADA

Mr. Iain Angus (Thunder Bay—Atikokan): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport. In addition to the revelation that Mr. Ruhland swore that the member for Vegreville, in his former capacity as Transport Minister, was among those who represented CN in the negotiations and sale of TRCI—

Mr. Mazankowski: That is nonsense!

Mr. Angus: He also went on to state:

> CN were aware of the real estate split (intended) prior to purchase and knew that other (split–offs) reorganization things would happen. They were party to the deeds being conveyed to the other companies. The deeds of various pieces of real estate.

Given those comments by one of the principals, will the minister now admit that the government, as the sole shareholder of CN, knew all along the plans that Ruhland had for the 2,400 employees of Route Canada? Will the government now take its moral, if not legal, responsibility and immediately announce an aid package that will give back to the workers the back pay, the vacation pay, the severance pay, and the pension moneys that are owed to them?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, this is amusing. On the one hand, the Opposition has all sorts of allegations against an individual and, on the other hand, they quote him. They cannot have it both ways.

There is no question that CN, and no one else, decided to sell its subsidiary after discussions with more than 30 companies beginning in 1985. Our negotiations on the sale were held directly with David Fingold, representing himself and his brother Paul as principal purchasers. Their financial credentials were very solid. That is it. CN sold the assets.

Mr. Iain Angus (Thunder Bay—Atikokan): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question. I take it from the minister's answer, which did not deal with the specifics of my question, that one can only assume that the government was at the table and that the government and CN did know in advance that this particular company was going to carve off sections of land and assets in order to assist in the situation. The government knew what this company was going to do.

Will the minister indicate yes or no? Did the government know in advance that these folks were going to carve up CN Route and sell off its assets?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I dispute all of the assertions and allegations in my hon. friend's preamble. The answer is no.

* * *

AIDS

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of National Health and Welfare. The minister will know that yesterday some 20 members of Parliament, as well as senators, issued a report entitled *Confronting a Crisis, the Report of the Parliamentary Ad Hoc on AIDS*.

I would like to ask the minister if he would concur with recommendation no. 1 which reads, and I quote:

> The Committee recommends that a Special Joint Committee of Parliament be established as soon as possible to study and make recommendations on all aspects of the AIDS epidemic in Canada.

Does the minister concur with that recommendation and, if so, when will he make that announcement to the House?

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member knows, it was at my initiative that the special *ad hoc* committee was formed. I was the one who encouraged the formation of that committee. I want to thank the members of that committee for the report which they released yesterday. It will be very helpful to us in the completion of our work on the national strategy.

There is already a House of Commons committee on health which gives members of Parliament the opportunity to raise all issues related to health, including AIDS, and the *ad hoc* committee itself provides a non-partisan forum for members of the House of Commons and of the Senate to look specifically at the issue of AIDS. We will be looking at all of the recommendations that have been made. I thank the members for their constructive suggestions and we will be responding when the national strategy is released on June 28.

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, I wish to remind the minister that the members who participated in this *ad hoc* committee did so on a non-partisan basis and recommended that particular recommendation in a non-partisan way as well. I would hope that the minister would give serious reflection to that very important recommendation.

My second question for the minister has to do with the recommendation whereby "the Department of National Health and Welfare, in co-operation with the Correctional Service of Canada, immediately set up a pilot study—with appropriate ethical safeguards, to assess the level of HIV infection in federal prisons."

Could the minister indicate to the House what has transpired between his department and that of the Correctional Service in regard to the possibility of a pilot study in order to ascertain this much needed information?

• (1440)

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I can indicate to the hon. member that, both in terms of recommendation no. 1 and in terms of all 50 recommendations that are made there, the government will actively look at every recommendation that has been made. We will be responding in the form of the national strategy on June 28. Where there are recommendations that involve more than one department, I certainly will be discussing those recommendations with my colleagues on an active basis.

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IMMIGRATION

Hon. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Employment and Immigration.

Earlier this week, the Conservative majority in the Standing Committee on Labour, Employment and Immigration tabled a report recommending slower growth in Canadian immigration levels. Will the minister now reject this timid, pessimistic recommendation, and give us her position on this important matter?

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the committee for its report and what has actually been a very interesting debate in the country over the last six months. We have engaged in a series of consultations across Canada about immigration levels and what they should be over the next five years, as well as the composition and services that should be provided within that context.

This is the first time in 15 years that there has been a national discussion of immigration and the committee's report has made an important contribution as well. I will be looking at it and the careful work that the committee has done, as well as the work from the other groups we have been discussing the issues with, when I discuss this with my cabinet colleagues.

Hon. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce): Mr. Speaker, does the minister not know that our immigration levels were over 200,000 several times in the past, when our population and services were smaller, and that several experts before the committee demonstrated that immigrants create jobs, produce wealth, and pay substantial taxes? Why then is she supporting this retrograde recommendation?

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that the hon. member consult with his colleague, the member for York West, who has thrown out all sorts of numbers on what immigration levels should be. In 1988 he talked about 150,000 to 170,000 and then he talked about 185,000. I would like to know where the opposition

stands and what it thinks immigration levels should be, because it changes every month.

* * *

ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Ross Harvey (Edmonton East): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources.

The minister will know that in testimony before the standing committee both the Atomic Energy Control Board and the National Energy Board have confirmed that they will be doing EARP reviews of various projects within their respective jurisdictions. That includes everything from a possible new nuclear plant in New Brunswick to the northern gas pipeline, the Hibernia project, and others in the future.

The problem is that neither board has the ability to grant intervenor funding to those who otherwise would not be able to afford to appear before them in the environmental assessment review process.

When will intervener funding—in fact, will intervener funding—be put in place that these boards may disburse to allow those who do not possess louder voices to appear before them?

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is correct when he says we have discussed this issue before the standing committee. I am sure that he would recognize, as all members of the House would recognize, that one cannot preclude what legislation and the form of legislation will take prior to its tabling.

Mr. Ross Harvey (Edmonton East): Mr. Speaker, setting aside the question of legislation that may or may not be introduced in this House, will the minister undertake to guarantee the House now that no major EARP proceeding will go forward under either board without provisions for intervener funding in place?

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has made the representation. I say to him that when the Minister of the Environment tables the legislation, these questions can all be answered.

[*Translation*]

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Guy Saint-Julien (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance.

For two years, you have been co-operating with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities on the GST to reach the Conservative government's goal of ensuring that municipalities will not have a bigger tax burden when the GST takes effect next January 1 than they already do.

Can the minister explain to Canadians today the major benefit that municipalities will derive from a 3 per cent GST?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I made a commitment a year ago that the GST would not be a bigger burden for municipalities, universities, schools and hospitals.

We reached an agreement with the municipalities for an effective sales tax rate of 3 per cent, as I announced last week. Therefore I have respected my commitment.

[*English*]

I have respected the commitment that I made. I believe that the municipalities are pleased that we have been able to reach this agreement. The fact is that we have a treatment for these institutions which we can follow with the hospitals, the universities and the schools so that they also will not have an increase in the federal sales tax that they will pay.

* * *

WHARFS AND HARBOURS

Mr. Lawrence MacAulay (Cardigan): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans. Dredgers and fishermen in Atlantic Canada are demanding that harbours be dredged. Fishing boats have run aground in several harbours creating dangerous situations. Also, dredgers have no employment.

Could the minister explain to the House why his department is stalling on the dredging issue and why dredging has not begun in most Atlantic harbours?

Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, all I can say to the hon. member is that as recently as a couple of weeks ago, I authorized a

lot of contracts to be given for dredging in communities in all of Atlantic Canada. I suspect that if the hon. member wants to take the time to have a little ride in Atlantic Canada, he will see some dredging taking place.

Mr. Lawrence MacAulay (Cardigan): Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of dredgers unemployed in Atlantic Canada.

My supplementary question regards the lack of wharf repairs. Many wharfs in Atlantic Canada are in serious need of repair. Last month, the wharf at Stanley Bridge, P.E.I. collapsed on the eve of the lobster fishing season.

I have made the minister aware of which wharfs are in the most urgent need of repair. Given these facts, will the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans act immediately to repair these wharfs?

Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, I know there are requirements for wharf repairs in many of the communities in Atlantic Canada. We do not have the resources to do all of them. We are doing some of them, according to priorities established by Small Crafts and Harbours.

The hon. member could check with his colleague from Beauséjour. This member could tell him that imminently, probably next week, a lot of repairs will be taking place in his own riding. We can do some. We try to answer the priorities and we will continue doing that.

* * *

[*Translation*]

STATUS OF WOMEN

Ms. Mary Clancy (Halifax): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister responsible for the Status of Women. She has now had time to read the report on the crisis situation facing women who are living in poverty. Instead of cutting women's programs, could the minister tell the House what she intends to do now to help these women?

[*English*]

Hon. Mary Collins (Associate Minister of National Defence and Minister responsible for Status of Women): Mr. Speaker, the report to which my hon. colleague refers was a background document for the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women.

I met with the council yesterday and we discussed the recommendations. As my colleague knows, they are very broad and cover many different aspects, some under provincial and some under federal jurisdiction. I have asked the council to advise me as to what the priorities should be, what should be the most important areas.

• (1450)

Also, I am pleased to advise my colleague that this government has already undertaken a variety of initiatives that are consistent with the recommendations of the report.

For example, my colleague the Minister of Employment and Immigration, is proposing to expand training funds by something in the order of $8 million, which will assist women to attain the training which is required to assist them out of poverty.

Along with a variety of other initiatives, this will ensure that we will continue the important trend we have seen since 1986, where we are reducing the number and the percentage of women who are living in poverty.

Ms. Mary Clancy (Halifax): Mr. Speaker, if only the picture were so rosy for the 60 per cent of Canada's poor who happen to be female.

The minister and I both attended the Women in Power Conference in Montreal this week. The host country, Canada, allows the feminization of poverty and slashes the few programs that do assist women.

Will this minister fight for the recommendations made by the Advisory Council, specifically increased pay equity and more public sector jobs for women, or is she too as a woman simply powerless?

Hon. Mary Collins (Associate Minister of National Defence and Minister responsible for Status of Women): Mr. Speaker, I am surprised that my colleague would ask that question. I think the women in this House are, as are the women in Canada, full of power, energy and the improvement of our status throughout this country. The conference in Montreal was an interesting example.

My colleague also knows that it was this government that has provided the leadership on pay equity, that has in fact negotiated the first pay equity settlement for our

own public servants. This is the kind of work that starts at home.

Last week, as I met with my provincial colleagues, the ministers responsible for the status of women, we reviewed the situation across the country. We have seen the good efforts that the province of Ontario has put forward. Many of the other provinces are considering similar kinds of approaches, as we move forward to a more comprehensive implementation of pay equity across this country.

* * *

DIEFENBAKER CENTRE

Mr. Chris Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the minister from Saskatchewan, the Minister of National Defence, and it concerns federal government funding for the Diefenbaker Centre at the University of Saskatchewan.

As we all know, this unique centre houses an invaluable resource covering Mr. Diefenbaker's tenure as Prime Minister of Canada, as well as much more. Two months ago, the minister was reported as saying that an announcement of federal funding would be ready within two weeks. As the minister knows, the federal funding support is not available—

Mr. McKnight: That was your announcement, that was not mine.

Mr. Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing): —if federal funding support is not forthcoming, the centre will close at the end of the month.

Can the minister advise this House whether it is his government's intention to save the Diefenbaker Centre and, if so, when and with how much money?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Marcel Masse (Minister of Communications): Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to see there is so much interest in preserving the memory of the Right Hon. John Diefenbaker, but I can assure the hon. member that the Department of Communications will take care of the situation.

[*English*]

Mr. Chris Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing): Mr. Speaker, as we all know, time is running out and the centre will close at the end of the month if money is not forthcoming. It is an important western institution, recognizing the achievements of an important western Canadian. It is time the Diefenbaker Centre and the University of Saskatchewan had the answer.

Can the minister not tell us, with three weeks left before the centre will close, when the centre will get an indication of how much money it will get, and would he commit himself to making sure that this happens right away?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Marcel Masse (Minister of Communications): Mr. Speaker, I can assure the socialist member that this government will be far more zealous in preserving the memory of John Diefenbaker than the New Democratic Party ever was.

* * *

FISHERIES

Mr. Fernand Robichaud (Beauséjour): Mr. Speaker, I was delighted to hear that the Department of Fisheries is going to start major repairs in my riding, because we certainly need them.

The fact remains that lobster fishermen in my region, in the province of New Brunswick and throughout Atlantic Canada, are very disturbed about the negative decision by the free trade panel. How does the minister intend to compensate these fishermen for the $30 million they stand to lose as a result of U.S. protectionist measures?

The fishermen are very disturbed about this.

Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, I realize fishermen are disturbed, in the present circumstances. However, we must admit that although people asked us literally to throw millions at problems when prices were lower, we now see the situation is improving and that prices are going up.

Concerning the decision of the free trade panel, as my colleague, the Minister for External Affairs said before, steps have been taken, and at the present time, the parties are trying to see whether a conclusion can be reached that will benefit both U.S. and Canadian lobster fishermen.

The process is continuing and we hope everything will turn out all right.

Mr. Fernand Robichaud (Beauséjour): Mr. Speaker, I hope means will be found to help the fishermen because they are in a very difficult situation.

With respect to marketing and promoting fish products, the staff at the Department of Fisheries and Oceans is now at its lowest level in years. Can the minister tell us whether he will hire more staff to deal with the marketing and promotion of fish products?

Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member would know that quite recently the government, with the co-operation of colleagues in New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, has earmarked $2.4 million for marketing lobster products. For the first time my colleague the Minister for International Trade has launched very aggressive sales promotion campaigns on the European and Asian markets. Lobster fishermen can only benefit from all these measures— Mr. Speaker, the hon. member does not seem to agree with me, but I can tell him that a few months ago we had huge lobster stocks in the Atlantic region and, thanks to the promotion efforts of the federal government and the provinces of Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick, these stocks have been drastically reduced.

* * *

[*English*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Catherine Callbeck (Malpeque): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources.

This spring the minister said that it was too soon to set targets for reducing carbon dioxide emissions. However, this week the new Environment Minister said his government is committed to stabilizing carbon dioxide emissions at the present level by the year 2000.

I want to ask the minister whether he agrees with the Minister of the Environment.

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of the Environment, along with a number of his colleagues, is having consultations with Canadians on The Green Plan. I have had the opportunity to be with him at a number of consultations. As we have announced before, the purpose of those consultations is to finalize what are the recommendations from the public. They will then be put together in a green plan, approved by Cabinet, and announced.

Ms. Catherine Callbeck (Malpeque): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of the Environment said that the policy of the government was to stabilize carbon dioxide emissions by the year 2000.

I would like to know whether the Minister of Energy agrees with that statement, yes or no? If he does, when will he have a plan in place to meet the carbon dioxide emissions target?

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, I do not want to quibble with the hon. member. Just as a matter of detail, the hon. member mentions CO2. If she checks the statement, she will find that it was greenhouse gases rather than CO2 specifically that the minister mentioned. As to the timing and the announcements, I answered that in the first answer.

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NORTHERN BENEFITS

Mr. Len Taylor (The Battlefords—Meadow Lake): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance, who eight months ago received the report of the task force on northern benefits and northern allowances. Hundreds, almost thousands of communities in northern Canada have been waiting in limbo for eight months for some idea as to what is happening to that northern allowance. I ask the Minister of Finance today: Is he prepared to reject the recommendations in that task force now, and is he prepared to announce a new program that provides fair and equitable tax treatment for those people in our communities?

• (1500)

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I would like to call to the attention of the hon. member the fact that we did put in place a permanent regime as opposed to the very temporary regime that had been in place prior to our taking office in 1984.

There are some problems with the current regime, as my friend is only too aware, and it is for that reason we have asked the task force to consider these problems of the borderlines between communities that receive the northern benefit and those which do not receive the northern benefit. We are looking at the task force report. I have also asked for some considerations for some options that might be considered in order to meet the

needs of the people in these communities. I have not completed that work but when I have completed it, I will make those views known.

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VACANCY

YORK NORTH

Mr. Speaker: It is my duty to inform the House that I have been notified that a vacancy has occurred in the representation in the House of Commons for the electoral district of York North in the province of Ontario by reason of a certificate of judgment of the Supreme Court of Ontario declaring the election void and invalid which I am now tabling.

Accordingly, I have addressed my warrant to the Chief Electoral Officer for the issue of a new Writ of Election for the electoral district.

* * *

[*Translation*]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

WEEKLY STATEMENT

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): As House Leader for the Official Opposition, I would like, like every Thursday, to ask the government house leader what will be the business of the House tomorrow and also next week, particularly Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

[*English*]

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, tomorrow I intend to call Bill C-69, the expenditure restraint bill, to commence third reading and to continue with third reading on Monday, hopefully to completion. On Tuesday it would be my hope to call for report stage and third reading if possible of Bill C-52, Income Tax Act amendments respecting pensions. On Wednesday, June 13, I would hope that we would be able to consider three bills for which there is a fair amount of agreement and little contention, namely Bill C-54, joinder of counts; Bill C-66 animal diseases; and Bill C-67, dealing with plant pests.

In any event, I may require consent of the House to proceed with those if they are not back from committee to give the required notice to the House, but I will engage in discussions with the House leaders of the opposition parties on this issue.

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I could put a question to my hon. friend, the government House leader regarding Bill C-46. A lot of people are anxious to see the rapid passage of Bill C-46, that is the conflict of interest legislation. Has the hon. member decided when he is going to bring that forward?

Mr. Andre: No, a final decision on that has not yet been made but just as soon as it is, I will get back to my hon. friend.

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, to follow up, one of the things that I know the government House leader is interested in is the obligation of the government to table its reports and papers on a speedy basis. The Treasury Board prepares this quarterly report to Parliament on those reports. I note from the most recent report that the Royal Canadian Mint has not yet tabled its 1990-94 corporate plan summary and its 1990 capital budget summary which were due on March 9 of this year.

I know that the government house leader is most interested in ensuring that these things are done on a timely basis and I wonder if he could let us know if he would look into the matter and have those documents put before Parliament promptly.

Mr. Andre: Mr. Speaker, I will do that in my own self-interest. The phone has been ringing off the hook by people demanding to see that report. I will get after the Minister of Supply and Services to make sure it is tabled as soon as possible.

Mr. Speaker: Members of this House will be interested to know that a former colleague of some of us and a former member of this place, Fred Stenson, died on June 5. Some members have requested the House to give tributes. I know the House would be in accordance with that. I call first the hon. member for Peterborough.

TRIBUTES

THE LATE FRED STENSON

Mr. Bill Domm (Peterborough): Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute today to the late Fred Stenson, who was a member of Parliament between 1962 and 1965. Fred represented the riding of Peterborough which I now have the honour to represent. Fred passed away this past Tuesday at the age of 75. His funeral service is being held today in Peterborough.

To my knowledge there are only two members left in the House today who were here when the Right Hon. John Diefenbaker was Prime Minister and when Fred Stenson was an MP. They are the member for Windsor West and the member for Saint-Denis. I am sure they both have very fond memories of Fred. I should also point out that the Hon. Stanley Knowles, now honorary clerk of the table, was also a member of the House during Mr. Stenson's term of office.

As reported in *The Peterborough Examiner* last night, Fred was often referred to as a doer. He was guided by the principle that instead of sitting around and talking about something, it is better to simply get up and do it. This philosophy was followed by Fred throughout his very distinguished career.

Prior to his election to Parliament in 1962, Fred served as trustee on the North Monaghan School Board. He then was elected to the North Monaghan Township Council for 10 years. He served as Reeve for four years and Deputy Reeve for two.

Fred Stenson was perhaps best known in the Peterborough area for his very successful farm. This love of the land remained with him after his election to the House where he maintained an acute interest in agricultural issues, working diligently to improve the plight of the farmers not only in his own constituency but in all parts of the country.

After his defeat in the election of 1965, a defeat that he took with distinction, Fred returned to his farm at which he worked tirelessly right up to the time of his death. It was also in this capacity, as an avid farmer, that you would see Fred every Saturday at the Peterborough Farmers' Market working at a very large fruit and vegetable stand. In fact, even last Saturday Fred was there at his usual spot doing what he loved best, keeping in touch with the people and listening to their concerns.

It would be there at the Farmers' Market that I would often run into Fred. I would occasionally get his assessment of what he saw as the important issues in the region. This ability to fully understand the Peterborough area right from the grassroots level and up was what made Fred Stenson truly unique.

For myself, stepping into Fred's shoes some years later, it was these qualities that made him such an invaluable source of help and guidance to me. I will miss him a great deal.

To his wife Bernice, their children, Sally, Robert and Arthur, his sisters, Beryl, Muriel and Norma and all of their families, on behalf of myself and all members of this House, I extend our deep and sincere condolences.

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I was very sorry to learn that Fred Stenson had passed away. I recall him as a serious concerned individual, a person who built on his previous career as a school trustee, as a member of township council, as a Reeve, to provide an example of serious, solid public service.

Fred Stenson provides an example of the kind of serious, solid public service which has helped to build so many of our communities and our country at large. This example should be important to all of us and, therefore, I am pleased to pay tribute at this time to Fred and to his memory.

• (1510)

I would like to express my deep and sincere sympathy to his wife, his children and his entire family. I hope that the memories of Fred and his contributions to family life and his community will help them surmount the sadness they face at his passing.

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute on behalf of my colleagues in the New Democratic Party to Mr. Fred Stenson.

While I was not a parliamentarian when Mr. Stenson served in a very distinguished way in this House, my friend and colleague, Mr. Stanley Knowles, the hon. clerk at the table, was.

Earlier today I spoke with Stanley about his recollections of Fred Stenson. Stanley remembers Fred as a respected colleague, a colleague who was admired by all and was a very likeable man. He was a grassroots

politician. Stanley described him as a person who spent a lot of time serving his constituents well and with distinction.

He was a hard worker. Mr. Knowles indicated that in committee work, in the House, in his constituency and about the country, he worked hard and spent time on a one-to-one basis with people, serving them in that capacity as opposed to speaking in the House of Commons at length.

He was an active man, involved in politics at the local level, indeed at the federal level. He was a realtor, service station operator and, above all, he was a farmer. In that capacity, Mr. Knowles and Mr. Stenson spent many hours discussing ways and means of assisting the farmer and the farm community during his time as a member of Parliament.

He was very active in his community. As the present member for Peterborough has indicated, only this past weekend Mr. Stenson was working in his stall in a Peterborough market. People over the years always knew him to be there serving his constituency and representing the community.

On behalf of a former colleague, Mr. Knowles, and the New Democratic Party, I say to Mrs. Stenson, his family and friends, our hearts and thoughts are with you today.

Mr. William Scott (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Veterans Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I am rising today to speak of the late Fred Stenson. I enjoyed the privilege of his company and his advice.

He was the first man to lead me through the House of Commons. He did so in a very capable manner. That was prior to the election of 1965, when I was a young aspiring candidate.

Fred had quite a reputation as a good community man. He was a man people trusted. He was a man well respected throughout the entire county of Peterborough. He was involved in civic politics also. He was a doer, not a taker. He was ready to help an individual anywhere in the country. This is what Fred leaves. He leaves a great legacy that some people will follow and for which Fred is respected.

I join with other members of the House of Commons here today in paying tribute to Fred Stenson. I want to offer my deepest condolence to his family, his good wife and his many associates in the city of Peterborough, and the county of Peterborough in which I live.

I have many present and past reflections of his community activities, his style of life and his belief in his country.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Marcel Prud'homme (Saint-Denis): Mr. Speaker, I had the honour of being here when Mr. Fred Stenson was a member of the House and I think that the leader of the Opposition, my party leader, has ably put into words our feelings on this occasion. I join him in extending my sincere condolences to Mr. Stenson's family. I sat with the hon. member in this House and I can say that, like you and my two colleagues, we remember him very warmly.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*English*]

PETITIONS

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Jack Whittaker (Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt): Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise today, pursuant to Standing Order 36, to present a further petition against the goods and services tax.

It is interesting to note that I received this petition from one of the petitioners just a couple of weeks ago, an accountant in the town of Grand Forks.

It is clear from this petition that the people of Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt are still diametrically opposed to the goods and services tax and ask the government to bring in a fairer tax system, fairer to all Canadians.

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise to present a petition signed by numerous residents of the province of Newfoundland: Dunfield, Bonaventure, Goose Cove, and Trinity. These persons are opposed to the government's proposed goods and services tax.

The petition was gathered by my hon. and gallant colleague from Bonavista—Trinity—Conception. I know he has expressed the views of his constituents as set out in this petition.

They object to this unfair tax. They are sick and tired of Tory taxes being imposed on them one after another. They call upon Parliament to reject this tax.

Ms. Lynn Hunter (Saanich—Gulf Islands): Madam Speaker, I too rise today to submit a petition, pursuant to Standing Order 36, from a number of constituents in Ontario, and Ottawa particularly, who have expressed their opposition to the goods and services tax.

Canadians have not given up the fight against the goods and services tax. They have asked those of us on this side of the House of Commons to continue to voice our opposition to this tax in the hope that the government will come to its senses and withdraw the bill.

GUN CONTROL

Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): Madam Speaker, I rise to present a petition on behalf of more than 1,000 Canadians who have signed a petition urging Parliament and in particular calling on the government to bring forward tougher gun control legislation.

CANADA POST

Ms. Catherine Callbeck (Malpeque): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise under Standing Order 36 to present a petition signed by hundreds of my constituents in the riding of Malpeque, Prince Edward Island.

Canada Post has plans to amalgamate several of the rural routes in the Kensington area. These constituents feel that it will lead to a delay in postal services of up to six hours for some people.

They call upon Parliament to resolve that Canada Post does not proceed with plans to amalgamate the rural routes but instead maintains the rural route system and upgrades postal service.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Fred J. Mifflin (Bonavista—Trinity—Conception): Madam Speaker, I rise pursuant to Standing Order 36. I have the duty and honour to present a petition from the constituents of my riding building on the numbers that were just put forward by the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands.

I have 45 signatures here from the northern part of my riding: Templeman, Wesleyville, Pound Cove, and Newtown.

These petitioners are very concerned about the level of economic activity now existent in Newfoundland, the difficulty in the fisheries, and all the other dismal economic outlooks that have been put upon them. They have recently been given the benefit of a northern tax allowance change, and there is a recommendation that that be abolished as well.

They consider the goods and services tax a very definite hardship, and they are asking Parliament to reject this measure of the government.

LITHUANIA

Mr. Jesse Flis (Parkdale—High Park): Madam Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, it is my duty and honour to present further petitions signed by Canadians from Windsor through Hamilton to St. Catharines to Toronto regarding the issue in Lithuania.

The petitioners are very concerned that the Soviet Union has put an economic blockade around Lithuania, cutting off fuel to the country and cutting off even basic medical supplies.

• (1520)

Yesterday we hosted a delegation from the Soviet Union. We appealed to them yesterday. I appeal to them today while they are still in our country that when they return to the Soviet Union they sit down with officials from Lithuania and negotiate a resolution so that all three Baltic States can work and trade on a friendly basis with the Soviet Union as they want to do, but they want to do it as individual, independent states.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Madam Speaker, I have the duty to table a petition again today of more Canadians joining millions of others in protesting the planned imposition by this government of a 7 per cent sales tax on goods and services starting in January 1991.

These people—and there are hundreds in this petition—claim this tax will be hidden from Canadians, that it will impose upon them a serious and unfair hardship,

and that the imposition of the tax will create onerous burdens for small business.

They believe this to be the biggest unprecedented tax grab from the pockets of Canadians in the history of Canada which will hit Canadians not only with higher taxes and higher inflation but higher interest rates and higher unemployment. They pray that this Parliament refuse to go ahead with this initiative.

CHILD POVERTY

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Madam Speaker, it is my honour to present a petition pursuant to Standing Order 36 on behalf of a number of constituents from Kamloops, British Columbia, who point out their concern in terms of the increasing number of children living in poverty in Canada.

They are calling upon the Government of Canada to introduce a comprehensive bill of rights for children in an effort to remove child poverty from this country.

VIA RAIL

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Madam Speaker, I rise on behalf of a number of residents from the constituency of Kamloops who point out their concern regarding the government's decision to cut back on passenger rail service.

They are asking the government to invest in a modern, first-class transportation rail system to move passengers across Canada like every other country in the world is now doing.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Madam Speaker, they do not give up, these petitioners. Nearly 21,000 petitioners from Kamloops alone are opposed to the goods and services tax. That is about one-third of the population.

If they were here they would ask the Liberals in the Senate to do the honourable thing and defeat the bill in the Senate. I think they have given up on the government in terms of stopping legislation, so their appeal goes to the Liberal dominated Senate.

Mr. Ross Harvey (Edmonton East): Madam Speaker, I too am pleased to join with the hon. member for Kamloops and indeed with so many of our Liberal colleagues this afternoon in rising to present a petition. This one is signed by a number of residents of the city of Ottawa and its environs.

They humbly pray that Parliament reject the current proposal for a goods and services tax.

I would note that Parliament includes the Senate where the Liberals do enjoy a majority. I would, on behalf of these petitioners, entreat the Liberals to put their Senate majority where their mouth is and kill the GST.

Mr. Alex Kindy (Calgary Northeast): Madam Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I have the privilege to present a petition, certified correct by the clerk of petitions, from 28,133 Calgarians and Albertans who feel that the GST is regressive, will hamper the competitiveness of the Canadian economy, and reduce the standard of living of the average Canadian.

These 28,000 signatures have been collected by a great Canadian, Mr. George Deveau from Calgary. Mr. Deveau and the petitioners feel that the government should withdraw this unfair form of taxation immediately.

* * *

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

(Questions answered orally are indicated by an asterisk.)

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Madam Speaker, question No. 291 will be answered today.

[*Text*]

POSTAL AREA OF ORANGEDALE, NOVA SCOTIA

Question No. 291—**Mr. LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso):**

For the postal area of Orangedale, Nova Scotia, (a) what were the total operating costs of the Post Office for each of the fiscal years from 1987 to 1989 (b) how does Canada Post arrive at the value of contracts for retail postal outlets which replace existing post offices? (c) what is the negotiation process involved in awarding such contracts and in particular the retail postal outlet in Orangedale (d) what were the amounts offered to local stores to act as retail postal outlets (e) what would be the cost of Rural Route delivery?

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): I am informed by Canada Post Corporation as follows:

a) The revenues and operating costs of individual post offices are not made public by Canada Post Corporation.

b) The value of contracts for retail postal outlets is based on actual work performed. Individual details are a private contractual relationship which are not disclosed by Canada Post Corporation. Remuneration is on a gross margin and fee–for–service basis.

c) Canada Post discusses the service requirements and remuneration (as in (b) above) with interested businesses and evaluates all applications received. Canada Post does not negotiate between businesses with regard to remuneration. Service, security and credit considerations dictate the successful applicant. At this time, Canada Post has not secured a retail postal outlet in Orangedale.

d) The contractual arrangement between Canada Post Corporation and local businesses is a private business relationship and the values of such contracts are not made public.

e) Rural route delivery is provided by a contractor. The value of this contract, as any other, is not made public.

The value of a rural contract is determined by the tender process, and the value will ultimately be determined by the number of customers served and the distances travelled. Contract values are not made public.

[*English*]

Mr. Cooper: Madam Speaker, I ask that the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

[*Translation*]

Madam Deputy Speaker: The question mentioned by the hon. parliamentary secretary has been answered. Shall the remaining questions be allowed to stand?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

HIBERNIA DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

MEASURE TO ENACT

The House resumed from Friday, February 9, consideration of the motion of Mr. Epp that Bill C–44, An Act respecting the Hibernia Development Project and to amend certain Acts in relation thereto, be read the second time and referred to a legislative committee; and the amendment of Mr. Barrett (p. 8146).

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Madam Speaker, it is a great pleasure for me to have the opportunity to speak for a few minutes on the bill before the House today. It is a very important piece of legislation for the province of Newfoundland and Labrador and as a matter of fact for Atlantic Canada and for the country as a whole because it will have substantial economic benefits not just for eastern Canada but across the country, including the great province of Alberta and the provinces of Ontario and Quebec as well.

Of course the legislation deals with the Hibernia project. I believe in 1979 the consortium led by a Mobile Oil and the others who participate in it—Chevron, Gulf Canada and Petro–Canada— discovered oil off the east coast of the Avalon Peninsula in Newfoundland in what is known as the Hibernia fields. It is now 11 years later, Madam Speaker, so you can see how difficult it has been to resolve all the issues involved in bringing this oilfield into production. It has taken 11 years to get the project to this stage.

It is a massive project. It is a project that is taking place physically in an area—I have not had a chance to research all the statistics for this occasion because we have been busy in other directions—something like 170 miles off the shores of Newfoundland in an area that is frequently ice traversed, particularly during the winter and spring and where there are many problems to be faced and overcome in preparing to develop and take out the oil which lies beneath the surface of the land and sea in that particular area.

In 1985 there was finally a breakthrough with respect to jurisdiction over the offshore oil and gas resources that lay off Newfoundland and Labrador. That was a matter that was in dispute for a period of three or four years. It was settled by the government of which I am a member. I am very delighted and proud to have been a member and to be a member of the government that solved the conundrum and entered into an agreement with the province of Newfoundland and Labrador to provide for a fair way of managing this resource in which both the province and the Government of Canada would share.

That agreement known as the Atlantic Accord is being carried into effect by the legislation before the House today. From the summer of 1985 it took a further three years to July 1988 for all the detailed negotiations to be completed among the Government of Canada, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, Mobil, and the Mobil consortium. The consortium that is going to develop and produce the oil of the Hibernia field is headed by Mobil Oil of Canada, and I think I have named the other parties involved in the consortium already. It took three years of hard negotiations to bring the project to the stage where all the issues were resolved with respect to agreement in principle. That was completed and announced in July 1988.

However, the completion of the final legal agreements necessary for this project took longer than expected. It was hoped it would be only a year, but rather than the project going forward in its final form in 1989, it is now our hope and our objective that the project will get its final approval in the summer of 1990. I want to thank and congratulate the present Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources and his two predecessors for their work in bringing the project forward to this stage.

• (1530)

We have heard much in this House this year about the economic difficulties suffered by the people of the province of Newfoundland and Labrador, particularly those who are connected with or associated with the fishery. We have heard considerable discussion both in this House and in the province of Newfoundland on the need for economic diversification in Newfoundland.

We have had an extensive regional development program in effect in Newfoundland for many years, including an accelerated program under the aegis of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency which has been operating for the last two or three years, and I think quite successfully.

However, it does not matter what financial assistance is made available, it is a very difficult matter to diversify economically the province beyond the natural resources of the province, its advantages of location or what have you. These resources in Newfoundland, the fishery, the minerals and the forests have been developed. What further are we going to diversify in? If there are problems in the fishery and we have to diversify so plant workers and those who are now fishing may have other economic opportunities, what are they going to be?

I have been in politics or public life for the last 25 years. My conclusion is this. There is no opportunity for any great economic diversification in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador that is not associated in some way with the sea; either what is in the sea, what goes on the sea, or what lies under the sea, as well as with our geographic location and the other natural resources that I have mentioned.

Our only major opportunity for economic diversification other than what already exists in Newfoundland lies with this offshore mineral potential, not just the Hibernia field but with the Terra Nova field and other fields that have already been identified and that will be developed once Hibernia is under way.

Since 1979, we have developed a number of high-tech industries in Newfoundland. These are companies which over the last several years have been just clinging on. Some are successful doing work in other parts of the world. There is a whole series of high-tech companies and persons now in Newfoundland, particularly located in eastern Newfoundland, who are ready to exploit the opportunities of the offshore once Hibernia starts and they are very anxious to see this project going forward.

I am very pleased to support this bill because I think that anyone who appreciates the need for economic diversification or other economic alternatives for the working man and woman of Newfoundland and Labra-

dor will realize that this is the only real alternative that presents itself.

This is a project that is receiving very considerable economic assistance from the Government of Canada. If Newfoundland was not part of the great Dominion of Canada, as it used to be called, I do not know where the necessary assistance would come from to see that this project was developed. I think that is something the people of Newfoundland and Labrador might well keep in mind at the present time.

I have not had a chance to refresh my memory today as to all of the means of assistance of the Government of Canada on this project, but I believe that our basic assistance is $2.7 billion which the Government of Canada is providing by way of grant or by way of guarantees of loans for this project. While I cannot guarantee these figures, the Hibernia project itself is going to require a cost, roughly, before it comes into production, of $5.1 billion.

So the investors in this project are going to have to put in $5.1 billion before they have an opportunity to receive one cent of return on their investment. The total capital investment will be $8.6 billion before the Hibernia field is completely developed and the oil removed. The operating costs during that same period will be another $12 billion.

These figures may be outdated, but the positive estimate of the contents of the field are 680 million barrels. The minister indicates that has since gone up with a probability of 890 million barrels. The minister can bring these figures up to date as there may have been improvement.

There has been some degree of cynicism in Newfoundland and Labrador as to whether this project was ever going to go. This is not unexpected when one remembers that the Hibernia was first discovered in 1979. Nevertheless, since 1984 when the present administration headed by the Prime Minister took over, there has been steady progress. It is not a question of there being just promises, there has been considerable performance.

I would just like to mention in that connection the fact that in 1985 Canada and Newfoundland agreed that there should be a Canada–Newfoundland offshore development fund to help Newfoundland and Labrador get ready for the development of Hibernia. That was a $300 million fund, 75 per cent being put up by the Government of Canada and 25 per cent by the Government of Newfoundland.

As of the end of last January that fund had been used for a great many projects. It was used to prepare the province and the people for the project to go ahead so that they could take the maximum advantage of it when it started. To date, the projects approved in principle amount to $132,601,000, with total costs of projects approved and approved in principle to date of $236,625,000. A great deal of that money has already been spent.

Hibernia is not merely a promise repeated by politicians. Hibernia is already performance. From that fund we have constructed the Centre for Earth Resources Research at Memorial University in Newfoundland, $27,100,000; an offshore survival centre, $5,000,000; skills training projects, $3,000,000; computer aided design facility in engineering, $1,150,000; the centre for Cold Ocean Resources Engineering, $5,000,000; the Centre for Excellence in Marine Signal Processing, $7,400,000.

These are not projects for creating temporary jobs. These are all devoted to the long–term training of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, the young people who will be trained in these kinds of facilities.

Other projects include the Offshore Technology Transfer Opportunities Program, $3,000,000; Petroleum Technology Training Programs, $21,100,000; access road to the Cow Head Oil Rig Repair Facility in Placentia Bay, $614,000; the Institute for Marine Dynamics and the new wave generator, owned by the Government of Canada in St. John's, $3,500,000; the Marine Offshore Simulator Training Centre, $12,818,000. On and on it goes, moneys expended from this fund, provided principally by the Government of Canada with a substantial contribution by the Government of Newfoundland.

Approved in principle is $34,500,000 to enhance the offshore fabrication capability of Marystown shipyard, the great Newfoundland shipyard in Placentia Bay. The sum of $95 million is being committed to the construction of the gravity–based structure and the main support frame facility for Hibernia. This is $95 million to ensure that the gravity–based structure, along with other facilities, the main support frame facilities, the top–side facilities and the like can be constructed in Newfoundland. As a matter of fact the main site is going to be at Bull Arm in Trinity Bay in the district of the hon. member sitting opposite, Bonavista—Trinity—Conception. It is just a mile or two from the great district of St.

John's West and Placentia Bay, not far from the Bull Arm area.

• (1540)

This is going to be a great shot in the hon. gentleman's Bull Arm. It will be a great employment generator in the area of Placentia Bay and the district of St. John's West, in fact in all of eastern Newfoundland, and I hope in all of Newfoundland, Quebec, Ontario, and Alberta, which will be the other main centre.

We are dealing with a project that is imperial in size and concept, difficult to carry out and execute. But I think that Mobil and its associated companies have the people who can pull off this construction feat and get this field going. But they cannot do it, because of the frontier conditions under which he project must go ahead, without the assistance of the people of Canada, through the Government of Canada, with the $2.7 billion and other means as described in the bill that is now before the House.

There was a change of government in Newfoundland a year ago last April and former Premier Peckford was associated with the great battle to ensure that Newfoundland had at least joint management of this offshore resource. Mr. Peckford did not run in the last election and was succeeded by Premier Wells who led the Liberal Party to victory in April, 1989. Mr. Wells is in the capital today in connection with the Meech Lake Constitutional Conference.

Premier Wells said, and I really do not think he can be serious, but he did say publicly several times that this project was the equivalent of two fish plants being established in Newfoundland. That misses the point entirely.

I do not have the exact employment creation figures but I believe that during construction there will be approximately 35,000 jobs connected with the project. Once it is finished and the field is producing, direct employment will be in the area of 1,100.

That, of course, is directly on the project, but there will be dozens upon dozens and hundreds and thousands of Newfoundlanders employed in companies servicing the development and servicing further developments that will come once Hibernia is established. A lot of those jobs will be high tech, very skilled jobs, just as they have been from the beginning.

We have dozens and dozens of entrepreneurs in Newfoundland who have prepared themselves, many of them with the help of government, for the opportunities that will come with this development.

This is a development not just in the economic interests of Newfoundland and Labrador, or the other parts of the country I have mentioned. It is a project in the national interest because it is in the national interest to overcome regional disparity in Newfoundland. If this project did nothing else, if it only assisted Newfoundland in overcoming regional economic disparity, it would be justified on that basis alone. But it is justified as well in developing a frontier offshore oil resource that Canada is going to need in the future as our on-land and more easily accessible oil and gas resources are steadily used up.

It is in the national interest that this development should go forward. It is certainly in the interest of overcoming regional disparity and of advancing regional economic equality in Canada that this project go forward.

Where are we at the moment? We are completing negotiations with the Government of Newfoundland and with the Mobil consortium as to what proportion of this great project must be carried out, from the benefits point of view, in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador; what must be carried out in the nation of Canada; just what these benefits are; and, how the benefits are going to be distributed in that manner. I think we are at the end of that process. Good progress has been made. We have to go on to see. There has to be a test on the market to see whether a lender risk-sharing arrangement is viable when it comes to financing and issuing the bonds that will be required to finance the project, from time to time, as it is under way over the next few years. I believe 1996 is the year in which it is expected that production of oil from the field would start.

Those negotiations are now approaching their end. There seems to be no reason why we cannot conclude all this during the coming summer, in the next month or two. All the final documents could be signed in time for

this year not to be slipped when it comes to the project being accomplished.

However, for that to be the case, the Parliament of Canada has to enact this bill before we adjourn for the summer. I am hoping, and I have no reason to doubt, that we will have co-operation from the other parties in the House so that this can be accomplished. If Parliament does not enact this legislation before we rise, during the month of June, then of course we will not be back until September and there would be real doubt as to whether or not a year would be lost with reference to the Hibernia project and the project, itself, could be in some jeopardy as a result.

Therefore, I would like to ask fellow members of the House to deal with this bill as expeditiously as they think possible, keeping in mind that there is this urgency. If we hope to complete all of the documents this summer and not to lose this year, it is important for the House to deal with this bill which was introduced last November. It is not something that we are just introducing at a late date. It has been debated at second reading on December 18 and on February 9.

I do not want to take up any more of the time of the House, except to say that I am honoured that I am still in the House of Commons when this legislation goes through the House. I have supported this project since 1979. I did all I could to assist Mr. Peckford in his struggle to acquire some rights over the offshore oil and gas resources. It was a monumental struggle that he was engaged in with the government that preceded us. I intend to do what I can to work with Premier Wells to ensure that the project goes forward now because the province and the federal government have to work together for that purpose.

In closing, I want to thank the hon. minister for the fine work he has done in this connection. I hope that members of the House will co-operate with us in seeing that we do all that is necessary before we adjourn for the summer.

• (1550)

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Madam Speaker, I listened with interest to the hon. minister's presentation and noted particularly his appeal for rapid consideration of the legislation.

I find it rather odd, when we have had a gestation period now of nearly nine months since this bill was first introduced. Nine months have transpired and nothing has happened. Nine months later, at the eleventh hour, the minister stands up and says that he hopes that, now that we have sat on this for nine months, the House of Commons can set everything else aside and expeditiously deal with this one piece of legislation. I just say we will do our best. Of course, we always do. We will work as hard as we can.

I just find it odd, I must say to the minister with all due respect, and I mean that with all sincerity, that after having a piece of legislation sitting on his desk for nine months, suddenly he wants to move it in a matter of hours.

As the minister has said, it was introduced in December. Why was it not introduced again? It is the government that decides what we do in here, not the opposition. It is not the Official Opposition and not the New Democratic Party. It is the government that decides the business of the day. It has not called this business of the day for month after month after month—for nine months.

I ask my hon. friend, the minister, with all due respect, that, if this is so urgent, if this was such a high priority for the government and if this was such an important matter, why is it introduced on the day that Premier Wells is encouraged to make a decision at the First Ministers' Conference? I realize there is no association, of course. Why has the minister taken nine months to begin serious debate on this important legislation?

Mr. Crosbie: Madam Speaker, the hon. gentleman is suggesting, of course, that the House has not been doing anything since December or February. As far as I know, the House has had important legislation before it the whole time.

He asks why this has not been brought forward. The last time it was brought forward, the House was in the mood to pass it with the exception of a few members who did not want to see it passed on that particular occasion. I have forgotten the date.

An Hon. Member: It was the member from Juan de Fuca.

Mr. Crosbie: It was the member for Juan de Fuca. One could easily be accused of profanity when one mentions his district. He did not want it to go through at that particular time.

I do not want to be bellicose today. I cannot avoid being "belly-cose", but I do not want to be bellicose today. I want to be in the mood of sweet reasonableness and simply say that this is not connected, of course, with anything that is going on in Ottawa today.

If the hon. member knew Premier Wells, he would know that it would be a wrong tactic to try either to encourage or discourage him. He told me that the Constitution was for 1,000 years. Hibernia is not for 1,000, it is only going to be for 20 or 25. He has a long-term view of the Constitution. Frankly, I think that Meech Lake will be forgotten long before Hibernia is. However, that remains to be seen.

The legislation that the province is required to pass is being debated in the Newfoundland House of Assembly now. I think the timing is right in both Houses. My hon. friend from British Columbia happens to be lucky enough to live in one of the booming parts of the country. Of course, they have had good government there for a number of years—

Mr. Riis: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I want to correct the hon. minister. I think he has his politics wrong. The Social Credit Party has been in office in British Columbia for the past few years.

Mr. Ross Harvey (Edmonton East): Madam Speaker, on this same matter, I took the minister to imply that the government's hands would be tied in proceeding with further negotiation as required, or even with the disbursement of certain funds relating to the project, if this bill did not make it out of the Commons today or before the summer adjournment.

I am a little puzzled. If this is, indeed, his contention, would he be so kind as to inform the Minister of Finance of these requirements so that the Minister of Finance may stop securing rented accommodation, hiring staff, and renting and purchasing machinery and equipment for the purpose of implementing the GST, which, as we all know, has not yet cleared this Parliament?

Mr. Crosbie: Madam Speaker, with respect to the Hibernia project, this legislation authorizes the government to do certain things which it cannot do unless the House of Commons approves the legislation. Unless I am advised mistakenly, the government cannot sign the final agreements or execute final agreements without the legislation being passed first.

With respect to the offshore development fund, the spending from it has been approved from year to year in the Estimates and the budget.

With respect to signing and executing agreements, giving guarantees, and doing what the government agreed to do in July, 1988, we need the approval of the House. That is why it is important. If the legislation is not passed before we adjourn, then we will not be able to do anything until next fall and a year will slip from the construction schedule.

Madam Deputy Speaker: 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 Cape Breton Highlands—Canso—Scotia Synfuels Project; the hon. member for Chambly—Riding of Laurier—Sainte-Marie; and the hon. member for The Battlefords—Meadow Lake—Canada Post.

Resuming debate. The hon. member for Bonavista—Trinity—Conception.

Mr. Fred J. Mifflin (Bonavista—Trinity—Conception): Madam Speaker, I would like to begin by congratulating my colleague from Newfoundland, the hon. Minister of International Trade, on the history and background of this project that is so important to Canada, to Atlantic Canada, and, in particular, to Newfoundland.

This project is about jobs, technology, and energy. As far as Newfoundland is concerned, it is about hope. Where hope is involved, I am not interested in being bellicose or in laying blame. I am not interested in political rhetoric. I am interested in getting this bill through the House of Commons so we can get on with this hope and make the hope a realistic thing, as opposed to the hope that it has been for almost 20 years now.

In as brief a time as possible, I would just like to recapture some of the background to demonstrate the tortuous history that this project has had. One may consider it a relatively short time, but if one is looking at it as an item of hope, it has been fairly tortuous.

The field itself is located 315 kilometres southeast of St. John's. The oilfield covers about 20,000 acres and the last capacity I saw was in the range of 600 to 900 million barrels. When capacity production starts, this amounts to

roughly 100 million barrels, but the daily production would be somewhere in the vicinity of 120 million barrels a day.

An Hon. Member: That is impossible.

Mr. Mifflin: One hundred and twenty million barrels a day?

An Hon. Member: One hundred and twenty thousand barrels a day.

Mr. Mifflin: One hundred and twenty thousand barrels a day. One of the things we are really concerned about is the total capacity.

As far as the hope is concerned, I would like to translate this into jobs and what it means to Atlantic Canada, indeed to the whole of Canada.

• (1600)

In fact, the exploration activities took place as far back as 1971, but there were really no successes until Hibernia was discovered. The exploratory drilling began in May of 1979, and it was by Chevron Standard in partnership with Mobil, Gulf, then Petro-Canada and Columbia.

In August of the same year, oil was discovered and a series of evaluation wells were drilled between then and 1984. From 1985 to July of 1988, a series of project-owner cost estimates, government proposals and tax reforms were exchanged between the parties. Then on the magic of July 18, 1988, a series of project-owner cost estimates and a series of statements of principles were discussed and signed in St. John's, Newfoundland by Prime Minister Mulroney and the then Premier of Newfoundland, Premier Peckford, together with the Government of Canada, the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, Chevron Canada Resources, Columbia Gas Development, Gulf Canada, Mobil Oil and Petro-Canada. These were the organizations involved in the initial findings.

I recall that day. I was in St. John's and I believe the hon. minister was there as well. It was a day of jubilation across all sectors of Newfoundland. It cut across party politics, it cut across everything. It was a day of rejoicing for Newfoundland because the crisis in the fishery had arrived and as we are all aware in this House, it has got considerably worse since then. We felt that things were going to get better.

In the words of Premier Peckford at the time—and it may have been overstated—it was an indication of the way Newfoundland felt about this. He talked about the sun shining and "have-not will be no more". That was based on something tangible happening on March 31 of the next year, 1989. March 31 came, and for reasons that I think are well known by the House, to our great disappointment, the agreement could not be signed.

We are looking at a delay of a year and a bit. During this time, we have had considerable discussion in this House. If my figures serve me right, the first reading took place on November 7. Some discussion went on over those days. The second reading took place on February 9. That is roughly four months ago. And we had some discussion just before we closed at Christmas time.

The purpose of the bill is to give the federal government the statutory authority to enter into a legally binding agreement based on the statement of principles put together in July of 1988 and subsequently negotiated between the Government of Canada, the Government of Newfoundland and the Hibernia project owners. Essentially, the bill will allow the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, with the approval of the Governor-in-Council, to enter into one or more agreements on behalf of the federal Crown in respect of the development project itself.

I think it is safe to say that the reserves of oil are not truly known. The main concern of all of us in the House is employment benefits. The construction phase will take about five or six years. It is estimated that the field will last around 20 years. During the construction phase of the projects, the partners targeted 14,500 person-years of direct Canadian employment and 32,600 person-years of indirect Canadian employment. I stress if my constituents are watching this, it talks about 14,500 for direct Canadian employment. That does not necessarily mean it will all be in Newfoundland, although we certainly hope that the majority of it will be.

Specifically, after the construction phase, the targeted Canadian employment figures—if the ones that I have are not right I know the Minister of Energy Mines and Resources will correct me—we are looking at are 1,100 direct person-years, that is those directly employed with the production and 2,450 indirect person-years. That is wild compared to the opportunities for employment that one has right now in Newfoundland and in Atlantic Canada.

With respect to the construction stage, as I understand it, the winning bidder would be able to construct a community near Come-By-Chance, as the hon. minister said, in Bull Arm. Specifically, I think it is called Mosquito Cove. They would construct a community in this area for about 2,000 employees, would pour the 500,000 tonne base, join it with the topsides and then would tow the 1.5 billion tonne gravity based structure out to its spot out in the area where it would begin production, which is roughly 315 kilometres off Newfoundland.

I recall we had an enthusiastic and a very hopeful discussion here on February 9. I spoke to the main bill on second reading and my feeling was that we were within days of having this thing go through. In fact we were making some arrangements with the House leaders for the next week. All of a sudden we hit a little bit of a snag and there were some concerns. Whether the concerns are legitimate or not, I would like to speak to that later on. However, I was disappointed and, quite frankly, I have had a bit of a rough ride from my constituents when I go back home because they wondered what was the House of Commons doing to prevent this from going forward.

We have had enough obstacles in the way. Again I promise, and I am going to stick to that promise, that this is not a time for political rhetoric. This is a time to get on with doing something for a region of our country which is badly in need and needs this particular project. I think we should look at the positive side, while still being concerned about those aspects that have been raised by a number of my friends on the left.

Newfoundland takes its resources from the sea and whether it is fish, or whether it is oil, or whether it is the tourist attraction of the beautiful bays and villages around the area. That is what we have in Newfoundland and Labrador, and in other parts of Atlantic Canada. It is not surprising that there should be concern about the environment, and it is really this concern that is the source of the amendments that have been put forward today.

One of my party's policies is to use energy in the most environmentally responsible way. Indeed, it is my understanding that after we get through with this business and we get approval, that the revised project, scaled down from the 17 to the four or five modules that have been the result of a scrubbing down to reduce the cost of this project, is going to be submitted to the Canadian Newfoundland Offshore Petroleum Board for approval, along with the plans for the eventual abandonment of the Gravity Bay structure. When the production is completed, we will have to win environmental approval again before Ottawa makes a decision on this. My understanding is that this environmental decision will be made by an intergovernmental body involving the Department of the Environment, the Canadian Coast Guard and Canada Oil and Gas Lands Administration.

I would suggest that when Hibernia gets that far down the pike we will have a number of options at which we can look. We could dismantle the topside and leave the structure manned. Perhaps by that time we will have found some other use for it. It would provide a structure for search and rescue, which is badly needed in that area of Newfoundland. We could take the structure down approximately 180 feet so that the largest vessel could navigate safely, or we could take the structure completely out of the ocean floor and either dismantle it or find some other use for it.

If this bill passes second reading and goes to committee, it is important that the committee concern itself with these particular concerns that have been raised by the NDP. Hopefully, we will not only be able to get this approved, but I am hoping that we can get it through committee and back for third reading before the House adjourns for the summer. Quite frankly, I do not think we can afford to wait another three months.

We have been working on this very assiduously and we have had some difficulty in getting the thing under way. Now we have reached the point where we can get something done. I would find it very difficult to support any impediments to this bill.

• (1610)

In the short time that I have been in this House there are many issues that have divided us. Heaven knows, we have seen so many of them here in the House. There is a place for partisanship, a time for political rhetoric, a time for being, perhaps, politically different from each other. However, I think this is one of the few issues that I have seen since I have been here where not only are members

anxious to approve this project but to go on record as having had their names behind approving this project. Everyone wants to get on with fuelling the hope of those people who are counting the days, in fact counting the moments, when some announcement of substance can be made and we can get on with tapping the vast reserves, and translate this into jobs, into the economy and into a working production.

Then we, in Canada, will not only be able to secure a sounder energy foundation and not have to worry about importing foreign oil, while at the same time being environmentally conscious. This will ensure the economic diversification that we have been groping for in Newfoundland since 1947. This is one of the hopes that we have. I am going to call on all members to put aside partisanship and, perhaps, the minor concerns that they might have so that this bill is approved and passes third reading before the House closes for the summer.

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, I would just like to make a comment or two, if I might, to the Minister for International Trade and to the hon. member for Bonavista—Trinity—Conception. Let me thank both of them for the comments which they have made today.

It is not my purpose to take the time of the House, but I think possibly it is important that I just put some figures on the record so that people in the oil industry and, more importantly, the people of Newfoundland and Labrador have the latest play. If that is acceptable, I will use this opportunity to do so.

First of all, in terms of the number of barrels in the Hibernia field, members have been putting certain figures on the record and none of them are wrong because all of them have been in the public domain at one time or another. The best seismology work and information that we can put to that question is that existing reserves of Hibernia are in the range of 525 to 650 million barrels. I appreciate that while the science is specific, until one gets into the work, the actual results are subject to a fair bit of verification and one can only do that when the work is being done. The low estimate is in the order of 725 million barrels and the high estimate is one billion barrels-plus. Possibly that answers it just in quick form.

Additionally, what should be recognized is that this is light and medium crude. As our light crude, especially in the western sedimentary basin, starts declining, as it has already, there is also an additional advantage in terms of mix of crude for Canada.

The last point that I want to make is that in terms of the project now contemplated, we are looking to produce an average of 110,000 barrels of oil per day with a maximum production capacity of 150,000 barrels per day.

Mr. Harvey (Edmonton East): Madam Speaker, I was wondering if perhaps the Chair, the minister, and indeed, the House, might agree to allow questions of the minister, being that the minister has just participated in the debate.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I do not have unanimous consent. The hon. minister has used the period for questions and comments following the speech by the hon. member for Bonavista—Trinity—Conception to add a few things to the record. The hon. House leader.

Mr. Andre: Madam Speaker, I understand the member for Edmonton East is going to be speaking next and if he has questions to put, the minister will be delighted, I am sure, to try to answer them at the end of that period.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Further questions or comments. Debate. The hon. member for Edmonton East.

Mr. Ross Harvey (Edmonton East): Madam Speaker, in rising to participate in the debate today, I would like to note that what we are debating is the reasoned amendment proposed by my colleague, the hon. member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, which would have the effect of rejecting this bill for the three reasons stated. First, granting a project more than $1 billion without securing an equivalent equity in the project for the people of Canada is wrong in principle. Second, the bill fails to contain specific provisions which provide environmental protection measures in connection with the project. Third, the bill fails to contain specific provisions which provide for the creation of job opportunities in relation to the project.

These are very large topics that the reasoned amendment addresses and, in consequence, we will be dealing with each in turn through three speakers this afternoon.

I would like at the outset to make it very clear that the New Democratic Party caucus in this House opposes Bill C-44 for those reasons. We do not oppose the Hibernia project *per se*.

If I may draw the analogy, Madam Speaker, it may be a very good thing to have a hospital constructed in your community. Presumably everyone in your community, if there is not one there now, would be very much in favour of having a hospital constructed there.

However, if the government that proposes to build the hospital proposes to do so with straw and plasticine, your constituents are not going to be terribly thrilled at the prospect. Although the project itself may be praiseworthy and commendable and certainly worthy of public support, the form and nature that that public support takes, as well as the consequences of the form and nature of that public support, are very much a matter of attention for this House.

If the form of that support is inappropriate or inadequate, then it is the business of this House to defeat it until such time as more proper form and content are brought forward.

For these very good reasons we oppose this bill. We do not oppose job creation. On the contrary, we want jobs in Atlantic Canada. That is why we oppose the government's cuts in transfer payments. That is why we oppose the reduction in important government services in the Atlantic. That is why we oppose the government's cuts to UI. And that is why we oppose the continued mismanagement of the Atlantic fishery.

We New Democrats believe that it is vitally important to create as many jobs as possible with the money available. However, before I consider the subject of job creation in greater detail, I would like to touch on the historic background of this project and very briefly on the specific contents of this bill. Given time limitations, I will have to leave the other important subjects of economic development and environmental considerations to two of my colleagues who will be speaking a little later this afternoon.

The history of the Hibernia project has been a dizzying roller-coaster of rays of expectations and dashed hopes. When the first major oil discovery was made on the Grand Banks in 1979, the expectation was that Newfoundland would blossom to become the Norway of North America. Unfortunately, the first estimates of the amount of oil in the field were soon proved to have been much too high.

In 1979, it was estimated that Hibernia contained about 1.8 billion barrels of oil. In 1985, this estimate was halved. The field was estimated to contain, as the hon. minister noted, between 800 million and 900 million barrels in all likelihood.

The estimate on the most recent Hibernia background papers is down to just 525 million to 650 million barrels. The estimates and the benefits from the project that would be enjoyed by Newfoundlanders have similarly declined steadily. Initially, many Newfoundlanders believed that the province owned this offshore resource and that it could be used mainly to provide much needed jobs and to boost the Newfoundland economy.

• (1620)

This hope of exclusive provincial ownership and control was dashed by the rulings of the Supreme Court of Newfoundland and the Supreme Court of Canada in 1983 and 1984 respectively, rulings to the effect that the federal government has jurisdiction over this offshore mineral resource. The Atlantic Accord, a long-term agreement on the joint management of offshore oil and gas development was, therefore, signed in 1985. As Newfoundlanders know only too well, the agreement does not change the fact that Hibernia will not by itself transform the Newfoundland economy.

On top of the disappointing realization that Hibernia would not be the bonanza that many initially thought, Newfoundlanders have been disappointed that politicians have repeatedly used the promise of the project for political purposes. Politicians have regularly raised the hopes of Newfoundlanders by big, glitzy announcements of deals before or during election campaigns. The project was announced once in 1979, again in 1982 and yet again during the 1988 election when the federal Conservatives made Hibernia an important plank in their campaign in Atlantic Canada. Each time the impression was given that a final deal was done and that this would mean great things for Newfoundland.

Listen to what the Prime Minister said during a pre-election speech in St. John's on July 18, 1988. I quote: "Hibernia has been the dream of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador for decades". Given that

he said this nine years after it was discovered, that is a bit hyperbolic, but let it pass.

"Today the dream has been realized". During the last election campaign on October 6, 1988 the Prime Minister waxed lyrical about the project, saying, and again I quote: "For me, Brian Mulroney, Hibernia meant a lot more than barrels of oil. Hibernia to me was about dignity. Hibernia is about the future, about jobs for our kids. It is about a new tomorrow".

For his part the hon. minister of trade who spoke earlier this afternoon told more than 1,000 invited guests in St. John's on July 18, 1988 that the announcement "has nothing to do with politics. This has to do with justice". That was in 1988. That was yet another announcement that has come to very little after it was made. It is no surprise that Newfoundlanders are just a wee bit cynical about Hibernia announcements and just a mite suspicious about what repeatedly appears to them to be political opportunism of the first order.

Speaking of healthy cynicism, Newfoundlanders will recall the minister of trade has already suggested that the Opposition is somehow to blame for holding up this bill. This is a minister of a government that did not hesitate to use its majority in the House of Commons to stifle debate and ram through the hated GST, and that out-voted the Opposition to cut VIA Rail, to chop transfer payments and to slash UI benefits. This is the same government that introduced this bill on Hibernia last November 7 and then delayed further consideration of it until December 18, then until February 9 and finally, until today, a full seven months since the bill was introduced.

The government will still try to blame Hibernia delays on everyone but itself claiming that we are against jobs for Newfoundlanders, that we are against the Hibernia project itself. This is not true. We, New Democrats, do not oppose Hibernia. Again I say, we oppose this bill.

What is in Bill C-44? In a nutshell, Bill C-44 is meant to give the federal government the statutory authority to enter into one or more legally binding agreements based on the statement of principle signed in July 1988 and on the results of subsequent negotiations. It essentially sets out how the federal government will spend money on this project.

We are talking about a great deal of money. The bill proposes that the federal government contribute up to $1.04 billion toward capital costs in free grant money; up to $1.66 billion in loan guarantees for the capital project; $175 million in loan guarantees for a temporary financing facility; $300 million as a loan and no cap on the amount contributed as interest on the $1.66 billion in loan guarantees should interest become payable in consequence of those guarantees. In sum, this bill proposes that the federal government pay up to $1.04 billion in absolutely free grant money and up to $300 million as a loan and at least $1.835 billion in loans and interest guarantees for a total potential outlay of up to $3.139 billion or more. That is a lot of money.

The question we have to ask ourselves in considering this bill is: Is it a wise use of money? Does it provide the most jobs and economic development that can be had for the money?

In the rest of the short time available to me to speak today, I would like to focus if I may on the employment opportunities that will result from Hibernia if this bill passes without change.

The people of Newfoundland and Labrador need jobs.

Nobody in this House disputes that it is indeed incumbent on the Canadian confederation to come to the aid of the people in Newfoundland and Labrador to the degree necessary to bring them up to some kind of economic equality with the rest of the country. It is the contention of other people who have spoken here this afternoon that not only will Hibernia do that, but Hibernia is virtually the only vehicle that can do that.

It is true that the people of Newfoundland and Labrador need jobs. They need real economic development. Hibernia could help provide that but it is not likely to happen with this bill. Indeed, the terms of this bill will necessarily see a great many potential benefits to Newfoundland and Labrador squandered. In fact, this bill provides inadequate employment opportunities for Newfoundlanders for the public money invested and given away. Even Premier Clyde Wells recognized this publicly, pointing out in an interview published on October 2, 1989, in *The Financial Post*, that the number of permanent jobs generated by Hibernia would be about the size of the workforce of two fish plants.

The hon. Minister for International Trade disputed that contention earlier this afternoon. If he looks at the job creation figures involved, the 35,000 person-years created over the entire projected 25-year life of the project with construction and operation, if you take those person-years and you divide that by the 25 years, you will wind up with a figure of about 2,000 jobs a year. That is about the size of two decent fish plants. As Mr. Wells put it at that time on October 2, 1989, in *The Financial Post*: "The former government painted it as a saviour", he said. "It isn't."

The current estimates of job creation are much lower than the consortium that Premier Peckford predicted in the early 1980s. The 1989 Hibernia background papers suggested that up to 10,000 person-years of direct employment could be created in Newfoundland during the construction phase, and another 25,000 person-years of indirect employment and that makes up those 35,000 person-years during the construction phase. It is estimated that the 20-year operational phase will see the creation of 1,100 permanent jobs.

As the Federation of Labour President, Bill Parsons, pointed out in an interview published in the July 19, 1988 edition of *The St. John's Evening Telegram*: "Those jobs are just a fraction of what is needed to turn the province's struggling economy around. As he put it, and again I quote: "The thing is there are 40,000 Newfoundlanders out of work and we won't get any revenue from Hibernia for 15 years".

In addition, some observers who suggested that because jobs are urgently needed in Newfoundland, the government's emphasis should shift to creating jobs more quickly by tapping the existing Terra Nova discovery, reportedly a much less complicated venture, leaving the more difficult Hibernia field for later.

This leaves but one alternative available. Hibernia jobs will be enormously expensive. Even if we use the government's own figures, which we know to be optimistic, Hibernia is a very expensive way of creating jobs. For example, let us use the figures published in the Hibernia background papers. These figures we know to be overestimates because they do not take into account the recent design changes. Redesigning the project to reduce costs by assembling the Topsides rig in five 'supermodules' rather than the 18 to 20 smaller components originally planned could mean the loss of 10,000 construction jobs in and around St. John's. Let us be very generous and use these earlier more optimistic figures anyway.

On page 9, this 1989 government document states that for both the temporary construction period and the production period and I quote: "The combined total direct employment for residents of Newfoundland will be in the order of 32,000 person-years over the entire life of the project".

The total government involvement is $3.139 billion. That makes almost $100,000 of government money alone for the creation of every person-year of work. If we assume a 37.5 hour work week and a 50-week work year, that works out to over $50 an hour for the work. Let us be clear, that is not what people will be paid, that is the amount of public money the government is proposing to invest or spend to create that job. That is $50 an hour in government money alone, Madam Speaker.

• (1630)

As Newfoundland and Labrador New Democrat leader Cle Newhook put it, and I am quoting from an article in the September 15, 1980 edition of *The Evening Telegram*, he said:

> It looks like an incredibly expensive way of creating a few jobs up front and a few industrial jobs during production while making the companies rich.

This is a telling and accurate assessment in my opinion. There are not many Newfoundlanders who would not agree that there are literally thousands of community economic development projects featuring hundreds of thousands of well paying jobs that can be created for the same outlay of money. In fact, when it comes to maximizing the number of jobs or getting the biggest bang for the buck, Hibernia does not stack up very well against other existing programs in the region.

Between 1984 and 1988 just over $14.5 million was spent by the provincial and federal governments under the CEIC, fisheries and rural development programs and the like, creating 775 person-years of work. That works out to just under $19,000 in government spending for every job. That is less than one-fifth of the cost per job that can be expected under the most optimistic predictions for Hibernia.

Allow me to quote at length an article from *The Financial Times* of July 25, 1988. The article was written

by William Mackness, the Dean of the Faculty of Management at the University of Manitoba. He writes:

> As a regional development scheme, the project may have some merit, but not in terms of capital cost per job. Energy is one of the world's most capital-intensive industries and, accordingly, is a strikingly expensive vehicle with which to deliver regional employment. Temporary construction jobs in Newfoundland will carry a capital cost in excess of $500,000 per job. Permanent production jobs will carry a capital cost of several million dollars per job. Granted, the oil is there, but it would be difficult to find a more expensive way to deliver either oil or jobs in Newfoundland.

But, expensive or not, 32,000 person-years of work sounds like a lot of jobs.

Unfortunately Hibernia is primarily an energy project. It is not designed to be a job creation project. It will not provide nearly the boost the province needs, especially when one considers the funding and service cuts the Mulroney Conservatives have made since coming into office.

The Canada Employment and Immigration Advisory Council issued a report on Hibernia in July 1988. The 30-page report states that Hibernia "covers only one of the many aspects of economic growth possibilities in Newfoundland".

I would like to emphasize that point: "only one of the many aspects of economic growth possibilities in Newfoundland". When the hon. minister stands up as he did earlier this afternoon and says it is Hibernia or nothing, it is he who is betokening a terrible and even tragic lack of faith in the initiative and indeed the entrepreneurial zeal of Newfoundlanders.

In fact that same report, the CEIC advisory council report of July 1988, goes on to say that at least 70,000 permanent jobs are needed to bring Newfoundland's employment and economic figures up to the national average, just to the national average. That report was issued before the latest devastation in the Atlantic fishery.

Hibernia jobs will also be dangerous jobs. No one needs to be reminded of that awful night eight years ago, February 15, 1982, when 84 people, including 54 Newfoundlanders, lost their life when the world's largest semi-submersible drilling rig, the *Ocean Ranger*, capsized and sank in 18-metre lashing waves in a screaming 145-kilometre per hour wind.

There have been changes to procedures and safety equipment since then. Some people suggest that such a tragedy could never happen again. Other people are deeply concerned that we have let our guard down on safety since the *Ocean Ranger* disaster. The fact remains that offshore drilling takes place in one of the most inhospitable and dangerous places in the world. Offshore drilling jobs, by their very nature, are dangerous. Clearly we need to make worker safety a priority. This should include a review of the precise details of the provisions for worker safety on the Hibernia project before it proceeds.

Offshore jobs are also very stressful. According to a recent government and industry financed study, offshore oil jobs mean month-long shifts at sea, $60 for a five-minute phone call home, and a work environment some compare to a prison or a war zone.

This 118-page report based on a survey conducted in 1985 and entitled *Family Life Adaptations to Offshore Oil and Gas Employment* concluded that 40 per cent of women married to rig workers and nearly 20 per cent of married men working on offshore rigs were deeply unhappy with their jobs. What is even worse, many of these jobs could also go to Americans because of the free trade deal. The Mulroney Conservatives signed a deal that specifies that U.S. firms have, and I quote from the deal, "a right of national treatment". Remember that, John, the right of national treatment in seeking business opportunities.

That means that the Hibernia companies cannot discriminate against U.S. firms under the trade deal, and that means governments cannot insist on local employment and procurement guarantees. As a result, the target of 45 per cent to 50 per cent Newfoundland content in jobs and procurement—and do not forget that is the target 45 per cent to 50 per cent, half of jobs and procurement benefits—will remain just that, a target. This cannot be guaranteed because it runs directly contrary to the provisions of the free trade agreement.

In any event, the Canadian content rules in the Hibernia agreement were relaxed in the summer of 1988. Instead of regulations the Hibernia deal translated Canadian content goals of previous Hibernia policies and the Atlantic Accord into targets—again, targets not regulations—which are stated so generally that they

permit wide open bidding, but this too is required by the free trade agreement.

I am trying to keep within my time here. Before I run out of time, I want to focus on one way in which the Hibernia project demonstrates this government's ongoing, indeed continuous, stunning hypocrisy. We will remember that the Mulroney Conservatives campaigned in 1984 on a promise to provide jobs, jobs, jobs. They now claim to support this bill in part because it will create jobs, albeit expensive ones, in a region that desperately needs employment. At the same time, the Conservatives have proceeded to destroy existing job opportunities by cutting federal transfer payments, slashing VIA, closing rural post offices, closing CFB Summerside, and continually failing to address effectively the long-standing crises in the fishing industry. Then, to top it off, they slash unemployment insurance benefits for those people who do lose their jobs.

The people of Newfoundland and Labrador do not want yet another set of politicians dangling visions of prosperity in front of them. They do not need smoke and mirrors. They do not need more raised hopes and dashed expectations. They need well paying, long-term jobs—lots of them. It is about time their government began a concerted effort to assist them to achieve what they need, what they want, what they deserve.

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Madam Speaker, I just want to make a comment following the intervention by the hon. member for Edmonton East.

First of all the hon. member mentioned job creation. He has heard many times in this House since September 1984 that approximately 1.6 million jobs on a net basis have been created by the economy during the tenure of this government.

The hon. member should just give some attention to this since he comes from a province that is energy rich, a province that recognizes more than possibly any other province that government policies can seriously damage the resource and the jobs related to that resource. He and I might disagree on the philosophical basis in terms of development of energy resources, but what he and I should not disagree on is that the energy economy, by and large, has been an engine of growth particularly for his province. He should remember that, regardless of the political differences we might have in this House.

He also should recognize, regardless of partisan differences, that all of us have been concerned, for example, that the resources belong to the provinces and that the provinces and the people in those provinces get the maximum benefit from the ownership of those resources. He should also remember that resources regarding the offshore only were clarified with the accords, and particularly the Atlantic Accord, to which my hon. colleague the Minister for International Trade referred in his comments.

I say to the hon. member, let us look in committee at the differences we have. Let us look at the rationale for Hibernia, but at end of day let us remember that permanent jobs are not created by government or by governments transferring tax points or tax dollars. Those are needed for basic services. That is why the federal government and the provincial governments agree with equalization and Established Programs Financing. Let us not hinder the people of Newfoundland and Labrador from having the permanent jobs which he talks about, as well as the benefit of resources which that part of the country needs.

• (1640)

If anything has impressed me as minister of energy, it is when I go to St. John's particularly and Newfoundland and Labrador generally. The people there are no different from any other Canadians. What they want is the development of their resources to be done properly and prudently. At the end of day they want to have permanent jobs based on the merits of the case, not simply on the largesse that might come from Ottawa or other taxpayers. They are no different from anyone else. This project, while not being the panacea for all ills in Newfoundland and Labrador, it goes some distance in meeting that objective.

Mr. Harvey (Edmonton East): Madam Speaker, I agree with some of what the hon. minister has just said. I agree that it is not for the government to attempt to put everybody in Newfoundland on the dole, definitely not. It is the proper role of the Government of Canada to foster and encourage that economic development in

Newfoundland which will result in stable, long-term, well paying jobs. There is no question of that.

As long as we are remembering things, let us remember not to be mesmerized by the prospect of oil megaprojects. I come from a province which has had a great deal of experience with oil megaprojects. I come from a province with a great deal of experience with energy as the engine of growth. Madam Speaker, I can tell you it can be the engine of destruction for many. I can tell you that when the price of oil collapsed in 1985 somewhere between 15,000 and 40,000 Albertans lost their jobs and had their lives wrecked in consequence.

Beware of oil megaprojects. Beware of the energy economy. If ever you have the alternative, if you are talking about the expenditure of public funds, not loans but direct expenditures, direct free grant money, I would advise you to look long and hard at other possibilities because among other things a great deal of that expenditure will be to the benefit of people who do not live anywhere in this country. We are told that a great deal of the production from Hibernia could be destined to go straight to the United States and never see a Canadian refinery.

Mr. Brian Tobin (Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte): Madam Speaker, I want to ask the member for Edmonton East whether he could be clear and tell the House, given all the concerns he has raised during the course of his remarks in this debate and looking at the amendments that are set out here, whether or not the NDP in essence is saying that this project ought to be put on hold. Is that what he is saying? I think the House should be clear on it.

Mr. Harvey (Edmonton East): Madam Speaker, especially for reasons that will be outlined in far greater detail by my colleague from Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing, the NDP is saying that this bill is sufficiently flawed to warrant its defeat regardless of what one thinks of the Hibernia project itself. The principal problem is the proposal to give away more than $1 billion in government money without taking a penny in equity in return. That is the main problem, but there are others.

The Hibernia project itself, if we assume it to be a worthy vehicle in the energy market which is apparently the yardstick used by the government and the Official Opposition these days, fine, no problem. But to give away $1 billion in an area that could profit from that scale of government investment much more in other areas is to fatally flaw the bill in our opinion.

Mr. Tobin: Madam Speaker, I will have my own remarks with respect to the member's position in a moment in my speech, but I want to ask him a question about the principle of not putting money in without taking equity in a project. I happen to think that Hibernia benefits all of Canada. It benefits the nation, assists in the area of self-efficiency, and is good for the whole country.

But putting that aside for a moment, given this principle of cancelling the project if there is $1 billion and no equity, is the member saying that, in the case of the farmers of western Canada who have received each year over the last four or five years approximately $1 billion of federal assistance, it is the position of the NDP that the government should take equity in their farms or no assistance should be forthcoming? I am interested in hearing what he has to say in the House.

Mr. Harvey (Edmonton East): Madam Speaker, the analogy is completely unreasonable. It does not apply. It is not individual Newfoundland oil producers who are heading out to the Hibernia site and digging up pails of oil and taking it in.

Nor, Madam Speaker, is it individual Newfoundland oil producers who work that field, sometimes for generations, building up an economic base that is fundamental to the survival of Canada as a whole.

No, there is no comparison between the two. Mobil Oil does not farm in western Canada.

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): The hon. gentleman for Edmonton East says he supports this project. I hope to God he does not support any other projects that I am interested in, if he thinks stopping the bill will make the project possible. The people of Newfoundland have waited 11 years for this project. The hon. member supports the project, but, by golly, he is going to stop this bill going through the House so that he can really show the people of Newfoundland and Labrador how he supports the project. Talk about logic!

What about the question of jobs and comparing this to two fish plants or whatever. This is not just a question of the jobs that may be created directly by this project, and a great many jobs are going to be created directly by the project, it is a question of changing the nature of the

economy of Newfoundland so it is not dependent just on the fishery or on some jobs in pulp and paper.

It is to give the people another alternative, highly skilled jobs, not just the jobs out there on the rigs or in construction, or the jobs at Bull Arm, although we hope there will be more fields.

There is the Terra Nova field. There is the White Rose field and there are indications of other fields out there. Hopefully they will be able to construct rigs and so on at Bull Arm for another 50 or 60 years, as well as in the Newfoundland dockyard and the Marystown shipyard where we are putting $34.5 million with the province so that they can take full advantage of this.

It is not just the direct jobs. It is all of the companies that have been created in the last 10 or 12 years, the high technology companies and the kind of jobs they are going to be able to provide. Anyone who wants to compare this with another two fish plants for Newfoundland has something wrong with their mental processes or does not have sufficient scope to visualize what this is going to do.

I do not think for a moment that Premier Wells meant it. This is not creating 500 more jobs for women to go on a fish line and cut fish. This is not the kind of job this process is going to create, or jobs for 12 or 14 weeks of the year in an inshore fish plant and those types of jobs, though God knows they are welcome enough.

I would suggest to the hon. gentleman that he and his party take a different approach to this. They are supposed to be the party that represents the labour movement and the like. When they have an opportunity to support a bill that is going to change the nature of the economy of Newfoundland and create some better paying, more skilled work, they oppose it. How else is this going to start if the government does not assist in getting it started?

If the NDP is going to vote against any assistance to the project, then how is the project ever going to start? If the NDP supports this project which took 11 years of struggle to get this far, they cannot really come down to Newfoundland and tell how helpful they were if they are going to vote against this bill and do everything they can to stop it going through the House.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The period for questions and comments is now over. Resuming debate. The hon. member for Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte.

Mr. Brian Tobin (Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte): Madam Speaker, I must say to the member for Edmonton East who spoke on behalf of the New Democratic Party that I am really quite amazed at the attitude of the New Democratic Party with respect to the Hibernia development. More particularly, I am quite amazed at the attitude of the new Democratic Party about Newfoundland and Newfoundlanders. I frankly find it patronizing. I find it insulting, if not by design, I hope at the very least that it must be by accident, to the intelligence of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

• (1650)

The Hibernia project is not something new that materialized as a matter of debate before this House at the first reading of Bill C-44 on November 7, 1989. This project, its potential, its development, has been around for a long time, several decades.

I want to tell the hon. member who has been here for less that two years—and I am not reflecting upon him in any way, as he has been an active and engaged member all the time he has been here. The debate we are attempting to have today has its genesis in a debate between jurisdictions several decades ago. Certainly that debate has gone on in an intense fashion for the last decade.

I have to tell him in all frankness that to have an hon. member from Edmonton East, as well-intentioned in his own mind as he might be, stand and purport to speak for the people of Newfoundland, to understand the history and dynamics of this project and suggest that he and his party are going to save Newfoundland from a tragic mistake, I find patronizing and insulting. It displays an abysmal ignorance of the history of this development and the kind of agreements that have been negotiated and understandings that have been reached over a very long and difficult debate.

What do we have at the end of a very difficult and long process, sometimes a partisan process between parties and sometimes a difficult process between jurisdictions? We have at the eleventh hour the New Democratic Party storming into the House of Commons and suggesting

that they are going to put the brakes on an important project not only for Newfoundland but for Canada. That is an incredibly patronizing attitude.

Let me say, in all sincerity, that this is not the kind of approach we expect from the New Democratic Party. It is not the normal thing we see in this place. I find the member's attitude absolutely incredible, because what is Bill C-44?

I find the attitude incredible. I listened in silence to the hon. member and he ought to listen in silence to me. What is Bill C-44? The Canadian public has listened to a lot of rhetoric. In reality, it is a piece of enabling legislation. That is all it is, enabling legislation. It makes possible agreements. It makes possible the participation of the federal government with two other partners, one being the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and the other being the private consortium.

This legislation represents the approval of Parliament for the government to participate with two other partners in an offshore oil development, the Hibernia Field specifically and other fields, if and when they have been proven viable. That is what it does. What does the New Democratic Party say? It says in essence—and I find this amusing—that it wants to impose certain conditions upon the Government of Canada—more particularly the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador which is not in this House but in another jurisdiction—and upon the private consortium. It wants the federal government to impose arbitrary conditions, without consent, knowledge, dialogue, discussion and the agreement of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, representing the people of Newfoundland and Labrador and the consortium.

The amendment moved by the New Democratic Party asks that the bill be not now read a second time because granting the project more than $1 billion without securing equivalent equity in the project for the people of Canada is wrong in principle. There is provision in this enabling legislation for the Government of Canada to take an equity position, but it is an equity position that will arise out of negotiation with the consortium and with the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, the two other partners in the project. That ability is contained in the enabling legislation.

The hon. member is asking the Government of Canada to move in arbitrarily, like a bull in a china shop, to state upfront what its position is going to be, notwithstanding changing circumstances. God knows, world prices change and therefore circumstances change. He wants that provision included in advance of any discussion or negotiation with the players.

That is not a reasonable amendment. That is a patronizing amendment that displays an abysmal ignorance about the agreement that has been reached between all of the partners and players in this agreement.

The second paragraph of the amendment states that the bill fails to contain specific provisions which provide environmental protection measures in connection with the project. The reality is that in 1985 the environmental review on the Hibernia project was completed. It was an extensive, very complex and public process. It was debated and circulated. It is debated still today, with many players and broad representation.

There has been an environmental process and there is provision on any additional or new field other than Hibernia which is being considered, for additional environmental review. I have no hesitation in saying as a member of the opposition Liberal Party that it would be subject to the full weight of guidelines that have now been laid out by the Minister of Energy. That is proper.

There is nobody in Newfoundland and Labrador, which for 500 years has depended upon the fishery, the harvest of the sea, who wants to risk the cod stocks in any way, shape or form. God knows they are in bad enough shape now because of the exploitation by man, both in this country and many other countries of the world.

We are not prepared to take that environmental risk, we have to be satisfied. The heritage of our province is the bounty of the sea. We have the patronizing attitude of the New Democratic Party, a party that rushes in at the eleventh hour, to say there must be an environmental review. There has been a review and we shall remain vigilant on the environment. To assume that that vigilance is not there, that Newfoundlanders are a people so much in a rush for a bit of prosperity that they would

turn their backs on their heritage, is an insult to the people of Newfoundland. Frankly, I find it insulting, and the hon. member ought to have known better.

The third provision in the amendment states that the bill fails to contain specific provisions which provide for the creation of job opportunities in relation to the project. Again, it is an amendment which displays a total lack of knowledge about what has gone on for 10 years and what the debate has been for 10 years between the national government, the provincial government and the consortium.

What has the debate been about? Hibernia is adjacent to the province of Newfoundland, located close to the province of Newfoundland. The debate has been about whether the benefits from that project would flow to the province of Newfoundland and Labrador. That is what the long history of conflict, over a period of time, and negotiation has been all about, governments of Newfoundland and Labrador ensuring that, within the bounds of viability, there should be some long-term, permanent benefit to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

We are sensitive to not having a boom and bust economy. We are sensitive to not overheating the economy, as occurred in Scotland, and seeing that the people prosper. We are sensitive to having a pace and control of development, not allowing it to be done totally by the private sector. That is why we as a province in a collective sense, essentially put away our ability to have this project six or seven years ago, earlier than it would otherwise come on stream. We said no to unplanned development. We wanted a plan; to know what the effect is on the society, the social structure, the values of our community, before we proceed.

The hon. member and his party, the New Democratic Party, now want the federal government to arbitrarily write into the bill what the pace of development will be, when the federal government is now obligated to consult with the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador regarding the pace of development. The control and the assurances for the people of our province is vested in the legislature and government of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador and the hon. member wants to take that away.

The hon. member believes that we here in Ottawa, in this gilded chamber, are somehow supreme, wise and, in our wisdom, we can do better than those people down in St. John's, that fog-infested capital, in telling them what the pace of their development should be. The hon. member is saying, "We in the New Democratic Party, given our usual bleeding-heart consideration for those unfortunate, unintelligent people, unable to help themselves, we will determine here in Ottawa, from this ivory tower, what their pace of development will be, because they cannot help themselves".

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The hon. member will have 10 minutes remaining, plus 10 minutes for questions and comments when we return after six o'clock.

It being five o'clock, the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on today's Order Paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS—MOTIONS

[*English*]

PUBLIC SERVICE

REGIONAL RATES OF PAY

Mr. Ron MacDonald (Dartmouth) moved:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should consider abolishing the Regional Rates of Pay, now in force for certain federal government employees, in accordance with its stated policy of pay equity.

He said: Mr. Speaker, on December 7 of last year, I spoke in the House on a very regressive piece of back-to-work legislation, Bill C-49. That will go down in the history of this Parliament as one of the most regressive, callous attacks on organized labour in Canada in recent history. I said at that time that I would hope that never again in this Parliament would I have to address the House on the discriminatory wage practice called regional rates of pay.

The government opposite has not listened to logic. The government shows no change of attitude at all in its perpetuation of discriminatory wage practices that primarily affect those individuals who live on the east coast of Canada.

Here is a little bit of history about regional rates of pay for anybody out there who is watching and wants to know what it is all about. Regional rates of pay have been practised by governments for a number of years. Over that period of time governments of the day put in a

system of regional rates of pay, probably reflecting society's view that it was all right to pay people based not on the work that they did, but on where they lived. There was all kinds of rationale used at the time, but most important of all, one has to understand that it was acceptable behaviour 27 years ago to do that.

The many times when I have raised the issue of regional rates of pay in this place, I received the rebuttal from the government members that previous Liberal governments did the same thing. We are now into 1990. What society may have accepted in 1957 is not necessarily what society will accept today.

The government's rhetoric on pay equity has been incredible. Time and time again we have government members speaking in the House and different mouthpieces of the government outside of the House talking about the government's commitment to pay equity.

Pay equity means equal pay for work of equal value, but time and time again in this place, in committees, and in public, when asked if it supports abolishing regional rates of pay, the government has said no, it does not support abolishing regional rates of pay.

Only 18 or 20 months ago, during the federal election campaign, we had a potential strike situation develop in a very important part of the public service. It was the CBRT and GW, the dockyard workers. On the east coast, there were over 1,500 men and women who work in the employ of the Government of Canada in the dockyards in Halifax and Dartmouth.

At that particular time, the primary issue that almost forced a strike was the issue of regional rates of pay. Quite simply, what the union was looking for, and what the men and women who worked in the CBRT and GW down on the east coast were looking for, was not a lot of money. They were not looking for great changes to their work environment. What they were looking for was fairness and equality. What they wanted was pay equity with their brothers and sisters working for the same employer, the Government of Canada, doing the same job, with the same job description on the west coast.

But the government dug in its heels and told them no, and there were offers going back and forth across the table. Eventually, in the middle of the election campaign, there was an offer on the table which perpetuated the regional rate of pay and perpetuated that discriminatory wage gap.

Unfortunately, the vast majority of Canadians who oppose the government—now 85 per cent—would now say unfortunately the Conservative government managed to bluff its way into another electoral term, one that will most likely be its last electoral term.

After the government got that term, it basically blackmailed the union. It told the union that the offer on the table during the election campaign would get worse, because now it had another term and it did not like what the union had been saying about the federal Tory policies in this regard. The union had better darn well accept it, and accept it now, because the offer would get worse.

Those individuals who were working at the dockyards in Halifax, in my humble opinion, are no less worthy of their pay for their day's labour than the people who are working on the west coast in the Victoria shipyards. The government insisted on perpetuating disparity based, not on colour, not on religion, or not on language of choice, but based on where people live in the country.

When we talk about pay equity and the need for the government to remove immediately regional rates of pay, we are talking about a matter of equality. That is what it boils down to.

It is rather appropriate that my motion got drawn to be debated this week, because unfolding across the street at the conference centre is a drama about the very future of our country. A key component of what is taking place is the discussion about preserving the equality of individuals who live in every province of the country, no matter if their mother tongue is Gaelic, as it may be down in my home province of Nova Scotia and as my grandfather's mother tongue was, or if it is French or English, or if they live in the Northwest Territories, populous Ontario, or in small Prince Edward Island. The whole debate that is taking place is about preserving that unique relationship of equality between all Canadians.

Yet, at the same time that it constantly and consistently talks about its desire to achieve wage parity, equal pay

for work of equal value, and at the same time that the great debate is going on about the very future of our country based on that fundamental principle of equality, the government continues to support policies and programs which discriminate against workers, most particularly in Atlantic Canada, not for any other reason than the fact that they live on the east coast and not in the golden triangle of central Canada or on the west coast.

I have said it in the House on a number of occasions, and I will say it again: Discrimination based on where a person lives is no less abhorrent to me and the people I represent—and I hope to all Canadians—than discrimination based on race, creed or colour. No longer does our society accept these discriminatory practices.

Last December a situation developed right across the country, on both coasts, with the ships' crews through PSAC when the ships' crews went out on strike. The ships' crews went out on strike again primarily for one reason. They were going to stand tough and stand on principle because they wanted to be treated equally.

The ships' crews, those men and women who work out in 15 metre swells at times on the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, but specifically on the Atlantic coast, said that they were going to go out on strike and did not care if they starved because it was a matter of principle. They were striking against the federal government because the federal government refused to move on the issue of removing regional rates of pay.

When that dastardly bill came to the legislative committee examining this legislation that Sunday—and I want to quote from this because this is absolutely incredible—I asked the President of the Treasury Board: Is your government not committed to eliminating regional rates of pay?" The response of that Minister was very short but it spoke volumes. His answer, clearly, unequivocally was: "No." I asked for some clarification and I said to him: "You are not in favour of eliminating regional rates of pay and I would like that clarified for the record." I am again going to quote the President of the Treasury Board who stated: "The labour markets are not national, they are regional. If the federal government decided to pay all of its employees the same wages it would pay, for example, in downtown Toronto, it would wreck the local economies in many regions of this country."

• (1710)

That is the most bogus argument I have ever heard put forward in the House of Commons. The minister knows, as well as anybody else who has been involved with those two labour disputes I mentioned, that on the east coast of Canada those men and women who were going out in 15 metre seas on coast guard vessels to protect the individuals trying to eke out a living from our fishery and the marine transportation industry earn an average of $21,000 a year.

Even in Atlantic Canada, where the economy is almost in ruin because of the government's economic policy, those same individuals were being paid as much as 32 per cent less than individuals in similar occupations in the private sector in Atlantic Canada. Yet the minister had the nerve to come to a committee and misrepresent the facts. But, then again, the government is quite good at coming before the Canadian public and misrepresenting the facts, especially when they are facts relating to its commitment on pay equity and paying a person based not on where they live or their gender, but on what they do.

In the debate on regional rates of pay, we see a government that is committed to maintaining the disparity between various parts of the country. We are not asking for much in this motion that is put forward. We are asking for fair treatment. My goodness, how can anyone possibly tell me that, if I am a pipe-fitter in the dockyard in Halifax, or if I am a ships' crew working in the engine room of a coast guard vessel in Atlantic Canada, that somehow my labour is not worth as much as the same job being performed by another individual in another part of the country? It is outrageous.

If we were dealing with a minority group, this would not even be attempted. However, because we are dealing with groups of workers, particularly on the east coast of Canada, the government thinks that it is quite acceptable to perpetuate this incredible disparity.

Members opposite from Atlantic Canada have continued to support it, especially in light of the two labour disputes that I talked about, and knowing full well that those dockyard workers who fought hard to get wage parity, a decent living, and to be paid the same wage as

their counterparts in other parts of Canada who are employed by the same employer, the government of Canada. The workers are now in a position that they are going to have to start negotiating a new contract in July.

It is quite appropriate that at this point we are debating my motion in the House today. It suggests that the government abandon its perpetuation of this discriminatory, abhorrent regional rates of pay and start paying the people who are in the public employ of the country according to the work that they do and the worth of that work not based on where they live in the country.

We went through that strike and I have talked about Bill C–49, that infamous back–to–work legislation. The government had bargained in bad faith with the ships' crews. However, the government and the President of the Treasury Board were not prepared to close that wage gap between the east and west coast workers. In that particular strike situation, that was the major problem they were having with the government of Canada. All they wanted was to close that wage gap. They were not looking for a 50 per cent increase in their hourly wages. They wanted to be treated fairly. However, the government said: "No, you do not deserve it."

It went into the arbitration process and we finally got the decision which we found quite clear. The ruling of the conciliation board was as follows: "Upon signing, we will close the wage gap between the east and west coast ships' crews". Second, it was going to be paying payments over the course of the contract to try to raise the pay of those workers who were part of the ships' crews, so that they could try to achieve a more equitable parity with the private sector.

That proves the bogusness of the arguments the government uses that it cannot pay because it will disrupt local economies and that there is no basis for eliminating regional rates of pay. They should read very carefully the conclusions, recommendations, and orders of that board.

I would hope that today, as other members debate this particular motion, they realize this is not a partisan issue. It is a pocket–book issue affecting thousands and thousands of Canadians. Representing many of those Canadians who have suffered unfairly under the perpetuation of regional rates of pay, I ask this House to reconsider, as my motion asks, this government's commitment to perpetuating the regional rate of pay system in this country. Canadian workers deserve better. The men and women who work in the public service of Canada deserve better than lip service from this government in this regard.

Mr. Lee Richardson (Calgary Southeast): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is proposing that the government consider abolishing the regional rates of pay now in force for certain government employees in accordance with its stated policy of pay equity. I respect the hon. member's sincerity, but from his remarks I still sense a little confusion.

I want to concentrate on the mistaken impression that the hon. member has that regional rates of pay and pay equity are somehow one and the same. They certainly are not. In fact, I recall the hon. member was told that quite explicitly by the President of the Treasury Board during debate on Bill C–49.

I think that a review of the Canadian Human Rights Act will help make it clear to the hon. member that what he calls pay equity is distinct from regional rates of pay. This act spells out what the federal government, as an employer, must carry out in order to eliminate discrimination, and in this particular context pay discrimination. The government's policy, as has been stated many times in this House in respect to what the hon. member calls pay equity is based on section 11 of the Canadian Human Rights Act.

It may be helpful to quote section 11 of the act which states:

> It is a discriminatory practice for an employer to establish or maintain differences in wages between male and female employees employed in the same establishment who are performing work of equal value.

What do we learn from this section? We first learn that what the hon. member is referring to is not pay equity but is in fact equal pay for work of equal value. More importantly, we learn that the government as an employer shall not maintain differences in pay between male and female employees performing work of equal value. That is to say that the government shall not discriminate on the basis of pay between male and female employees performing work of equal value.

Section 11(1) of the Canadian Human Rights Act does not give us any guidance as to regional rates. It merely states that there shall not be any pay discrimination based on gender. Section 11 goes on to spell out the criteria to be applied to determine the value of work including the composite of the skill, effort and responsi-

bility required in the performance of the work and the conditions under which the work is performed.

Further, section 11 deems that separate establishments established or maintained by the employer solely or principally for the purpose of establishing or maintaining differences in wages or maintaining differences in wages between male and female employees shall be considered a single establishment.

I have just paraphrased sections 2 and 2(1) of section 11 of the Canadian Human Rights Act and as yet we have seen no mention of regional rates.

I am trying to show that the hon. member has confused equal pay for work of equal value, or as he calls it pay equity, with regional rates of pay. I believe that by going through the Canadian Human Rights Act and the equal wage guidelines in a logical manner, as I have done up to now, it will be eminently clear when I have finished that the government's policy on equal pay for work of equal value is not in conflict with the government's policy on regional rates.

Let us go back to the equal wage guidelines. Sections 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15 deal with who is an employee of an establishment, complaints made under the act by individuals and complaints by groups.

The last area of the equal wage guidelines that I want to deal with is section 16 which spells out the reasonable factors that justify for the purpose of subsection 11(3) of the Canadian Human Rights Act a difference in wages between male and female employees performing work of equal value in an establishment.

• (1720)

I believe that this section of equal wage guidelines is terribly important and as such I intend to quote the entire subsection. However, before I do, I want to remind the House, as I have already stated, that the government's policy on equal pay for for work of equal value is based on the Canadian Human Rights Act and as such the following quote from section 16 will reinforce that the government's policy on equal pay for work of equal value is not in conflict with the government's policy on regional rates.

16. For the purposes of subsection 11(3) of the Act, a difference in wages between male and female employees performing work of equal value in an establishment justified by

(a) different performance ratings, where employees are subject to a formal system of performance appraisal that has been brought to their attention;

(b) seniority, where a system of remuneration that applies to employees provides that they receive periodic increases in wages based on their length of service with the employer;

(c) a re-evaluation and downgrading of the position of an employee, where the wages of that employee are temporarily fixed, or the increases in the wages of that employee are temporarily curtailed, until the wages appropriate to the downgraded position are equivalent to or higher than the wages of that employee;

(d) a rehabilitation assignment, where an employer pays to an employee wages that are higher than justified by the value of the work performed by that employee during recuperation of limited duration from an injury or illness;

(e) a demotion procedure, where the employer, without decreasing the employees wages, reassigns an employee to a position at a lower level as a result of the unsatisfactory work performance of the employee caused by factors beyond the employee's control, such as the increasing complexity of the job or the impaired health or partial disability of the employee, or as a result of an internal labour force surplus that necessitates the reassignment;

(f) a procedure of gradually reducing wages for any of the procedures set out in paragraph (e);

(g) a temporary training position, where, for the purposes of an employee development program that is equally available to male and female employees and leads to the career advancement of the employees who take part in the program, an employee temporarily assigned to the position receives wages at a different level than an employee working in such a position on a permanent basis.

(h) the existence of an internal labour shortage in particular job classification;

(i) a reclassification of a position to a lower level, where the incumbent continues to receive wages on the scale established for the former higher classification; and—

Here it is, and I appreciate your waiting:

(j) regional rates of wages, where the wage scale that applies to employees provides for different rates of wages for the same job depending on the defined geographic area of the workplace.

There it is, Mr. Speaker. Subsection (j) of section 16 of the Equal Wages Guidelines makes it perfectly clear that it is reasonable and justifiable to have a policy of regional rates while at the same time having a policy of equal pay for work of equal value.

As I stated earlier, I felt that it was quite important to quote the entirety of section 16.

I did so because I did not want to leave the impression that regional rates of pay was the only reasonable and justifiable factor that allowed a difference in wages between male and female employees performing work of equal value. Section 16 specifies 10 different reasons, including regional rates, that justify a difference in wages between male and female employees performing work of equal value. I think the answer is clear that there is absolutely no conflict between the government's policy on regional rates and the government's policy on equal pay for work of equal value. The government's policy on equal pay for work of equal value is based on the Human Rights Act where I have shown that regional rates of pay are permitted.

Let there be no mistake about the government's commitment to the concept of equal pay for work of equal value. I need only remind the House about the government's recently announced equal pay adjustments for clerical and regulatory, secretarial and education support employees. It is important to note that the employer took the incentive in making these adjustments.

While the government is committed to equal pay for work of equal value, it is also committed to its compensation policy included in which are regional rates of pay. The government's compensation policy, which has been explained many times in this House, is to compensate its employees with wages and other terms and conditions of employment that are comparable to but do not lead those employees in the private sector who do similar work. The compensation policy recognizes that the federal Public Service compensation should be sufficient to recruit and retain qualified employees. However, where there is a locally identifiable labour market and it is possible to recruit locally then the compensation policy calls for regional rates of pay. Regional rates of pay that are comparable to but do not lead those of employees in the local private sector and are sufficient enough to recruit and retain locally qualified employees.

A few examples of regional rates of pay are the general labour and trades group and the general services group. While it is true that in the context of collective bargaining with unions representing these employees, the number of pay zones have been reduced over the years, this was done in direct reaction to local market conditions. Obviously, when it is no longer possible to identify or recruit from a local market, then market conditions demand a change in the regional pay zones to one that does reflect existing conditions.

To come back for a moment to my main theme of equal pay for work of equal value, the government's commitment to regional rates of pay does not interfere with equal pay but works in harmony with it, because it is obvious now that within any given regional pay zone equal pay for work of equal value applies and, as I have already stated and elaborated on, it does not operate between pay zones. Differences in wages for male and female employees performing work of equal value is justifiable and reasonable in terms of the Canadian Human Rights Act, but also in terms of a responsible employer, which the government certainly is.

This House has been told many times about the practice of private employers in respect of regional rates. The recognition of local labour conditions by other employers is growing yearly. I would say that the government is acting in complete concert with the private sector by paying regional rates when the local market warrants it. To do otherwise, would be a sign of an irresponsible employer.

What would be the result if the government were to abandon its policy of regional rates? What would be the affect on the local labour market? Let me note a few of the effects of such an action. Paying national rates of pay when regional rates of pay are warranted would only serve to over–pay employees in some regions and under–pay employees in other regions in relation to the rates of pay prevailing in those regions.

A far more serious effect, I believe, would be the effect on the private sector in the different regions. They would be faced with the dilemma of the federal government paying national rates while their employees were paid local rates in response to local economic conditions. How could those employers possibly survive when faced with the prospect of having to raise the rates of their employees beyond what local conditions warranted in order to compete with a federal government for qualified employees.

Let me conclude by summarizing my approach to the hon. member's motion. Regional rates of pay are not in conflict with equal pay for work of equal value, but in

fact are consistent with the Canadian Human Rights Act. Regional rates of pay are part of the government's compensation policy and, as such, match the practice of private employers and respect local market conditions. They are fair, reasonable and simply make common sense.

Mrs. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West): Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to rise in support of this motion. I particularly want to compliment the member for Calgary Southeast who has just spoken for having made himself familiar with the Human Rights Act.

A number of actions by the government over the years have made it clear that it is not familiar with the act, and it has insisted on sending tens of thousands of its own employees off to the Human Rights Commission to prove their right to pay equity. It is only when court cases are hanging over its head that the government takes any action on pay equity. So I am not reassured by the fact that the member has read the act because it requires more than to read it, one should live by it.

However, the member seems to be rather poorly informed on how regional rates of pay are related to this issue.

I want to say that the government likes to rely on laws and only go as far as the law demands, which is usually until it is faced with a court challenge that it cannot ignore and cannot resist. But there is a simple matter of justice here. One person's day's work is worth the same as another person's day's work when they are doing the same work. It is a principle of Canadian society that opportunities and rewards should be relatively equal wherever you live in Canada.

The attitude towards regional rates of pay that has just been expounded by the member for Calgary Southeast is just another tool to keep poor regions poor while wealthier regions prosper. There is absolutely no justification for a west coast worker risking his life to be paid more than an east coast worker risking his life. Does this government really want to tell me that the life of a worker in Atlantic Canada is worth less than the life of a worker on the west coast.

• (1730)

The government has tried to put forward the argument that these regional rates of pay are necessary because they are consistent with the local labour market. The member in making that argument merely showed that he is uninformed, totally uninformed, about this situation. On the east coast the old regional rates of pay, which discriminate depending on where you live in Canada, were 32 per cent below the private sector.

Now the principle put forth by Treasury Board when it went to the conciliation board on this matter was that the government should be able to pay more to keep up with the local market where it is necessary to do that. Here it was paying substantially less. Let me give a good example of where the member is totally out to sea on this and simply does not know what he is talking about.

On the west coast, public employees working as search and rescue personnel were being paid $11.68 an hour, while ferry workers were getting paid $20 an hour.

The conciliation board, fortunately, recognized both regional rates of pay and non-conformity with the local rates as being inequitable. It has added over 10 per cent over the term of the contract just to bring government rates a little closer.

The conciliation board admits that it is only inching closer and is not anywhere near parity with the private sector. It felt it had to do that as well as get rid of the regional rates of pay. It recognizes that with both those measures it is not being fair to these workers and that this is a long-term prospect that is going to have to be addressed in future contracts.

It is shocking that this country went through what it did last fall and winter. It is shocking that this government would jeopardize shipping on the Great Lakes, would tie up for over a week millions of dollars worth of shipping because it could not treat its employees differently. It knew and the conciliation board has confirmed that regional rates of pay are inequitable and I say, iniquitous. That is why I applaud the motion my colleague has brought forth today.

The government knew that and, instead of making a fair settlement, it allowed the economy of this country to suffer for weeks on end while the strike went on, while it brought in back-to-work legislation, while it forced these people back to work for inequitable wages because it did not want to do what was right and fair.

The conciliation board that dealt with these issues in depth and issued this lengthy report did not even have to give arguments for its decision. It simply said: "We are bringing east coast rates of pay to parity with the west coast rates of pay". It did not even feel it had to justify this decision. For this simple decision which the government could have made any time since 1988, it disrupted the economy, disrupted shipping on the Great Lakes, and disrupted search and rescue operations on both coasts of this country. There is no excuse. It is time to get rid of regional rates of pay.

If nothing else, I think the government had better be practical. It had better recognize that this conciliation board decision set a precedent and that it is not going to be able in the next round of contract negotiations to avoid the issue of regional rates of pay.

It is going to have to decide whether it is a game and negotiations will be dragged out at great cost to the taxpayer, or whether it is going to do as it did with the ship crews workers, force them to go on strike to get what is only fair and just. Is it going to do that or is it going to do the sensible thing by getting rid of the regional rates of pay and treating the day's work of one person the same as another who is doing exactly the same job?

Surely the government does not need a law to tell it to do that, or a court case, or another long and multi-million dollar strike that adversely affects not only the public sector but the private sector. Surely it just needs to face the inevitable and do what is fair.

Mr. Scott Thorkelson (Edmonton—Strathcona): Mr. Speaker, I would like to address the motion which was presented by the hon. member for Dartmouth concerning the payment of regional rates for certain federal government employees in view of the government's policy of pay equity.

Compensation policy for the federal Public Service since Confederation has embodied a number of guiding principles which have emerged with relative regularity and consistency. The public sector compensation must be fair to both employees and to the tax-paying public. That is very important. It must be fair to both. The Public Service compensation must be comparable to that found in the private sector, but does not materially exceed the compensation paid for similar services by private sector employers.

Public Service salaries should be sufficient to attract and retain qualified employees. In comparing the compensation paid in the federal government with the private sector for similar jobs, the terms and conditions of employment as well as the relative advantages and disadvantages of employment in the two sectors must be taken into account.

Restraint should be exercised in times of economic adversity as an example to the private and public sectors and that Public Service settlements should be fiscally responsible and contribute to the containment or the reduction of inflationary pressures.

Regional rates of pay should be established for groups where private sector data indicate significant variations and labour market rates among regions in Canada.

Compensation levels for the vast majority of the Public Service employees are established through the collective bargaining process. When collective bargaining was introduced in the Public Service in 1967, there was a concomitant revamping of the entire compensation system, including classification and pay.

In order to prepare the way for collective bargaining, the new system was designed to serve several objectives. The first was to provide a logical framework for the determination of bargaining units and a negotiation of pay rates.

The second was to make it possible for the government to respond flexibly to changes in outside rates of pay and at the same time to retain a relatively high degree of stability in the more important rate relationships between jobs and the Public Service.

The third objective was to permit different approaches to wage and salary administration and to personnel administration generally for different types of employees.

The fourth objective was to provide attractive career patterns and strong incentives to superior performance. This included the provision of classification and pay system which would support and encourage the best and most effective employment of human resources in the Public Service. Attractive career patterns marked by the absence of both artificial barriers to mobility and lateral transfers and by the opportunity for advancement by merit to higher income levels were advocated. A related objective was the provision in the pay plans of strong incentives to superior performance.

These objectives of the current compensation system, as well as the principles of government compensation policy are reflected in the legislation which currently governs employer–employee relations in the determination of compensation levels for the federal Public Service employees.

The compensation policies of different organizations vary accordingly to the objectives and goals each seeks to achieve. Within the collective bargaining context it is conventionally assumed that an organization's objective is to establish wages and benefits at a level necessary to attract and retain employees with skills and abilities sufficient to fulfil the requirements of the firm or organization. Normally this involves the payment of wages and benefits which reflect conditions prevalent in the appropriate labour market, a competitive policy.

• (1740)

For example, no one forces people to take a job in the Public Service. They can always look in the job market and take one with the private sector. One would assume that people take jobs in the Public Service because of the stability of employment, the pension benefits, and other benefits. What would happen if we increased the level of regional rates of pay? It would distort the local labour market and make people want to leave the private sector to go to the federal government, bidding up wages in the private sector, making them less competitive.

An analysis has been done, and I say this for my friend from Dartmouth, and it would cost the federal government $100 million. What would happen is the regional rates would rise to the highest national rate. A hundred million dollars. Now, where are we going to get that? Should we raise taxes? Is the hon. member in favour of another rate point in the GST? Where would it come from?

Does the hon. member want to distort the local labour markets all across the country, making the private sector uncompetitive? That is what the member is advocating. The member is advocating structural imbalances in our Canadian economy which bid up interest rates, inflation, and so on.

It is the structural imbalances created by the previous Liberal government through these programs which makes it harder to change the competitiveness of our economy. We have been doing that gradually and it has been proven in the number of jobs created.

The government's aim is to pay a going rate in the labour market for the various classes of employees. The government expects a reasonably good quality of labour and it expects to pay employees fairly with respect to one another so that employees themselves feel that they are properly paid.

As I said before, and I will say this again for the hon. member's benefit, when you join the Public Service you join for a variety of reasons. One may be the stability of employment, or the pension plan, or other benefits.

Most private sector businesses do pay a regional rate of pay on a local market basis, particularly for operational, administrative and technical support jobs. The reason given most frequently by these firms for having geographic salary differentials is the nature of local salary and wage markets.

As an employer, the federal government is committed to paying rates of pay which are equitable and competitive with rates being paid outside the Public Service for similar occupations. Where the outside pay data of occupational groups indicates significant variations from the Canadian average and where the area of recruitment and the mobility of employees within the public service is limited, the government as an employer considers it appropriate to pay regional and not national rates of pay. As an employer competing with other employers, it is the government's view that the payment of regional rates contributes to the achievement of fair and competitive wages in the local market.

Currently most federal Public Service employees receive national rates of pay. However, some 30,000 employees, or approximately 16 per cent of the total Public Service workforce, are paid according to regional rates of pay.

The abandonment of regional rates of pay in the Public Service would have a negative impact on regional development and the fiscal framework. It would be very unlikely, or even undesirable, to have national rates emerge which would be based on an average of regional rates. National rates would gravitate to the highest regional rates. These rates would pose unfair competition to the private sector in the traditionally lower wage areas of Canada and would serve to dissuade industrial development in these regions. Is that what the hon.

member is asking for: less industrial development in his region? No.

Fiscally the estimated cost of moving public servants presently paid on a regional basis to a national rate is $100 million. Where are we going to get that? Are we going to raise taxes? Are we going to print money and create inflation? Is that what the hon. member wants?

As my colleague, the hon. President of the Treasury Board has stated in this House, this government is committed to maintaining regional rates of pay, where it is indicated that such an approach is in the best interests of the local labour market.

In summary, I think we want to be competitive in Canada. We do not want to distort the local labour markets. We do not want to raise taxes, which would cost us $100 million. I would say that our system is working very well now.

Mr. George Proud (Hillsborough): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise and speak in support of the motion put forward by my colleague, the hon. member for Dartmouth. He proposes in his motion that "the government should consider abolishing the Regional Rates of Pay, now in force for certain federal government employees, in accordance with its stated policy of pay equity".

It has also been said that it is necessary for us to remind the government of its responsibilities as an employer and as a role model for the private sector. The government seems determined to be dragged into the 20th century, much less the 21st, kicking and screaming all the way.

As has been said here, last November we witnessed a strike by ships' crews and hospital services workers that could have been avoided if the government had respected the groups' concerns and sat down with them before the situation reached a critical stage. These people were trying to convince the government of the fundamental injustice of discriminating between workers who perform the same jobs but who live in different parts of the country or are of different genders. The government resorted to back to work legislation but still refused to acknowledge any responsibility for the terrible situation. When the conciliation board recommended that wage parity be given to these groups, the government filed a minority report objecting to the recommendations.

This attitude is shameful. If the government refuses to pay the same wages for the same job, then its so–called commitment to pay equity is a sham, as has been said before here today. We challenge the government to put its money where its mouth is. The government has made a tiny gesture toward these demands, but it is an empty gesture. Regional rates of pay differ according to zones and the general labour and trades groups have seen the number of zones reduced from 15 to 10. This is meaningless. The basic principle remains: certain people are paid less than others for doing the exact same job.

Pay equity is a thorny issue, but in this case the problem could not be clearer. The majority of trades personnel, as I said, are classified under the general labour and trades group. There are some interesting and some shocking figures to consider. The group is divided into 17 subgroups, and in 7 of the subgroups hourly wage rates in Atlantic Canada are the lowest in Canada and in 5 other subgroups they are the second lowest.

For instance, construction inspectors in the Atlantic provinces earn between $10.16 an hour and $13.30. For the same job in British Columbia, excluding metropolitan Vancouver and metropolitan Victoria, the pay is $11.82 and $15.63. What makes the job more valuable in British Columbia than it is in Prince Edward Island? This is the question Atlantic Canadians are asking. There are other examples, and they form an unmistakable pattern. An Atlantic Canadian makes less than his or her counterpart anywhere else in this huge country of ours, simply because of where he or she lives. There is no other reason.

• (1750)

I am sure that my colleagues on the other side of the House, and they have already done so, will rush to tell me that indeed there is very good reason for this. When the President of Treasury Board appeared before the legislative committee on Bill C–49 he said, and I quote from the minutes of the December 12 meeting: "Labour markets are not national. They are regional". This has been said here today. "If the federal government decided to pay all employees the same wages as it would

pay in downtown Toronto, it would wreck the local economies in many regions of the country".

I suggest that the government is already doing a very good job of wrecking local economies, such as that of Atlantic Canada. If this theory is sound—and since I am not an economist I will not pass judgment on that here—I say that pay equity would be but a drop in the bucket. Our regional economy is already in deep trouble largely because of federal measures such as the gutting of the UI program, the failure to renew the ERDAs, the cutbacks to ACOA, the mismanagement of the fishery, and the inadequate package offered in its place.

Some members might respond that regional rates of pay only reflect the fact that the cost of living varies between areas. I will grant you it is true that it costs less to live in some parts of Atlantic Canada than it does, for instance, in downtown Toronto, but I have other problems with this argument.

How does reducing the individual spending power do anything to help the local economy? I should think that if more money, whether in the form of consumer spending or income taxes, goes into the local economy everyone benefits.

The argument avoids the fact that workers are discriminated against because of where they choose to live and raise their family. This is just another way, as was said over here today, of preaching resettlement to Atlantic Canadians as an answer to their problems. They say: "You want to earn more money for the same job? Fine, move to Toronto and you will get it. Abandon your home. Abandon your friends. Pull up your roots". No, no, Atlantic Canadians refuse to accept this.

The minister stated, and again I quote: 'I will not in any way make a commitment that this government is going to get rid of the concept of regional rates of pay. It would not make sense".

What does not make sense and what is so offensive to workers is that the government is basically saying that some people are worth more than others. This has never been more obvious than it was last November when the east coast ships' crews were striking for wage parity with those on the west coast. Both groups risk their lives on the high seas to protect their coasts and to keep foreign fishermen from stealing even more of the fish than the government is already giving them. Both groups leave their families for months at a time to do this. According to their pay cheques, west coast lives were more valuable than east coast lives. No matter what anybody says that is the impression left.

It is my fundamental problem with any argument against pay equity that it is a matter of dignity and of respect for the individual. Pay equity is based on responsibility, not on geography. If this government's commitment to pay equity is more than just hollow rhetoric, it will abolish regional rates of pay. The government must stop treating Atlantic Canadians as second-class citizens.

I have heard much rhetoric here today about the differences between pay equity and regional rates of pay. What it all boils down to is that people are being paid less for doing the same thing, and this is wrong. I am pleased to support this motion put forward by my hon. colleague from Dartmouth.

Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester): Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak to the motion of the hon. member for Dartmouth which reads:

> That, in the opinion of this House, the government should consider abolishing the Regional Rates of Pay now in force for certain regional federal government employees, in accordance with its stated policy of pay equity.

I feel quite qualified to speak on this matter as an employer from Atlantic Canada with a lot of experience in competing with the government for employees. I am sure the hon. member has good intentions, but in my view his motion will be very, very damaging to our economy in Atlantic Canada.

I will bet dollars to doughnuts that neither of the previous speakers have experienced the frustration and anger of losing their very best employee, the highest quality employee, the highest productive employee with years and years of training in whom they have invested or seeing them just walk away to go to a government job and leave them abandoned.

It is a frustrating experience and we cannot fight it because the private sector cannot compete with Ottawa for benefits and pay. The only way we can compete is to increase wages in our own business and sector to a level where we can compete and therefore the whole business expires and declines.

I believe it is absolutely essential to maintain equal pay for equal value in the private sector. It is interesting that the private sector with strong quality people will grow and prosper, but a government with strong quality

people will not grow and prosper and will not add wealth and jobs to the economy. It will just do the opposite.

I would challenge the members from Dartmouth and Charlottetown to take a survey of their small shop owners and small industry owners in their towns. They should ask them if they would like to compete with Ottawa for their wages and employees. Maybe they could set up a 1–800 number and have the employers call and vote as to whether they want to compete with Ottawa for their employees.

This motion does not seem to recognize that the government compensation policy for its employees already takes into account many factors, including the issue of pay equity. This government has an enormous responsibility in its role as an employer. This responsibility extends not only to its valued resource, our employees of the federal Public Service, but it extends also to the taxpayers and other important employers across the country.

It appears to me that the other speakers do not take into account the other employers. They only consider the government as an employer. For the government employees, we must pursue a policy on rates and pay that recognizes the valuable contribution made by our public servants to the delivery of government programs and the continued high quality of service delivered to the public at large.

The government's policy on compensation recognizes the following principles: First, that the terms and conditions of employment for federal public servants should be comparable to but not lead those employees in the private sector who do similar work. I ask those members to check with employers in their towns and see how they feel about that one.

Second, that comparison with the private sector shall take into consideration factors of employment such as job security, pensions, hours of work, and other benefits. Sometimes the private sector just cannot compete with these.

Third, the federal Public Service compensation should be sufficient to recruit and retain qualified employees and be determined so that appropriate compensation relationships are maintained among Public Service occupations.

Fourth, most public servants should have the right to participate in the determination of their own compensation and particular conditions of employment through responsible collective bargaining.

Fifth, federal compensation settlements will contribute to reducing inflation and be fiscally responsible.

Sixth, recognition of pay equity implementation under the Human Rights Act is based on entirely different principles from those contained in the employer's policy on compensation, that is, the Canadian Human Rights Act does not take into account either the relevant market salaries or internal organizational salary relationships. The objective of the Canadian Human Rights Act is to change purposely these relationships where there is evidence of gender or sexual discrimination.

The government's policy on rates of pay is based on a job classification system that recognizes the skills, the effort, the responsibilities, and the working conditions encountered in the employment in the federal Public Service.

It is these factors which must be scrutinized in the analysis of the appropriate level of compensation for our employees and then compared to a similar job classification in the private sector to determine if the rate of pay is comparable to that of the private sector.

As I stated earlier, it is the policy of the government as an employer that the compensation for its employees should neither leave nor trail that of similar occupations in the tax paying private sector.

Coincidentally, it is these same factors—skill, effort, responsibilities, and working conditions—which be analysed when comparing jobs within the Public Service to ensure that the principle of equal pay for work of equal value is being adhered to.

It should be pointed out that geographic location is not considered by the Canadian Human Rights Commission as a factor in determining whether wage discrimination is occurring.

In addition to comparing the rates of pay for public servants with those of their occupational counterparts in the private sector, the government as an employer must in accordance with the Canadian Human Rights Act, must also consider all the factors of employment, not just rates of pay.

• (1800)

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The hour provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired.

[*English*]

Pursuant to Standing Order 96(1), the order is dropped from the Order Paper.

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MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I have the honour to inform the House that a message has been received from the Senate informing this House that the Senate has passed Bill S-14, an act respecting the laws prohibiting marriage between related persons to which the concurrence of this House is desired.

Mr. Cooper: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order there have been discussions with the three parties. I believe that you will find that there is consent for us to proceed with the private members' bills to change riding names at this point, then to return to debate on Orders of the Day, Bill C-44 shortly after that.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): So agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS—PUBLIC BILLS

[*English*]

ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES READJUSTMENT ACT

MEASURE TO CHANGE NAME OF ELECTORAL RIDING OF BRAMPTON—MALTON

Mr. Harry Chadwick (Brampton—Malton) moved:

That Bill C-294, an act to change the name of the electoral district of Brampton—Malton be now read a second time and referred to a legislative committee.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to introduce—

Mr. Gauthier: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order I take it that there is agreement also that there will be no speeches. The agreement is that we will pass this series of nine bills. If we start having speeches, the agreement will not stand.

Mr. Cooper: Mr. Speaker, I would like to confirm that it is our understanding as well that there will not be speeches. Also, may I say that I believe the motion you just read was reference to a legislative committee.

Perhaps we can change that and do it in committee of the whole very quickly.

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and, by unanimous consent, considered in committee, reported, concurred in, read the third time and passed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is it possible for the Chair to do all the bills at once, then bring them back?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

MEASURE TO CHANGE NAME OF MONTMORENCY—ORLEANS CONSTITUENCY

Mr. Jacques Tétreault (for Mr. DeBlois) moved that Bill C-296, an act to change the name of the electoral district of Montmorency—Orléans be now read the second time and referred to Committee of the Whole.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and, by unanimous consent, considered in committee, reported, concurred in, read the third time and passed.

MEASURE TO CHANGE NAME OF ELGIN CONSTITUENCY

Mr. Ken Monteith (Elgin) moved that Bill C-298, an act to change the name of the electoral district of Elgin be now read a second time and referred to Committee of the Whole.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and, by unanimous consent, considered in committee, reported, concurred in, read the third time and passed.

MEASURE TO CHANGE NAME OF SELKIRK CONSTITUENCY

Mr. Ken Monteith (for Mr. Bjornson) moved that Bill C-308, an act to change the name of the electoral district of Selkirk be now read a second time and referred to Committee of the Whole.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and, by unanimous consent, considered in committee, reported, concurred in, read the third time and passed.

MEASURE TO CHANGE NAME OF SURREY—WHITE ROCK CONSTITUENCY

Mr. Harry Chadwick (for Mr. Friesen) moved that Bill C-309, an act to change the name of the electoral district of Surrey—White Rock be now read a second time and referred to Committee of the Whole.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and, by unanimous consent, considered in committee, reported, concurred in, read the third time and passed.

MEASURE TO CHANGE NAME OF LAVAL CONSTITUENCY

Mr. Vincent Della Noce (for Mr. Ricard) moved that Bill C-310, an act to change the name of the electoral district of Laval be now read a second time and referred to Committee of the Whole.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and, by unanimous consent, considered in committee, reported, concurred in, read the third time and passed.

MEASURE TO CHANGE NAME OF LAVAL-DES-RAPIDES CONSTITUENCY

Mr. Jacques Tétreault (Laval-des-Rapides) moved that Bill C-311, an act to change the name of the electoral district of Laval-des-Rapides be now read a second time and referred to Committee of the Whole.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and, by unanimous consent, considered in committee, reported, concurred in, read the third time and passed.

MEASURE TO CHANGE NAME OF GLOUCESTER CONSTITUENCY

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (for Mr. Young (Gloucester)) moved that Bill C-305, an act to change the name of the electoral district of Gloucester be now read a second time and referred to Committee of the Whole.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and, by unanimous consent, considered in committee, reported, concurred in, read the third time and passed.

MEASURE TO CHANGE NAME OF LANGELIER CONSTITUENCY

Mr. Charles DeBlois (for Mr. Loiselle) moved that Bill C-307, an act to change the name of the electoral district of Langelier be now read a second time and referred to Committee of the Whole.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and, by unanimous consent, considered in committee, reported, concurred in, read the third time and passed.

• (1810)

ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES READJUSTMENT ACT

MEASURE TO CHANGE NAME OF DUVERNAY CONSTITUENCY

Mr. Vincent Della Noce (Duvernay) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-312 entitled an act to change the name of the electoral district of Duvernay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Shall the hon. member have leave to introduce the bill?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to, bill read the first time and ordered to be printed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): When shall the bill be read the second time? By unanimous consent, now?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Vincent Della Noce (Duvernay) moved that Bill C-312, an act to change the name of the electoral district of Duvernay be now read a second time and referred to Committee of the Whole.

Mr. Gauthier: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order I think it would be appropriate if the hon. member from Duvernay would explain briefly to the House why he wants to change the name of his riding.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The hon. member can do that in Committee of the Whole.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and, by unanimous consent, considered in committee, reported, concurred in, read the third time and passed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

HIBERNIA DEVELOPMENT PROJECT ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Epp that Bill C-44, an act respecting the Hibernia Development Project and to amend certain acts in relation thereto, be read a second time and referred to a legislative committee; and on the amendment of Mr. Barrett (p. 12464).

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The hon. member for Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte had 10 minutes remaining for his speech, plus 10 minutes questions and comments.

Mr. Brian Tobin (Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to continue my remarks on Bill C-44, particularly on the amendment put by the New Democratic Party.

When I spoke earlier, before debate on this bill was suspended, I dealt with each part of the amendment proposed by the New Democratic Party on Bill C-44, one after the other. I think it is illustrated quite clearly that none of the amendments being moved by the New Democratic Party to Bill C-44, upon serious, sober reflection, have any substance. The net effect of the amendments proposed by the new Democratic Party is, in essence, to suggest to the government and the people of Newfoundland that they have no role to play in the Hibernia development.

It represents an attitude on the part of the New Democratic Party that, in essence, big brother in Ottawa, as represented by the House of Commons, has to provide a degree of assurance in a whole variety of areas for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador because they are unable to provide for themselves any assurance about their future prosperity, the pace of development, the question of environmental protection, and, frankly, the question of equity participation by the federal government.

I think I was able to point out to my colleagues in the NDP, who I have to assume moved these amendments by accident and not by design, that, in fact, this motion is not well founded. It is my sincere hope that the New Democratic Party will withdraw these amendments and will not insist upon a vote on these amendments. Having heard something of the history of this development over the last decade or two, but in particular the last decade, for the New Democratic Party to insist upon these kinds of amendments in the House of Commons can only be seen as, first, an effort based upon an abysmal lack of knowledge about the history of the development. Second, it is essentially an attitude by the New Democratic Party—a paternalistic attitude at best—that says that the people, and in particular the elected representatives in the government of Newfoundland and Labrador, are composed of people who have some kind of inferiority that prevents them from representing their own best interest and from participating in a full way as a partner in this development.

As a Newfoundlander, and one who has watched the 10 years of debate that have gone on, I cannot accept, no matter how well-intentioned, the paternalistic attitude of the New Democratic Party which says that Newfoundlanders are intrinsically incapable of seizing and seeing their own best interest and representing themselves; and that we, as members of Parliament from Edmonton East or elsewhere in the country, as well intentioned as we may be, really ought to look after those people of Newfoundland because they are not able to look after themselves.

• (1820)

I hope that it not the intention. In fact I have difficulty believing that is the intention of the New Democratic Party, and I would expect that members of that caucus upon reflection will withdraw these amendments which can only be considered by any rational, intelligent, informed, and engaged human being as, I hope unintended, insult and offence to the people and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Clearly, it is unusual in the first instance for amendments to be moved on a bill even before that bill has gone to a legislative committee. That is rarely done in this place and, in essence, the attempt to move amendments becomes a form of filibuster. It becomes a basic vote of no confidence in the bill. They have not even given it a chance to be amended or studied in committee. They have not even heard witnesses and already they want to amend the bill.

I say to my colleagues in the New Democratic Party that, if they do not withdraw these amendments, no amount of woolly language and no amount of slippery words are going to convince Newfoundlanders of anything other than that the New Democratic Party of Canada, the national New Democratic Party, is opposed to the Hibernia development. The national New Democratic Party, as they say right in their amendment, does

not believe that Hibernia deserves the financial participation of the Government of Canada, and thereby of all Canadians, in this project on behalf of the notion of security of supply and, frankly, on behalf of the notion that Newfoundlanders deserve to share in the wealth and the opportunity for prosperity in the country.

My friend from Edmonton East, a member from Alberta, stood up and said: "I am from Alberta. I know all about energy development. It brings prosperity, but it brings problems too. It can bring disaster. It can bring misery. It can bring tremendous problems for the people who live in the province where energy development occurs." I found that an incredibly arrogant remark from the member.

I want to tell the member from Alberta, the member for Edmonton East, I know that energy development means challenge. I know and Newfoundlanders know that we have to be concerned about the pace of development. I know and Newfoundlanders know that we have to be concerned about protection of the environment, but let me tell him that the problems of prosperity are infinitely preferable to the problems of poverty. It is insulting and arrogant to suggest that he has suffered prosperity and that Newfoundlanders are far better off continuing to live in poverty.

It takes a special kind, may I suggest humbly, of pomposity to say: "I have had the wealth. We have rolled around in the prosperity of development and, believe you me, we have had difficulty from the vantage point of Alberta handling that prosperity, both the good and the bad. We want to keep you Newfoundlanders in your quaint little village with your high unemployment, with your particular culture, and with your particular way of life, shielded from the problems of prosperity, because you are really quaint, cute, valuable, and unique in your poverty." Well, I cannot accept that kind of reasoning from the New Democratic Party.

I have to believe that a couple of people ill-informed in that caucus, without the knowledge of the greater number of the members, hopefully without the knowledge of the leader and certainly without the knowledge of the New Democratic Party of Newfoundland and Labrador, moved this ill-considered amendment. Right now, as I speak the truth of the words that I utter on behalf of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, I have to believe the confidence that I expressed in the ability of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to be a partner in this project and to participate with the national government and the consortium, and the confidence that I have that the legislature of Newfoundland will represent the views and interests of Newfoundland will permeate the fog that obviously prevails around the minds of those who drafted these amendments, Mr. Barrett and others, and the New Democratic Party will withdraw these amendments. The choices are two: Withdraw these amendments, recognize the ability of Newfoundland to speak for itself and to be a full partner; or have the courage to stand up and say clearly and without any equivocation that the New Democratic Party of Canada opposes Hibernia development.

The New Democratic Party of Canada is saying to Newfoundland that it does not believe, as a party, that the investment by the national government is warranted in Hibernia. It does not believe that the opportunity for new kinds of jobs, high-tech jobs, and permanent jobs should happen in Newfoundland and Labrador.

That is the challenge to the New Democratic Party. It is not to hide behind weasel words, not to hide behind phoney concern for Newfoundlanders, and not to assume that only the New Democratic Party can speak for Newfoundlanders, that they are unable to speak for themselves. The challenge is to admit honestly and openly that the party, the New Democratic Party, with these amendments, is saying to Newfoundland and Newfoundlanders everywhere: "You are not deserving. Hibernia is not deserving of the financial support of the federal government, and we oppose this project." Say it openly and say it honestly. At least it shall have the admiration of the people of my province for the courage of its convictions as much as we disagree. But do not hand us paternalism, do not hand us big brotherism, and do not tell us that they are doing it in our best interest because we, in our ignorance, know not what is good for us.

I say to the NDP: "Have the courage of your convictions, withdraw these foolish and insulting amendments, or stand clearly and say that you oppose the development of Newfoundland. Stand clearly and say that you genuinely believe that the so-called joy of poverty is preferable to the problems of prosperity. Say that to Newfoundlanders and they shall hold this New Demo-

cratic Party in judgment for this foolish delaying tactic of a project that is long overdue and urgently needed in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador."

Jack Whittaker (Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt): Mr. Speaker, I listened very intently to the member's speech and I was astounded when he spoke of pomposity and arrogance because what I was hearing was exactly that. I heard a member who totally ignores, as perhaps governments in Newfoundland in the past have done, assistance or ideas from those outside.

I point the member to events in the have-not province of Saskatchewan under Tommy Douglas and the New Democratic Party. That was a party that knew where it wanted to go and how to get there. Unlike the Liberals and the Conservatives, this was a party with ideas, this was a party that was willing to come up with new ideas.

I ask the member, how many New Democratic Party governments has Newfoundland and Canada seen? Which parties have led the country and the provinces to the economic problems they have now? Which parties has it been?

Mr. Tobin: Mr. Speaker, I was asked a question and I am glad to answer it. The member has asked how many New Democratic governments has Canada had. I am tempted to say in response to this so-called question that obviously we have had too many New Democratic Party governments in the country.

I am not one who usually spends much time having knee-jerk, philosophical reactions to the NDP. Frankly, on occasion, I find myself in agreement with it. But I must say that when I see this kind of bill I do not hesitate to tell my friends in the New Democratic Party that I think they have lost their minds. I do not think they have done their homework. I think they have been misled. I think they are confused. I think they do not even realize this is offensive.

The issue here is not that parties or people from other parts of Canada cannot give advice to Newfoundland. They are more than welcome to give advice to Newfoundland. They are more than welcome to come and visit my riding and give all the free advice they are willing to pass out. In many cases, it will be genuinely and happily accepted.

I do not subscribe to the notion that I am not able to speak about British Columbia, Ontario, Quebec, Saskatchewan, or Manitoba. I think I am and I have an interest, as a Canadian member of parliament, in those provinces.

• (1830)

What I do subscribe to, as well as a right to speak about B.C., is a responsibility to understand what it is I am speaking about, a responsibility to have done my homework, a responsibility to understand the issue, a responsibility to understand the history of the development and an understanding to have knowledge not just biases or instincts as forces upon which I make my statements.

All I am saying to my hon. friends in the New Democratic Party—and they have not responded in detail—is that this amendment, moved even before we go into the legislative committee, the normal process, is a vote of non-confidence in Hibernia. I asked the member for Edmonton East earlier whether or not this meant that the bill should be defeated. He said that whether the amendment is passed or not, the bill ought to be defeated.

The member for Edmonton East had the courage to say that the New Democratic Party of Canada is opposed to Hibernia. In reality he said that, hidden behind this agenda of so-called amendments to help the quaint people of Newfoundland, is a clear statement by the New Democratic Party, the party of the little people, the party of the impoverished, the party of the poor, the party of the least advantaged, that it has given a boot to the people of Newfoundland, the province of highest unemployment in Canada.

Hidden behind the so-called party of energy self-sufficiency and security of supply is the party that says that offshore oil and gas ought not to be developed. That is what we have, hiding behind the party that has a member from Alberta who has prospered and seen some prosperity from energy development. It is the hypocrisy that the prosperity can be handled by those who live in Alberta, as difficult as it is, but Newfoundland really is better at handling poverty. They say we ought to stop this bill.

The hon. members of the NDP ought to stand up and be counted, speak forthrightly and quit these weasel words, pretending to have an interest in somebody and in an issue on which they obviously have not done their homework.

Ms. Lynn Hunter (Saanich—Gulf Islands): Mr. Speaker, I would have hoped that the hon. member who represents a riding in Newfoundland would not take this debate to such a low.

The hon. member has succeeded in doing that. What is happening is that the hon. member for Edmonton East happens to come from Alberta—I am treading on dangerous ground and implying motives. What we are seeing now is a dynamic that is tearing our country apart. We are seeing it on a daily basis, and it is this kind of analysis that only feeds that dynamic.

The New Democratic Party represents all of Canada and works for the interests of all Canadians. The hon. member can very well cloak himself in the Newfoundland flag and feel that he is speaking for his riding. That is his right and duty. But we see things on a larger scale. We speak for all of Canada.

In fact, I think there are international aspects to this deal that need to be looked at, and I will address those in my speech. I just caution the member that the kind of regional hit-list that he is invoking today is not creative. It does not bring a solution to the problem. Because the hon. member who moved or supported the motion was from Edmonton East, it does not disqualify him from making comments on economic projects, on billions of dollars of taxpayers' dollars.

I ask the member this question. Does he believe that, because the hon. member for Edmonton East is from Alberta, it disqualifies him from commenting on this expenditure of Canadian taxpayer dollars?

Mr. Tobin: Mr. Speaker, I made it very clear in my last comments that I would invite every hon. member of the New Democratic Party to come to Newfoundland to visit, to comment and to do some research to understand the history of the issue.

This hon. member has not been standing up and suggesting that hon. members outside Newfoundland have no right to comment, quite the contrary. In his last response, this hon. member made clear that he has a right and a responsibility to comment on issues affecting every other part of Canada. I frequently do in this place.

Along with the right to comment as a Canadian about Canadian issues, comes a responsibility to be informed. Because I have a right to comment on what is happening in every part of Canada does not give me the right to comment without having done my homework. All I suggested to members of the New Democratic Party is not that they have no right to speak about Newfoundland issues, but that you have a responsibility to have done your homework. The issue I raise is not that members should not speak because they are from Alberta or British Columbia. What I have said is that the NDP should have done its homework on the issue.

Bill C-44 is a piece of enabling legislation which allows the federal government, the provincial government and a private sector consortium to reach arrangements for the development of Hibernia. However, the effect of the NDP amendments will eliminate the role of the government of Newfoundland and Labrador. The NDP are saying that there is only a role to be played by the federal government and the consortium.

The Minister of Energy is across from me now. The effect of these amendments is that the Newfoundland government has no role. There is a role for Ottawa. There is a role for the big boys in the corporate towers of Toronto but there is no role for Newfoundland. I cannot accept that. I am saying that if the NDP do not understand that is the effect of their amendment, perhaps it is by accident, not by design. It is one or the other. If you have not understood that is the effect of the amendment, Mr. Speaker, is what I am saying to my colleagues in the NDP, if it is an accident, withdraw the amendments and we will understand you made a mistake. If it is by design that you moved this kind of a motion, then have the courage to say it honestly and you will be judged accordingly by every region of Canada. This is not an issue about which you cannot speak. You have a right to speak. You have a responsibility to speak, but you have a responsibility as well to be informed. That is what I say to my colleagues in the New Democratic Party.

Ms. Lynn Hunter (Saanich—Gulf Islands): Mr. Speaker, it has been over 10 years since significant amounts of oil were discovered off the east coast of Canada. In that short time there has been a revolution in the energy sector in this country. Oil is not just oil anymore. How we find it and how we use it is still part of our energy policy, of course, but there is a new way of looking at energy policy. There is a new criterion by which energy

policy is to be judged. That new criterion is the effect the exploration, development and use of our energy resources have on the environment. After all, in the words of the Brundtland report, *Our Common Future*, "choosing an energy strategy inevitably means choosing an environmental strategy".

When it comes to the environment, this bill does not cut the mustard. In the absence of other concerted ameliorative actions, Bill C-44 proposes a course of action that is environmentally unsound. It promotes unsustainable development.

In my remarks this evening I would like first to address some of the serious environmental problems associated with offshore drilling and development. Second, I would like to take a broader view. I would like to consider how this bill fits into the government's sorry environmental record. What name comes to mind when you think of oil tankers plying our coastal waters? How about when I mention tankers running aground such as the *Exxon Valdez*. Oil tankers, waves, rocks and in the inevitable human error make a dangerous mix. Add fog, darkness, icebergs or screaming winds and tanker accidents, given time, become a virtual certainty.

Marine accidents do not just happen off the west coast. On October 9, 1984 a 30-thousand tonne Liberian-registered bulk carrier nearly rammed the drill rig *Sedco 706* which had about 80 people on board. The ship came so close to the rig that it actually came between the anchor chain and the rig before being intercepted by supply vessel.

Canadians will also remember the tragic loss of life that occurred when the semi-submersible drill rig *Ocean Ranger* capsized and sank in 1982 during a furious storm. Busy tanker traffic to and from Hibernia's tanker loading facilities will inevitably increase the chances that just such an accident involving an oil tanker will occur. After the television coverage of the *Exxon Valdez* disaster, I do not have to remind Canadians of the environmental devastation that is caused by the thousands of tonnes of oil that can spew from a stricken tanker. I do not have to remind Canadians of the damage to fish stocks and to other marine life so fundamental to the lives of hundreds of thousands of Canadians in Atlantic Canada, people whose livelihoods are already threatened by actions of this Conservative government.

• (1840)

Oil spills also occur when offshore petroleum wells blow out. Since 1970 there have been six natural gas blowouts on the Canadian offshore, the most recent of which occurred in the Beaufort Sea just last June. In the Atlantic, three blowouts have occurred recently. On February 22, 1984, machine failure and lack of proper blowout prevention procedures caused a gas blowout of the semi-submersible drilling platform *Vinland*.

Another natural gas well blew out of control 290 kilometres off the Nova Scotia coast in February, 1985. That blowout lasted for several months. Yet another gas well blew out at West Venture, N-91, off Sable Island in April, 1985.

Natural gas well blowouts are more common and less harmful than oil well blowouts. But oil wells can blow too.

That is why I was shocked to learn that Canada is simply not prepared for an oil spill off the coast of Newfoundland. This fact is outlined in a report entitled *Oil Spill Preparedness in the Upstream Petroleum Industry*, released November 22, 1989, by the Canadian Petroleum Association and the Independent Petroleum Association of Canada.

This report which was reviewed in the November 23, 1989 *Financial Post*, and again in the March 22, 1990, *Globe and Mail*, concluded that:

> On the Grand Banks, industry does not presently have appropriate equipment or sufficient support vessels to respond immediately to an oil blowout and to clean up a blowout spill.

The report goes on to say that in a worst case scenario, as much as 32 times the volume of oil lost by the *Exxon Valdez* could be spilled into the most productive fishing grounds in the North Atlantic.

Moreover, the report states that in the event of a blowout during a storm on in the presence of significant amounts of ice:

> —containment and recovery efficiency would be reduced, likely to zero per cent.

My colleague, the member for Edmonton East quizzed the president of the Canadian Petroleum Association, Mr. Maciej during a meeting of the Standing Committee on Energy, Mines and Resources on February 8, 1990. Mr. Maciej said that:

> —if the project proceeds it will be accompanied by the necessary preparedness to deal with oil spills.

When my colleague asked how this was to be guaranteed, Mr. Maciej replied: "It will just happen." He later elaborated slightly by saying that: "The approval of the department plan—requires that kind of action."

Well, most Canadians would not be very reassured by those comments. You can bet that my colleagues and I will be watching the situation very, very closely.

There is another significant threat to Hibernia and other similar projects that is not well known among Canadians who do not live in Atlantic Canada. Icebergs, huge icebergs towering like skyscrapers above the water, some weighing up to 50 million tonnes, are one of the most serious threats to east coast offshore activities.

Icebergs and bits that break off them are obviously a serious threat to tankers in the vicinity of Hibernia.

Drifting icebergs are also known to have forced personnel on movable drilling rigs to halt activities and flee their destructive presence.

Such icebergs are capable of gouging massive trenches in the sea bed, trenches up to 15 metres deep, 200 metres across and several kilometres long. This enormous power threatens Hibernia's proposed loading facilities and oil-gathering lines.

To be fair, this issue was considered during Mobile Oil's Environmental Impact Assessment in 1985. However, Cle Newhook then executive director of the Ocean Ranger Foundation, now leader of the Newfoundland and Labrador NDP, was quoted on October 17, 1985, in *The Chronicle-Herald* from Halifax expressing serious concerns that Mobile's assessment contained, in his words, "dangerous underestimates" of the wind, wave, current and ice conditions on the Grand Banks.

Many other people remain unconvinced that Hibernia's cement gravity-based structure, huge though it will be, together with its more fragile pipelines and tanker loading facilities will be capable of withstanding the full force of a massive iceberg during a raging storm.

It seems clear that many environmental questions about this project have not been answered, and indeed are difficult to answer definitively.

Oil industry analyst Ian Doig asked a crucial question in a *Financial Post* article on September 16, 1989, when he wrote:

> The gravity based structure, GBS, will not just disappear when its use is finished. How do you hide 450,000 metric tons of concrete standing 357 feet tall?

Mr. Doig then suggested that, and I quote:

> The revised project will probably have to be submitted to the Canada-Newfoundland Offshore Petroleum Board (CNOPB) for approval. And certainly the plans for the eventual abandonment of the GBS structure will have to win environmental approval from Ottawa before work begins.

Speaking of environmental reviews, the Environmental Impact Statement conducted by Mobil and released in 1985 did not even consider or mention carbon dioxide emissions that will result from this fossil fuel megaproject. It is possible by aggressively pursuing the development of energy alternatives and energy conservation to ensure the Hibernia development would not result in an increase in Canada's CO_2 emissions, even given the emission reduction target that we should be setting for ourselves in the next decade.

A major report released last August by the Toronto consulting group, DPA Group Incorporated, indicated that Canada could combat the greenhouse effect by slashing carbon dioxide emissions by 20 per cent by the year 2005 and save $100 billion in the process.

The point is that the government, through this bill, has effectively ignored the global warming issue altogether. I imagine some hon. members across the way are asking: What has carbon dioxide got to do with Bill C-44? It is simple. Bill C-44 provides for the extraction of a whole new source of CO_2 emissions. Listen to what the Prime Minister said on June 27, 1988, at the International Conference on the Changing Atmosphere held in Toronto.

> The world is coming to recognize what we believe to be self-evident—that development and environmental protection are mutually reinforcing, not mutually exclusive. Our economic activity must be increasingly compatible with today's environmental facts of life.

Later in the same speech, the Prime Minister stated:

> In no area is the link between our economic activity and environmental disruption more evident or more troubling than in the area of energy policy. Canada is committed to applying the principles of sustainable development to our energy future.

So what about CO_2 and global warming? The conference statement for the 1988 Toronto conference entitled *The Changing Atmosphere: Implications for Global Security* stated that, and I quote:

> The earth's atmosphere is being changed at an unprecedented rate by pollutants resulting from human activities, inefficient and wasteful fossil fuel use and the effects of rapid population growth in many regions.

It was stark language that the conference used in speaking of the changing atmosphere.

I want to draw the particular attention of the House to this quote:

> Humanity is conducting an unintended, uncontrolled, globally pervasive experiment whose ultimate consequences could be second only to global nuclear war.

It should be noted that the Prime Minister did sign the Hague Declaration entitled *Our Common Future: It's in our Hands*. That declaration emphasized the importance of all countries doing their bit to prevent atmospheric pollution. It stated:

> Because of the nature of the dangers involved, remedies to be sought involve—the duty of the community of nations, *vis-à-vis* future and present generations to do all that can be done to preserve the quality of the atmosphere.

• (1850)

More recently, before his untimely departure from cabinet, the hon. member for Lac-Saint-Jean made many statements about global warming on behalf of his government. He stated in a *Toronto Star* interview published on April 18, 1990 that:

> We have sufficient indications (of global warming) to implement whatever action we can now.

On April 17, 1990 in Washington, D.C., speaking to reporters after a conference on global warming, the hon. member for Lac-Saint-Jean said that:

> The price of inaction is too high to wait for further research.

In a column published in the November 1, 1989 edition of *The Finance Post* the hon. member for Lac-Saint-Jean wrote:

> We can accept our responsibilities as leaders or we can abdicate.

Even the Energy Minister admits that actions need to be taken. He stated, during the December 11, 1989 meeting of the Standing Committee on Energy, Mines and Resources, that:

> Based on information I have received in the department from scientists and others who are working on global warming within the department, I am convinced that we have to reduce emissions, that they have negative effects on climate.

Clearly, on the level of government pronouncements, the Mulroney government is quick to agree that much needs to be done to protect the environment.

For its pronouncements to mean anything significant, Canada has to begin to put its own House in order. We clearly have a valuable role to play. After all, although Canada is directly responsible for about 2 per cent of the total global CO2 emissions, we are one of the most energy-inefficient countries in the world. Canadians consume more energy per person than is the case in the U.S.A., Sweden, Germany, the U.K. and Japan, and the situation is getting worse.

From the perspective of energy use per thousand dollars GDP, we also use more energy than the U.S.A., Sweden, the U.K., Germany and Japan.

We live in a cold country, it is true, but in addition we are extremely wasteful. We could use substantially less energy, thereby polluting much less, without making significant changes to our way of life, but so far the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources has been heading in the opposite direction.

In the 1989-90 budget the government closed 12 conservation and renewable energy offices across the country. These offices provided information to people in the regions on how they could save money and energy at the same time. In fact they did not even interfere in the market-place, they only provided information, but the government closed them down. The government cut funding for conservation and renewable energy, according to figures from the Energy Department, from $410 million in 1984-85 to $40 million for 1990-91. That is a 90 per cent cut. This simply boggles the mind and it surely qualifies for yet another example of this government's stunning hypocrisy.

The Mulroney government publicly support the Brundtland Report and claimed to be very concerned about global warming. At the same time, it cut already limited funding for the most effective government programs to combat global warming and, instead, poured billions of dollars into Hibernia, a fossil fuel project that will add to global warming.

In conclusion, I urge the federal government to examine much more closely the environmental consequences of this project in particular, and its energy policy in general. This government has a long way to go to address environmental concerns.

The hon. member for Lac-Saint-Jean is quoted as saying in *The Globe and Mail* report on April 19, 1990:

> I don't think we should be afraid to be taking the lead.

Unfortunately, as this bill stands and in the absence of other concerted ameliorative actions, Bill C-44 proposes a course of action that is environmentally unsound and which constitutes unsustainable development.

Mr. Chris Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing): Mr. Speaker, earlier today my New Democrat colleague, the member for Edmonton East, outlined why we in the New Democratic Party oppose this bill. He emphasized that we do not oppose the Hibernia project itself, but that we oppose this bill because it will not provide, among other things, the employment opportunities that the people of Newfoundland and Labrador deserve.

I do not propose to go into the sad history of dashed hopes and political opportunism that lies behind this bill, nor will I enter into a detailed description of the financial arrangements in the bill itself. Instead I will proceed directly from the remarks of my colleagues and focus on another serious shortcoming of the government's legislation.

This bill fails to provide adequate economic benefits for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador in particular, and for the people of Canada in general.

The Conservative government claims to support this bill, in part because of the economic spin-offs associated with the Hibernia development.

The Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources has repeatedly emphasized this point. For example, he was quoted in the *Toronto Star* on September 13, 1989, as saying:

> We want the Hibernia project to take place. It is a project of national importance and it is a project for regional benefits, particularly for Newfoundland and Labrador.

In the House of Commons when my colleague from Edmonton East, the New Democratic energy critic, questioned the minister about plans the government might have to minimize the project's environmental effects, the minister responded by claiming quite wrongly that we opposed economic development for Atlantic Canada. He stated and I quote:

> New Democrats are opposed to Hibernia. I guess they want the unemployment in Newfoundland. They do not want the industrial benefits in Newfoundland. I am simply saying, you want all the benefits, but you do not want to take any of the responsibility.

I am pleased to say that the minister was totally wrong. We on this side of the House care very much about job creation, about everyday folk getting a fair deal, about our children having an even better opportunity in life than we have had.

That is why we examined the bill closely from the perspective of economic development. That examination demonstrated to us that the bill will not provide nearly enough benefit to Newfoundlanders and Canadians.

Contrary to the impression left by the minister that we imposed regional benefits, we want Newfoundlanders and Canadians to benefit from this project, and that is exactly why we oppose the bill. Just for a change, we want the federal government to take seriously the notion of economic diversification.

The simple fact is that the government, through this bill, is promoting a huge energy project that will bring precious little in the way of economic benefits to ordinary Newfoundlanders. That, to put it politely, is shameful.

The government should pay careful attention to the following statement contained in the background report prepared in 1986, written for the Royal Commission on Employment and Unemployment in Newfoundland and Labrador. It recognizes that Newfoundlanders will come up short in economic spin-offs. It states:

> It is must be recognized that the majority of Hibernia development expenditures will be incurred outside Newfoundland. The skilled labour force in the province is limited. The number of local companies capable of significant involvement in the offshore industry is also relatively small.

Let me repeat that quotation from the Royal Commission on Employment and Unemployment in Newfoundland and Labrador.

> It must be recognized that the majority of Hibernia development expenditures will be incurred outside Newfoundland.

Newfoundlanders will remember the two cabinet ministers holding a news conference in July 1988 to tell Quebecers that they could look forward to landing a large portion of the Hibernia contracts available to Canadian companies. At that time the Minister of Regional and Industrial Expansion estimated that Newfoundland would receive about $770 million worth of Hibernia contracts, while other provinces between them would get more than twice as much, about $1.83 billion in contracts. All that was before the free trade agreement and its national treatment provisions.

One of the original hopes of Hibernia was that it would provide Newfoundlanders with considerable economic benefit. This bill certainly will not satisfy that aspiration.

A study about how much money from offshore oil and gas exploration actually stays in Newfoundland was conducted by the offshore Business Development Division of the provincial Department of Development in 1985. That study found that in the preceding five years, while oil companies spent nearly $1.5 billion in Newfoundland, less than 20 per cent of that stayed in the province.

Newfoundlanders have also been led to expect that Hibernia will bring royalty and tax money into the province. Incredibly, Newfoundlanders will gain much less than they thought they would just a few years ago.

Last year the official in charge of Norway's multi-billion dollar petroleum industry was quoted in the St. John's *Evening Telegram* of March 11, 1989 calling the Hibernia deal "more generous to the oil companies" than would be allowed in his country.

In fact, even before the recent redesign of the project which will result in fewer benefits accruing to Newfoundland, the Hibernia deal was severely criticized for being a very bad deal for Atlantic Canada.

For its part the provincial government has given up an enormous amount in potential benefits by granting a sales tax holiday, providing corporate income tax concessions and designing a royalty regime that will result in the province forgoing billions of dollars on royalties. Many observers have pointed out that the provincial government made so many concessions, and Newfoundlanders will benefit so little from the project.

The people of Newfoundland and Labrador deserve more than this. Yet the Conservative government insists that Newfoundlanders should be grateful and they want us to support this bill, this financial strait-jacket for Newfoundland and Labrador.

• (1900)

We New Democrats are not the only ones to recognize that the Hibernia deal is not a good one for Atlantic Canada. A former federal Liberal energy critic indicated that a much better deal could have been struck. While in opposition the present Premier of Newfoundland was a vocal opponent of the deal. Mr. Wells' opposition is rather more muted these days, but he certainly was strongly opposed to the deal at an earlier stage when he was in opposition. It was instructive to remember what Mr. Wells was saying a few months ago. He said:

> Mr. Peckford and the federal government did a terrible job on the Hibernia deal. The agreement in principle gives away more than we are getting in return. There are no significant benefits for Newfoundland.

He also said:

> Unless there is a massive increase in the price of oil, which nobody at this stage is predicting, there will be very low royalties to start with, and the royalties that are paid will result in virtually a dollar for dollar reduction in (federal) equalization payments. So the net cash value to Newfoundland will be virtually nil.

The problems with the deal do not end with the provincial royalty and tax regime. What about the economic spin-offs? What about the opportunities for business in Newfoundland to supply goods and services for the project?

They do not look good. Based on the offshore oil experience in Norway and Scotland, Newfoundland's development minister is already warning local companies that they might have a hard time meeting the exacting standards the owners of the project will demand. He said: "Alarm bells should be going off in company heads right now".

The article from which I just quoted went on to refer to what he called a typical purchase order of Mobil Oil and said:

> The quality control requirements imposed by the offshore oil industry are more stringent than those normally encountered by Canadian contractors and suppliers, excepting perhaps those involved in the nuclear industry.

That sounds a lot like a foreign multinational letting Newfoundland business know that it is going to be out of luck. But there is more: perhaps the government will help local businesses meet those exacting standards imposed by the oil industry.

According to one article, about $500,000 has already been spent on this, but according to the province's energy minister right now only three or four businesses meet the specifications for quality control. Three or four businesses only, Mr. Speaker, and according to the minister only a number of others will be able to meet those standards. That is clearly not economic diversification.

What about using the old to diversify the Newfoundland economy? There will be no luck there either.

In Alberta, petroleum feed stocks were provided to the petrochemical industry at a reduced price to give it a competitive advantage. The trade deal prevents Newfoundland from enjoying this diversification tool. The deal prohibits government policies intended to result in energy prices for domestic purposes that are lower than export prices. It is practically impossible for Newfoundland to spur local refining or develop a profitable petrochemical industry using oil stock from the Hibernia and nearby fields.

Similarly under the trade deal there is no possibility that Newfoundlanders in particular, or Canadians in general, will have priority access to Hibernia oil subsidized with Canadian public funds.

What seems more likely is that most of the Hibernia oil will be shipped straight to the United States, and that most of it will not even be refined in Newfoundland.

Not only will Newfoundlanders not get the jobs that refining represents, not only will the province not get the economic spin-offs that could come from refining it, on top of it all Canadians by subsidizing Hibernia will in effect be subsidizing American consumers.

That is not what we in the New Democratic Party call economic diversification for Newfoundlanders.

Aside from these forgone financial opportunities, there are also very real social costs associated with any megaproject like Hibernia. These often receive very little attention, even though large energy developments in other provinces have all too frequently led to serious social problems resulting from rapid population shifts, inadequate planning, and a lack of human services and facilities.

The Community Services Council recommended to the Hibernia environmental assessment panel that Mobile should be required to set aside adequate funding for social planning and research. The Canadian Mental Health Association indicated that not enough base line data existed to forecast accurately the social services that will be required.

Other organizations have stressed the need for additional day care facilities in the province so that women are not prevented from obtaining those employment opportunities that will exist.

All these things take planning. All these things will end up costing the people of Canada and Newfoundland money.

Given these often ignored costs and given the deal's shocking paucity of benefits for Newfoundland, it is not surprising that even the Premier of Newfoundland stated in a state of the province address on January 11 the following:

> It may well be in the best interests of the people of this province to leave the oil in the ground until we get the real benefits.

Whenever I think about this bill and the agreement behind it and about all those people who believe that it makes no economic sense for the people of province or the country, I am reminded of the great myth that Conservatives are supposed to be good economic managers. I think this is a good example of hypocrisy on the part of the government.

On the one hand the Conservatives frequently portray themselves as good economic managers and foster the ideology of the market oriented approach. Yet here they are using billions of dollars of public funds and a massive intervention in the market-place to subsidize a project that makes little economic sense and will bring few benefits to Newfoundlanders. This point is not lost on business commentators. Oil analyst, Ian Doig, points out that of all oil production in the world 99.5 per cent of it would be less costly than Hibernia oil. The Associate Editor of *The Financial Post*, Terence Corcoran, in an article on July 26, 1988 wrote:

At best, Hibernia and the other megadollar sinkholes re-establish corporations as corporate welfare bums—

• (1905)

Quite clearly, the Conservative market ideology demands that ordinary Canadians survive as best they can in the market–place. The wealthy and the powerful, however, apparently have to be induced to venture into those inhospitable climes.

And what an inducement Hibernia backers will get: up to more than $3 billion in free money, loans, and loan guarantees. Of that, more than $1 billion will be in the form of a direct grant, free money with no strings attached. A billion dollars in free government money can be a wonderfully comforting thing to have when the chill winds of the market start to blow.

Not even the Alberta government, which for years was rolling in petro–dollars, was ever that profligate. When the time came for it to ante up its contribution to the giant Syncrude oil sands plant in Fort McMurray, the Alberta government made sure that Albertans could share in the project's successes. Through a combination of equity and convertible debentures later converted to equity, the Alberta government came to hold 16.74 per cent of Syncrude directly. The 16.74 per cent share generated returns for the people of Alberta of more than $410 million in the 1980s alone. That is almost twice the original cost to Alberta of its participation in the project.

By investing in Syncrude through equity and convertible debentures instead of simply giving away money as this government is doing, the people of Alberta secured a tidy profit over time and have retained share holdings which have doubled in value over the years going from about $250 million to over $500 million. What is more, the $500 million is still there to be used in any future projects the government might desire.

The question which hangs on this bill is: Why not equity? Why did the Conservative government not obtain an equity participation in the Hibernia project? Why not secure for the Canadian people a dollar's worth of equity for every dollar they put into the project? Surely, if the Conservative Government of Alberta is capable of realizing and acting upon this sensible concept, the Conservative Government of Canada should take the hint, but no it prefers the role of corporate Santa Claus, giving billions of dollars away, to the role of prudent husbander of the public purse.

In summary, this bill fails to provide for adequate economic benefits for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador in particular and for the people of Canada in general. That has been pointed out by many in Newfoundland, including the present Premier of Newfoundland. For this reason alone, as well as for the other reasons presented by my colleagues, the bill deserves defeat at second reading.

For those reasons, I support the amendments of the hon. member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is the House ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The question is on the amendment standing in the name of Mr. Barrett. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the amendment?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some Hon. Members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some Hon. Members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): In my opinion the nays have it.

An Hon. Member: On division.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): On division. I declare the amendment lost.

The next question is on the main motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

An Hon. Member: On division.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and referred to a legislative committee.

Adjournment Debate

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[*English*]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

SCOTIA SYNFUELS PROJECT

Mr. Francis G. LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso): Mr. Speaker, tonight I would like to return to a question I raised in the House on May 25, 1990 to which the leader of the government in the House of Commons responded on behalf of the Minister of Industry, Science and Technology. The question concerned in a narrow sense the Scotia Synfuels Project for coal liquefaction in Cape Breton and specifically the approval by the government of an application by the company for a package of assistance containing principally the Cape Breton Investment Tax Credit and certain loan guarantees available through the department of Industry, Science and Technology.

• (1910)

The Scotia Synfuels Project in its proposal to use a liquefaction process to convert high sulphur Cape Breton coal in an oil mixture into a clean source of energy to serve the needs of Atlantic Canadians and for export has been under development for several years. The technology has been proven.

The jobs and the spin-off benefits in eastern Nova Scotia are well established. As well, the general soundness of the project in environmental and other terms are widely acknowledged and well established. They were enumerated at some length in a speech in this House by my colleague, the member for Cape Breton—The Sydneys on May 28.

While the question concerned the narrow issue of the government's support for this project, it concerns broader issues as well. It concerns the seriousness of this government's commitment to seeking out more environmentally friendly ways of producing energy sources from our fossil fuels. It concerns the seriousness of the government's commitment to ensuring that Canada is on the leading edge of technology in an area in which we should have an important comparative advantage and which is definitely going to be vital for the future success of our economy. It concerns as well the seriousness of this government's commitment to fostering industrial development in Atlantic Canada. It concerns the willingness of this government to take risks, even moderate risks, in support of progressive technology in a part of the country that badly needs it.

In his reply to my colleague's remarks on May 28 the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment and Immigration pointed out that his government had funded to the tune of 50 per cent the cost of a feasibility study on this project. He also said that "this government wants to be certain that an investment of public funds results in durable and viable jobs for the long term".

The principals of this project are anxious to do whatever they can to prove to this government and to demonstrate the technical and commercial viability of this project. They have been doing so for several years. They have had Wood Gundy, one of the prominent investment firms in Canada, produce a study which declared the project commercially viable, provided that the regular incentive programs available through this government were made available to the project, including the Cape Breton Investment Tax Credit. They have responded to the concerns raised by the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources about the economics of the project and have proven that the economics of the project are indeed favourable because and not in spite of its location in the east coast of Canada.

The principals are anxious to proceed with the next stage of the project, to firm up the cost estimates, to establish the market sources for the product, and to secure the necessary financing so that construction and jobs can commence.

The people of Cape Breton, and in particular the people of the Strait of Canso area where industrial activity has lagged since this government came to power in 1984, are anxious to see this project proceed. They are anxious to see the benefits and the jobs which will come through the commencement of this important project, but the government keeps waffling. It keeps passing the buck from one department to the other, from Energy, Mines and Resources to DIST, from DIST to ACOA, and from ACOA back to Energy, Mines and Resources.

The company is frustrated. It wants to know what more it can do. What other information can it provide this government? What concrete conditions does it need to meet in order to be able to get a firm, positive answer on the part of this government as to whether it will be able to receive this investment tax credit which is vital to the success of this project? What is more aggravating is that the government does not really need to share the risk upfront on this project. The investment tax credit will only cost the government money once the company has developed investment sources and the project has begun to earn taxable revenue. The project could earn up to $800 million in tax revenue for the government during its life, not to mention some of the other benefits.

• (1915)

Although there are some risks in the loan guarantees and other incentives that the government would have to provide, they pale in comparison to the opportunity of developing an economically depressed region in Canada with a leading, environmentally efficient process for coal and oil liquefaction, a project which is Canadian owned and which will use our local coal resources in a cleaner, superior way which can lead to lower acid rain emissions and which can be a show-piece to Canada's future environmental agenda.

This government's failure to support fully the Scotia's Synfuels initiative is incomprehensible and amazingly short-sighted. The U.S. government is not so short sighted. It has already indicated through the Department of Energy its support for a similar project in Ohio. It has urged this government to support that project.

We have our own project in Cape Breton. Why does the government insist on demanding additional information from a company which has been so co-operative in the past? Why does the government not simply approve this project, take a risk on Atlantic Canada and allow these jobs to commence.

Mr. Lee Clark (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, I very much agree with the hon. member when he says that the Scotia Synfuels proposal in Cape Breton has considerable potential to economically benefit eastern Nova Scotia.

I would like at this time to reiterate some of the points which the minister responsible for ACOA made last week in this Chamber. Certainly the Government of Canada has been trying to enhance economic opportunities in the Atlantic region by considering every alternative employment opportunity that will help to diversify the economy. I would suggest that the very creation of ACOA has been a step forward in that regard.

It must be pointed out, however, that while the hon. member has again pressed for the approval of investment tax credit for the Synfuels project, it is really Industry, Science and Technology, as the hon. member knows, rather than ACOA which has the lead role for the federal government on this project.

ACOA, as the development agency for small to medium sized businesses can, of course, and will play an advocacy role.

That being said, I wish to point out that federal officials have devoted a great deal of time to looking at the long term economic viability of this project, and its potential to create long term employment.

I wish to point out, as the hon. member has already indicated, that the federal government did help fund 50 per cent of the costs of a technical feasibility study to which he referred, at a very significant sum of some $650,000. That study, of course, was completed in November of 1989.

As has often been the case in the past, I speak of prior to 1984 when governments were interested in establishing projects in order to produce a quick fix, this government wants to be certain that any investment of public funds results in durable and viable jobs for the long term.

With respect to Scotia Synfuels, ACOA and Industry, Science and Technology officials want to be sure, and I think most Canadians would understand why this is so, that this project valued at well over $400 million is sufficiently viable to justify the substantial expenditure of public funds which would be required from Investment Tax Credit.

While a number of jobs this facility promised to create is certainly impressive, there is still more study required before any decision can be made.

[*Translation*]

RIDING OF LAURIER—SAINTE-MARIE

Mr. Phillip Edmonston (Chambly): Mr. Speaker, almost a month ago, I had a question for the Prime Minister concerning the people of the riding of Laurier—Sainte-Marie. In my question I asked the Prime Minister when the government was going to provide

economic measures to help the residents of Laurier—Sainte-Marie. I was not satisfied with the Prime Minister's answer, and that is why I am asking the same question today, although I will be more specific. When will the government take economic steps to help the people of Laurier—Sainte-Marie?

I would like to explain that the unemployment rate in this riding is almost 20 per cent. At a time when direct government assistance is needed to help these people, it would seem the government is doing the exact opposite.

• (1920)

I will mention some of the economic measures that have had a disastrous impact on the people of Laurier—Sainte-Marie.

First of all, there is the GST, the Goods and Services Tax that will soon come into force. It will be a heavy burden for people who are in no position to pay this kind of tax, any more than other Canadians.

Second, a federal Budget has just been adopted, obliging the provinces to take over an increasingly larger share of the responsibility for various social programs. I will name some of the programs that are vital to Laurier—Sainte-Marie—medical care for the elderly, for instance. Federal budget cuts are going to affect medical care for senior citizens. Even the Government of Quebec has condemned the cuts affecting these people.

Third, this Budget is a blow to students who need federal assistance for postsecondary education. This budget will not provide the assistance we received in the past.

Furthermore, we also have a problem with the unemployment insurance reform legislation. The people in Southeast Montreal need the safety net. They need the unemployment insurance they have been paying for for years. Unfortunately, the so-called reform adopted by the federal government—I wonder whether this is not misleading advertising, because the reform gives less to these people. Instead of protecting them, it provides less protection than they received in the past.

That is why the Churches, unions, charitable organizations, local citizens groups and others objected to this so-called unemployment insurance reform. I deplore the fact that after all the work done by Jean-Claude Malépart, who was very much a populist, to protect his people—and I think we in this House must recognize one thing, and I believe everyone will agree, Conservatives as well as Liberals, that Jean-Claude Malépart, the former Liberal member, did a terrific job of representing his constituents— not just Liberal voters but all his constituents. This was a guy who worked for the poor—people who are vulnerable, people who have no hope. He did a good job. And now, for more than six and a half months, these people have lacked representation in Parliament. And instead of providing tax measures to help these people, the government does the exact opposite.

What I would like the government to do is implement three things: first of all, measures to provide subsidies under the Employment and Immigration Act, through Challenge 90; second, provide grants for job development programs, and I am sure it would be a great help to the people of Laurier—Sainte-Marie; and finally, drop this unemployment insurance legislation, because it will make matters even worse for the people of Laurier—Sainte-Marie. This time I expect a reply, and I hope it will be a clear and sensible reply, one that will give genuine consideration to the needs of the people in the riding of Laurier—Sainte-Marie.

• (1925)

Mr. Lee Clark (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for his question. However, I think it would better for both of us if I answered in English.

[*English*]

The hon. member, when he asked the question originally in the House, was asking about the date of the by-election because of the vacancy caused by the death of our colleague Jean-Claude Malépart, and he also asked us when the issues would be addressed.

Mr. Speaker, I think, as you know and I am sure all members of the House know, that by-election has now been called for August 13 and I know that the Progressive Conservative candidate, who will make a very vital contribution during the course of that by-election, will be responding to those issues and we look forward to the campaign.

CANADA POST

Mr. Len Taylor (The Battlefords—Meadow Lake): Mr. Speaker, on May 3 of this year I rose in my place to put a question to the Minister responsible for Canada Post because I had just learned that 92 Canadian communities were going to lose mail-sorting operations and jobs within their communities.

One of those 92 communities is my own home city of North Battleford, Saskatchewan, a city and an operation that I know quite well. Canada Post announced on May 2 that they were going to increase efficiencies. I put quotation marks around that word "efficiencies" because that is the word that they use, but which is yet to be really defined in terms of Canada Post. Canada Post said it would increase efficiencies by streamlining the mail sorting process. The whole thing is to take effect on September 1 of this year.

What are these efficiencies that they are talking about? They are going to put a second mail collection box on street corners where ones already exist. These twin boxes, as they call them, will allow the postal user to deposit mail for local delivery in one box and mail for out-of-town delivery in another box. What on the surface seems very simple is otherwise crazy. In implementing this twin box policy, Canada Post will reduce the number of street box locations where mail can be deposited and across Canada reduce its work-force of inside sorters by 800 to 1,000 persons.

In North Battleford they eliminated positions that equal six full-time and two part-time, a situation the postal workers estimate in the city of North Battleford alone to be as much as $300,000 a year. There is no reason for this loss to these workers, their families, to our communities, and the disruption is as great on the service where the so-called simplification situation will actually lead to more handling of the mail.

Let us use the example of the mail going from North Battleford to Lloydminster now. This mail is now sorted in my home town of North Battleford. It is put on a truck in North Battleford and brought to Lloydminster where it is delivered. It is a very simple process.

Under the new system, after September 1, the mail will now be deposited in these out-of-town mail boxes in North Battleford. It will be trucked east to Saskatoon for sorting and then trucked west again through the city of North Battleford on to Lloydminster. The extra handling will result in slower mail and likely more losses. There are no efficiencies here.

Other small communities around the city of North Battleford will be effected in exactly the same way. Today, mail going to Maymont just a few miles outside of North Battleford to the east, is sorted and sent for delivery to Maymont, but after September 1 that mail from North Battleford to Maymont will first go through Maymont to Saskatoon for sorting, back through Maymont to North Battleford for putting on the contractor's delivery truck and then back to Maymont. That mail which previously took about 40 minutes to get delivered will now pass through Maymont three times before it gets to its destination. The more handling there is the greater the incidents of error.

Let me give one other situation concerning the town of Meadow Lake. Meadow Lake is north of the city of North Battleford. Mail posted before midnight in North Battleford today will arrive in Meadow Lake the next day. In September that mail posted in North Battleford will first go to Saskatoon in the south, then back through North Battleford to arrive in Meadow Lake. Unless mail is posted before 4.30 in the afternoon, it is guaranteed to take an extra day for delivery between North Battleford and Meadow Lake, just a short 100 mile distance. The service has obviously been reduced to these communities as a result of the new efficiencies introduced by Canada Post.

Let us not forget one other situation. If you are mailing locally, and you happen to make a mistake and your mail goes into the wrong box, your mail from North Battleford now goes to Saskatoon, whether you want it to or not.

Therefore, since this rationalization is not more efficient, it can only be for one other purpose, to get a reduced workforce, lower costs and a greater chance to increase the profile of the corporation. In this way, the government can sell it to the private sector as recommended by a government committee.

There is no justification for a privatized post office which would never provide service to rural Canada adequately. The Crown corporation exists to meet certain communication needs for Canadians and only a Crown corporation accountable to Canadians through Parliament will meet those needs.

On May 3, I called this latest move by Canada Post a stupid idea and I called on the minister to maintain the Crown corporation and establish a full-time postal commission to return accountability to the post office and give Canadians some control over the type of service they deserve.

Mr. Lee Clark (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, Canada Post's network rationalization program is another step in the corporation's efforts to optimize the use of both mechanized sorting equipment and better transportation links.

Once the program is implemented, as it has been in a number of communities already, mail will be streamlined into mechanized plants for maximum efficiency and faster sortation and distribution. Some delivery improvements will be achieved, particularly forward mail, and in all cases the corporation will maintain its present delivery standards. The program allows for the elimination of one step from the existing mail processing operation.

Through the twin-letter box system, local mail will continue to be sorted by the local post office in most cases, while mail destined for other locations will be moved immediately to the nearest mechanized facility for speedier handling. Similar changes have already been successfully implemented in other communities.

The changes undertaken with the network rationalization program are proven methods of increasing efficiency, while at the same time improving service.

So I ask, why is the hon. member so opposed to this positive accomplishment, when the corporation has already stated that no one, and I repeat, no one will lose their employment because of this, and all affected employees will be dealt with in accordance with their respective collective agreements. The allegations that this program will cost jobs, as some have alleged, of close to 1,000 postal workers is clearly based on erroneous information.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): It being 10 o'clock, the motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 o'clock a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

The House adjourned at 7.33 p.m.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, June 8, 1990

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*Translation*]

GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES RESTRAINT ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

Hon. Mary Collins (for the Minister of Finance) moved that Bill C-69, an Act to amend certain statutes to enable restraint of government expenditures, be read the third time and passed.

Hon. Gilles Loiselle (Minister of State (Finance)): Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to speak in support of Bill C-69, which implements the policy of spending restraint that we announced in the Budget of February 20.

The measures in this bill have a clear goal: controlling inflation and securing steady non-inflationary economic growth in Canada. I am sure that our friends opposite will support these objectives, especially the hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier, who is very interested in properly promoting the interests of our country. Attaining this goal will lead to the bright economic future that, of course, we all want for this country.

[*English*]

These measures contained in Bill C-69 are part of the February budget which, through a wide ranging expenditure control plan and with no increase in taxes, reinforces our commitment to address the fiscal challenge. The budget keeps the deficit on a downward track and we will see it cut in half in four years.

Our expenditure control plan takes real action affecting a wide range of federal program spending but it is also sensitive to the financial circumstances of individual Canadians as well as government. Our plan is helping us to meet the fiscal challenge in a fair and consistent way.

• (1010)

The expenditure restraint measures must be examined as an integral part of the economic strategy we have been following since 1984, and of our response to the current fiscal economic situation. They are part of the government's consistent, comprehensive plan to ensure that Canadians benefit from a standard of living and quality of life that is second to none.

A lot of progress has been made. For example, the burden of government has been significantly reduced. The growth of spending on all government programs and services has been kept well below the growth of the economy and even below the rate of inflation. This is quite a performance.

Our progress toward a better fiscal balance has not been easy. We have all felt the impact of the measures needed to protect and strengthen our future. Many Canadians have had to face difficult adjustments, but the economic pay-off has been considerable.

The success of our economic management plan set out in 1984 is clear. It was the right policy then, and it remains the right policy now. But, as the budget warned, its continued progress is threatened.

[*Translation*]

Despite our fiscal progress, the burden of the public debt continues to grow, primarily due to the compounding interest on the original debt we inherited. To get off the debt treadmill, we must reduce the burden of high interest rates. To do this, we must deal firmly with high inflation.

The expenditure restraint measures in the February Budget are designed to do just that. I am convinced that our friends oppose, especially the hon. member who is attracting attention as he comes in, will support this policy which is so important for our country. Lower inflation and interest rates and lower deficits will be

mutually reinforcing and lead to strong, sustained growth.

Everyone who is able must do their part to help restore the nation's finances to health. That is why our expenditure control plan has an impact on a wide range of government program spending while at the same time remaining sensitive to the financial circumstances of individual Canadians and provincial governments.

I would like to begin by going over two major elements of the plan as it is set out in the legislation.

First, federal program spending. Under the plan, 60 per cent of government program spending is affected to some degree.

To protect modest-income Canadians from the full impact of our expenditure restraint measures, we have exempted major federal transfers to persons, such as old age security, which is not affected, the guaranteed income supplement, which is not affected, spouses' allowances, which are not affected, Madam Speaker, family allowances, which are not affected, veterans' pensions and allowances and unemployment insurance benefits.

So these budgetary measures are extremely sensitive to the needs and interests of people who are less well off. I would like to emphasize one point because I know it is of concern to many individuals: no limit is placed by the expenditure control plan or by this legislation on programs such as old age security, family allowances or veterans' pensions.

[*English*]

The second element I want to touch on concerns transfers to the provinces. Significant deficit reduction cannot be achieved without affecting transfers to the provinces. They are simply too large a part of federal expenses to be ignored. And so this bill includes measures to bring the growth of major transfers to provinces approximately in line with general federal programs spending. This, everybody will agree, is a very reasonable measure to bring the transfers to the provinces in line with our own expenditures.

In 1990–1991 tax and cash transfers to provincial governments will total more than $35 billion. As a whole, transfers to the provinces have risen at an average annual rate of 6.5 per cent since 1984–85. At the same time, spending on federal programs in general has been held to an average annual growth rate of 3.6 per cent. We believe the provinces as a whole are in a position to bear more of the burden of their own spending. At a time when 35 cents of every federal dollar is used to pay interest costs on the debt, the average figure for the provinces is 12 cents.

As a result of this bill transfers to provinces will grow. I will repeat that. Transfers to the provinces, as a result of this bill, will continue to grow by about 3 per cent annually over the next two years, roughly the same rate as that of total program spending for the federal government.

The reduction to transfers to the provinces represents about 1 per cent of total provincial revenue. At the same time, we recognize the special circumstances of lower-income provinces. Federal support to provinces remains large, total transfers will still increase, and the poorest provinces will receive more growth than others. For example, total entitlements for the major federal-provincial transfer programs are expected to grow an average of about 4 per cent over the next two years for the Atlantic provinces, a growth higher than our own expenditures. While, in the higher-income provinces, they are expected to average 2.3 per cent.

I want to go briefly over the three major programs under which federal support, about $36 billion in 1990–91, is given to the provinces and territories. These are: Established Programs Financing, equalization, and the Canada Assistance Plan.

Under EPF, Established Programs Financing, the federal government provides equal per capita financial assistance to all provinces through the transfer of tax points and cash payments. These transfers were originally designed to help provinces carry out their responsibilities in respect of health care and post-secondary education, but since 1977, provinces have been able to use these transfers according to their own particular priorities.

Established Programs Financing reached $20 billion in 1989–90, an average annual growth rate of more than 6 per cent. The legislation we are discussing today will hold EPF per capita transfers for the next two years to the 1989–90 level. Total transfers will continue to grow with the population increase of each province or about 1 per cent nationally.

In addition to EPF, the federal government provides substantial additional assistance to the lower-income provinces through the equalization program. Equalization transfers have grown from over $5 billion in 1984-85 to close to $8 billion in 1989-90. They exceed Established Programs Financing as the largest form of federal support in the Atlantic provinces for example. Equalization transfers to the lower-income provinces are not affected by the budget. They are expected to increase about 6 per cent to 7 per cent annually over the next two years, considerably faster than the expected growth of total federal program spending.

• (1020)

[*Translation*]

Madam Speaker, I want to make two important points about the effect of this legislation on these transfers.

First, payments will not be cut. Over all, they will continue to increase.

Second, the provinces have complete control of the spending of this money. Whether all or none of it, or any proportion in between, goes to post-secondary education and health care depends on decisions made in provincial capitals, not in Ottawa. It is and remains the responsibility of the provinces themselves.

It is therefore wrong to say this legislation is intended to cut federal support for post-secondary education and health care.

Third, under the Canada Assistance Plan, the federal government provides funds to provincial and territorial governments to help them pay for social assistance benefits and services. These transfers, which are based on a 50-50 cost-sharing of eligible provincial spending, have grown at an average annual rate of about 6.6 per cent over the past five years.

The federal contribution in the form of cash and transfer of tax points has increased from $4 billion to $5.5 billion. The average rate of growth in each province has varied from 1 per cent to 3 per cent in Saskatchewan, British Columbia and Quebec to nearly 14 per cent in Ontario.

For the next two years, growth in CAP transfers will be limited to 5 per cent a year in Ontario, British Columbia and Alberta. All provinces receiving federal equalization payments, that is, all provinces whose income is less than these three, will be exempt from this ceiling on growth. They will continue to have open-ended access to federal dollars to meet any growth in expenditures eligible for cost-sharing under CAP. This measure provides for resumption of the present regime on April 1, 1992.

The 1990 federal Budget, Madam Speaker, will slow the growth of federal transfers in a manner which is sensitive to the situation of low-income provinces—that is very important. The impact on Established Program financing is spread broadly and evenly across all provinces. Low-income provinces will continue to receive large and growing support under equalization. Provinces receiving equalization payments, namely those with lower revenues, will be exempted from the 5 per cent growth limit on cost-sharing under the Canada Assistance Plan.

Despite the enormous difficulties we face in reducing this country's debt and deficit and improving the nation's finances, these are balanced, reasonable decisions geared to the ability to pay of provinces and individuals. We are not like the Liberal government that spent without regard to revenue. We are doing what is right for the country and we want to keep our ability to help people with programs of this kind in future. If we did not act quickly, the Government of Canada would lose its ability to help the most disadvantaged and we will never allow that to happen.

While the provinces are being asked to do their part under the Expenditure Control Plan, as I explained, it is clear that we have restrained our own costs and we will continue to do so. Over the next year, total expenditures on programs other than those that are exempt or capped will decline to a level that is $800 million below that of the current year.

[*English*]

These are real cuts. They reflect the fact that, after several years of restraint, there are no painless ways to cut spending. At the same time, our expenditure control plan balances prudence in managing public finances with the responsibility to protect Canadians who are least able to afford income restraint.

This bill takes a further step along the path we have been following since 1984. It does so with sensitivity toward those in our society who are less well off. It does so in a manner that respects the importance and rights of

the provinces, and that takes account of their economic situations as well as that of the federal government.

I have every confidence that the measures in Bill C-69 are appropriate for our situation and that they are fair and effective.

Mr. John Manley (Ottawa South): Madam Speaker, in debating Bill C-69, which the minister has explained in some detail in the past few minutes, I think we are perhaps getting to the very heart of Canadian federalism.

I suppose sometimes the people who watch our debates on television think that they are somewhat strange and maybe irrelevant. Today, more than ever, they hear us debating what sounds, I suppose, rather arcane visions of federal-provincial funding arrangements, when, a couple of blocks down the street, the First Ministers are at this moment discussing the fundamental arrangements among the provinces and the federal government, in fact, the fundamental arrangements among all Canadians whereby we live together in the country.

It would be inappropriate to engage in debate simply on this matter of Established Programs Financing and federal-provincial fiscal arrangements without a word about the more important discussions that are going on down the street, not to debate the merits of the arguments that are being put either way, but merely to say that in a way all that we argue about on Bill C-69 becomes irrelevant if the good will and the wisdom of the First Ministers on behalf of all Canadians do not find a solution to the more fundamental problems that seem to trouble us as a nation.

As we look back into the history of how we fund things like post-secondary education in Canada, we find that there is quite a sense of *déjà vu*. Some of the current debates between the provinces and between the federal government and the provinces sound very much like the ones that occurred in 1864 and have been repeated many times in Canadian history. I think the vast majority of Canadians hope and pray for wisdom and solutions.

These are the fundamentals of our federation. In some ways, the more esoteric topics that we debate as a country about our Constitution are the frills and the extras. The federal-provincial fiscal arrangements, the way we finance the kind of country we want to be, perhaps those are the nuts and bolts. That is the essence of the Canadian federation. How do we fund the country being and becoming the kind of country that we want it to be? How do Canadians want Canada to develop?

If we could get into a time machine and spin forward into the next century, different scenarios would present themselves; some good, some bad. If you can imagine arriving in the national capital in the year 2020, you might hope, if you could describe the kind of Canada that you want, to discover a country where the people are well educated, where the people interest themselves in examples of the highest of human culture and human awareness. You would hope to find a population that by and large understands the nature of how the world functions, how the economy functions, where the people appreciate the value of literature and art and where the people appreciate the importance that culture brings to the way they live. You would hope to find an economy where we produce high quality value-added products that we sell to the world. You would hope to find a country in which the care for those who are least able to look after themselves is exemplary, where health care is affordable and available to all.

• (1030)

You would hope to not find a country in which the ordinary citizen is not well educated, where illiteracy is rampant, where you find that we no longer debate the harvesting of forests on Vancouver Island because they have all been harvested, where you find that we are still surviving as a nation on the sale of the things that we can dig out of the ground, cut down, grow, or catch in the sea and where we are strictly basing our economy on the sale and production of resources, where we failed to train our people to move forward in competition in a global economy where the need to add value and to make things that the world buys is crucial.

If you look at those two scenarios, Madam Speaker, and say that we definitely want the first one, you might want to go back then and ask what policies should governments in Canada be following in order to ensure that we arrive at that first scenario and that we avoid arriving at the second one.

That in a nutshell for me expresses why the subject matter of this bill is so crucial, so important. I look at it, not strictly as the minister did in his remarks, as a means of getting our financial house in order, although it is that and I understand that, and I will add my words of

explanation to the public about why that is the case. However, it goes beyond that.

How we spend money on post-secondary education, on health care and on assistance to the needy in Canada is of crucial importance to the kind of nation we are and are becoming. If this bill does anything, it highlights the critical necessity for Canada, the federal government, and the provincial governments, to overcome the type of debates that are currently going on down the street and to get on with, at least in my opinion, the far more important debate about what kind of country this should be and how do we get there from here. Included in the debate has to be the funding of post-secondary educational institutions, health care and assistance to the needy.

The idea that perhaps we should use these arrangements as a way of trimming back the deficit is something to which the current Minister of Finance seems to have been recently converted. At least back in 1982, when he was in opposition, he did not think that this was really the way to go about cutting back on federal spending. Let me read to you what he said in this House on March 24, 1982 in reference to cuts in Established Programs Financing:

> —could have disastrous effects on the universities and on the colleges, on the hospital funding and on the operation of the hospitals. Let us not make hospitals, universities and colleges a battleground between the federal government and the provincial governments. Let us solve those problems not on the backs of hospitals and universities; let us solve those problems outside of that arena.

I agree entirely with the remarks of the Minister of Finance.

First, let me talk a bit about post-secondary education. When we talk about how important it is for Canada to emerge from this century and go forward into the next one with an economy that moves from our traditional hewers of wood and drawers of water mode into one that highlights the value-added production of new goods, new services, the ability to provide new technologies, and provide information to the world, this requires a broad base of well-educated people. We need a population that is characterized by its commitment to excellence, to its level of literacy and education. It is essential to Canada. This is not merely a provincial matter.

When you go back in history, you discover that this is not a new debate. Back as early as the Confederation debates, 1864, one of the Fathers of Confederation, George Brown, said this about the division of powers:

> In thus defining the functions of the general and local governments, it will, no doubt, be objected that we have committed certain matters of an important character to the local bodies which the people of Upper Canada would have been well content to have seen left to the general government. But if the details of the scheme are closely examined, it will be seen that we have given nothing to the local bodies which did not necessarily belong to the localities, except education and the rights of property, and the civil law, which we were compelled to leave to the local governments—

That comment by George Brown is very similar to one made in 1864 by Sir Arthur Hamilton Gordon, then Lieutenant-Governor of New Brunswick, who stated:

> I am fully aware of the great difficulties attending the subject of Education, but it is with extreme regret that I see it committed to the Local Legislatures. At all events, the Universities should have been placed under the guardianship of the Central Power. The local governments—

These are his words, not mine.

> —needy, rapacious, and ignorant, with little money at their disposal, are pretty certain to appropriate the University Funds to what they will call more useful objects, that is to say, objects which will enable them to scatter the money among their political adherents.

That is what was said by one of the Fathers of Confederation 126 years ago.

Interestingly enough, as an historic footnote to the constitutional negotiations, the Charlottetown draft of the first constitutional arrangements left the universities under federal jurisdiction. It was only later that that was changed to leave the universities with all education in provincial jurisdiction.

It did not take very long for the federal government to become involved in post-secondary education. As early as 1874, the first military college was established, located at Kingston. In 1885 land was dedicated by the federal government for the University of Manitoba.

In 1910 we had a royal commission on industrial training and vocational education which ultimately gave rise to grants being made by the federal government to the provinces for the purposes of developing agricultural techniques and training and upgrading vocational, technical and industrial education.

By 1916 the federal government established the National Research Council in order to assert a federal presence in research in Canada.

• (1040)

This basically continued along until after World War II when the federal government, with the assistance of what became the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, initiated a program whereby universities received $150 grants for each veteran who attended their institutions.

Therefore, the federal government, at the end of World War II, perhaps partly as a means of rewarding those who had gone to fight for Canada, acknowledged the importance of a broadly based, well-educated population. Surely, to a great extent, the success of the Canadian economy through the 1950s and 1960s reflects the fact that we had a higher than would otherwise have been the case influx of well-educated, well-trained people into the workforce, the trained veterans.

In typical Canadian fashion, we have had a whole series of royal commissions, task forces, studies, and special groups study the issue of post-secondary educational funding over the years. We had the Massey Commission in 1951. We had the study of the Bladen Commission sponsored by the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada. We have had a series of discussions and studies about this issue, most recently in this House. We had the Breau report in 1981. We have had the Senate study it and we have had the Nielsen task force.

What continually comes across when you back through those studies and the discussions and debates that occurred around them is the fact that it was acknowledged by everyone that post-secondary education was too important to the national interest to be only left as a responsibility of the provinces.

For example, on June 15, 1951, Prime Minister St. Laurent said:

> The Government has also reached the conclusion that it is in the national interest to take immediate action to assist the universities to perform functions which are quite essential to the country.

Partly, this evolved from the fact that universities had expanded their facilities to take care of the increased enrolment resulting from the veterans who were attending university following the war. In consequence, the expanded facilities had given rise to a greater cost of operation, larger teaching staffs, and so on. In order to maintain the increase in facilities after the veterans had gone through the system, federal participation became essential.

What began then was 16 years of payments of grants to support university education in Canada. Interestingly enough, these grants were made to all provinces except the province of Quebec, which declined to accept any federal participation in post-education within that province. In fact, the funds that would have gone to Quebec were turned over to the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada and held in trust in the interest of the institutions in that province until 1960 when an agreement was entered into between the governments of Quebec and Canada which allowed Quebec to make the grants directly from the provincial government to its institutions within the province.

All of this went through an evolutionary period until about 1966 and 1967 when part two of the Federal-Provincial Fiscal Arrangements Act was passed to allow the federal government to make the payments to provincial governments rather than to the institutions in the provinces through the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada.

In leading to this arrangement, we have a statement by the then Prime Minister of Canada, Lester Pearson, about the importance to Canada of post-secondary education. In 1966, he stated:

> Education is, under our constitution, a matter of provincial jurisdiction. The federal government does not dispute this or wish in any way to do so. At the same time, education is obviously a matter of profound importance to the economic and social growth of the country as a whole—While education itself is provincial, the federal government accepts primary responsibility for employment and economic activity generally in the country.

He went on to state:

> The preparation of our young people for productive participation in the labour force of the country is a matter of vital concern to all Canadians. We have also to keep in mind that young people of a particular province do not necessarily receive their education and training in their home province, and that people, after graduation, do not necessarily live out their lives and take up employment in the province where they received their education.

Again, it is a very important acknowledgement of the importance of education to the well-being—economic, social and cultural—of Canada as a whole, of Canada as a nation.

What happened under the 1967 act was that the federal government committed itself to provide to the provinces, for post-secondary education, either $15 per capita of the provincial population, or 50 per cent of eligible post-secondary education expenditures incurred in the province, whichever was higher.

From 1967, for 10 years the federal government was essentially paying half of the cost of post-secondary education in the provinces. There was some revision to that in 1972 when the federal government limited its annual increase under that provision to 15 per cent, and that was pro-rated among the provinces. However, the commitment at that time was clear. Half of the cost of running the university system was federal responsibility.

That created several problems which were overcome with the 1977 arrangement which is really what we are debating today. That program, the 50 per cent support program, tended to distort provincial spending priorities because it encouraged the provinces to spend what were effectively 50-cent dollars. Every time the province spent 50 cents, the federal government, by law, was committed to throw in another 50 cents. Provinces, especially British Columbia, Quebec and, to some extent, Ontario took advantage of those 50-cent dollars in a period of a very broad expansion of the post-secondary education.

The federal government, having undertaken to pay 50 per cent, had no control over the growth of these expenditures. That is a problem clearly for any government; a lack of control.

Third, the federal taxpayer not only had no control, but not necessarily any particular awareness of what the money was going to be spent on. By the time the program was in its last years, more than $10 billion was going from the federal government with no direct control.

The most critical problem with that 50 per cent program was that it required substantial auditing requirements. In other words, in order to ensure that the provinces were receiving the correct amount of money, the federal government had to investigate what they were spending. This led to all kinds of complications.

Some provinces, for example Ontario, had Grade 13. Other provinces did not. To make it fair, Grade 13 had to qualify for these 50-cent dollars. That meant an argument about how much of the secondary educational system was devoted to Grade 13. Was it pro-rated in some fashion, or how was it worked out? There were even simple problems such as whether Grade 13 students used school buses and, if so, was the federal government not responsible to pay 50 cents of every dollar that was spent on school bus transportation for secondary school students in Grade 13.

Then Quebec introduced the CEGIP system which also was a quasi post-secondary educational institution. Again, there were questions about how much the federal government was obliged to contribute to that.

• (1050)

This led to the Established Programs Financing arrangements of 1977, which is what we are debating the amendments of today. It provided for block funding for, among other things, post-secondary education to the provinces. Those arrangements to the provinces set in course the freedom of the provinces to put the money into whatever they wanted, so much so that, according to a study prepared for the Secretary of State in 1985, some of the provinces were actually spending less on post-secondary education, in terms of the operating costs, than the federal government was giving them.

In 1984-85, according to this study, the provinces of Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Manitoba and British Columbia were all spending less on operating their universities and colleges than they were receiving in grants from the federal government. Where the money was going was entirely up to the provincial governments. They could build roads or bridges. They could give it away. They could do whatever they wanted with it and let the post-secondary education system erode.

This itself is not a satisfactory arrangement. For this reason, I must confess to having some sympathy with the problem the federal government has in this area. To some extent, these arrangements have resulted not in nourishing the post-secondary education system, but in allowing the provincial governments an additional source

of revenue from the federal government. Meanwhile, across Canada we see many instances of the decline of our universities and colleges.

This latter point is one that we need to be chiefly concerned about. As I said earlier, the health and well-being of the post-secondary education system in Canada is of absolutely crucial importance to our ability as a nation to move forward in the global economy. Surely to goodness, the time has come in Canada—when the First Ministers succeed, as they must down the street in finding a solution to the fundamental problems of the Constitution—for the federal and provincial governments to find an arrangement between themselves to ensure that universities and colleges in Canada are adequately and fully funded.

If we do not do that, it will inevitably lead to a country in which our people are ill-educated and ill-equipped to compete in the 21st century.

All that being said, and recognizing the problems that the federal government has, in my view, it is not enough to go ahead and cut back on EPF right now. I think the Minister of Finance had it right back in 1982 when he said that this is not the appropriate battleground for federal-provincial relations. Many of the things that have been said since the announced cut-backs bring into stark relief the problems that are occurring in our university system in Canada.

In some of our larger universities, the class sizes are enormous. The problems now are totally different from what they were a generation ago. The problems now are technological problems. For example, how do we provide in a lecture hall adequate sound systems and lighting systems so that the vast number of students who have to sit in the lecture hall can see and hear what is being said or taught? We have a need for special lighting systems so that people at the back of enormous lecture theatres can see things that are being written either on over-head projectors or in the odd case on blackboards.

In fact, students in many classes, in many subject areas, are having to go early to their lectures in order to get a seat in the lecture hall.

I am from the generation where we went late, as a matter of religion.

The Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada has stated: "It is no secret that overcrowding, meagre library budgets, outdated laboratories, deteriorating physical plants and demoralization of staff and students are all too common on Canadian campuses today. Faced with a funding squeeze, several universities have adopted enrolment restrictions and others are seriously considering such measures".

Since 1977-78, when the current EPF arrangements went into effect, the university system has received a reduction of about 20 per cent in its support per student. Not only are these facts a harbinger of ill things to come in Canada's future if we do not address them because they are of critical importance, but they also directly contradict the kinds of things this government has said.

For example, in August 1989 the Prime Minister stated: "This government will carry its fair share of the burden to ensure that all young Canadians receive a first-class education as they confront a world-class challenge". He is right. Is this the way to go about it, to cut back the one remaining method there is of assisting the provinces in adequately funding education?

The government, I am sure, is going to say that I have not got it quite right, because after all the government does fund research in the universities through the granting councils. Fair enough. The National Sciences and Engineering Research Council, the Medical Research Council and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council are very important. I wish I knew how much they were going to be funded next year. The government has not told them what it is going to do about the matching grants policy that expires this year.

On top of that, there are situations where the universities are going broke because of grants from these entities or from problems arising out of the network of Centres of Excellence. Why? Because the granting councils will not participate in funding the overhead for the research. In other words, they will not participate in the costs of laboratories and so on when the research grants are given.

On the one hand, the cut-back in EPF and the failure of the provinces to put what should be put into post-secondary education is stripping the universities of the resources they need to maintain first-class institutions with good equipment and top flight teachers to make

sure we have the qualified personnel we need to go into the future.

On the other hand, the money that is coming into research is inadequate to make sure that the universities have the infrastructures and overhead costs covered to carry on the research they are being funded to perform.

We get many examples of what this means. According to an article in the Hamilton *Spectator* on October 18, 1989:

> Tight financial situations and increasing enrolment at universities like McMaster mean faculty are forced to teach more students with fewer resources—
>
> The result is "undergraduate students at McMaster are no longer receiving a decent undergraduate education".
>
> As an example, Dr. Maurer, a psychology professor, said when she came to the university in 1973 she taught a third year-class of 20 students. This year that class has expanded to 170 students.
>
> "Grading 170 10-page essays is like reading War and Peace," she said. "It's clearly impossible."

I suggest that this problem is one that transcends federal-provincial arguments. It is of such critical importance to Canada that we must address it in the context of an over-all review of how we fund post secondary education in Canada.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I will now interrupt the hon. member. He will be able to continue after Question Period.

[*Translation*]

It being eleven o'clock, pursuant to Standing Order 30(5), the House will now proceed to Members' Statements pursuant to Standing Order 31.

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S. O. 31

[*Translation*]

ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Gabriel Desjardins (Témiscamingue): Madam Speaker, this week for the nineteenth consecutive year is National Environment Week, from June 3 to June 9. I need hardly recall how much the environmental awareness of Canadians has grown in the past few years.

All governments have a duty to show leadership in this area and promote all environmental initiatives so that, by the year 2000, Canada will have the best relationship with the environment of all industrialized countries.

In this connection, I would like to draw your attention to an announcement made today by the federal government that $100,000 has been earmarked under the Environmental Partners Program for a major project in the Rouyn-Noranda region. The project consists in placing 28 containers in as many schools to provide for recovery of recyclable waste.

Madam Speaker, this is a concrete example of co-operation between government and the community to provide for better management of our environment and also to ensure that our young people, the elite of tomorrow, acquire good environmental habits.

* * *

[*English*]

CANADIAN ENVIRONMENT WEEK

Mrs. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West): Madam Speaker, for Environment Week the government produced this beautiful 29-page book on what Canadians can do to help the environment.

One of the useful bits of information it contains is that a single growing tree can absorb up to 21 kilograms of carbon dioxide in a year. A major cause of destruction of trees is, of course, the excessive use of paper.

How well does Environment Canada respect its own admonition to "get involved"?

Of the 29 pages in this book, two are the covers which are on glossy paper, not recyclable; one page contains only two lines of type; there are seven pages which are blank, except for a half-line title, and not one of these pages is printed on the back.

I urge the government to heed its own message, get involved, use paper wisely and save a few trees.

* * *

CANADIAN ENVIRONMENT WEEK

Mr. J. W. Bud Bird (Fredericton—York—Sunbury): Madam Speaker, I am also pleased to speak this morning about the environment and to join my colleague from the environment committee in bringing to the attention of Canadians the realities of Canadian Environment Week for 1990.

I am certainly proud to represent a government which is committed to the environmental imperative as a fundamental principle of its mandate. Indeed, government decision-making has changed dramatically, as environmental considerations gain equal status with economic factors.

Both streams of policy—environment and economics—are critical for resolution before action occurs, if we are ever to truly practise the compelling concept of sustainable development.

The Green Plan consultations which are now being held across the country, constitute a responsible and comprehensive process to bring all Canadians into Canada's environmental movement. Each of us must be a part of this process. It cannot be decreed or imposed upon us, it must be shared. We must all understand the environmental implications of our daily lives.

The Green Plan program arrives in my riding of Fredericton next Monday and Tuesday where citizens will have the opportunity to help build our national environmental consensus. By developing the Green Plan together, we shall ensure its ultimate success which is so essential not just for the sake of our own future but for—

Madam Deputy Speaker: The hon. member's time is up.

* * *

[*Translation*]

PERLEY BRIDGE

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Madam Speaker, on May 31, the hon. member for Argenteuil—Papineau (Ms. Bourgault) went to Grenville, in her riding, to make an announcement about the Perley Bridge on behalf of the President of the Treasury Board.

She said that Treasury Board had given the Minister of Public Works a mandate to negotiate with Ontario and Quebec representatives with a view to eventually building a new bridge. One wonders whether the Department of Public Works, which has been negotiating this dossier for the last two years, has been doing so illegally, Madam Speaker.

The hon. member also announced, and this made more sense, that funds designated for the requisite environmental assessment would be released following an agreement among the parties concerned. The hon. member also indicated that a three-party meeting was to be held today, June 8, and that the parties agreed that these funds would be released at that time.

The President of the Treasury Board should immediately authorize spending on the environmental study, even if federal-provincial negotiations are still in progress. Otherwise, we may all be faced with a crisis and have to scramble to keep up with events.

* * *

[*English*]

ABORTION

Mr. Jack Whittaker (Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt): Madam Speaker, this week doctors in Alberta joined doctors in Manitoba and Nova Scotia to say that they will stop providing full reproductive health services as soon as their waiting list is exhausted because of the government's new restrictive abortion legislation.

One doctor said: "I don't need the hassles." Another said: "I am being forced into this situation by a crummy law. As an individual I cannot fight the government. We have all tried. It is now out of our hands."

Other doctors, worried about criminal prosecutions and jail sentences, will require signed statements, witnesses and expensive psychiatric evaluations.

The government's unjust abortion legislation not only violates women's basic constitutional rights, it will result in fewer services for women who need them. This unjust law not only reduces Canadian women to second-class citizens in their own country, it tries to make criminals out of women and their doctors.

This unjust law not only violates Canada's U.N. commitments to promote women's equality, it deprives women of full personhood.

This unjust law not only ignores the real issues of unwanted pregnancies, it does nothing to promote family planning, better contraceptive research, and more supportive services for women and their children.

Madam Speaker, women are not children. Doctors are not criminals. But this government is guilty of depriving women of their basic rights.

* * *

THE SENATE

Mr. Garth Turner (Halton—Peel): Madam Speaker, there is a place in this very building which they call the red chamber. In the Senate they pay unelected senators $62,000 a year. Last year this amounted to 68 days of work, half the number of days of two years previously.

But $62,000 is not all. There is also $9,800 in expenses, and now an extra $153 a day for every Senator showing up for a meeting.

Canadians should know who their tax dollars are supporting. I think we should have a Senator-of-the-Week contest.

The envelope, please.

This week's senator is Michael Pitfield. He is a former civil servant, with a civil service pension. He is an employee of the huge Power Corporation. He is a Senator. He earns $62,000 a year. And now he gets $153 more.

Mr. Senator, welcome to the trough.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I believe that talking disrespectfully about the other place is not really in order.

* * *

LEBANESE REFUGEES

Mr. Mark Assad (Gatineau—La Lièvre): Madam Speaker, last week I appealed to the Minister of Employment and Immigration on behalf of Lebanese refugees who are being returned via the United States to war-torn Lebanon.

For the first time Christian and Moslem leaders representing a multitude of denominations have joined together to plead on behalf of the refugees.

I personally know some of these leaders and they are profoundly distressed by the situation of the people in Lebanon. They are calling upon Canadians who have a great reputation for humanitarian values and their government to open their hearts to these victims of war in their country, perpetrated by some of their neighbours.

S. O. 31

MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Mr. Ken James (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Labour): Madam Speaker, this past hour the 11 First Ministers began their sixth day of discussion to resolve the impasse on Meech Lake. At no time have these negotiations been more important. Few Canadians would disagree that the future of this great country of ours, as we know it, is at stake. They are watching and waiting anxiously to hear of success.

One such citizen is Tony Pacheco of Sarnia, Ontario. Yesterday he sent me a letter from which I would like to quote:

> We are a country built on geographic, cultural, ethnic, and political diversity and adversity. Certainly we are proud of and celebrate our ability to forge a common purpose and still respect and cultivate our differences.
>
> Accommodation, tolerance and compromise are the historical pillars of this country and must continue to be if Canada is to exist.

I am hopeful that in current discussions our First Ministers can embrace these principles. For his part, the Prime Minister continues to demonstrate his commitment and leadership throughout this process.

I, like a majority of Canadians and the members of this House, wish him and the premiers success in today's negotiations of constitutional change.

* * *

TRANSPORT

Mr. Chris Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing): Madam Speaker, the Government of Canada yesterday decided to risk the health of air passengers and airline employees on the flimsiest of evidence. Although the Non-smokers' Rights Act passed with the support of all three political parties, the Minister of Transport has elected to ignore the will of Parliament and the Canadian people. He has decided to protect Canadian airlines from their own failure to market a unique product, smoke-free international flights, by endangering the health of thousands of Canadians. By delaying the implementation of the smoking ban on overseas flights of more than six hours, the minister is setting back the cause of public health and is discriminating against Canadian workers.

• (1110)

Canada has been a world leader in protecting employees and the public from the carcinogenic effects of second-hand smoke. Rather than convince the world of the benefits of breathing clean Canadian air on Canadian airlines, the minister has accepted the airlines' argument that they will lose money, even though no evidence has been produced by them to demonstrate this.

Tobacco is the only legal product that injures and kills when used exactly as directed. I call on the Minister of Nation Health and Welfare to explain the serious health dangers from tobacco smoke to his colleague, the Minister of Transport, so that he will act to protect all Canadians and re-establish Canada as an example to the world of the advantages of butting out.

* * *

THE SENATE

Mr. Lee Richardson (Calgary Southeast): Madam Speaker, enough is enough. Earlier this week the Liberals who dominate the Senate voted to reward themselves, over and above their generous salaries, by paying themselves $153 every time they show up for work.

Canadians were rightly outraged, as so was I and every member of the Conservative caucus, including the Finance Minister, who correctly labelled the Senate's actions obscene. The so-called rationale that went into that proposal defies logic and is an insult to every hard-working Canadian.

When I read of the senators' plan I thought I had heard it all. Then along came the member for Kamloops who, in an astounding twist of the facts, accused the government yesterday of supporting the senators' proposal—

Madam Deputy Speaker: I am sorry, I cannot let the member go on. The hon. member for Mount Royal.

* * *

EMERGENCY RADIO LICENCE FEES

Mrs. Sheila Finestone (Mount Royal): Madam Speaker, it seems this government's grab for cash in the deficit battle knows no bounds. It continues regardless of the human and local impact. They have moved now to tax public safety by charging volunteer fire-fighters in municipalities exorbitant 1,000 per cent increases and more for licences to operate emergency radios. In my own riding, the city of Côte St. Luc could face an 1,100 per cent fee increase because of the government's action. My colleague from Dartmouth has told us of the incredible burden this places on volunteer fire-fighters in his own area.

I warned back in 1986 that the government's Bill C-3 could lead to this but the former communications minister assured Canadians on December 1, 1986, that the changes as they affect municipalities, volunteer fire-fighters and fire departments would not be proceeded with. That has become another hollow promise. We can only hope this budget action does not cause the reduction of emergency fire, ambulance and other services.

Not only has this government imposed the highest income taxes ever, but it now has decided to tax public safety. Canadians are saying, "This has just got to stop. Enough is enough."

* * *

[*Translation*]

THE SENATE

Mr. André Plourde (Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup): Madam Speaker, a recent decision by the Senate, with its Liberal majority, to give senators a tax-free salary increase is incredible.

At a time when the federal government is trying to control public spending and keep a tight rein on inflation, the Canadian Senate has once again demonstrated it does not live in the real world.

It is absolutely incredible to see senators giving themselves $153 per day in compensation, in addition to their salaries, especially when we see how the Senate obstructs the bills of a democratically elected government.

Madam Speaker, I think the government must reject this increase. In fact, I think the Senate deserves a cut in salary or should disappear altogether.

* * *

[*English*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Lynn Hunter (Saanich—Gulf Islands): Madam Speaker, the United Nations environment program report, issued this week, once again raises the serious question of child mortality in the developing world. Pollution and other environment-related problems cause the deaths of 14 million children under the age of five each year. In the developing world alone 4.2 million

children die annually from respiratory diseases caused by air pollution.

Imagine if you can, Madam Speaker, half the population of Canada dying before Christmas from poisoned air and water, preventable diseases or lack of food. Such a situation would be unacceptable here, and it is unacceptable elsewhere.

We have heard the word "crisis" used a great deal this week. The real crisis is in the developing world where 1.4 billion children live in abject poverty. The time is long past for discussions and debate on the issue of environmental protection. We have the means to inoculate and feed the world's children. What we lack is the political will to do it.

In the minute it has taken to make this statement, 27 more children have died. We must act and act swiftly.

* * *

THE SENATE

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Madam Speaker, during the last few days, there has been a lot of misinformation spread concerning the Senate's proposed pay increase of $153 per day.

Everyone knows that the government controls the order of business in the other place. One of its cabinet ministers is the House Leader there. Yet, who proposed the pay increase? Was it our former colleague, Senator MacEachen?

Some hon. members: No.

Mr. Milliken: Was it the NDP senator, Brother Lawson?

Some hon. members: No.

Mr. Milliken: Was it a Liberal senator?

Some hon. members: No.

Some hon. members: Order.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please. Oral Question Period.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[*English*]

MANUFACTURING SECTOR

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister.

This morning, Statistics Canada reported that 43,000 Canadians lost jobs in manufacturing last month. This brings to 120,000 the number of Canadians who have lost manufacturing jobs under the government since January of this year alone.

Why is the government deliberately pursuing a policy of destroying manufacturing jobs in the country?

Hon. John McDermid (Minister of State (Privatization and Regulatory Affairs)): Madam Speaker, the government is not following the policy of deliberately destroying jobs. That is a statement that is completely inaccurate.

Five and a half years ago, the hon. member and his party predicted some disaster as far as employment is concerned when the Government of Canada brought out a program for renewal in our economy. The Minister of Finance presented that some five and a half years ago.

In that period of time, we have had unprecedented growth in the economy and in employment. Our record is very good.

At this time, the economy has slowed down somewhat. There is still growth, albeit slow growth. Over the last year, we still created a net 139,000 new jobs. Although the economy has slowed down, we are on our plan to get interest rates and inflation down. Once we get those pressures down, we will see the economy moving again in Canada.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, this reply is simply incredible. According to Statistics Canada, an agency of this government, in May 43,000 workers lost their jobs in the manufacturing industry. Since January, 120,000 jobs were lost this year.

I want to ask the minister whether this is a deliberate policy on the part of the government, and when the government will change its policy and introduce measures that will create manufacturing jobs instead of destroying them.

[*English*]

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Industry, Science and Technology): Madam Speaker, I would never have believed that the Leader of the Opposition would give me the chance to ask Canadians: How can he say what he says?

We want to remove a federal sales tax of 13.5 per cent that totally disturbed the manufacturing sector of the economy of Canada, and he is against the GST.

[*Translation*]

You are against the Goods and Services Tax. We want to remove the old sales tax to help Canadian manufacturers be more competitive, but no way! Madam Speaker, this party is against any measure that would let the government boost Canada's economy.

• (1120)

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, no wonder the government has no credibility, considering the reply given by the Minister of Industry, Science and Technology. It was he and his government who increased the existing tax four times since they came to power, a tax which according to him is harming our economy, and now they want to introduce a GST that will increase inflation in this country!

[*English*]

Yesterday, Robert Blair, chairman of Nova Corporation, said at the meeting of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association that the government's "crude and cumbersome" economic policy "has driven up the value of the Canadian dollar, hammered our exporters, and is endangering the nation's standard of living".

Will the minister admit that his policies are endangering the country's standard of living, and that the people who have to bear the brunt of his government's mismanagement are the 120,000 Canadians who have lost good manufacturing jobs since January?

Why does the minister and his government continue with these policies when he knows they are creating massive job losses and are expected to cause the loss of thousands more at plants such as Kelsey-Hayes in Windsor over the coming months?

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Industry, Science and Technology): Madam Speaker, I would like to go back to what the Leader of the Opposition said about the manufacturing reality of Canada.

He knows very well that, at the present time, the international economy is going toward globalization. Because a lot of Canadian industries have to rationalize their operations, we face a lot of operation on that level. As a Canadian and as a minister of the government, I would hope that the member agrees that one of the ways that we have to help the manufacturing sector is through decreasing the federal sales tax.

The hon. member does not agree with that. He does not agree that we can totally remove the manufacturers' sales tax to put in a goods and services tax, which will be applied not only to Canadian manufacturers. I do not understand him, but I know what the economy that they had in 1980-84 gave to Canadians.

* * *

[*Translation*]

MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister and concerns the constitutional impasse. Negotiations are entering their sixth day. The atmosphere is pretty negative, and Canadians are very worried about the course of events. I want to ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether he could give the House a progress report on the negotiations and let us know whether, should the impasse continue, the plan is to continue the negotiations over the weekend.

[*English*]

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, obviously the discussions of the First Ministers have reached a critical stage.

As the hon. member is aware, I am sure, the talks did reconvene this morning. I am satisfied that there is still a strong will to reach a satisfactory conclusion by all First Ministers and others who are involved in the process.

We can only hope that their deliberations this morning will result in further progress toward reaching a satisfactory conclusion.

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): I have a supplementary question, Madam Speaker.

Will the Deputy Prime Minister assure us that the Prime Minister will give a full accounting of the situation to the House of Commons today, or whenever the negotiations are terminated, even if it means calling back the House of Commons during the weekend?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Madam Speaker, that has always been the Prime Minister's intention.

On previous occasions when these discussions took place, at the first opportunity, he sought to come before the House and to report in full detail. I have no reason to believe that that would not be the case on this occasion.

* * *

MANUFACTURING SECTOR

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Industry, Science and Technology as well.

As the minister responsible for the manufacturing sector in the country, does he not have a sense that in fact there is systematic destruction of our manufacturing base taking place right across the country? Since November, 1988 when the Conservatives were elected again, 183,000 manufacturing jobs have been eliminated. The minister can suggest all sorts of red herrings such as the manufacturers' sales tax.

Is he not prepared to admit clearly that his ministry has not taken action to protect the jobs of Canadians in the manufacturing sector and has not been able to take action against the present government's policies which are so detrimental to the manufacturing sector in Canada?

Hon. John McDermid (Minister of State (Privatization and Regulatory Affairs)): Madam Speaker, the hon. member is entirely inaccurate in what he is saying.

For example, there was just a major announcement in his own community of Windsor where Chrysler is investing some $400 million in two or three plants to upgrade and bring up to standard, which will preserve and increase employment for people in his own constituency. He knows that. For him to stand up and make a statement in the House as he did is totally wrong.

The other problem in the manufacturing sector right now is that the wage demands being asked now are inflationary. We are seeing it, and the Minister of Finance has said it many times. They are forcing Canadians to be uncompetitive.

I draw the hon. member's attention to the fact that labour costs grew 8.2 per cent last year, while productivity increased only 1.7 per cent. That is why we are uncompetitive. Wage demands must get more in line with productivity if we are going to compete. That is the message that is out there. It is inflationary to have an 8.2 per cent increase in labour costs. It causes the problems we are experiencing at the present time.

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): I have a supplementary question, Madam Speaker. I would just say that the minister should get real.

According to the latest *Economist*, the rate of growth of industrial production in the country is the worst among the G-7 countries for last year. We are not succeeding.

The minister has mentioned my community. Let me ask a question with respect to my community. Yesterday, over 1,500 people from Windsor, from right across the community, protested against the shutdown of Kelsey-Hayes. It was a shutdown of a company which made $8 million last year and yet has shifted three of its production lines to Missouri.

Will the government use the two million shares it owns in Kelsey-Hayes and Varity Corporation to see that these jobs are protected and saved for the future of our community?

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Industry, Science and Technology): Madam Speaker, I agree with the hon. member who knows very well that Varity had a covenant in that it had to protect, maintain, or create jobs in its

companies. I expect that the company will live up to its commitment.

The question is not that jobs have to be protected specifically at Kelsey. Jobs have to be protected by Varity within the plants belonging to Varity. The hon. member knows that very well. The covenant will be respected.

I believe that, as far as the headquarters is concerned, the 1986 agreement determined that the number of jobs will be protected and that will be done. However, the company does not have to give the guarantee that it will be done at Kelsey, specifically.

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Madam Speaker, the point is that this company has an important government shareholding in it. In the past, the minister responsible for small business said that the shareholding would be used to help protect jobs in this company. It has not been.

Is the minister not prepared to listen to those 1,500 people who in the streets of Windsor yesterday said: "Our jobs are being hit and our families are being hurt"? Is he not prepared to listen? Is he not prepared to act for the sake of our country? Do something.

• (1130)

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Industry, Science and Technology): Madam Speaker, I hope the member from Windsor does not want to give the House the impression that we are not sensitive to people who lose their jobs. We are as sensitive as the hon. member. We do not have the magical answers that the hon. member seems to have.

I never said that we would not be open to listening to those people.

My friend knows very well that a great many steel wheels are being replaced with aluminum wheels. This is something that creates problems in that type of industry. We are sensitive to that. We are working with the company.

We are very sensitive to what happened to the workers. It would be more sensitive to look to having an industry which could continue to be competitive with industries across the world.

ROUTE CANADA

Mr. Russell MacLellan (Cape Breton—The Sydneys): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport.

When Manfred Ruhland and his partners were given Route Canada they paid $29 million, none of which was their own money. Then the government turned around and asked CN to give Route Canada $40 million so that it could lay off 1,500 workers. What a deal!

How can the government possibly say that it made a good deal when it gave away $11 million more than it got in return for a $100-million corporation?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, there are a lot of allegations and a lot of figures in the hon. member's question. Let us put everything in perspective.

The purchasers of Route Canada paid $29 million for a company with an asset base of $40 million or $50 million. The company was losing $40 million to $50 million a year. That is not much of a return on investment in any business, in any country. That is what happened.

In the efforts, CN, the company which sold the asset base, felt that selling it as a going concern would give those employees a better opportunity to see if they could make a go of it. Unfortunately, they did not make a go of it. Everybody regrets that. Nobody takes any pleasure in people losing jobs. But that is part of the competitive system that we all believe in.

CN came to the assistance of some employees who wanted to take their pensions, and they did so. I do not think CN should be chastised for that either.

Mr. Russell MacLellan (Cape Breton—The Sydneys): Madam Speaker, Route Canada which was given $40 million and which got rid of 1,500 employees still could not make a go of it.

During the election campaign the government was afraid that Route Canada truckers were going to disrupt the election campaign, so it got CN to carry out negotiations with them. When the election campaign ended so did the negotiations.

Why did the government lead Route Canada workers to believe that negotiations were being carried out in

good faith when all the government wanted to do was to shut them up until the election campaign was over?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, I think what we have to decide here is whether we take into account the unfounded allegation of my friend or a letter written on CN's letterhead to *The Toronto Star* in an effort to put in writing the facts as they are, not on an unfounded allegation.

In that letter it is stated: "In the process we negotiated special agreements to help ease the impact on employees not required to operate the new company profitably. We have met every one of our commitments to employees, pensioners, customers and communities, including the payment of $23 million for separation and related costs of former CN Route employees".

I ask the House and everybody watching to compare that with the unfounded allegation of my friend.

Mr. Joe Comuzzi (Thunder Bay—Nipigon): Madam Speaker, I would like to follow up on the question that I asked in the House yesterday. It is with respect to the sworn statement of Manfred Ruhland, who stated that he had dealings in this transaction with the then Minister of Transport, Donald Mazankowski.

Will the Deputy Prime Minister tell the House if he had any dealings with Manfred Ruhland before the sale of CN Route, during the negotiating process or after CN Route was sold to Manfred Ruhland?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): I believe, Madam Speaker, that my friend has inadvertently misread what the actual question in the alleged—heavy on the "alleged"—affidavit of the individual concerned is. I do not think he did it intentionally.

It states: "Who represented CN in the negotiations and sale of TRC?" That is not as put by my hon. friend.

If he is going to read all the names, I would hope he will pay attention to the word "maybe" in the sixth line.

Mr. Joe Comuzzi (Thunder Bay—Nipigon): Madam Speaker, I have read the document fairly thoroughly—

Some hon. members: Fairly!

Mr. Comuzzi: I appreciate the comments of my friend with respect to that transaction. I might say that I am very pleased to hear the answer that I suspect I heard, that is, that there were no dealings. That just goes to show that this company was sold to a person, a most undesirable person, who took this company and destroyed the lives of 1,900 people.

Since we cannot always deal with legal obligations between parties, does the government not now have the moral obligation because of this transaction to look after the affairs and the pension benefits that rightly belong to those people who devoted so many years of their lives to CN Rail?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, I want to start off by thanking my friend for withdrawing the allegation of yesterday. I think it is important to this whole affair that that be done. I appreciate that.

I think we should look at the letter in total. It lays out the facts of what kind of money was being lost. I have read a previous statement to the House so I shan't read the same statement. There is another statement that is very important. It is: "Our alternative to the sale was to close down CN Route and lay off all staff in 1985". To lay off all staff and close down was the alternative.

The letter continues: "We chose to sell to purchasers who agreed to use their best efforts to continue in business as a national common carrier. As a result, this is what happened".

"CN and no one else decided to sell its subsidiary after discussions with more than 30 companies beginning in 1985".

This letter is on CN letterhead, and I will table it. It continues: "Our negotiations on the sale were held directly with David Fingold representing himself and his brother Paul as principal purchasers. Their financial credentials were very solid".

* * *

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Ms. Joy Langan (Mission—Coquitlam): Madam Speaker, three times in the recent past my leader and I have raised questions in this House with both the

Minister of Finance and the Minister of National Health and Welfare about what the government plans to do to ensure that GST rebates to those on welfare will not be deducted by the provinces.

Three times we have received vague and sanctimonious answers. My provincial colleagues have been asking the same questions of ministers in their provinces.

My question is more specific. It is directed to the Minister of State for Finance.

Has the deputy minister been instructed to clarify this concern with the provincial governments at the upcoming Deputy Finance Ministers' Conference?

Hon. John McDermid (Minister of State (Privatization and Regulatory Affairs)): Madam Speaker, I will have to take that question as notice and discuss it with the Minister of Finance. We will get an answer for the member.

• (1140)

Ms. Joy Langan (Mission—Coquitlam): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to get yet another succinct reply.

I would then like to ask this question of whoever over there answers these questions. Will they give an undertaking that they will attempt to get from the provincial counterparts to the Minister of Finance an assurance in writing that the millions of Canadian on assistance will not have their GST rebates clawed back and that the matter will not be left in the laps of the gods, who in this case are the provincial finance ministers?

Hon. John McDermid (Minister of State (Privatization and Regulatory Affairs)): Madam Speaker, the Minister of Finance has expressed his concern many, many times about the behaviour of provincial governments when benefits are provided by the federal government. There are certain jurisdictions in this country that give provinces and the federal government certain powers. We are all becoming very much more aware of that in the discussions that are proceeding at the present time.

The Minister of Finance has been very vocal in his concern that the benefits that flow from the federal government to beneficiaries in this country of ours are received by them and are not taxed back by the provincial government. He will continue to make those representations in the strongest possible manner.

MANUFACTURING SECTOR

Mr. Jim Peterson (Willowdale): Madam Speaker, can the Minister of Industry, Science and Technology give us the name of one Canadian manufacturer who has phoned him up and said: "Keep up the good work. You are doing a great job, Minister. Your high interest rate, high dollar policies are just what we need to compete"?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Industry, Science and Technology): Even in French, Madam Speaker—excuse me, obviously it would take me far too long to give the hon. member all the facts although he must be familiar with the situation that prevailed before 1984. I believe the government's record for industrial development has been excellent. The results are there. I repeat, we are now in a phase where Canadian companies must adjust to international competition and, as a result, are restructuring their operations and must also deal with anti-inflation policies. We are coping. However, I am inclined to think the hon. member was being funny when he asked his question.

[*English*]

Mr. Jim Peterson (Willowdale): Madam Speaker, this government's industrial policy is not funny. It involves cuts to R and D and cuts to employment and training. It involves a high interest rate, high dollar policy that is driving Canadian manufacturing jobs south of the border, just so that they can compete under free trade.

What is the result? The result is that since free trade we have lost 172,000 key manufacturing jobs.

Is it a deliberate policy of the government to drive Canadian jobs south of the border? When will it realize that its economic policies are destroying our future? When will it wake up and stand up for Canada?

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Industry, Science and Technology): Mr. Speaker, it is amazing that we should hear such comments in the House of Commons. Even the Premier of Ontario is promoting a free trade agreement in the United States and all across the world.

The Royal Bank said: "Trade deal fuelling investment jobs". "Free trade helping Canadian business" was another statement made. We have a lot of examples.

The premises are wrong. We want to put money into employment. The bill is being stalled in the Senate. It is a bill for money and for jobs.

The Liberals are not serious. They never had a policy. We have sound industrial and economic policies.

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BILL C-21

Hon. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister or the Government House Leader.

As the minister knows, the Senate, in order to break the impasse with the House of Commons has introduced a—

Mr. Valcourt: They voted themselves an increase. That will help the impasse. Your Liberal friends now have an incentive to come and sit down and do their jobs.

Mr. McKnight: They are looking for more days of work so that they can get the $153.

Mr. Allmand: Madam Speaker, as I said, the Senate, in order to break the impasse with the House of Commons, has introduced a motion to refer Bill C-21 on unemployment insurance to a conference between the two Houses, which is the established way of dealing with such differences between the two Houses.

Mr. Valcourt: They have a self-interest now. We are paying them to sit down.

Mr. Allmand: As a matter of fact, there have been 10 such conferences since Confederation.

I want to ask the minister responsible if the government is now ready to respond to the Senate and participate in such a conference to resolve the differences between the two Houses.

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Madam Speaker, you can tell from the reaction to that question that we on this side are tremendous admirers of that other place.

We think they have been acting very responsibly, particularly recently.

The Senate has sent back its amendments to Bill C-21 which, incidentally, would have added $2 billion to the deficit. This House rejected those amendments and sent them back.

The Senate has sent back a message insisting on those amendments, something that is questionable, certainly from a propriety point of view, since it is this House that establishes the fiscal policy of the country and not that House.

This House has sent back an answer. It is now up to the Senate to respond.

The hon. member is asking us to rely on some arcane procedure that has never been used successfully in this country, one which has not been used since 1947.

It is unconscionable to me for the senators to continue to insist that they have the right to deny the opportunities that Bill C-21 provides to those who are unemployed, pregnant women and so on, and to demand that we take on an additional $2 billion in deficit at a time when the deficit is already causing tremendous pressures on the inflation rate and so on.

I think the responsible thing for the Senate to do is pass Bill C-21 now.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce): Madam Speaker, there is overwhelming public opinion in this country against the government with respect to Bill C-21. There has been overwhelming testimony before two committees which opposes the bill. We do not accept the argument of the minister.

The established practice for resolving differences between the two Houses, and it has been done 10 times since Confederation, is to have such conferences. Am I to understand from the minister that the government refuses to enter into a conference to resolve the differences with respect to this bill? Is that the answer of the government with respect to this serious issue?

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Madam Speaker, the hon. member is wrong in terms of the views

of the public. Sixty-seven per cent of the public is in favour of using UIC funds for retraining, for example.

He is wrong if he suggests that the public is opposed to the reforms of the UI system that are in the bill. I think he should check his facts.

The fact that the Senate went around and heard the same group 200 times does not mean that it somehow reflects public opinion. There is something a little bit obscene about an appointed body saying that it represents the people.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Andre: If senators want to represent the people, then they should run for office and be accountable.

The reality is that every Senate scholar in recent memory who is still alive has acknowledged that Senates not behave the way this Senate is behaving.

The conferences the hon. members talks about were last held in 1947. None of them were successful. If the member were to read Beauchesne's sixth edition he would see what he thinks is the required procedure is no longer the required procedure.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

* * *

• (1150)

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Lynn Hunter (Saanich—Gulf Islands): Madam Speaker, now that we have wasted more time of the House during Question Period—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Ms. Hunter: My question is for the minister responsible for the environment today, if we have one.

We on this side of the House have been calling for action in the environmental assessment review process. At present, the Export Development Corporation does not require environmental review when considering the approval of export loans.

In committee the president of the EDC stated: "If EDC were required to apply environmental standards that other export credit agencies were not, the Canadian exporter would lose the deal".

Does the minister, whoever that might be, accept the view that the bottom line is more important than the global environment?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Madam Speaker, the minister, whoever that might be, is me.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Crosbie: The Export Development Corporation is a body set up to assist Canada in its exports. It makes loans to foreign buyers and ensures exports against various risks. It assists in providing jobs here in Canada so that the orders sold to foreign buyers, assisted by our finances, are purchased from Canada so that jobs are created in Canada.

Why is it that the New Democratic Party seems to be totally against anything that is to help workers here in Canada be employed, to be creative and to be paid good wages? That is the whole purpose of the EDC.

Mr. Peterson: Then why did you cut it back by $100 million?

Mr. Crosbie: Madam Speaker, I wish Premier Peterson were as voluble as his brother. He makes as much sense as his brother, but he is not quite as voluble.

Mr. Peterson: You have some wonderful brothers, John.

Mr. Crosbie: I wish I had more of them, Madam Speaker.

If I might continue, Madam Speaker, the EDC fully complies with current federal environmental legislation which does not oblige it to undertake such screenings.

Who are we to say that we will have extra-territorial jurisdiction and to decide what projects should and should not go ahead in other countries? The effrontery of it is amazing.

Ms. Lynn Hunter (Saanich—Gulf Islands): Madam Speaker, my interpretation of that answer is that the economic priorities of the government take precedence over environmental priorities. We have all known that for a long time.

The Export Development Corporation administers a multi-million dollar budget. The list of environmentally harmful projects in which the EDC is involved is as long as my arm.

It supports CANDU nuclear reactors in Argentina and Mexico, hydroelectric projects in China and India, pulp and paper mills in Indonesia.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is there a question?

Ms. Hunter: My question is this. Will the government commit itself today to including EDC in the pending environmental assessment review process?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Madam Speaker, there will be new environmental legislation coming before the House shortly. Of course the policy that it contains will be dealt with then.

I am not surprised by the question from the hon. member because that hon. member was the one who said yesterday that Newfoundlanders were not of sufficient intelligence and qualifications to be able to take advantage of the Hibernia development and to fulfil the jobs that would—

Some hon. members: Shame.!

Ms. Hunter: Point of order, Madam Speaker.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Winnipeg—St. James.

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JUSTICE

Mr. John Harvard (Winnipeg St. James): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice.

There has been yet another dramatic development in the David Milgaard case. One of the chief Crown witnesses now says that he lied at the trial 20 years ago. Ron Wilson says he was pressured by police and manipulated by them.

I now want to know whether the minister takes this latest revelation seriously. I understand that the RCMP contacted Wilson only hours after he went public.

Can the minister confirm to this House that the RCMP and an official from the Department of Justice will be interviewing Ron Wilson in the next few days?

Hon. Kim Campbell (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Madam Speaker, I cannot make that specific undertaking because I am not aware of those specific circumstances.

I would point out that this is the hon. member who has been pressing me to make a decision on this case when in fact clearly all of the evidence that the applicant wishes to bring forward has not been brought forward. I would say that after the hon. member's last question, which I think was on about June 5, on June 6 counsel for Mr. Milgaard identified a former trial witness whom he said had relevant evidence, and this may be the person to whom he is referring.

We are taking into account all of the evidence which counsel for Mr. Milgaard wishes to bring forward. When we are assured that the case is complete from their point of view, the review will be completed and I will make the adjudication as Minister of Justice.

Mr. John Harvard (Winnipeg St. James): Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is for the same minister.

As the minister well knows, Ron Wilson is not the only Crown witness to have changed his story. Another witness recanted on the stand at the trial and was declared a hostile witness. In fact none of the testimony of the Crown witnesses appears to be solid at this time. This whole case against Milgaard is unravelling before our eyes.

I want to know from the minister whether the Department of Justice has interviewed all the Crown witnesses in the last few weeks or months and, if not, why not?

Hon. Kim Campbell (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Madam Speaker, the Department of Justice has reviewed all the evidence that has been brought to its attention. A report is being prepared for my consideration. I will review it.

I do not believe that this House is the proper place to re-enact the trial of David Milgaard. I want to ensure that the case that he and his counsel bring forward to me—and it is a very serious responsibility to question the findings of not simply a trial court but an appellate court—are considered in the fairest and most dispassionate way, and not in the kind of media circus which the hon. member seems to prefer as a process in this country.

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HEALTH

Mrs. Beryl Gaffney (Nepean): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Health and Welfare.

We all appreciated the decision to end exposure to tobacco smoke on Canadian air carriers as an integral component of the program to reduce both health and economic costs to our nation.

Now his colleague, the Minister of Transport, is considering an extension of three years before implementation of this policy, which is clearly a cave-in to the airlines. It is jeopardizing our health objectives for air travellers and for flight attendants.

How can the minister possibly approve of his colleague taking such a backward step?

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Madam Speaker, if the hon. member had checked the facts, she would know that Canada is a world leader in terms of the fight against tobacco. Today, some 95 per cent of all flights by Canadian carriers are smoke-free.

Canada is the one country that is determined within three years to eliminate all tobacco usage on Canadian carriers.

Canada will be reducing by 25 per cent the seats available for smoking as of July 1 of this year.

Canada will be operating internationally with IATA to seek international co-operation to reduce and eliminate smoking on flights around the world.

Canada has spelled out to the airlines that we are serious about ensuring that they must co-operate in eliminating the use of tobacco on airlines in Canada and around the world.

Mrs. Beryl Gaffney (Nepean): Madam Speaker, I believe the minister has just confirmed to me that they have already approved that extension of three years.

Mr. Lewis: That is what we said, yes.

Mrs. Gaffney: What does the minister say to flight attendants and travellers who are concerned about three more years of high levels of concentration of tobacco smoke? How can the minister explain to flight attendants that money to the corporations is more important to him than their health?

• (1200)

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, perhaps I can assist my hon. friend in her quest for information as to how the flight attendants feel. I could provide her with the correspondence that I got from employees of the airlines who are concerned about the fact that if this arrangement had not been made Canadian airlines would have been forced to compete on an unequal playing field, because all the other airlines in the world allow smoking and Canadian airlines are going to be smoke-free in three years.

They have asked me, as Minister of Transport, to be sure to take into account the health of workers, yes, but also the health of the airlines they work for.

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ROUTE CANADA

Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina—Lumsden): Madam Speaker, I have a couple of questions for the Minister of Transport who insists that the sale of Route Canada was purely a decision of CN and that it was done only by CN.

Would the minister tell us who was present at the negotiations before cabinet gave approval to the sale? Prior to the government approving the sale, who knew that up to 1,900 workers would be out of a job? Will the minister take some responsibility for those 1,900 workers?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, despite the time, I am pleased to answer a question that has already been asked during the normal Question Period time.

CN and no one else decided to sell its subsidiary after discussions with more than 30 companies, beginning in 1985.

Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina—Lumsden): Madam Speaker, the government was the representative of the shareholders of Canada of Canadian National. It has the responsibility to protect the shareholders, namely the people of Canada.

The government brags about using sound business practices. Could the minister tell me what boneheads agreed to sell a company for $29 million when it was appraised by experts at $72 million? Who would be dumb enough, using sound business practices, to do that?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to quote from a letter from CN to *The Toronto Star*:

> CN was a money-losing trucking subsidiary of Canadian National Railways. Canadian National, with a debt load then

approaching $3.5 billion, could not continue to absorb annual losses of $40 million without affecting our railway operations.

CN, and no one else, decided to sell its subsidiary after discussions with more than 30 companies, beginning in 1985. Our negotiations on the sale were held directly with David Fingold, representing himself and his brother Paul as principal purchasers. Their financial credentials were very solid.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr. Lewis: Oh, are we out of time?

Madam Deputy Speaker: I thank the hon. minister for giving two more minutes of his precious time to the House.

* * *

PRIVILEGE

COMMENTS DURING QUESTION PERIOD

Ms. Lynn Hunter (Saanich—Gulf Islands): Madam Speaker, I am rising on a question of privilege. During Question Period earlier today the Minister for International Trade accused me of making statements that were very insulting to Newfoundlanders.

I would offer him an opportunity now to retract and to apologize to me.

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Madam Speaker, I would certainly be glad to apologize to the hon. member if there was anything to apologize for. However, I think we should wait until *Hansard* is available to see exactly what the hon. member said yesterday when she was denigrating the workers and people of Newfoundland.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The hon. Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources.

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Madam Speaker, that is what happened in the debate yesterday. The hon. member strongly opposed the bill in favour of development and workers in Newfoundland. If you check page 12502, you will also find that her colleague, the member for Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing, played a very interesting game quoting a royal commission as follows:

It must be recognized that the majority of Hibernia development expenditures will be incurred outside Newfoundland. The skilled labour force in the province is limited. The number of local companies capable of significant involvement in the offshore industry is also relatively small.

That leaves the distinct impression that Newfoundlanders would not get benefits, they are not capable, and that is wrong.

Ms. Hunter: Madam Speaker, I would ask you to rule. I ask you to look at the speech that I made in the House yesterday. You will see that I was not talking at all in insulting terms about Newfoundlanders. I was talking about our party, as the party for all of Canada, having a right to talk about the expenditure of billions of dollars of taxpayers' money.

[*Translation*]

Madam Deputy Speaker: I think this is actually a continuation of the debate we had yesterday.

The hon. member for Kingston and the Islands (Mr. Milliken).

* * *

[*English*]

POINTS OF ORDER

STATEMENT PURSUANT TO S. O. 31

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. During the statements under Standing Order 31 earlier today, Your Honour cut off me and the hon. member for Calgary Southeast in the course of our presentations, and also the hon. member for Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup.

I want to object to that on behalf of at least two of us. I presume that Your Honour's view was that we were making statements that were disrespectful of the other place. I deny that. My statement was not in the least disrespectful of the other place. I was simply pointing out who in the other place had moved the motion to increase the allowance paid to senators. It was, of course, the assistant government House leader in that House.

The hon. member for Calgary Southeast had not said anything in his statement that I heard that was disrespectful of the other place and none of the members on this side of the House were objecting to his statement for that reason.

I suggest that to be fair, Your Honour ought to give us additional time to repeat our statements.

Now the hon. member for Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup was a little close to the line, I will admit, and maybe Your Honour was correct in interrupting him. However, the two of us had been very careful to avoid speaking disrespectfully. I would not speak disrespectful-

ly of the other place. I have defended the other place in this House on numerous occasions, to the great annoyance of the government House leader, and I would be pleased to do so again at the appropriate time.

I think the two of us are quite innocent of any wrongdoing. Our statements were in order and we ought to have been allowed to complete them.

Mr. Lee Richardson (Calgary Southeast): Madam Speaker, I too would like to rise on a point of order with reference to being interrupted today during my statement pursuant to Standing Order 31 about the outrage of Canadians about the Senate rewarding themselves an extra $153 a day over and above their already generous salaries.

I referred to the Standing Orders to note that no member shall speak disrespectfully or use offensive words. I do not recall using any disrespectful words about the Senate. I did not call them our national unelected boondogglers. I did not call them appointed profiteers. I made no disrespectful mention.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Both hon. members have risen on this point of order and referred to our Standing Order that says that no one in this House should speak disrespectfully of the other place.

I think the hon. members will accept my judgment that in either content and/or tone the remarks made today could very easily be construed as disrespectful to the other place. That was my decision at that time and I stand by it.

ROYAL CANADIAN MINT

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Madam Speaker, yesterday the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands rose in some concern that the anxiously awaited reports of the Royal Canadian Mint were somehow not tabled. I just want to acquaint him with the fact that *Votes and Proceedings* of April 11, 1990, point out that the report of the Royal Canadian Mint was tabled in this House.

Perhaps we might both anxiously leaf through this document to see if the information he and I were both anxiously seeking is there and available for us.

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Madam Speaker, the government House leader's office was very quick to call my office and inform me of that tabling. In fact, I have asked for another copy of it. However, I believe he will find, if he checks—and I hope he has taken the time to do so—that that is in fact the annual report of the Royal Canadian Mint. I did not ask, in my statement yesterday, for the annual report.

• (1210)

If the hon. member will look at page 12459 of *Hansard* of yesterday, he will see that I requested the capital budget summary and the corporate plan summary. Those were the two documents I requested. Those are not the documents referred to in *Votes and Proceedings* on the date in question.

I am informed that it was the minister's own publication that listed these as late. I realize it was his colleague, the President of the Treasury Board, who happened to point out the fact that they were late. I hope that he will check, as I am trying to do, to ascertain that the document referred to in *Votes and Proceedings* was in fact the annual report, which may or may not have been on time, but which is at least before the House. It is the other two documents that I asked for. I did not ask for the annual report and I hope that the minister will check this out.

Hon. Paul Dick (Minister of Supply and Services): Madam Speaker, I think it appropriate, as the minister responsible for the Canadian Mint, to point out that the reports for which the hon. member made a request yesterday will be tabled very soon.

I know he will be extremely pleased to know that the reports, when tabled, will show that for the fifth year in a row the Mint showed a profit, this year of over $7 million.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*English*]

Madam Deputy Speaker: I must inform the House that there is an unfortunate error in today's Order Paper. Senate Public Bill S-14, an act respecting the laws prohibiting marriage between related persons, is incorrectly indicated as having been deemed read the first time. It was placed on the order of precedence under Private Members' Business.

In fact, the bill should have appeared on this day's Order Paper under the heading "First Reading of Senate Public Bills" in Routine Proceedings and is therefore eligible to be considered for first reading at this time.

* * *

PETITIONS

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina—Lumsden): Madam Speaker, the roll of petitioners gets longer and longer and goes on and on, and will continue to do so.

I wish to present a number of petitions with over 1,900 signatures of Canadians who are protesting the implementation of a goods and services tax because it is unfair to low and middle income families.

They call upon this House to reject the proposed tax, to bring in genuine tax reform based on the income tax system and to put an effective minimum tax on wealthy individuals and corporations. For this, your humble petitioners will ever pray.

COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Robert E. Skelly (Comox—Alberni): Madam Speaker, I have a petition containing close to 1,000 names from citizens in virtually every province of Canada who are opposing the cuts in funding to the Northern Native Broadcasting Access program and also to the Native Communications Program which has been cut by 100 per cent, even though that program provides a valuable service in promoting and enhancing literacy among aboriginal peoples and also in preserving and enhancing the aboriginal languages and cultures of aboriginal people.

The petitioners call on the government to consider the advisability of reinstating both the Native Communications Program and the Northern Native Broadcast Access program at full funding levels, and also to conduct consultations with groups affected before any of these types of cutbacks take place.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Robert E. Skelly (Comox—Alberni): Madam Speaker, I have another petition, again from several hundred Canadians mainly from my constituency, calling on the government to cancel the proposed goods and services tax.

The petitioners call on the government to reject the current proposal for the goods and services tax and to reform the taxation system so that there is an effective minimum tax on wealthy individuals and corporations.

FORESTRY RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENTS

Mr. Robert E. Skelly (Comox—Alberni): Finally, Madam Speaker, I have a petition with respect to the federal-provincial Forestry Resource Development Agreements.

The petitioners encourage the Parliament of Canada to renew this important agreement with British Columbia and therefore to provide for renewed commitment to restocking our forest land, advancing forest research, promoting silviculture, and assisting the forest industry in developing the new products and markets that will provide us with forestry jobs in the future.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition signed by numerous residents of Newfoundland, particularly from Melrose, Bonavista, Port Rexton, Deer Lake, and Labrador City.

These persons have signed a petition objecting to the goods and services tax being imposed by the government, its thirty-second major tax increase since taking office in September, 1984.

These residents of Newfoundland, like many other Canadians, are groaning under the burden of Tory taxation. They call upon Parliament to reject this additional burden being imposed in the goods and services tax.

Mr. John Harvard (Winnipeg St. James): Madam Speaker, petitions against the goods and services tax continue to pour in. I have some in my hand right now.

Despite the fact that the GST legislation has passed through the House and is currently in the other place, Canadians, it is quite evident, are still very much opposed to the GST. They are still hoping that the government will come to its senses, sooner rather than later, and abolish this proposed tax.

The petition I have in my hand is certified correct as to form and content. It cites the usual strong arguments

against the GST and calls on the government, at the eleventh hour, as it were, to put a stop to this unfair tax.

Mr. Dan Heap (Trinity—Spadina): Madam Speaker, it is my honour and duty, under Standing Order 36, to present four different petitions. The first one is a petition with more than 890 names from many parts of Canada, but especially from Toronto and from Trinity—Spadina.

The petition opposes the goods and services tax for reasons that I will not cite. It gives specific alternatives by saying that the undersigned residents of Canada call upon Parliament to reject the current proposal for the goods and services tax; to cancel the tax breaks for rich individuals and corporations; to reduce the need for a sales tax by reducing the bank interest rate to 2 per cent, so as to reduce interest payments on the federal debt and increase small business and general employment; and to increase employment in such useful work as protection of the environment, restoration of needed roads, sewers and bridges, air traffic control, improved VIA service, and industrial research and development.

I have another petition on the same subject, Madam Speaker, which simply calls upon Parliament to reject the goods and services tax.

I have still a further petition which is much more specific. It concerns the fact that skating lessons will be taxed. The petitioners point out that the sport contributes significantly to the physical and mental health of our youth. They pray that Parliament will consider instruction in skating as an educational service and therefore exempt skating educational expenses from the proposed goods and services tax.

LOW-LEVEL FLIGHT TRAINING

Mr. Dan Heap (Trinity—Spadina): Finally, Madam Speaker, I have over 1,000 names on a petition from all parts of Canada from people who are deeply opposed to the low-level flight training being continued by our government in Labrador and eastern Quebec.

They call upon Parliament to join with the Assembly of First Nations, the Innu of Labrador and other aboriginal peoples in opposing the use of their land for NATO-NORAD attack training. They demand that Canada cease NATO operations in Canada, including the proposed tactical fighter and weapons training at Goose Bay which is considered for expansion. They demand that Parliament redirect Canada's NATO-NORAD funding toward enabling Canada's aboriginal peoples to regain control of their lands and their livelihood and toward promoting sustainable development for all Canadians.

• (1220)

VIA RAIL

Mrs. Sheila Finestone (Mount Royal): Madam Speaker, like my colleague, I have a series of petitions which I present to you pursuant to Standing Order 36.

The first is a petition with respect to VIA Rail travel and the cutbacks to that service. The petitioners bring to your attention what they consider to be the shameful attack on Canada's infrastructure and the cutting back of service which enables them to travel and to meet their commitments, both to the health and welfare of their children and in the light of certain handicaps. They feel it is absolutely essential that we maintain the transportation needs of people in outlying districts.

Therefore, they call upon Parliament to maintain, improve and modernize VIA Rail services in those areas of the country where it can provide a more rapid, economical, safe, convenient, environmentally sound, and energy efficient alternative to other means of transportation.

I will not read all the whereases for you, Madam Speaker, but it is interesting that these petitions are coming in again at this time. It must be travel time for a lot of people from the Gaspé area, for example.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mrs. Sheila Finestone (Mount Royal): Madam Speaker, I also have three different forms of petitions with respect to the goods and services tax. Again, I will not remind you, because we have heard it so often, of how unhappy the population is about the goods and services tax.

This particular petition comes from those who are involved in the distribution of cultural properties. In this instance they call upon the government and Parliament to reaffirm the historic principles embodied in the tax-free status for the printed word by retaining the zero-rate in the goods and services tax legislation and its regulations. That is with respect to the book industry.

Those who are involved in occupational therapy, physiotherapy, social services, speech language pathology, and audiology call upon the House not to impose the goods and services tax on any health care services, whether in public institutions or in the community.

Again, hundreds have signed the general petition that has been circulating calling upon the House simply to re-examine the goods and services tax and find a more fair and equitable way to improve the tax structure.

Mr. Jack Whittaker (Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt): Madam Speaker, it is indeed a privilege and a pleasure to present, pursuant to Standing Order 36, yet another petition against the goods and services tax.

The people of British Columbia, in fact the people of Canada, have not given up hope that the government will come to its senses. They continue to sign and send in petitions against the goods and services tax, asking the government to look at reasonable alternatives that will be fair to all Canadians rather than a tax system that will simply help its corporate and wealthy friends.

* * *

[*Translation*]

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Hon. Marcel Danis (Minister of State (Youth), Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House): Madam Speaker, I suggest that all questions stand.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Shall the questions stand?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*Translation*]

GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES RESTRAINT ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre) that Bill C-69, An Act to amend certain statutes to enable restraint of government expenditures, be read the third time and passed.

Mr. John Manley (Ottawa South): Madam Speaker, before Question Period, I was giving a few examples of the problems we find in our post-secondary education system here in Canada, and I mentioned some problems at McMaster University in Hamilton.

[*English*]

There are problems though throughout Canada in post-secondary education. They are a signal to us that we are at risk in Canada of imperilling our economic well-being in the future because of the failure of our system to produce trained and well educated people.

I will take you Madam Speaker, on a brief tour across Canada.

In the University of Manitoba Department of Computer Science, for example, courses for non-specialists in computer science have had their class sizes increased to over 200 people and line-ups to use computer equipment are commonplace because there is not enough equipment to go around. One computer course for non-specialists was eliminated altogether due to lack of funds. Three faculty members in that program have resigned—one to go to the United States, one to teach in high school and one to join the private sector. In all three cases, it was in order to obtain pay increases.

Another professor says that in his classes he has embarked on trying to shake down the class size, since they are so large, through a process of intimidation and refusing the students the right to ask questions so as to encourage them to drop his course.

In Newfoundland at Memorial University, Dr. Leslie Harris, the president, has recently had to announce an interim hiring freeze. He says that further measures are going to be taken to make up the difference in the short-fall in the university budget. Dr. Harris stated:

> We have eliminated approximately $4 million from capital operating costs and many of the projects we have had to drop are of critical importance. These include such things as roof repairs, road improvements, classroom renovation, replacement of desks and other classroom equipment, repairs to tunnels and other necessary projects.

Dr. Harris said that inadequate funding is reflected in the ability of the administration to provide services and facilities for students. He said:

> The fabric of the place suffers. Old plant and equipment which breaks down, the deteriorating quality of classrooms and classroom materials, desks, audio visual equipment, the lack of space for recreation and social activities—these are some of the prices we pay when we cut back.

With regard to the University of Alberta in Edmonton, a newspaper report in *The Leader–Post* of Regina in April of this year stated:

> The University of Alberta has adopted a plan to freeze enrolment at its current level next year.
>
> The board of governors voted in a closed meeting last week to limit enrolment for 1990–91 to the present level of 29,500 students. This means entrance requirements could be raised to a 73 per cent average mark from 70 per cent.

The problem is also reflected in the level of tuition fees in the universities. The Canadian Federation of Students has made this point and has raised the prospect that many qualified Canadian students are unable to pursue their education because of the sky–rocketing tuition fees and other costs.

For example, between 1989 and 1990–91, tuition fees have climbed at Memorial University in Newfoundland from $1,280 to $1,344; Dalhousie University, from $1,710 to $1,771; and Mount Allison in New Brunswick, from $1,935 to $2,135. Quebec is exemplary in respect of tuition fees, but even it has had a significant increase. McGill University went from $570 to $890. At McMaster in Ontario it went from $1,516 to $1,637. I could go on across the country, province by province.

If I might be permitted, I will comment on the relevant weight of tuition fees.

[*Translation*]

The Province of Quebec has set an example for the rest of Canada in the way it handles tuition fees for students. If we want our students to be well educated and well prepared for the future, we must reduce, not increase tuition fees.

• (1230)

[*English*]

Quebec has set that example; tuition fees are as little as one–third or one–quarter of what they are in other provinces. Surely, if we put a high value on education we would see to it that cost does not prevent people from pursuing their education.

Going on, George Pedersen, President of the University of Western Ontario, issued this stern warning:

> The university system in Canada is in trouble. Serious trouble.

Mr. Pedersen said that the quality of instruction available to university students today is not nearly so good as that provided to their parents who attended an Ontario university 30 years ago. Class sizes are now much larger, laboratory equipment is outdated, students get more of their instruction from graduate students and part–time instructors instead of regular professors. Mr. Pederson further stated:

> The reinstatement of quality in our universities is, without question, the number one challenge to the system.

I go back to the question I posed at the very outset of my remarks. What kind of Canada do we want in the year 2020? Surely, if we want a Canada whose hallmark is a well–educated, skilled, capable population able to enter into the global competitiveness in an energetic and enthusiastic way to meet the best that the other nations of the world have to offer, we have to focus our resources on post–secondary education. It is of critical importance. It is not an option. If we think education is expensive, we ought to stand back and figure out what the cost of ignorance is.

There are other aspects of this bill that I would like to comment on as well. Before I do though, I want to restate this question because I want these remarks not to be considered as being highly partisan. I do not intend them to be highly partisan. I have already said that I understand why the government must be frustrated with what the provinces are doing in education. What I really want to stress when it comes to post–secondary education is that we need a national strategy in Canada to ensure that our post–secondary educational system is not compromised by the need to achieve fiscal responsibility at all levels of government.

This calls for very great skill and judgment on the part of the leaders of the provinces, as well as the leaders of the federal government, to find a new method of funding the universities that ensures quality and accessibility of education for all qualified Canadians. It is crucial.

In addition to reducing the transfer payments to the provinces in respect of post–secondary education, Bill C–69 has a similar effect on the transfer payments for health. Again they work in the same way, a block amount of money. Cash or tax points are transferred to the provinces on a non–accountable basis so that they can be

assisted in paying for the health care. I suggest that what we need to do is appeal to the health ministers in Canada to agree on what standards of health care are needed across Canada, and then ensure that adequate funding from the proper level of authority is available to achieve that.

I suggest that block funding is no longer working. We get many reflections of this. Some of these have come in through the testimony that was presented to the Standing Committee on Finance of this House when it examined the provisions of Bill C-69.

I would like to cite the evidence of Mrs. Carol Clemenhagen, President of the Canadian Hospital Association. She said this to the Standing Committee on Finance:

> Prior to the February 20 budget, the CHA (Canadian Hospital Association) calculated that the cumulative loss the provinces have already experienced from 1986-87 to 1989-90 because of the 2 percent reduction in EPF growth was $2.6 billion, and the projected cumulative loss to the provinces from 1990-91 to 1995-96 because of the combined 3 percent reduction in EPF growth is $19.4 billion.

That is a lot of money, no matter who is counting. She goes on to say this:

> Reductions in the EPF transfers challenge provincial governments either to reduce health care and post-secondary education budgets or to increase taxes. We believe a national framework of stable and adequate EPF funding is a prerequisite to achieving health goals. In the case of health manpower, cuts to EPF threaten both the health system in which health professionals work and the education system in which they are trained.

There are many examples of the way in which the strain on health budgets is affecting health care in Canada. Some of these examples came forward before the finance committee when it was considering this bill. It is interesting that governments at all levels are cutting back on funding which is going to hospitals. I think all of us are conscious of the enormous effort that the volunteer sector is now having to put into raising funds for health care in the communities across Canada; volunteer contributions of time and money are becoming crucial. In the face of that, there are government initiatives which are responsible for increasing the financial burden on hospitals. The evidence at the finance committee showed that increasingly the only option appears to be to divert resources from direct patient care to meet some of these regulatory requirements.

There are some examples that I can give. The workplace hazardous material information system involves an extensive, in-house training program to comply with new initiatives which took effect in 1989. There is environmental legislation, including legislation dealing with transportation of dangerous goods, very important legislation, critical legislation, and yet it is imposing an additional financial burden on the hospitals of Canada. Pay equity legislation is another example. Unless the governments, whose responsibility it is to fund a health care system, are able to come forward and to assist in bearing these burdens, the health care system is in peril.

If you would permit me one last quotation from the evidence before the finance committee, it is very striking. I am quoting from the witness, Ms. Heidemann, who appeared before the finance committee as Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Canadian Hospital Association. She said:

> In some provinces, Quebec for example, the pressure has become so intense the hospital associations have expressed the desire to debate the merits of alternate sources of health care funding, including certain privatization options.

I think it is evident that the pressure on the system is inevitably going to result in poorer or more expensive or privatized service in the health field. I do not think that this is what any of us want for Canada. Again, I go back to the original question. What kind of country do we envisage for the year 2020? Where do we want to go, as a country? What kind of society do we want this to be? Surely, it is one in which we are assured that health care is adequate and generously available to all Canadians.

The other aspect of this bill that I would like to comment on briefly is the decision to put a 5 per cent limit on payments under the Canada Assistance Plan to three provinces in Canada, those three provinces being Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia. The Canada Assistance Plan is the source of assistance in our society for the poorest members of our society. CAP is not a luxury. CAP is a bare essential to ensure that everybody in our society maintains at least a minimal standard of living.

• (1240)

I think that when we put this kind of limitation on CAP, what we are saying again about the kind of society we want to be in 30 years time is that we are going to leave it to everyone to fight for their own well-being, without any concern for our weakest, our poorest, our disabled, and so on.

The question I feel we need to address in asking what kind of country we want this to be is, does this kind of decision bring out the best in Canadians, or does it do otherwise.

There are always those who are going to say to us that poverty is a self-inflicted wound, that hunger, where it exists—and many deny that it exists in Canada, and they are quite wrong—can be relieved if people are only willing to work hard.

I suggest that those of us in positions of leadership have every responsibility to address those arguments and to expose them for the lies that they are. The reality of Canada today is that there are increasing examples of poverty and hunger among children especially, and we must not take measures that make it harder for those people to make do in our society. If so, we deprive ourselves because we are making this a country of much less compassion and care.

I think that deprives all of us of the satisfaction of knowing that we share not only enormous natural wealth, but we share it fairly in a way that ensures that everybody has adequate resources.

When you look at what was happening at the end of the decade of the 1980s, when you look at the share of national income, you find that high income people have increased their share of the national income beyond what it normally would have been at the start of the 1980s. Given ordinary projections, that share of national income which goes to high income people is about $4 billion more than it would have been if it had followed the same course as in 1980.

What this suggests to me is that inequalities in Canada increased over the decade of the 1980s. We are conscious of the number of people who rely on food banks for food; we are conscious of the number of single parents and of children who live in poverty in Canada. Is this the time, for whatever good fiscal reason there may be, for the federal government to signal that now they want the poorest in Canada to look after themselves? I suggest not.

I know that the government is going to say: "Well, we didn't put this limit on the Canada Assistance Plan payments across the board. We only put it on the three richest provinces."

The data shows that the three richest provinces have most of Canada's poor people living in them. Fifty-four point nine per cent of Canada's poor individuals, and 49 per cent of Canada's poor families live in Ontario, Alberta, and British Columbia. The CAP arrangements were strictly a 50 per cent federal contribution to the costs of the social welfare system based on federal-provincial agreements.

To intervene in this is not only callous and unfeeling, not only does it send out the wrong kind of signal as I mentioned earlier but it means that, in a very cold, calculating fashion, the federal government has reneged on agreements with the provinces and is shifting the burden of its deficit on to the provincial treasurers.

This is really where I would like to finish. Underlying what we have seen in the context of Bill C-69 highlights for us the problems of funding and post-secondary education, health care, social assistance payments and other things that I have not mentioned between the federal and provincial governments.

After that, the federal government justifies these cut-backs on only one solitary ground. That ground is it wants to reduce the deficit. The reality of the situation is this. It is not benefiting Canadians as a whole one bit with these measures, even though deficit reduction is a valid and good objective. All it is doing is shifting those burdens from the federal government to the provincial governments.

These are not luxuries that we are talking about. Post-secondary education, health care and social assistance are not optional or things that we can have if we have a good day or a good year. These are essentials for our society. If we are going to continue to build the best kind of country that we want, we have to ensure the adequacy and security of our post-secondary education, health care and social assistance programs.

This may require new kinds of arrangements. In fact, I believe it does. It may require very difficult negotiations between the federal and provincial governments. I am sure it will, but it does not require the callous cutting

back of payments to the provinces for these vital ingredients of our national life.

The present Minister of Finance was a member of the opposition when he said in 1982, long before he became Minister of Finance, that cuts to EPF could have disastrous effects on universities and colleges, on hospital funding and on the operation of hospitals. He had it right. Now he has the gall to stand in this House and say: "Well, it is all block funding anyway. The provinces do not pay their share." Maybe they do not. I might even acknowledge that.

I am not contending to defend the provincial governments in this matter. I think they bear a heavy burden of responsibility in the area of funding. I think it is also true that, when we pick these areas to reduce federal spending programs, we do it at the expense of those critical things that the provincial governments have the responsibility of providing.

In concluding, when I think of the kind of Canada that I would like to live and grow old in and that I would like to see my children grow up in, it is one in which education is considered a basic and fundamental right, where the very best education is readily available to Canadian students so that they can afford it and so that it will provide us with a base of highly qualified people to help build the strong, value-added economy that we talked about.

It is a Canada in which health care is readily available, not only adequate, but the best in the world, and again, universally affordable for everyone. It is one in which those who are too weak, too poor and too powerless to adequately care for themselves are taken care of in a compassionate and caring way.

As long as we share those values as a nation, many of our other conflicts and difficulties will find ways of sorting themselves out.

• (1250)

Mr. Chris Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise to participate in the debate on Bill C-69, the Government Expenditures Restraint Act.

There are two things on which I would like to concentrate my comments. The first relates to the two-year freeze on transfers to the provinces of money which has traditionally been targeted for health care and post-secondary education. Of course, this two-year freeze means that, with the impact of inflation running at around 5 per cent a year, moneys transferred to the provinces for health care and post-secondary education will be reduced by about 5 per cent a year.

The second point I would like to discuss is the cap on the Canada Assistance Plan. The Canada Assistance Plan will increase to the richer provinces by only 5 per cent a year. This 5 per cent will cover inflation and, consequently in real terms, the financial assistance provided to the richer provinces in Canada by the federal government for the social welfare system will experience no growth whatsoever.

The government's expressed preoccupation is with controlling the deficit. The question is not whether to reduce the deficit but how to reduce it. I do not want to appear unrealistic. I do not want to appear to be overly challenging the government's pessimistic view of the importance of the deficit. I share the importance of the deficit to Canada.

The question is: How are we going to reduce the deficit? Bill C-69 represents 70 per cent of the government's deficit reduction program contained in the 1990 budget. Fully 70 per cent of the reductions in expenditures are expressed. Under this bill, who will be affected?

Those people who will be affected are the sick, because these are expenditures which have been reduced to the health care system, students and those working in our post-secondary education institutions because of cuts to post-secondary education. Third, the poorest in our society, those who are on social welfare in the provinces of British Columbia, Ontario and Alberta will be affected.

This is a disgrace. To call it, as the minister did this morning, balanced and reasonable is the rankest of hypocrisy. There have been statements by the government and indeed by the Prime Minister on enhancing and improving social services. We all recall the statements regarding the sacred trust, the need and importance of a world-class education system and a world-class health care system in Canada. We recall, too, the argument that the Prime Minister has been making since 1984 that the social system in Canada is a priority of the government and would not be cut. It would be enhanced.

This is all well and good. The expenditures on post-secondary education, health care and social welfare should be a priority of all Canadian governments. But, actions speak louder than words. It took the Conservative government two years to turn its mind to attacking federal transfers. Perhaps it looked at the damaging cuts of previous Liberal governments, perhaps it needed to bolster its fortitude.

By 1986, the attack on funding to the provinces, which had traditionally gone to health care and post-secondary education, had begun with a vengeance. Between 1986-87 and 1994-95, if the government makes no further cuts—and we cannot rule that out—the reductions in federal transfers to the provinces for post-secondary education and health care will amount to almost $29 billion. That is according to the Library of Parliament figures, not my figures.

My province of Saskatchewan, during this eight or nine-year period, will lose $1 billion in funding from the federal government. The federal government commitment to post-secondary education and health care has been longstanding in this country. It is at least since 1912 that the federal government supported agricultural education. Since the late 1960s, it instituted the national health care system.

In 1977, the Established Programs Financing Act—that is how it is traditionally described and is what we are working under now—was passed. Although the grants under that legislation are unconditional grants to the provinces, clearly they are designed for post-secondary education and health care. The history of the 1977 act makes quite clear that governments have, over a long period of time, intended and required these moneys, prior to 1977 to be spent on health care and post-secondary education. The present government members when in opposition accepted this. Indeed the present Minister of Finance, while in opposition in 1982, said in referring to cuts in transfer payments:

> The minister is proposing to cut spending in two very important areas. He is prepared to risk major cut-backs in medical care and post-secondary education. Rather than rush into this on a unilateral basis and force spending cuts and service cuts on the provinces, would the minister and the government consider entering into two or three national conferences on health and post-secondary education so that we can set out the national objectives of the various levels of government in these two important areas before we cut spending, and before we cause closures of hospitals and cut-backs in post-secondary education?

The government members cannot have it both ways. They cannot argue as they did in 1982 that the transfers to the provinces are for health care and post-secondary education, and then in 1990 argue that transfers are not for those purposes.

The Minister of Finance, in making his statement in 1982 in response to cuts by the Liberal government of the day, could in fact be making statements which apply today. The arguments are as telling today as they were when the Minister of Finance made them in 1982. The only difference of course is that now we have a Conservative government making those cuts rather than a Liberal government making the cuts.

Indeed it is an interesting comparison to look at what Liberals say in government and in opposition, and look at what the Conservatives say in government and opposition on this particular issue, we see that the important thing is not which party you are in but whether or not you are in government. If you are in government then the cuts are made and argued for as a need to reduce the deficit, whether you are a Liberal government or a Conservative government. If you are in opposition, the cuts are criticized as being an attack on the future of Canada and the future of our health care system and post-secondary education system.

I would point out that the New Democratic Party has been consistent in its opposition to these cuts, whether they are made by Liberal governments or Conservative governments.

Why is the federal government involved in funding post-secondary education and health care in the first place? It is clear that it is in the national interest to do so and to ensure equal accessibility and high quality health care and post-secondary education.

This is as it should be. The federal government should be involved in ensuring that no matter where you live, no matter what your economic resources, you have access to appropriate health care facilities and appropriate post-secondary education opportunities.

The cuts which have taken place by Liberal and Progressive Conservative governments have indicated a lack of commitment to these national interest goals when they are in government. When in opposition they talk of the importance of adequate funding for post-se-

condary education and health, but then when in government, in the name of deficit reduction, they make cut-backs.

Let us look briefly at the impact of these cuts. With regard to health care, we have seen line-ups for medical services. We see the British Columbia government being sued at this very moment for failure to provide appropriate health care facilities. We see patients in British Columbia and Ontario being sent to the United States for treatment and, of course, that treatment being paid for with Canadian dollars.

Patients have even died because of problems in the health care system. All the actors in the health care system, doctors, nurses, all the health care professionals, consumer goods, patients' rights groups, have all pointed out the critical condition of our health care system.

We have to add to that the fact that costs may continue to rise as a result of an aging population. Clearly, we have a critical situation in our health care system, and yet the federal government chooses today to make its third attack on its support mechanisms for health care.

It cannot be doubted that this is short-sighted and in the long run it will add both to Canada's health problems and to the costs of running our health care system.

It is clear, and everyone in the health care system points this out, that if a person is required to wait in order to obtain health care treatment, then the cost of the system increases as the illness becomes more acute.

We have major and critical problems in our health care system and yet the federal government chooses a time when those problems are acute to cut funding to the provinces for those very facilities.

In terms of post-secondary education, we have all heard considerable discussion of the critical condition of our post-secondary education system.

• (1300)

Dr. Pedersen, the President of the University of Western Ontario and President of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada has said that our post-secondary education system verges on being a national disgrace because of its inability to effectively take on the challenges of the 1990s. We know of overcrowded classrooms, we know of inadequate libraries, we know of crumbling physical plants, of out of date laboratory equipment and facilities.

Universities and colleges are bursting at the seams and are finding it increasingly difficult to provide the high quality post-secondary education that the Prime Minister has recognized Canada needs and Canadians are entitled to.

Our universities receive fully 40 per cent less per full-time student than comparable U.S. institutions, and this at a time when the U.S. has begun a major effort to increase post-secondary education participation rates, even though their rates are already considerably better than ours. The United States and other countries clearly understand the importance of increasing funding to post-secondary education. As our government continues to remind us, it is one of our major competitors.

The government also talks about the importance of a level playing field, and yet in terms of federal funding for post-secondary education, the Conservative government is doing what it can to ensure that we will never reach a level playing field, that our young people will never have the same educational opportunities as their colleagues in the United States will have. At a time when the federal government should be investing more in the future, it is cutting back by billions of dollars.

At the finance committee, witnesses appeared to discuss the impact of Bill C-69, and not one witness supported this bill. They all had very interesting things to say about the impact that this bill would have. All witnesses from the health care field pointed out that these cuts in the name of restraint, in fact, will add costs to the health care system not only in the long-term, but also in the short-term, and that the short-term and long-term costs to the economy due to cuts in health care will be considerable.

Cutbacks in funding to health care can only mean quality of services will be reduced and/or quantity of services will be reduced, leading to adverse consequences to the health status of Canadians. In terms of economic impact, let alone the impact of pain and suffering, this can only lead to increased absenteeism and reduction in efficiency and effectiveness at work, in other words, to important economic consequences and economic costs.

The Canadian Hospital Association has said that cuts could reduce the ability of provincial governments to fund medical care adequately. The Canadian Medical Association went further by saying that we were headed toward a two-tier health care system with one quality of health care in the rich provinces and a second or third rate service in the poorer provinces. We are already seeing moves toward that in health care reports coming out of some of the provinces and, in particular, coming out of Alberta. It is a departure from our traditional commitment to one health care system for all Canadians irrespective of financial abilities. It is a move away from our notion of health care as a right. The federal government, along with provincial governments, has to accept a responsibility for this in its cutbacks.

Increases in short-term and long-term costs will flow from these supposed restraints in expenditures to the health care system. It is not restraint at all, but an additional cost on the system, both now and in the future.

The representatives from the health care system also pointed out that they were considerably concerned about what they saw as the lack of understanding on the part of this government and its officials as to the impact of cut-backs to the provinces for health care expenditures. In their lobbying activities, they meet frequently with members of the government and members of the bureaucracy. They were concerned that the people with whom they met did not understand what these cutbacks would give rise to.

They did recognize and they did state that the government is fully aware, as they see it, that there is not very much fat left in the health care system. Consequently, if it cuts funds, it actually cuts into the bone of the health care system.

All the witnesses from the post-secondary education sector made the same criticisms. They pointed out that short-term and long-term costs would flow as a result of cut-backs to funding for post-secondary education. The costs to the economy would be considerable when one considers that Canadians would not be able to receive the level and quality of education they need in order to take on the challenges of the 1990s and beyond.

In other words, as far as post-secondary education cuts are concerned too, it was pointed out by those on the front line, representatives of faculty, students and university administrations, that this would not give rise to a saving but, indeed, would give rise to increases in expenditures in the short-term and the long-term.

In his response to the committee, Dr. Pedersen stated: "The signal is that Ottawa is no longer willing to fund the core educational research activities at Canadian universities, an activity in which they have been engaged for some 30 years".

He also stated: "We say to the federal government that you cannot have it both ways, talking about the need to improve the education system while at the same time pulling the plug on federal cash transfers for post-secondary education just does not square".

Again, those witnesses who spoke upon the post-secondary education system pointed out that they felt that officials in the Department of Finance and in the government did not fully understand the impact on the economy that these cuts in post-secondary education funding would have. All witnesses pointed out the great frustration they felt at having to continue to make these points to a government that refused to listen.

In questioning the finance committee officials, it became clear that in their deliberations and in their quantifications of the impact of these so-called expenditure restraints in Bill C-69, they did not consider the economic impact that would flow as a result of young Canadians finding it impossible, as a result of cut-backs to post-secondary education, to obtain an education needed in order to take on the challenges of the next decade and beyond.

In other words, they did not consider the short-term or long-term implications to our economy of cut-backs to post-secondary education. They did not take into account the full implications of what these cuts will do.

The only conclusion one can make is that these cuts are not based upon solely a concern about funding, but more on a concern with the philosophical commitment of this government to get out of funding health care and post-secondary education. If this trend continues, in a few years the government will not be providing any funding to the provinces for health care and post-secondary education. Consequently it will be unable to use its funding as a means of persuading the provincial govern-

ments to effectively run health care and post-secondary education. For example, it would not be able to ensure that user fees and deterrent fees did not return to the provincial health care systems. There would be no mechanism by which to penalize the provinces should that happen.

It is part of an over-all scheme of privatization, of ensuring that those who can pay get the best and those who cannot pay get the worst. It is a philosophical commitment which is pushing the costs of health care and post-secondary education on to users in our society. Canadians do not agree with or accept that philosophy. In many different ways, Canadians have told this government not to cut funding to post-secondary education and health care and yet, as with so many other things, this government refuses to listen and goes ahead against the wishes of Canadians. The government has been told of many other ways to deal with the deficit, rather than attacking the sick, students and the poorest in our society.

One last comment that I would like to make is with regard to the cap on the Canada Assistance Plan. Witnesses pointed out another interesting phenomenon. Placing restraints on the growth of assistance to Ontario, British Columbia and Alberta for social welfare support systems would stop innovation, reform and experimentation in social welfare systems in Canada and would indeed prevent the provinces from exploring ways of making the system more efficient and more effective. Consequently, we would not see improvements to the system in the future.

This is perhaps the most misguided and short-sighted piece of legislation that the government has put forward in the last two years.

Mr. Heap: Worse than the GST?

Mr. Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing): I think worse than the GST. It is at least as misguided as that. It is misguided and short-sighted because it will be a major attack on the future. It will result in a major burden of costs being transferred to the next generations. It is unwise from an economic point of view. It is unwise because it prevents this country's citizens from being healthy and well educated. It is unwise because it attacks the poorest of all Canadians.

• (1310)

Finally, as I mentioned, Canadians, an overwhelming majority, some 80 per cent, have told this government not to make these particular cuts and yet it has done so anyway.

Unfortunately, Canadians will pay for this government's stupidity. The government will pay ultimately at the next election.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Robitaille): Resuming debate with the hon. member for Winnipeg St. James.

Mr. John Harvard (Winnipeg St. James): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to take part in this debate on Bill C-69. It is an important debate about a bill that raises serious concerns right across this country.

The formal title of this bill is "Government Expenditures Restraint Act". There is a saying, "What is in a name?" When it comes to this particular bill, there is a lot to this name and all of it is very bad.

The name is a euphemism for a nasty bill, a euphemism for a bill that attacks the poor and penalizes poorer provinces. It is a euphemism for a bill that only makes worse the inequities of our system.

That should not come as any great surprise, I suppose, because this Tory government does not give a hoot about social justice in Canada.

I want to zero in on one particularly pernicious provision of Bill C-69. It is the freeze on federal transfer payments to the provinces. It is nothing short of shameful, for this is the third time the government has attacked federal transfer payments to the provinces.

Let us consider the seriousness of the situation from this perspective. Let us take the time period between the fiscal year 1986-87 and fiscal year 1994-95. The cuts in that period amount to an astronomical $31 billion. If these cuts had not occurred under the government, there would have been $22.2 billion more for health care in the provinces, and $8.9 billion more for secondary education.

Let us look at the effects of this and other Tory initiatives on health care. If current government practice continues, the federal government will soon cease paying a single cent for health and education by the turn of the century. That is alarming. There will be no more federal

funds for health and post-secondary education in about nine or ten years.

Years ago, the federal government was committed to 50-50 cost-sharing, but that was abandoned in favour of allocating more income tax points to the provinces. Now look where we are. The government is saying goodbye to health care and post-secondary education. Bill C-69 continues that trend.

What does a small province like my own province of Manitoba do when it faces a loss of federal government support of this kind? It has two choices: cut back services or raise taxes. It is estimated that the provinces would have to increase taxes on average $576 over five years to make up for the cuts proposed in Bill C-69.

If they do not raise taxes, the provinces will be forced to make cut-backs. For example, they would be forced to close hospital beds, limit costly operations, or find other reductions. There is no other way around it. Students would have to face higher tuition fees, overcrowded classrooms and other cost-cutting measures.

Freezing federal transfer payments to the provinces makes a mockery of the Prime Minister's promises. We all remember what the Prime Minister said about medicare. We all remember his description of medicare in Canada. He called it a sacred trust.

Also, I want to repeat something the Minister of Finance said eight years ago in the House of Commons on March 24, 1982 when he was in another incarnation:

> Let us not make hospitals, universities and colleges a battleground between the federal government and the provincial governments. Let us solve these problems not on the backs of the hospitals and universities; let us solve these problems outside of that arena.

That is what the Hon. Michael Wilson said in the House of Commons on March 24, 1982. So much for the Finance Minister's promises. So much for the Prime Minister's promises.

If broken promises are coupled with three successive reductions in the rate of growth of federal transfer payments, what does that say about the future of Canada's health care system? Well, the future looks mighty gloomy. The prognosis is not good. The Canada Health Act is fast becoming irrelevant. It is the Canada Health Act that outlawed user fees and extra billing. We all know that. We all remember that. However, there is concern that the government has already decided it will not enforce the penalty provisions of the Canada Health Act.

Provinces that allow user fees and extra billing can have their federal health payments withheld. If the government were not to enforce the health act, in my opinion, Canada would soon drift towards a two-tier health care system. This is not far-fetched. It is a very real danger.

Already we are told of two provinces, Quebec and Alberta, which are flirting with a two-tier health care system. Earlier this year, a former Quebec Health Minister who is also a major business executive, reportedly told a Quebec Assembly committee on health care that it is time to bring the private sector into the health care field. He claimed that competition is needed to keep costs down. Perhaps that is all that was needed for a senior Quebec cabinet minister to say, a short time later, that Quebec may not be able to continue having a free universal health care system.

I submit that this is the thin edge of the wedge. Destroy universal health care, allow private sector competition ostensibly to control costs, and the country is put on the slippery slope toward a two-tier health care system. It cannot be avoided.

We have heard alarming and disturbing words from Alberta where a government task force actually advocated a two-tier system. One tier would provide basic services and it would be paid for by the government. The second tier would provide additional services—the word "additional" not defined—which would be purchased through a supplementary insurance plan.

It can be seen why we on this side view with alarm any reduction of federal government support of the health care system. If the government does not take its responsibilities seriously, and as soon as the federal government backs away from its full commitment to health care, we soon hear talk of user fees, extra billing, competition, and the like. That will lead to a balkanization of Canada's health care system where there are no national standards, no guaranteed access for the poor, and of course the loss and destruction of universality. It would be, in the end, without any doubt at all, one system for the poor and one system for the rich.

There are powerful forces out there who would love to see this happen to satisfy some kind of crazy lust produced by a cruel ideology of the privileged few.

Michael Walker of the Fraser Institute, that nutty but dangerous right-wing think tank in Vancouver, wrote a series of articles last spring in which he claimed that the United States' health care model was superior to Canada's. Can you imagine turning something like that upside down? There are 35 million to 40 million Americans without any health insurance at all, and twice that many with only limited insurance coverage. In that country, having a catastrophic illness can destroy everything you have. Yet, somebody such as Michael Walker, who should know better, suggests that its system is superior.

• (1320)

Despite all that, that wretched system which does not deliver to its people, costs more per capita than does Canada's universal system. Yet there are these powerful forces in Canada, whose only battle cry is fiscal restraint, who would move our health care system closer to that of the U.S. model.

I say to the government: "Wake up, open your eyes, and smell the coffee or smell the flowers—whatever is appropriate. Freezing federal payments to the provinces is a virtual invitation to destroy medicare."

The government's backing away from payments to the provinces and medicare is consistent with what this administration has been doing since it was first elected in 1984.

The 1980s were really a lousy decade, in some ways reminiscent of the Dirty Thirties. What started as a disturbing trend at the beginning of the 1980s was greatly exacerbated by Tory policies.

I would like to make reference to a newspaper column which was written May 16 last by Frances Russell of the *Winnipeg Free Press*, one of Canada's leading commentators on public affairs. In her column, she makes use of facts and figures provided by the Canadian Council on Social Development, and she quotes comments made by one David Ross, an independent social economics consultant based here in the nation's capital. I want to quote from that column because it paints an absolutely superb picture of what has been going on in Canada in the last few years and it points the finger where it ought to be pointed—right at the Mulroney government.

> The decade ended with 155,000 more Canadians unemployed than at the beginning. There were 62,000 more poor children. There was a virtual standstill in household income. Whereas average family earnings rose 27 per cent in the 1950s, 53 per cent in the 1960s and 42 per cent in the 1970s, in the 1980s they went up a meagre nine per cent, largely due to a decline in family size.
>
> The rich got richer and the poor got poorer. The share of national income enjoyed by the lowest 29 per cent of Canadian families shrank from 10.7 per cent to 10.4 per cent. By contrast, the wealthiest 20 per cent of Canadians saw their portion rise from 42.1 per cent to 43.2 per cent.
>
> That means, Ross says, that during the 1980s, about $4.2 billion was transferred from the poor to the rich.
>
> Ross says the starkest images of the 1980s poverty were the homeless bedding down in shelters and the hungry queuing up at food banks. "Not since the breadlines of the 1930s has Canada witnessed such a shameful reminder of the shortcomings of the labour market and the holes in the income safety net."
>
> Government policies were intent on heightening social and economic inequality.
>
> "The decade was marked by the *status quo* or retrenchment in existing social programs. More decision-making was transferred to the marketplace. Thus began the era of trickle-down, an economic philosophy that wealth should be generated at the top simply by removing economic shackles (mainly taxes) with ensuing gains eventually trickling down to middle and lower income workers".
>
> Ross attributes the phenomenon of homelessness and food banks to the tightening of unemployment insurance, which threw more people faster onto social assistance, and to the failure to maintain social assistance rates even at the poverty line.
>
> No social policy area was harder hit in the 1980s than family benefits, he says. As a result of partial de-indexing, they lose 3 per cent of their value each year. Already, the worth of family allowances has shrunk 12 per cent since 1980.
>
> The new clawback of family allowances and old age security from "rich" Canadians will work down the income scale at 3 per cent a year (again due to partial indexing) until middle and finally, lower income Canadians will be shut out.
>
> Ross contrasts this contraction of public pension benefits with the piling on of tax breaks or private pensions, also out of the public purse—The federal government's 1985 tax reform was a further giant step back to inequality. The tax changes between 1984 and 1990 meant, for a one-earner family of four, an increase of 21 per cent at the $20,000 level, 28 percent at the $50,000 level, 3 per cent at $80,000, but a saving of 1 per cent at $100,000.
>
> Ross is not optimistic that the 1990s will bring immediate change.

"The liberalism of the 1970s, characterized by strong government involvement and high levels of public spending, was replaced in the 1980s by a conservative trend. The decade will be remembered for government cutbacks, privatization, concern with the deficit and market decision-making—"

That is the end of that particular series of quotes and that column says it all. It really does, it says it all.

I would submit that those who are watching the Parliamentary Channel right now, whether in Newfoundland, British Columbia, or my home province of Manitoba, will understand why we Liberals are dead set against Bill C-69. It contains just more of what we have come to expect from this government: VIA Rail services cut; postal services cut; farm support programs cut; unemployment insurance cut; native programs cut; federal transfer payments—it all depends how you express it—either frozen or cut, but either way inimical to the best interest of the provinces, inimical to the best interest of Canadians, inimical to the best interest of the health care system, and inimical to the best interest of post-secondary education in the country.

Sad to say, it is the same old story from a government that does not believe in government, that does not believe in governing. This government has completely, absolutely, without reservation, abdicated its responsibilities. I think it is time to put this government away and put it away for a long time. May it never be seen again. If it does not want to govern, if it does not want to take its responsibilities seriously, I know a group of people on this side of the House who are more than happy to take on that responsibility, more than happy to govern the country in the best interest of all Canadians and not just a privileged few. It is palpable that it is not only us who are saying this. Canadians are saying it by the millions through the polls.

Bill C-69 is a very bad bill. The government is going to regret this legislation. It will regret this legislation and the Canadian people will make absolutely sure of that.

Mrs. Beryl Gaffney (Nepean): Madam Speaker, I want to congratulate my colleague for a very fine speech, a speech that accurately and adequately represented the comments that we are hearing from Canadians right across the country, and certainly that I am hearing from people in my own riding of Nepean.

• (1330)

He talked about reduced transfer payments to the provinces for education and health, in particular. He talked about the goods and services tax, the imposition of this tax upon Canadians and how it is going to hurt them. In addition, he talked about how the cuts in transfer payments and how the GST are going to hurt the provinces. The speaker talked about the clawback, how it is going to hurt the senior residents and about the cut-backs to the native programs.

These are only a few of the cut-backs that we see in this bill. The one thing that comes to my mind when I read of the dreadful measures in Bill C-69, is that Canada, as we have known it for 123 years, is being changed. How the programs have been administered all these years also comes to mind.

In my opinion, with the federal government giving more responsibilities to the provinces, I see a serious abdication of what we have considered to be and what we have known as the federal responsibility in this country for 123 years. It is decentralizing the federal powers and putting them on the backs of the provinces. Then the provinces, in order to maintain the level of the programs that we have known, obviously will have to increase taxes at that level. I would like to have the hon. member's comments in regard to an abdication of responsibilities on behalf of the federal government.

Mr. Harvard: Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague, the hon. member for Nepean. I think her beginning words were far too generous.

Let me pick up on what she said. There has been an abdication of federal government responsibility, especially the responsibility toward the provinces. My understanding of Canadian history, and, particularly, Canadian government history, is that there has been what one might call a family compact of provinces. At the centre of the compact is the federal government, the central government, that has a strong responsibility to all the provinces, especially to the poorer provinces.

The provinces cannot be left to fend for themselves. The provinces cannot be left to drift. The federal government has a responsibility to all the provinces, to the entire country, so that we, regardless of where we live, enjoy a certain basic standard of living. That is not

going to happen under these cuts to or freezing of federal transfer payments.

As sure as God made little green apples, this is going to hurt the poorer provinces. Eventually it may even hurt rich provinces like Ontario or British Columbia, but it will hit the smaller provinces like Manitoba and Newfoundland especially hard.

What we are facing is the balkanization of Canada. In the current constitutional proposals, we see an allowance for provinces to opt out of a national scheme, and at the same time get federal money. I find that provision enormously alarming. That is going to work against the best interests of the smaller, poorer provinces.

Perhaps a rich province like Ontario can make it on its own, but the smaller provinces cannot. This calls for a strong central government that cares about all the provinces and has policies that bind the country together to make it whole. One makes the country whole in many ways. We have heard this expression very often through the Meech Lake discussions.

There is a lot of truth to it, but one does not make a country whole through only some constitutional niceties or constitutional rules. One makes it whole through social programs and federal transfer payments, which constitute very important social programs. If the federal government, at the very centre of a program diminishes it, it diminishes the country.

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Madam Speaker, we are this afternoon on this late spring day discussing whether or not the government should cut $8.3 billion in assistance to the provinces. My colleagues and I say no. We say the government has no moral authority, has no possible excuse or reason why it should want to cut $8.3 billion in program money to be transferred to the provinces. That is exactly what the government wants to do with Bill C-69.

On February 20, 1990 this House heard the second budget from the Minister of Finance since the November 1988 election. Contrary to the previous year's budget, this budget was all released on the same day, rather than over a series of days as was done the previous year.

All members were sitting in this House listening attentively to the Minister of Finance. We thought we would hear words of wisdom from him. We thought we would hear a thoughtful speech on how this federal government wanted to work together with the provinces in order to provide a decent quality of assistance, not just to the provinces, but, to Canadians generally who utilize the services which are offered by the provinces. That is really the most important thing of all.

Instead, my colleagues and I were shocked to hear the following, and I quote from the minister's speech:

> We have capped the growth of a number of programs at 5 per cent per year for the next two years. These include Canada Assistance Plan payments to the fiscally stronger provinces of Ontario, British Columbia and Alberta; and certain expenditures for science and technology, and Indian and Inuit programs. In the 1989 budget, defence and foreign aid expenditures were substantially reduced. In view of the tight fiscal situation, their growth will also be limited to 5 per cent from this lower expenditure base.

If that was not bad enough, he then said further:

> We have held a number of programs at their 1989-90 levels for the next two years. Total per capita cash and transfers to the provinces under Established Programs Financing will be held constant.

This is newspeak, "will be held constant". That means the same as "will be frozen" but the newspeak expert across the way, the Minister of Finance who brought us other similar weasel words, this time told us that the financing will be held constant which of course, as I said previously, is a euphemism for a freeze.

This is what he announced and Canadians listened to him. At first, I suppose, one could be almost tempted to believe that these cuts were necessary. I say almost tempted, because of course no one truly believes any more what the government across the way says. In the unlikely event that some might have been tempted to slightly believe some of what the Minister of Finance said, we came to a rude awakening once we started to make the calculation and determined that provinces would have to cut back on services that they offer to Canadians, or increase their own provincial income tax or in turn, if the provinces could do neither, they would have to transfer some of those same expenditures by reducing their own transfers to municipalities.

• (1340)

[*Translation*]

Madam Speaker, this expenditure restraint program, as I said earlier, announces the government's intention to freeze federal transfers to the provinces under Established Programs Financing for the next two years and, during the same period, to cap federal transfers under the Canada Assistance Plan to Ontario, British Columbia and Alberta at 5 per cent.

I would like to expand on this particular point, Madam Speaker. There are those who will say that since Ontario is richer than the other provinces, these cuts will have practically no impact. Well, that is not true. Anyone who thought that was the case is badly mistaken.

My colleague, the hon. member for Winnipeg St. James (Mr. Harvard), pointed out earlier and very eloquently, I may add, that of course the poorer provinces would be hit more severely and would possibly feel the impact even more quickly than other provinces.

Madam Speaker, although some people may think everybody in Ontario is rich, that is not the case.

[*English*]

I have made a comparison of electoral districts in the province of Ontario. The Minister of Finance represents the riding of Etobicoke Centre and perhaps he feels that all of Ontario is the same as his own riding. That, of course, is not so.

I have made a comparison of the riding of Etobicoke Centre and the riding of Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, which I represent. The information I am quoting is from a document entitled, *Profiles: Federal Electoral Districts—1987 Representation Order: Part 2*, a publication of Statistics Canada. These are quite valid, genuine Statistics Canada figures in case someone would think that I was partisan and perhaps would use statistics other than official ones.

This is what these statistics show about these electoral ridings. First of all, Etobicoke Centre has 89,160 people living in it; Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, as of the 1986 census that is, had 87,140 people. As you see, Madam Speaker, both ridings are just about the same in terms of total population.

Let us look at some statistics which indicate the general socio-economic condition of the riding that I represent and demonstrate to this House that it is not the same as the riding of the Minister of Finance, notwithstanding the fact that it is also in Ontario.

If we look at the following statistic, total population with level of schooling less than grade nine, 6,960 in the riding of Etobicoke Centre and 13,845 in Glengarry—Prescott—Russell. It is the same size in population but has twice as many people who do not have a grade nine education.

The number of people with a university degree in Etobicoke Centre is 13,255; in Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, 3,780, with the same size population, notice the difference.

Let me read the following statistic to you: total labour force 15 years of age and over, 52,000 in Etobicoke Centre, and 42,000 in Glengarry—Prescott—Russell.

As you see, Madam Speaker, not all of Ontario is the same, and perhaps the Minister of Finance should look elsewhere rather than just his own constituency when trying to determine what he thinks is good for all of us.

Let me read a few more statistics: managerial, administrative and related occupations—let us see how many have big-boss jobs in Etobicoke Centre versus Glengarry—Prescott—Russell; in Etobicoke Centre, 6,155; in Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, 2,780.

Continuing with the statistics: females in the workforce, 23,825 in Etobicoke Centre, 16,760 in Glengarry—Prescott—Russell.

The total number of occupied, private dwellings is given as 32,000 in the riding of Etobicoke Centre and 28,000 in Glengarry—Prescott—Russell. That is nearly the same, Madam Speaker.

Now let us look at the average value of a home, which is usually a fair indication of the socio-economic standing of the people: $176,149 in Etobicoke Centre and $77,036 in the riding that I represent.

The statistics show government transfer payments offered to various electoral districts and in Etobicoke Centre, 5.7 per cent of the revenue comes from government transfers. In my own riding it is 11 per cent. This clearly indicates that any cut made by the minister has an

effect which is twice as bad in the riding that I represent than elsewhere.

I am trying to indicate that my riding needs assistance. It needs the help of this government, and it deserves the help of this government.

Mrs. Gaffney: It has a right.

Mr. Boudria: It sure does have a right, as my colleague from Nepean said very eloquently. However, when it comes to getting what is rightfully yours, this government of course does not deliver.

I want to read about income characteristics. The average income for males with income 15 years of age and over in Etobicoke Centre, $35,916; in Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, $22,127; average income for a female in Etobicoke Centre, $17,428; in Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, $12,243.

If cuts are justified any place in Ontario, surely my colleagues in this House will agree that the riding I represent cannot afford to share in any part of the cut-backs imposed by the government across the way.

Finally, I would like to read one last statistic which will indicate beyond doubt the difference in economic situations: average family income for all census families in Etobicoke Centre, $60,725; Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, $36,771.

What we need in the area I represent is not cut-backs. What we need is not the cold, callous way of doing things which this government has shown it can do so well. What we need are programs to assist the region I represent, enabling it to gain a higher standard of living similar to that enjoyed by people elsewhere.

The riding I represent is not located thousands of miles from Parliament Hill. It may be surprising to some to know that the statistics I have just read apply only 40 miles from Parliament Hill. That is the distance to the heart of Prescott County from where we stand right now.

Under the previous Liberal administration there were a number of programs which had succeeded in attracting industries to our area and improving the living conditions. These have all been abolished by the government across the way.

The government through these cuts will affect grants to the provinces, and if the province has to cut back, which area can afford it the least? The one that I represent and others like it.

It is all very well in the government's eye to talk about cut-backs, but I say to them that if any area is equipped to absorb them it is surely not the one I represent.

[*Translation*]

Madam Speaker, we must not think for one minute, just because Ontario happens to be very well off compared to other provinces, that this applies to every single person in the province of Ontario, because it certainly doesn't apply to Glengarry—Prescott—Russell. The riding I represent will certainly have trouble surviving and coping with the cutbacks the Minister of Finance gives us in his Budget and in Bill C-69.

The government sees Tory members applauding and supporting the initiatives proposed by the Minister of Finance. The Minister of Finance and the Prime Minister probably imagine the applause of Tory back-benchers reflects the feelings of Canadians in general. That is not the case, Mr. Speaker, and it is certainly not the case among the people I have the honour and the privilege to represent in this House.

• (1350)

What we need, Madam Speaker, is a government with heart, a government that will be mindful of the needs of Canadians on low and modest incomes, and as I pointed out earlier, there are a lot of people in my riding who belong to this group.

I want to ask the Minister of Finance to swallow his pride for a few minutes, and I even challenge him to rise in the House now, Madam Speaker, and withdraw Bill C-69. We on this side of the House, my colleagues and myself, would be delighted to give the unanimous consent that is necessary to withdraw a bill from the House of Commons. This bill will cause a lot of suffering both in provinces that are less well off and in the so-called rich provinces.

This bill certainly does not contribute to national unity because we know as long as such great regional disparities exist, they create tensions.

Furthermore, this bill certainly does not help my constituents.

I therefore appeal once again to the Minister of Finance and to the Minister of Transport, who is known for his generosity, Madam Speaker, and ask them to withdraw this bill. We know that the transport minister is generous. The Department of Transport showed its generosity in the past when they gave a Crown corporation worth nearly $100 million to one Manfred Ruhland. We already know how generous the finance minister is. Some people, or rather a very small group of two or three rich people, benefited from his generosity in the past.

What we want, Madam Speaker, is to be sure that low- and middle-income citizens can also benefit from the generosity of the government opposite.

[*English*]

In closing, I ask the Minister of Transport to pretend for a minute that my constituent's names are all Manfred Ruhland, that every single one of them is called Manfred Ruhland, and let us have the Minister of Transport treat my constituents with that kind of generosity. I am not asking the Minister of Transport to give airline passes to my constituents to fly all over the world or anything like that. I am just asking him not to impose those unfair cut-backs that he is proposing to us today.

The Minister of Transport may be speaking for the Minister of Finance today, although I think the Minister of Finance who is here among us is quite able to defend himself. In any event, for some reason the Minister of Transport wants to defend the Minister of Finance. I would hope that he would stand now and withdraw this bill which is unfair, not only to less financially-able provinces, but indeed has a severe impact on all Canadians, on their health care and on their level of education. Most of all, it has a negative effect on what we are all trying to do, which is to ensure that all our citizens are able to improve themselves and participate on an equal basis in the society of tomorrow.

Mr. Robert E. Skelly (Comox—Alberni): Madam Speaker, I appreciate the presentation made by the member. I thought it was very effective, especially in the way he compared the constituencies in Ontario, and demonstrated that there are some low-income people who are going to be suffering as a result of the cuts in transfer payments and the capping of the CAP in Ontario.

I want to talk about Manfred Ruhland. The hon. member suggested that he hoped all his constituents would receive the same treatment as Manfred Ruhland did. Unfortunately, if all his constituents were Manfred Ruhland, he would probably be representing a Tory riding. The guy who could not get a credit card most likely had a PC card.

I would like to talk about another constituency in Canada. It is a constituency all across Canada. It will be taking the hardest impact of the EPF cuts. Low-income Canadians will be taking 46 per cent of all the cuts in this budget. These are people who are living at the poverty level in Canada. There are millions of them across the country. They are single parent families headed by women, most of whom are found below the poverty level.

As you know, Madam Speaker, poverty goes hand in hand with illiteracy. The same people who tend to be poor also have difficulty with literacy skills. They will end up having difficulty as a result of the cut-backs in EPF funding. In fact, it has been pointed out that something like 6.8 million Canadians between the ages of 16 and 69 are unable to accomplish everyday tasks such as reading newspapers, making out cheques, reading bank statements and, generally speaking, functioning as normal Canadians.

These people lack the kind of literacy skills that are needed in order to function on a day-to-day basis in the modern world. All the government is giving to these people is something like $110 million over five years. Madam Speaker, you will know that in the national capital we spend $105 million a year watering lawns in the area.

Certainly, it shows what kind of priorities we attach to poverty and illiteracy in the country. We are supposed to be joining with countries internationally to conquer illiteracy. We spend five times as much watering the lawns in the national capital area as we are going to be spending on literacy this year. At the same time, we are cutting back on programs that help to support health care, the elimination of poverty and post-secondary education in the provinces across Canada.

I think it is tragic that the Conservative government holds those kinds of priorities. I appreciate the statements that the hon. member has just made on the priorities of this Tory government.

Mr. Boudria: Madam Speaker, I want to take a moment and indicate to my colleague who has just spoken the fact that single parent families are a phenomenon of all our constituencies.

In the riding that I represent, there are 2,000 such families. Perhaps that number is slightly lower than the number in other electoral districts, but I invite my colleagues to compare it with the fact that the average female in my riding who is working earns $12,243 a year, something like one third of what the average female in the constituency of the Minister of Finance would earn. It has a very devastating effect.

In closing, I do indicate that, in terms of the comparison, the literacy problem is a very serious one. I do not dispute that, but I am not one who would advocate that we stop maintaining the public property around the national capital. This building, and other government buildings, are monuments to the people of Canada. We have to continue to maintain them, and not allow them to deteriorate.

Madam Deputy Speaker: It being 2 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed in today's Order Paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS—MOTIONS

[*English*]

FINANCE

FEDERAL TRANSFER PAYMENTS

Mr. Chris Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing) moved:

> That, in the opinion of this House, the government should consider the advisability of ensuring that federal transfer payments to provinces for the purposes of education and health care are spent directly on those services.

He said: Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise to discuss the question of accountability of provincial governments for funding provided to them by the federal government under the Established Programs Financing system for the support of health care and post-secondary education.

If I may just read my motion, I am suggesting:

> —the government should consider the advisability of ensuring that federal transfer payments to provinces for the purposes of education and health care are spent directly on these services.

Essentially, this motion calls upon the government to explore making federal transfer payments to the provinces accountable for the purposes for which they are transferred. Particularly in the context of transfers under the Established Programs Financing legislation, the motion calls for ways to make sure that that part which has been traditionally transferred to the provinces to fund post-secondary education and health care is used for those purposes and not for other purposes.

As is well known, the federal government became involved in financing post-secondary education, at least by 1912, when grants were made in support of agricultural education. The involvement gradually increased from these modest beginnings with the temporary program of support for veterans returning to Canada after the Second World War.

In 1951, the federal government introduced a matching scheme of direct grants to universities. Starting at 50 cents per capita per annum, the grants rose to $5 per capita per annum by 1966.

With the 1960 Technical and Vocational Training Act, the federal government laid the foundation for the establishment of community colleges through federal-provincial agreements. The federal government paid 75 per cent of provincial expenditures for community colleges.

In 1964, the federal government became involved in student assistance when, in conjunction with the provinces, it launched the Canada Student Loans Program.

In 1967, a fiscal arrangement was entered into by the federal and provincial governments whereby federal government direct grants to universities were replaced by a shared-cost arrangement with the provinces. Under this agreement the federal government paid 50 per cent of the costs of post-secondary education institutions. At the same time, the shared-cost program for technical colleges, begun in 1960, was replaced by the direct purchase of student places at community colleges.

In 1977, the federal government withdrew from shared-cost financing and replaced it with unconditional fiscal transfers under the EPF arrangements, the arrangements which we are now living under. As is well known, these transfers were in the form of cash and the transfer of tax room to the provinces.

During this development of funding support for post-secondary education the federal government, of course, also instituted its participation in funding research in Canada and, perhaps more important, its participation in funding health care in Canada.

I set this out not just as a walk down memory lane, but to make it clear that the federal government has long been involved in funding post-secondary education and health care in Canada.

Even though the EPF legislation introduced in 1977 provided for unconditional transfers to the provinces, both the federal government and the provincial government have been fully aware of the history and the intention for these funds to go toward health care and post-secondary education.

When present ministers were in Opposition they pointed out the importance and the fact that these funds were designated or intended for health care and post-secondary education, although they do appear to take a different point of view now.

There was no intention for such payments to be for highways or for other expenditures over which the federal government had little interest. The federal government's funding of post-secondary education and health care stems from a national interest to ensuring a high quality education system in Canada to which all Canadians have equal access, and to ensuring a high quality and accessible health care system in Canada.

The national interest in both post-secondary education and health care clearly persists today, as statements made by the Prime Ministers and others in the present government have indicated.

Much has been made of the fact that some provincial governments have been spending some of the money transferred from the federal government under the EPF program for other than post-secondary education and health care. In earlier times this was used to argue for a return to some accountability on the part of the provinces for the money transferred from the federal government. This argument at least recognized the importance of two things—federal financing, because of the national interest in high quality, accessible post-secondary education and health care on the one hand and, on the other hand, making sure that federal money designated for post-secondary education and health care was in fact used for these critically important purposes.

However, and to disastrous effect, the present Conservative government has used the problem of provincial governments using EPF funds for other than post-secondary education and health as an excuse for cutting back on the funding, thus accentuating the very serious financial problems faced by Canada's post-secondary education institutions and by our health care system. This irresponsible and short-sighted action by the Conservative government is in sharp contrast to its rhetoric about the importance of both post-secondary education and health care in Canada. It has led to a critical situation.

With regard to education, for example, Dr. George Pederson, President of the University of Western Ontario and current President of the Association of Universities and Colleges in Canada, has publicly stated that the state of Canada's universities is a national disgrace and places Canada in serious jeopardy of being unable to train Canadians to meet the demands of the country's economy in an increasingly competitive world. Without immediate and drastic corrective action, this can only lead to Canada's deterioration to Third World economic status.

Canada's post-secondary education systems and health care systems are suffering from a sharp decrease in federal government funding, inadequate provincial government financial support and misspending of federal funds intended for post-secondary education and health care to other purposes. All this has led to a critical deterioration in the ability of Canada's post-secondary education system, for example, to offer the type and quality of post-secondary education which is required today in Canada, and has led to the situation in which our health care system is unable to cope effectively with the health care needs of Canadian citizens. This is illustrated by the fact that many Canadians in British Columbia and Ontario, at least, are having to go to the United States for certain health care procedures, and

that we have had long waiting lists at hospitals for surgery. Indeed, we have had examples of Canadians dying because of being turned away from our hospitals.

Again with regard to post-secondary education, the federal government in spite of the hope generated by the Saskatoon forum has shown no leadership whatsoever in attempting to ensure that Canada's post-secondary education system is world class, as it needs to be. In fact the federal government has instead attacked the system through major cut-backs in funding support.

The federal government has been roundly criticized by all actors in both the post-secondary education system and the health care system in Canada for its disastrous policies and lack of leadership for which future generations will pay dearly. Instead of complaining that provinces do not always spend Established Programs Financing funds on post-secondary education or health care, the federal government should take steps today to ensure that the provinces spend these dollars as required, that is, on post-secondary education and health care. It is in the national interest to do so. It is irresponsible, short-sighted, indeed, foolish and dangerous not to do so.

It would be prudent for the federal government to ensure that EPF funds intended for post-secondary education and health care are spent by the provinces on those two things.

The current pleas of the federal government are to reduce the deficit and to ensure that federal revenues are spent wisely. Surely, such arguments should also go for EPF transfers and should ensure that those transfers are indeed used for health care and post-secondary education.

Both the post-secondary education institutions in Canada and our health care system are in severe need of adequate funds to do their job adequately, as far as education institutions are concerned, to prepare Canadians for the 21st century and to ensure Canada a viable future; and as far as the health care system is concerned, to ensure that Canadians are able to lead a happy, healthy and dignified life.

Ensuring provincial accountability is a critical component of resolving the funding crunch experienced by our universities and colleges and by our health care systems. Many have called for greater accountability on the part of the provinces.

For example, a 1980 parliamentary task force called for a tight accounting of how provinces used federal transfers. The Johnson report argued for the federal government tying its increases in federal funds to increases in provincial expenditures. Indeed, the Nielsen task force argued that there should be a different approach to the use of EPF funds and, indeed, that they should be more accountable in the hands of the provincial governments.

I will just quote briefly from the Nielsen task force. It states, in part: "We note that provincial governments would object to any new option"—that is to say a new procedure for ensuring that they spent the moneys on post-secondary education and health, as required—"because no other arrangement could likely offer them the combination of revenues and unconditionality with respect to post-secondary education that the present EPF arrangement provides. Nevertheless, in the view of the study team, it is of the greatest importance that the government develop a new direction in consultation with the provinces".

• (1410)

I am not alone in calling upon greater accountability. As we all know, prior to 1977 there was total accountability on the part of the provinces with their funding for post-secondary education and health care in their use of federal transfers.

If the federal government was truly committed to high-quality, accessible health care and high quality, accessible post-secondary education in Canada, then it would ensure that its financial transfers to the provinces are increased to meet the needs of universities and colleges in Canada and the needs of Canadians. It would not drastically cut funds, as it has done. It would also ensure that the moneys transferred to the provinces under EPF are in fact used for post-secondary education and health care.

It should begin discussions immediately with the provinces to ensure the accountability of federal transfers. It should use the influence it has, stemming from its spending powers, to make sure that post-secondary education and health care funds are used for those purposes.

There is no excuse for not acting on this right away. Indeed, not doing so and not transferring adequate funds

to the provinces will be disastrous to post-secondary education and health care in Canada and for Canada's future itself.

Mr. Lee Richardson (Calgary Southeast): Madam Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to speak to the motion before the House.

The motion suggests that the government should ensure that federal transfers for health and education are spent directly on those services. There are a number of reasons for rejecting this motion.

Let me reiterate that supporting such a motion would be contrary to the spirit of the Established Programs Financing arrangement which the federal and provincial governments agreed to in 1977 when they moved from cost sharing to block funding for health and educational services.

Under EPF the federal government provides a contribution to provinces in respect of both health and post-secondary education. Provinces can allocate these funds according to their own priorities which may vary greatly in different parts of the country.

Requiring the provinces to provide a detailed accounting of every dollar they spend on post-secondary education and health care, as the motion suggests, would be a tiresome and unjustified administrative burden for both the provinces and the federal government. We would prefer the money went to the provision of services to Canadians, not to do unnecessary accounting.

Re-imposing conditions on the provinces with respect to how they spend EPF money would also be legally contentious. For example, at present there is no accepted definition of what constitutes post-secondary education. Attempting to arrive at a legal definition would no doubt launch the federal government into a lengthy and expensive legal wrangle.

Above all, re-imposing what would have to be detailed conditions on the provinces would reduce their flexibility in providing innovative health and education services. This would, in a very real way, inhibit the development of Canada's world-class health care system, and it would smother creativity in Canada's first-class post-secondary education system.

Canadians are proud of their health care and education systems. They are a good measure of the wealth and the compassion of our society.

Education, in particular, is increasingly important to making our way in the competitive world in the 1990s and beyond. Canada must have an education system that is responsive to change, that can adapt to help Canada meet the challenges of international competition. Education and human resource development and training will determine which countries are in the vanguard of economic development and which are in the rearguard of economic decline.

Canada already spends ample amounts on education, second only in per capita terms to Sweden among the industrialized countries. What is more important here is not money. It is value for money—it is results. We must not put policies in place that threaten to constrain innovative approaches to post-secondary education. This is obviously even more important in the field of health care where human lives are at stake.

The federal government has been and remains committed to quality education and health care in every region of Canada. While education and health generally are assigned to provincial jurisdictions under the Constitution, there has always been a federal role in these areas. Federal involvement in supporting post-secondary education can be traced back to its role of providing direct support to veterans and to universities in the post-war period. Joint health programs began with the national health grants which were part of the post-war reconstruction program.

With the development of a nation-wide health insurance system, and the rapid expansion of Canadian post-secondary education facilities in the 1950s and 1960s, the federal government's role in financing both health and post-secondary education increased dramatically.

Under cost-sharing arrangements, the federal government contributed about 50 per cent nationally of what were defined as the eligible costs of hospital insurance, medical care, and post-secondary education institutions. The cost-sharing approach was taken at a time when both health and post-secondary education programs were in a stage of major development and expansion, and when the Canadian economy was growing rapidly and governments could afford to devote large sums for these purposes.

By the mid-1970s, it had become quite clear to both the federal and provincial governments that the cost-sharing approach was no longer viable. The open-ended nature of cost-sharing arrangements reduced the federal government's ability to control and predict its expenditures. Wide per capita variations in federal transfers to different provinces appeared inequitable. Cost sharing of specific expenditures led to rigidities and an inefficient allocation of resources. The arrangements were cumbersome to administer because of auditing requirements and difficulties in defining eligible expenditures. The approach encouraged expenditures at both levels of government through 50-cent dollars.

In an effort to overcome these problems, the federal and provincial governments accepted in 1977 that cost sharing would be replaced in favour of Established Programs Financing.

Let me briefly review the objectives of this financial arrangement. They are to maintain across Canada the standard of services to the public under these major programs, and to facilitate their improvement; to put the programs on a more stable footing so that both levels of government are better able to plan their expenditures; to give the provinces flexibility in the use of their own funds which they have been spending in these fields; to bring about greater equity and equality among the provinces with regard to the amount of federal funds they receive under the program; and to provide for continuing joint policy discussions relating to the health and post-secondary education fields.

Under EPF, the federal government provides equal per capita financial assistance to all provinces through the transfer of tax points and cash payments. The federal government continues to pay a substantial share of the costs of provincial health and post-secondary education programs. In 1990-91 federal EPF contributions will amount to over $20 billion.

Let me reiterate, Madam Speaker, that since 1977 the provinces have been able to use these transfers according to their particular priorities rather than in the more restricted fashion required by the previous cost-sharing arrangements. This system works well. It has given Canada a health care system that is the envy of the world. It has provided us with world-class universities and post-secondary institutions.

I would ask hon. members to bear these facts in mind when considering the motion before the House.

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Madam Speaker, I listened to our colleague for Calgary Southeast and might have to reconsider my position because I agree with him. I do not want to agree with Conservative members too often. You, Madam Speaker, will understand the bad precedent that that could create from time to time. However, I do agree with him this time.

Mr. Thacker: You might even get re-elected.

Mr. Boudria: I hear a member across the way saying that the member for Calgary Southeast might even get re-elected.

Mr. Thacker: You might even get re-elected, if you become a Conservative.

Mr. Boudria: I suppose there is nothing impossible, Madam Speaker. That member might get re-elected. But then again he might not, as most Tories will of course go down to defeat in the next election. It could very well be that that particular member will as well. But who knows. The voters will decide ultimately and the member from Lethbridge will find out, as we all will on election day.

I listened attentively to the proposition set forth by our colleague, the member for Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing. He said that the government should consider the advisability of ensuring that federal transfer payments to the provinces for the purposes of education and health care are spent directly on those services. The only way of achieving that, as was pointed out earlier, is to amend the cost-sharing agreements that the federal government has right now with the provinces.

• (1420)

Right now we operate under a block funding type of arrangement. What that means is that, if we ensure that federal transfers to the provinces go to a specific area, then we would unilaterally change the agreement we have now with the provinces. I do not agree with that proposition.

It was only moments ago that we were discussing Bill C-69. With respect to Bill C-69 I said, and colleagues from all sides of the House said, how wrong it was for the federal government to cut back unilaterally on funds going to the provinces. If it is wrong to cut back

unilaterally on funds to the provinces, I ask my colleagues this. Is it not similarly wrong to amend unilaterally the agreements we have with them?

You can see, Madam Speaker, why I am tempted here to agree with the member from Calgary Southeast. The only reason I agree with him is because he is correct, not because he is the Conservative member for Calgary Southeast. I do think he is correct in the sense that we should not be trying to impose this kind of a proposition.

If my colleague from Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing would have proposed instead that the federal government consider the advisability, when it renegotiates agreements with the provinces, of ensuring that those new agreements have a provision whereby health care dollars would be assigned specifically as opposed to the present arrangement which provides for block funding, then perhaps I would look at the issue slightly differently.

At the present time what is proposed is not that. What is proposed to me sounds very heavy-handed. It sounds very doctrinaire. I have difficulty with that kind of socialism that is so doctrinaire that it wants to impose that kind of central authority on just about everything. You can understand, Madam Speaker, how I would be hesitant to support that kind of a proposition.

Therefore, I regret to say that I cannot agree with what the hon. member is suggesting to members of the House. I usually consider the opinions of the member for Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing as being very worthy and supportable opinions, generally. I do think, particularly at this time in the history of our country—and I need not remind hon. members of what is going on right now across the street—that it certainly is not a good time to talk about making the kind of changes that are being proposed here today.

Indeed, the arrangements we have now have been in place since, I believe, 1977. Before that, post-secondary education and health care were funded by mechanisms which were different, at least very different in the case of post-secondary education in particular.

I will recognize that negotiators, when these agreements expire, may want to negotiate them federally. At that particular point, as I said previously, I would be willing to offer my input as to how I think that should be done.

Needless to say, I do not think at the present we should be supporting the motion brought forward by our colleague for the reasons I have just described.

Mr. René Soetens (Ontario): Madam Speaker, this motion that is before us brings the whole question of federal payments to the provinces and, in particular, payments under the Established Programs Financing Act. It is a very important subject.

In 1977, we saw a major change in the way in which federal assistance was delivered to the provinces. The federal and provincial governments agreed back then to replace the old shared-cost program and shared-cost method of assistance with a very different kind of program which we now know as EPF.

Through the EPF program the federal government continues to support the financing of a number of programs, including, of course, post-secondary education and health care. Provincial programs are supported through payments made directly to their governments.

The change in 1977 was to move away from the old shared-cost system, where federal assistance met up to about half the cost of certain programs, to a system of what is called block funding.

Federal assistance is now based on a formula related to the growth of the economy and of the population of each province and is therefore more equitable across the country. The provinces are happy with this arrangement. I am certainly not aware of any objections since 1977 to that arrangement, since it allows the provinces more flexibility in designing programs to use their revenues, both those raised by themselves and those provided by the federal government.

Over the years there have been changes in the EPF program, but all have respected the basic principles of that act and the agreement between the provinces and the federal government.

Most recently, the federal government has responded to our financial situation by proposing changes which ask the provinces to share in the national burden of fighting the deficit and inflation. These changes, too, respect the outlines of the EPF program.

I want to take time now to look at these recent changes in light of our situation with respect to this motion.

At this point, it is important to remember that total federal transfers to the provinces through tax points and cash payments amount to over $35 billion. These transfers have grown at an average rate of 6.5 per cent per year since 1984–85—a rather significant growth rate. This compares to spending on federal programs which has grown in the same period by an average rate of 3.6 per cent per year. That is certainly less than the rate of inflation, but substantially less than the rate at which we have been transferring payments to the provinces.

We believe that the provinces are able to carry a larger share of the burden of their own spending, especially the more prosperous provinces.

At the present time, 35 cents of every federal revenue dollar is being used to pay interest on the accumulated federal debt, while the comparable figure for the provinces together is only 12 cents.

I have talked about more prosperous provinces sharing the burden that we at the federal level have. I would like to talk specifically about the province that I live in, the province of Ontario. I heard the doom and gloom about funding for various health care and education programs because of this cut that we have proposed in EPF. I say cut, but it really is not a cut. We are increasing transfers to the province of Ontario by over 2 per cent, almost 3 per cent.

Having said that, in all the doom and gloom that members of the Opposition have talked about, the province of Ontario this year was able to increase its spending on health care by 12.8 per cent in its budget. Where in the world is the doom and gloom that members of the Opposition are talking about?

Not only was the Government of Ontario able to increase its spending by 12.8 per cent in the field of health care, it was able to balance its budget. It was able to pay off some of its debt. All in all, it was doing a pretty remarkable job. I give it credit for that. The fact is that the province was able to raise the money. Yet here we are in the House saying that the province of Ontario could not afford to get only just under 3 per cent more from the federal government. That is nonsense.

Our expenditure control plan will limit the rate of growth of these transfers to about 3 per cent for the next two years. This is about the rate we ourselves are holding to for federal program spending. In other words, all we are asking the provinces to do is to carry the same load that we here in Ottawa are putting upon ourselves. We are asking them to do as we are doing—not more, not less.

Having said this about the provinces in general, however, we are sensitive to the fact that some provinces are not in as good a position as others. I understand that, yes, the province of Ontario was able to do some things because of some economic health that it has. As a result of our planning, our plan is sensitive to the needs of individual provinces. Federal transfers will grow by about 4 per cent a year in the next two years to those seven weaker provinces, while the stronger ones, including the province that I come from, will only grow at just over 2 per cent a year.

• (1430)

However, I want to underline another important aspect of our proposal. It is that the reductions we are proposing are really not reductions. They are reductions in the rate of growth, but they only amount to about 1 per cent of the provincial revenues. It is not 10 per cent, 20 per cent or 40 per cent. I realize opposition members have not used those numbers, but the hysteria they create by the way they are carrying on suggests that we are decimating provincial revenues. That is nonsense. It is about 1 per cent.

Transfers will, of course, continue to grow. The weaker provinces will benefit more than the stronger provinces. That is part of what Canada is about.

I want to look more closely now at one particular area of federal transfers, the Established Programs Financing, which is the focus of the motion that is before us today.

EPF is the single largest element of over-all federal transfers to the provinces which amount to about $36 billion in 1990–91. EPF itself has grown from $14.5 billion in 1984–85 to about $20 billion in 1989–90. That is a growth rate of over 6 per cent a year.

We at the federal level have been controlling our spending at a rate of 3.5 per cent a year. We have been transferring money to the provinces at the rate of about 6 per cent a year. They certainly have not been very hard

done by and now we are only asking them to match what we are doing.

Mr. Turner (Halton—Peel): What about Ontario's spending?

Mr. Soetens: Ontario's spending is a very good question. It has been increasing spending over-all at a rate of just under 10 per cent a year for the entire period that we are talking about. We held ourselves to 3.5 per cent while Ontario managed to raise its spending to 10 per cent. No wonder they have an inflationary problem in southern Ontario.

I want to remind you that under this program the federal government gives assistance to the provinces both in tax points and in cash transfers. The purpose of these transfers has been to assist the provinces in providing acceptable levels of programs in certain areas.

Since 1977, however, the provinces have been able to use the money in accordance with their own priorities. They have not been dictated to by the federal government. Each and every province can set their own priorities in using the money that we have been transferring to them.

Of course, in 1977, I need not remind you, Madam Speaker, and unfortunately for Canada, there was not a Conservative government in Ottawa. An awful lot of bad things have happened since 1977 because of another government that existed in Ottawa, but in this particular case on that point that government transferred responsibility to the provinces. That, in essence, is what Canada believes in, that the provinces have the responsibility to deliver. We give them that responsibility.

Our proposals will continue to transfer under the EPF for the next two years at the same per capita rate as they got in 1989–90. It is not a new formula. It is the formula they used in last year's budget that we are asking them to use it in this year's budget and in the next year's budget.

Transfers will therefore continue to increase as provincial populations increase at an expected rate for the country as a whole of about 1 per cent. Because transfers are based on an equal per capita figure for each Canadian, the effect of our program will be equal for each and every province.

In 1992–93, the rate of growth will return to that set out in the law and in the agreements which provide for the payments to increase by the rate of inflation less than 3 per cent, as announced in the April, 1989 budget. After 1992–93, the rate of increase will not be less than the rate of inflation.

The second program under which the federal government assists the provinces is the equalization program, which provides help to provinces with weaker revenues and which may be directed to health care and post-secondary education. These payments have also grown strongly in recent years, from about $5 billion in 1984–85 to nearly $8 billion in 1989–90, a 60 per cent growth rate in about five years.

In the case of the Atlantic provinces, these payments are more important than payments under the EPF simply because of the sheer size and volume of the payments. Equalization going to the less prosperous provinces is not affected by the restraint program presented by the government. They will continue to grow at a rate between 6 per cent and 7 per cent a year, which is substantially higher than the projected rate of increase in federal program spending.

The facts I have set out in explanation of what this government is doing with respect to EPF and equalization underline the importance we attach to the goals of these programs.

While we are asking the provinces to share the burden, as I have explained previously, we are continuing to spend a great deal of money, up to $27 billion in 1990–1991, on the two programs in actual cash. That is a substantial proportion of federal government spending and an even higher proportion of spending of federal programs.

These moneys are being transferred to the provinces because we believe the provinces, which have the constitutional authority in the areas of education and health care, are the level of government best suited to make the practical decisions about what services are to be delivered and how they are to be delivered. Without an increase in the size of the federal bureaucracy, this is the most efficient and effective way to ensure that Canadians receive the services they need.

I am not persuaded that these are appropriate messages being sent today. I am glad to put on record my opposition to the motion put by members of the opposition.

Mr. Garth Turner (Halton—Peel): Madam Speaker, in addressing this particular motion I can agree with the member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell. I think he spoke some very eloquent and intelligent words on this particular matter. I would like to compliment my friend.

When he said that this was an example of heavy-handed doctrinaire politics, he was right. This is an example of the ugly side of socialism in this country. This motion typifies the attitude, the doctrine, the belief that a federal government can walk into Canadians' lives, and provincial affairs, that the state can intervene in other jurisdictions. It is the state rearing its head, the jackboots of a central government which is totally wrong. It may be pure socialism, but it is wrong. It is wrong for Canada.

The member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell also mentioned what is happening here in Ottawa as we attempt to achieve constitutional reform. The symbolism of what is happening as those discussions go on, compared to the political reality of this kind of a motion, shows very dramatically different styles of government. It shows a government style that this government has adopted that is conciliatory, that is negotiating, that represents that it understands that there are other interests out there, that the government needs to work with Canadians, with other associations and other governments rather than dictating to them as, perhaps, the NDP would have us do. It is clearly not right.

I do not think Canadians want anything other than a partnership. They want a partnership that works. They do not want a dictatorship.

There is one thing, however, that the member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell said with which I must take a moment to disagree. He said that Tories will go down to defeat in the next election. Well, I do not know where he got that. Maybe it is because right now Tories have the conviction to reform the tax system. It would have been easier to leave an unfair and invisible hidden tax in place that hurts the economy. That would have been easy. In fact, for years governments have taken the easy way out. It is not easy to take an invisible, hidden tax and make it visible. It is not easy to take a tax that consumers do not know they pay and all of a sudden tell them about it. That is tough.

Maybe he was referring to spending cuts that this government has made. Maybe he was referring to the fact that we have stood up to special interest groups. The government has admitted that it is difficult to cut off the funding once it has been started, but the government has decided to do that and maybe that is why the hon. member thinks that the Tories are unpopular right now.

Maybe it is the fact that we have reformed the unemployment insurance system to try to make it fair, to channel more money into retraining people rather than just paying them to sit at home. That is not easy either and maybe the hon. member was referring to that.

Then again, the member may have been referring to the government's stance on fighting inflation. Maybe the hon. member thinks that interest rates are too high, that maybe we should abandon the fight for long-term economic stability into which we have entered. The hon. member may have been talking about the politics of convenience rather than the politics of conviction. Politicians of convenience are there to get elected again. That is what they care about. In fact, all that politicians of convenience care about is getting elected again. But there is something more important than that.

• (1440)

More important than being a politician of convenience is being a politician of conviction, politicians who do not care if they are popular. Popularity comes and popularity goes, polls rise and polls fall, and at the end of the day convenience does not matter. At the end of the day you have to look back and say, when I was a member of Parliament, while I was part of the government, while I was in the House of Commons, did I just do things that would get me elected again, or did I do things that I believed in and things that I could go back and tell people that I supported?

If the hon. member wants us just to be politicians of convenience, maybe it would be easier to get elected again and again. But to be popular, Madam Speaker, is easy. I will give you a recipe for popularity right now.

The government would scrap the GST. The government would not try to fix the constitutional impasses to which we have come. The government would print more money. The government would ignore the debt. The government would ignore the deficit. The government would ignore inflation. That would make us very popular very fast.

In the short term, we would have been politicians of convenience. We would have been politicians who became popular. We would be politicians for the short term, because that is how long the popularity would last. Very soon this country would have chaos on many fronts: social, political, economic, financial. We would have problems then that politicians who came after us would not be able to solve, and it is bad enough right now as we members of Parliament, we the government, try to cope with the problem that we inherited.

In 1984 the debt that we inherited was $170 billion. Today it is more than double, almost entirely because of interest on that debt that we inherited. If you have a mortgage on your house, Madam Speaker, and you cannot make the mortgage payments and you borrow enough to make them every year, pretty soon you are going to have a much bigger mortgage and will have a harder time paying it off. It is that simple.

We do not want to be politicians like the politicians who came before. We want to break the cycle of the last 20 years. Those of us who are in the House for the first time want to make a difference. We realize that making a difference for the future means solving the problems of the past. That is what all this is about. It is about conviction, not convenience. It is about the long term and not the short term.

We have to do things today which will have consequences throughout the 1990s. It will not be an easy decade. There are going to be lots of problems. There are going to be economic problems and environmental problems, linguistic problems and social problems. To solve all of those we have to take actions today so that we can reap the benefit in the future. This is what this government is doing now.

I have to take exception to the comments of the member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell. I think they were ill-conceived.

We are not here to talk about that anyway, and a few words on the funding program now would be worth while. As I said, I think the philosophy of the NDP is totally wrong, but I only have two minutes now to cover this subject in my remarks, so I will not even try, Madam Speaker. Two minutes is really not enough time to deal with this, but two minutes is enough time to say that all of us here on this side of the House are trying to accomplish an agenda.

Canadians will know that right now the government is not very popular in the polls. Canadians, however, recognize in their hearts that the polls do not matter. It is very easy to say that you would support some other politician or some other political party. It is very easy when there is not an election going on. It is very easy when there are so many issues of national importance on the agenda.

But, Madam Speaker, the polls do not matter right now. They do not matter to me as the member for Halton—Peel, they do not matter to the member for Ontario and they do not matter to the member for Calgary Southeast. All of us do not care about the polls. We care about doing what is right, what is constructive and what is beneficial for our country.

We will continue to do it. We have not lost any resolve. We do not look at the polls with any alarm or with any fear. We look at them with a passing curiosity because we know that when Canadians are asked to make a decision they will have only one decision to make, and that is to support those politicians who truly fight for Canada.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jean-Marc Robitaille (Terrebonne): Before I begin, Madam Speaker, let me congratulate my colleague for his excellent speech. I think he conveyed his position with great maturity.

In 1977, there was a very important change in the way federal aid was given to the provinces. The federal and provincial governments agreed to replace the shared-cost assistance with a considerably different funding mechanism, now known as Established Programs Financing. Under EPF, the federal government continued to fund a large part of provincial post-secondary education and health care programs by transfer payments to the provincial governments. The difference is that starting in

1977, the federal government would no longer contribute on a 50–50 shared-cost basis with the provinces. The federal contribution would be calculated on the basis of the economic growth and population of each province. The federal government's contribution to these programs thus became more uniform across the country. The provinces were satisfied with this arrangement because it gave them much greater flexibility in using funds both from their treasury and from the federal government.

Much has happened since then and our assistance continues in spite of straitened circumstances. In the current fiscal year, transfers of tax points and cash to the provinces will total over $35 billion. On the whole, transfers to the provinces have increased at an average annual rate of 6.5 per cent since 1984–85. By comparison, spending on federal programs in general has been held to an average annual growth rate of 3.6 per cent, which is less than the rate of inflation. In general, the provinces are able to carry a bigger share of their spending, especially the provinces that are in good financial shape.

At a time when 35 cents of every dollar of federal revenue is used to pay interest costs on the debt, the average figure for the provinces is only 12 cents.

Under the Expenditure Control Plan which was part of the last budget, the tranfers to the provinces are expected to grow over the next two years by nearly 3 per cent a year, roughly the same rate as the federal government's total program spending. In other words, we are not asking the provinces to carry a burden heavier than our own. We are asking the provinces to do their part, that is all.

If I may, Madam Speaker, I should like to emphasize the federal government's contribution to the provinces, a contribution which remains very significant. The transfers generally will continue to increase and the less affluent provinces will benefit from a higher growth rate than the others. Because the transfer payments to the provinces represent very significant amounts, I should like, if I may, to deal a little more in detail with the way the governement helps all provinces.

In 1990–91, the federal government will provide nearly $36 billion in total financial support to the provinces and territories.

• (1450)

The greater part of this assistance comes under three major programs: Established Programs Financing, equalization payments and the Canada Assistance Plan. Under the Established Programs Financing, the Federal Government provides equal per capita financial assistance to all provinces through the transfer of tax points and cash payments. These transfers were originally designed to help provinces carry out their responsibilities in respect of health care and post-secondary education.

Since 1977, provinces have been able to use these transfers according to their particular priorities. EPF transfers are the largest single form of federal support to provinces, and have grown from $14.5 billion in 1984–85 to about $20 billion in 1989–90, an average annual growth rate of more than 6 per cent.

In addition to Established Programs Financing, the federal government also provides substantial additional assistance to the lower income provinces to help them provide public services including health care and post-secondary education through the equalization program. Equalization transfers have grown strongly in recent years, from over $5 billion in 1984–85 to close to $8 billion in 1989–90. For example, they now exceed EPF as the largest form of federal support in the Atlantic provinces.

Under the Canada Assistance Plan (CAP), Madam Speaker, the federal government provides funds to provincial and territorial governments to help them pay for social assistance benefits and services. These transfers, which are based on 50/50 cost-sharing of eligible provincial spending, have grown at an average annual rate of about 6.7 per cent over the past five years. The federal contribution, in the form of cash and transfer of tax points, has increased from $4 billion to $5.5 billion. The average rate of growth in each province has varied from 1 to 3 per cent in Saskatchewan, British Columbia and Quebec, to about 14 per cent in Ontario.

For the next two years, growth in transfers under the Canada Assistance Plan, or CAP, will be limited to five per cent a year in the fiscally stronger provinces of Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia. Other provinces—those receiving federal equalization payments—will be exempt from this ceiling on growth. They will continue to have open-ended access to federal dollars to meet any growth in expenditures eligible for cost-sharing under CAP. Implementation of this measure will provide for resumption of the present regime on April 1, 1992.

Mr. Speaker, I repeat that federal financial assistance to the provinces is distributed on a progressive basis. Fiscally weak provinces receive far more substantial per capita assistance than the richer provinces. The facts show, beyond a doubt, that the federal government has done its share despite a financial context, a financial situation of which everyone is well aware, and I am referring to our very substantial national debt and deficit. I believe that in times like these, we must be realistic. We must be realistic because everyone wants more assistance. Everyone wants better programs. Everyone wants an even more progressive increase in programs. However, we must consider the country's financial situation, and I believe that Canadians are very well informed in this respect and are very proud of the fact that we are able to act responsibly as a government.

As my colleague from Halton—Peel (Mr. Turner) said, we were not elected to this House or to government just to win beauty or popularity contests. We were elected to show leadership and the ability to run this country well.

I think that for this reason, Canadians will be grateful to us for having done the right thing at the right time, Madam Speaker, for having made the right decisions when they had to be made and for not trying only to win popularity contests in the short run.

Madam Speaker, thank you for your attention.

[*English*]

Mr. Blaine A. Thacker (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Madam Speaker, it is a privilege to rise on this Private Members' Motion dealing with federal-provincial relations. I speak from some 11 years of sitting in this House and listening to the same debate over and over again. One hundred years from today members will still be debating this because the bottom line reality is that we live in a federal country with a federal power that has enormous taxing power against all Canadians in all regions of the country. It deals with provinces which represent much smaller areas, often with much less strength to be able to tax their people and industries.

Since Confederation mechanisms have been developed to transfer cash through the central Parliament back to regions that do not have the same taxing authority.

I can remember soon after 1980 sitting on a federal task force of all three parties in the House looking at the question of federal-provincial transfers. We travelled to every provincial capital and interviewed dozens of Canadians, provincial governments and officials. It became crystal clear that there is one thing that the provinces are absolutely unanimous on, and that is that if they can help it, they are not going to give up any fiscal power to the federal government and that they want more and more fiscal power back.

Indeed, the genius of Canada is that in times of crisis, war and depressions, for example, power can centralize in Ottawa as happened in World War I, World War II and during the Depression. However, during peace time there has been a steady devolution of fiscal responsibility to the provinces.

To me the most important thing for this Parliament is to ensure that we never give to the provinces that residual power that we have, i.e., peace, order and good government, so that at a time of crisis, whether an economic crisis or a political crisis such as war, power can be taken and used by Parliament.

In the meantime, during peace times, very likely the principle that the government closest to the people gives the best government is a good principle to operate by, and so we should not be frightened by that.

In terms of federal-provincial fiscal arrangements, we know from the speeches given earlier that the federal government, using its spending power, moved into areas of exclusive provincial jurisdiction. That is the real critical point. We are talking about that limited area where there is exclusive provincial jurisdiction— property civil rights and education. Property and civil rights includes hospitals.

We should not easily move into those areas and try to take them away from the provinces. Indeed, if we did, the Supreme Court would throw it out and declare any act of Parliament to be unconstitutional. So we have had to enter into arrangements.

The first one was shared cost under which the provinces would get 50 cents for every 50 cents they spent. Under that, the provinces, particularly the ones that had strong fiscal capacity, built up their hospitals, schools and colleges very fast. The weaker provinces did not have even the 50 cents so they were falling further behind.

The result was that there was uncontrolled federal spending and the federal government had no idea how much it was going to have to budget each year. So in 1977 the government came out with block funding, the idea that the provinces would just get a certain amount and would then decide how to spend it.

It is true that some provinces have abused that formula. Indeed, there are instances where they have received under the formula more than they have actually spent, for example, on post-secondary education. Nonetheless, it gave more certainty to the federal government and so, on balance, I think that was not so unwise.

The government then moved into a formula that was based on a moving average. The result was that we in Parliament were transferring to the provinces moneys well above the annual rate of inflation. That was not right because we were then giving up the right and responsibility of parliamentarians to act responsibly in a fiscal sense because, of course, it is the same people being taxed, whether federally or provincially. We have no more right to be irresponsible than do they. Thus, under Bill C-69 with which we just dealt, which is to try to cut back the rate of increase to the provinces, it is still going to be above the rate of inflation, but it will be a lower rate than before.

[*Translation*]

Madam Deputy Speaker: The period for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired. Pursuant to Standing Order 96(1), this item is dropped from the Order Paper.

It being three o'clock, the House stands adjourned under next Monday at 1 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

The House adjourned at 3.01 p.m.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, June 11, 1990

The House met at 1 p.m.

Prayers

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS–BILLS

• (1310)

[*English*]

CANADA WATER PROTECTION ACT

MEASURE TO ENACT

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops) moved that Bill C–221, An Act to protect water in Canada, be read the second time and referred to a legislative committee

He said: Madam Speaker, I am pleased to have this opportunity today to introduce for debate, Bill C–221.

I would like to begin my comments by suggesting that when people think of Canada or when Canadians think of our own country, there are a number of things that spring almost instantly to mind. One of those would be the term Meech Lake. I think that has been associated with being what Canadians are and what being Canadian is all about.

I suspect water is another item which makes one think of Canada. It has become almost a Canadian experience to take advantage of an abundance of water, since many other countries are not necessarily so fortunate to have such a vast resource.

It could mean houseboating or cottaging around our lakes, canoeing down rivers or across lakes, fishing in streams, boating on our coasts or in our inland waterways. It could be kayaking, yachting or sailing. The association of people with water has become a Canadian experience. I suppose the beer ads reflect that most clearly, in terms of people having fun in Canadian water.

On the other hand, there is another side to this water issue. We find that there are hundreds of lakes in the greater Ottawa area that are lifeless because of acid rain. While they look nice, very pristine and glacier clear, the fact is they look like that because there is nothing living in them. They are dead lakes. We hear of increasing pollution of waterways, streams and lakes and find, with horror, that many Canadian cities, large and small, still today dump raw sewage directly into our river systems and lakes.

It is almost incomprehensible that a country as sophisticated and developed as Canada would still find it acceptable to dump vast quantities of raw sewage directly into our rather pristine river systems on a daily basis. We are getting close to that time of the season when people would like to go to the beaches and go swimming. They will find the beaches closed for swimming because the water is polluted.

We have to ask ourselves what kind of a country are we that will allow beaches and water bodies, particularly those adjacent to large metropolitan areas, to be closed regularly every summer because of increased levels of pollution in our waterways.

I realized the need for this bill a few months ago while boating in the gulf islands, off our west coast. The boat was tied up with a whole set of other boats for an evening in a very secluded and safe cove. I recall getting up early in the morning, leaping into the water as one does to refresh oneself and enjoy an early–morning dip, only to notice as I am swimming around, a lot of indefinable bits of debris floating in the water around me. I then realized that everyone who had gotten up at the same time had decided to flush their toilets on their boats directly into the cove, and here I am swimming around with all sorts of interesting other objects. I got out of the water very quickly, I will tell you.

I had to ask myself what kind of a country we had that would allow this. I started to look at the laws and decided to introduce Bill C–221 as a result. I went back and looked at the federal water policy in 1987, when Environment Canada issued the federal water policy for the Government of Canada. This was a report outlining the major issues facing Canada's water resources, along with

a comprehensive list of initiatives that the Conservative government would undertake. That was in 1987.

We saw 1987 end, 1988 end, and 1989 end, and now we are into 1990. Quite frankly, little substantive movement has been made in any legislative forum to address the many issues cited in the report as being fundamental to the continued availability of our fresh water stocks when it comes to fishing and the whole matter of clean water and safe drinking water in our country.

Bill C-221, the bill before us today, takes the necessary step beyond rhetoric. It encourages us and, in some respects, compels us to examine seriously our water usage today in order to assure the availability of this precious Canadian resource for generations to come. Across Canada, I think we would agree that communities have acted and reacted differently to the challenges presented to them in recent years when the essential nature of coherent water management policies became a concern, not only for the federal government, but also for provincial governments and municipalities, including the nation's capital, Ottawa.

To be fair, I might say that there have been some outstanding efforts to clean up polluted waterways and lakes in some areas while, in others, the policy and problems of pollution control have become worse. The matter worsens by the day.

What we need is a commitment from the government to embrace a comprehensive water policy for Canada. We need federal leadership to establish maximum contaminant levels in drinking water. A national standard is necessary to ensure that all Canadians can be guaranteed clean water, regardless of which area one happens to reside in.

I think it is fair to say that in a country like Canada, blessed with the natural water resources that we have, safe drinking water is a fundamental right that any citizen ought to expect. Quite plainly, the necessity of clean water is no longer debatable. Today, we do not and ought not debate the need for it. We should debate the methods and ways of achieving it.

Clean water is a social good that goes beyond being an issue for ourselves. It has become an issue about our responsibilities toward our children, their children, and so on. We need a mandate to establish a minimum level of stewardship or our water will not last, at least in any usable form.

The federal water policy recommends that the government undertake "physical, chemical, biological and socioeconomic investigations". I am pleased to say that this bill makes this a reality. It directs the Minister of the Environment to cause research to be conducted into a wide range of water-related issues such as the causes, diagnoses, treatment, control, and prevention of adverse health effects associated with contaminants; the researching of new methods of purifying water; and investigating the sources of surface and ground water contamination, just to name a few.

This bill would force the government to keep its promises of expanded research in an area so vital to Canada's interest.

There are some in this Chamber who would say we have no business talking about water in the House of Commons because it is a provincial responsibility. I would say, with all due respect, that they would be incorrect.

The federal government and Parliament have a vested interest in the protection of navigable waters, shipping, drinking water in areas of federal jurisdiction, international water management, and federal-provincial-territorial co-operation in water resources, planning and management. Following the recommendations of Environment Canada, this bill would make the federal approach more anticipatory in order to protect the health and safety of Canadians. It is time that we became more pro-active in the matter of water policy development, as opposed to waiting for problems to happen and then simply reacting.

The government promised to bring forth legislative initiatives which would address interjurisdictional water issues. This bill, Bill C-221, would provide a mandate for the federal government to co-ordinate and formulate the implementation of inter-basin transfer policies, along with research into the effects.

At the moment, there are no penalties for surpassing the federal guidelines on water contaminants. This bill establishes a process by which testing is implemented, results are made public, and those supplies which fail to meet standards are not used until able to comply with the minimum standards of purity.

• (1320)

The government promised public participation in making water management decisions, but I cannot recall any opportunity for the public to become involved in the development of a comprehensive national water policy. As a matter of fact, there has been no opportunity for citizens generally, who are either marginally or very seriously interested in this issue, to participate in the formulation of such a policy. Without a plan before Parliament, there is no avenue for public discourse on the subject. Bill C–221 ensures the public's right to know by providing for public disclosure of the results of water testing.

Bill C–221 would require water suppliers to be responsible for testing their water supplies at least every month. This would encourage suppliers to be vigilant in their efforts to ensure the integrity of the water they supply to Canadians. Not only would they test monthly, but the results would be available for everyone to see because they would be required to be mailed to every user with their monthly water bill. This would be a direct way to involve the public. Not only would they know that their water is being tested, but they would be aware of what standards are being used and to what extent the supplier would comply with those standards.

During the debates on the free trade agreement, many alarming questions concerning large–scale water diversions to the United States were raised. As we are all aware, water was not given an exclusion from the free trade agreement, as were logs and beer. I find it rather odd when one considers we made a specific effort to exclude beer in the free trade agreement, yet we did not take the same measure with fresh water. Although anyone in a liquor store would notice that the American brewing industry has found a way around this. Even though beer was excluded from the free trade agreement, Canadians now drink even more American beer.

We are all aware of our friends to the south looking covetously at water in Canada. In the American southwest water supplies are drying up. Usage is increasing at alarming rates and a shortage is imminent, particularly when considering the drought conditions faced during the last few years. I suspect that more and more our American friends are looking northward to Canada.

We are all reminded of the North American water and power alliance from the 1960s when American engineers brought before the Senate a plan to divert a number of Canadian rivers into the United States. That plan is still on the books. A number of senators from the western states recently indicated their interest in the NAWAPA plan, the North American Water and Power Alliance, and major diversions of western Canadian rivers into the United States as far south as northern Mexico. Perhaps when the United States and Mexico begin their free trade agreement discussions, Canadian water will be part of those deliberations.

Canada is perceived to be in possession of massive amounts of fresh water which could be used to shore up faltering American water stocks. The fact is that Canadian water supplies are just able to meet our own needs and talking about huge diversion schemes at this point is completely unacceptable.

Canada comprises 7 per cent of the world's land mass and has approximately 9 per cent of its renewable water. According to a federal government report, this is very misleading because 60 per cent of our fresh water drains north, while 90 per cent of our population lives within a 300–kilometre area of the southern border with the United States. This means that even though water is technically available it is not always where it is needed. We have serious problems here with our own internal water management policies which must be addressed. The exportation of water through diversion schemes should be taken off the table as a topic for debate completely. The social, economic, and environmental costs of major inter–basin transfers to the United States are completely unacceptable regardless of what the short–term benefits may be.

The government also promised that it would take the strongest possible steps to prohibit the export of Canadian water by inter–basin transfer. Several ministers have assured us that such diversions are out of the question, but we still have no concrete legislative initiatives to ban the diversion of our waters. There are no laws in the books which would prohibit large diversions of our precious water resources. Bill C–221 would fill this legal loophole by specifically prohibiting the exportation of water from Canada by inter–basin transfer.

Canadians will feel a lot more secure once Bill C-221 passes later today. We will then have a law in place that the House of Commons would have supported that would prohibit the exportation of water from Canada southward.

Not only does this bill allow consumers to get involved with water concerns by making a broad base of information now open to them, it also provides for individuals to be able to file for damage against those who have violated the tenets of this bill. This would not only be a powerful incentive for water suppliers to be honest and very forthright in their dealing with the public, but also would enable those who use the resource to keep a watchful eye over would-be polluters.

After all is said and done, getting the public involved and aware of the importance of water management is an essential element of any national water policy which would be successful. The average Canadian must know that their contribution to water conservation does make a difference and that they do count in the process. That is why Bill C-221 involves people directly in the process.

This bill would provide very stiff penalties with first offenders facing up to $1,000 fines. Repeat offenders would be fined up to $1 million. Any person may petition the courts for damages caused by contravention of this act or any regulation made thereunder from the person who made the violation.

Finally, any person can ensure that this act is being carried out by the Minister of the Environment by applying for a judicial review. This allows individuals to take part in a first-hand way in ensuring that Canadian water supplies are maintained. Anyone would be able to apply for review whether they have suffered damages or not.

In a sense, that summarizes the contents of Bill C-221 and the motivation for its introduction. I also must take this opportunity to acknowledge the preparatory work that was done to make this presentation possible by Mr. Kenneth Ross who is an intern from the University of Michigan. I appreciate the support he has provided in making this possible.

Mr. Lee Clark (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of the Environment): Madam Speaker, Bill C-221 does refer at some length to the issue of water quality in Canada. The government very much appreciates the support of the hon. member for Kamloops in his efforts to support good water quality in Canada. The quality of raw or untreated water is of vital importance to the country and to the health and life-style of Canadians.

Canadians are very fortunate in the fact that we have access to a disproportionate amount of the world's supply of fresh water. As all members of the House know, fresh water is a scarce resource which Canadians sometimes, perhaps too often, take for granted.

The government does not believe that we can continue to ignore the importance of the water resource. As pollution and environmental issues rise on the public agenda, so does the need for clear, reliable information on water quality; information that is based on scientific knowledge of water and its response to chemical and biological threats; information which reports the findings of monitoring efforts; information that describes the cleanliness of particular waterways; and information that details the actions by governments, industry, and the public to resolve problems.

The hon. member for Kamloops is right to remind the House of the importance of water quality. He is also quite right in suggesting in Section 6 of his bill that the government undertake research on water quality, on the linkage between water and public health issues, and on water quality assurance technologies. His proposal to regulate against contamination of the aquatic environment and to penalize those who ignore water quality is laudable.

However, none of the ideas present in C-221 are new. In fact, the government, working in concert with the provincial and municipal governments, is already active in protecting waterways.

In the St. Lawrence River, the Great Lakes, Halifax Harbour, and the Fraser River, the government is playing a key role in identifying pollution sources, ensuring that they are cleaned up and in preventing further environmental deterioration.

We have in place the legislative authority for our actions. The Canadian Environmental Protection Act, otherwise known as CEPA, the Fisheries Act, the Pest Control Products Act, and the Transport of Dangerous Goods Act all serve to control the threat of toxic contamination of our waterways.

Water quality cannot be isolated from the wider environmental context. We believe that the best way of protecting water quality is by prevention, by effectively controlling the creation, use and disposal of toxic substances, whether they be in rivers, lakes, oceans, in the air we breathe or in terrestrial resources such as trees or crops. That is why in 1988 we brought in the Canadian Environmental Protection Act. The bottom line for this government has been and will continue to be that threat of toxic substances to the environment and to human life must be eliminated.

That is why the Fisheries Act restricts dumping of harmful materials into Canadian waters. In fact, this government recently used this provision to propose stringent regulations on effluent from pulp and paper facilities. We will be taking similar action on other major sources of water pollution.

• (1330)

I would also like to point out that the Government of Canada has considerable internationally respected scientific expertise in water quality. I would like to take a moment to praise those many, many public servants who work on our behalf and whose efforts are all too often, unfortunately, denigrated by the public at large. This expertise provides a foundation for the articulation of water quality guidelines.

To be clear, water quality guidelines are a way of defining how clean water must be for each major use. For example, how clean must the water be for swimming, to which the hon. member has just referred, for irrigation, watering livestock, industrial uses, supporting aquatic life or for feeding into municipal drinking water treatment plants. The guidelines are nationally accepted yardsticks. As such they provide the basis for provincial regulation of industrial pollution and municipal sewage treatment.

We now have guidelines in place for over 50 substances, and more are currently being developed.

Our scientific work links environmental and health impacts. It draws on the findings of the world's best experts, be they Canadian or from other countries. Our scientific evaluation, carried out in co-operation with the provincial governments, produces water quality guidelines which are credible, and which have the support of all the governments involved.

Our water quality monitoring work serves several purposes. It supports the development and enforcement of federal regulations. It also supports the preparation of public information on the state of Canada's aquatic environment.

This monitoring information tells Canadians just how clean particular waterways are, and whether or not they meet quality requirements for swimming, irrigation, watering livestock and fishing, among other things.

These guidelines are also used by decision makers as targets for pollution control measures. For example, in the case of pulp and paper mill effluent, water quality guidelines are being used as a basis for scientific requirements for each mill, whether they be new or old.

The Canadian public is increasingly concerned about water quality. This government shares that concern. We recognize the vital link between water quality and human health. However, we are not and must not be satisfied with the *status quo*. We have begun to expand our assessment work to examine the quality of the marine environment. This means monitoring shorelines and estuaries. It means testing marine waters as well as sediments. We will also be looking at national quality guidelines for groundwater.

In closing, I would like to say that I very much appreciate the effort of the hon. member for Kamloops, but I would suggest that Bill C-221 addresses many of the issues which are already being addressed by the government. I look forward to his support and participation in the debate as time proceeds.

Mrs. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West): Madam Speaker, I am sure the proponent of the bill, as well as all members of the House, are awaiting anxiously the opportunity to support new environmental initiatives and are somewhat perturbed that they have been so long in coming. We are certainly hoping before the end of the session to have the opportunity to deal with the environmental assessment legislation which has been promised for such a long time.

I would like to comment on the bill. I certainly support its objectives. First, I will make some comments on the specifics.

The kind of action recommended in the bill is long overdue, given the report *Currents of Change* that was produced for the government in 1985 by Dr. Pearse, and which to date has seen virtually no action. It is not much wonder that the opposition feels constrained to bring

forward a bill to protect the quality of drinking water for Canadians, as well as the quality of our rivers, lakes and oceans in terms of effluents, and to deal with the very serious problem raised by Dr. Pearse in his 1985 report concerning the diversion of major waterways and water systems.

Having said some very complimentary things about the intention of the bill, I have to say that the specifics of it show exactly why the New Democratic Party has never been elected to govern this country and why it never should be, at least not until it gets a little more in touch with reality. What this bill does, and I have certainly heard the NDP criticize the government for exactly this, is simply take a federal responsibility, push it down through two layers of government to the municipal level of government, in most cases, which can least afford to do what this bill proposes.

For instance, it asks municipalities to monitor, to inform and, most unrealistically of all, to provide an alternate water supply if there is anything found wrong with the supply of water available through the normal system.

Most municipalities monitor their water quality on a regular basis. From time to time things do happen that temporarily, usually for a very brief time, affect the quality of water. They are beyond the control of the people managing the water supply. To suggest that a totally parallel system be put in place so that a replacement water supply is immediately available for anyone who wants it, for whatever purpose they want it, is so out of touch with reality that I can hardly believe that the member has brought such a proposal forward.

I suggest that if the member is interested in having a bill that can be enforced practically and sensibly, then one of the things he might want to do is talk to the leaders of municipal governments across the this country, as members of my own caucus have done in preparation for a report that will be reproduced in the next couple of days. He would find out who could and who could not afford to live with the requirements that he is putting forward in his bill. Those who could not afford to live with them are the very communities in those regions that are already the most economically disadvantaged.

The member has to remember that the municipal property tax base is not income sensitive and that when 30 per cent of a community is unemployed the municipality still has the same obligations to meet in terms of providing water supply, sewage services as well as all of the other services that are within its mandate.

If the member has been keeping his eyes and ears open at all in the last six years, he would know that one of the crucial issues confronting municipalities right across this country is a shortage of resources even to bring their existing infrastructure up to par. For instance, in Newfoundland alone it will cost $1.6 billion just to provide basic water and sewer services to the homes which are not now provided with such services. It is estimated that $2.5 billion is needed to upgrade and replace existing water services.

We are talking about homes that have no water service aside from what they are able to get out of the ground on their own. We are talking about whether communities in some of the poorest regions of Canada can even meet the basic health requirements for a clean supply of water for their communities and their populations.

If the member were serious about bringing forward a bill like this he would have addressed the need for a municipal infrastructure program. He would have addressed the need for renewed federal programs to cost share with municipalities and the provincial governments, upgrading both the ability to provide clean water across the country and the ability to treat that water when it is returned to our waterways.

I must say I do support and urge the member to pursue the idea of national standards for both drinking water and discharges. As the Pearse report on water quality demonstrated, those standards were needed five years ago. They are even more needed now.

The need for research is also supported in this document, as is the deep concern about diversions which the government has so far failed to address in any whatsoever. We have to face the fact that Canada has more diversions of major water systems than the United States and the U.S.S.R. put together.

We have no idea what ecological, environmental, atmospheric damage or impacts we have caused by those diversions. We must certainly stop doing any more until we know exactly what we have done. Again, the Pearse report makes it absolutely clear that we have no idea what the impacts of those have been and what their

long-term affects not only for Canadians but for systems beyond our borders will be.

• (1340)

I am sorry that the parliamentary secretary did not choose to address this extremely important report which so far the government has chosen to put on a shelf and largely ignore. It addresses all the issues raised in the member's bill. I think it proposes more concrete solutions for many of them. While being critical of the way the member chooses to put through this bill, I am entirely supportive of the need for action to preserve the quality of our drinking water, the quality of our waterways, the quality of our oceans. We must preserve the natural systems that we have in place in Canada in such abundance and stop the desecration that we have allowed to occur in the past.

I put forward a challenge to the government to deal with this issue in a sensible way in consultation with the provinces, municipalities and the private sector, as *Currents for Change* recommends.

We must deal with these issues on an urgent basis, and the issue of exports of water is certainly one of the most urgent that needs to be dealt with.

I thank the member for his attention to this issue and for the opportunity to debate it today. I suggest to him that there is a great deal more that needs to be done on how his proposals should be implemented.

Mr. Brian L. Gardiner (Prince George—Bulkley Valley): Madam Speaker, it is an honour and a pleasure today to have an opportunity, short as it is, to make some comments on Bill C-221, put forward by the hon. member for Kamloops. I might add, Madam Speaker, as I think you know, that he has an ability when he is out in his riding, his province and across the country to identify what people are concerned about and to be able to translate those concerns into measures and suggestions that can be raised in this House.

While I have not been swimming lately where the hon. member may have been last year when he found funny things in the water, I think it is to his credit that he has identified this problem and brought it to the House and of course to the attention of all Canadians. That is part of our job here today.

I want to comment on some of the remarks made by the Liberal member. First, I know the member knows that in Private Members' Bills we are not allowed to recommend expenditures by the Crown. I know that the hon. member for Kamloops will be a minister in the next NDP government after the next election. We can then bring in legislation that will in fact deal with many of the questions mentioned by the member, including a municipal infrastructure program, a program which was cancelled by the Liberal Party when it was in office and which has yet to see any action from the Conservative government.

I think the issues raised by the member for Kamloops in this bill are clear. They are finally giving some guidance and direction to the country when it comes to the important necessity of dealing with water and water quality and, in particular, water management in our country. In Canada we all know how important a role water plays in our lives. We are made up of water. Much of the mass of Canada is made up of water. We know how important our everyday reaction and interaction to water is.

In my own particular area is found the headwaters of the Fraser River. It starts in the eastern end of my riding. We have flowing out of the western end of the riding a major tributary of the Fraser River which flows into Nechako Lake, Fraser Lake and Ootsa Lake. Thus we are very cognizant of the need to take a look at water management issues in northern British Columbia and across the country.

I think the member's legislation is well written because it deals with how we have to govern and work on an issue that is perhaps jurisdictionally difficult as water. Water does not respect provincial boundaries, let alone fiscal years or election years.

Part of the member's bill talks about entering into agreements with various governments, something which I think is particularly apt for the provincial government in my own province of British Columbia.

You have probably seen news reports, Madam Speaker, which have outlined the horrendous, outrageous, environment policies that the Social Credit government has had over the past number of years.

Some 3,000 pollution permits are issued in the province of British Columbia. Just recently information was released which showed that some 14 pulp mills are still in violation of those permits. It is absolutely incredible that

we have a provincial government that allows this to happen.

We also have had attempts by previous governments, as well as this government and its departments, with respect to the Heritage Rivers Act. The province of British Columbia, because it is on the other side of the mountains or because of Social Credit thinking, which is out of touch, has a government which refuses to participate in that heritage river policy. Rivers have played an important role in the development of the history of Canada and of British Columbia. Yet our provincial government still refuses to recognize that.

What this legislation attempts to do is address some of the concerns that we now face when it comes to water quality. All members have just received copies of a booklet entitled: *What Can we Do for Our Environment?*. While water issues are different in different parts of Canada, there have been various suggestions made to save water, such as putting a brick in the toilet, or taking what is called a sailor's shower which means turning off the water while you are shampooing. It is always a bit of a start when you have to turn the water back on because it always seems to be a little cold right at the start.

Those are some of the things that we should take a look at when we are dealing with water quality. They lead to the importance of ensuring that across the country, in co-operation with provincial and local governments, we develop the kind of guidelines that ensure that the water we get from the tap is safe for all of us.

What struck me most prior to the election when we were running for office, knowing that the environment would be a concern, was the whole question of beluga whales in the St. Lawrence. That struck me because when we are in school we learn about the big fish eating the smaller ones and so forth. We learn about the accumulation of DDT and dioxins in the livers and internal organs of these fish. When these belugas were dying because of that, it came pretty close to home.

It struck me as to how important it is that we pay attention to water quality in the country. What we have to do is take this little green book we all received in our office the other day that lays out the guidelines for Canadian drinking water quality.

What this legislation can do and what the Government of Canada should do, instead of putting out guidelines for Canadian drinking water quality, is legislate drinking water quality for Canadians so that we can ensure that the water we drink and the water that is in our environment is protected from the deleterious substances that flow into it from industry and development. This would ensure that our water is pure and clean.

If there is one effort that this House can make, and I know it is something that my friend from Kamloops has been pursuing, as has our environment critic, the member for Skeena, it is to ensure that water, one of our basics, is protected. We could go a long way to doing that if we were to pass today Bill C-221. It would have a tremendous positive impact on water quality.

• (1350)

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Lise Bourgault (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Health and Welfare): Madam Speaker, I am very happy to have an opportunity to discuss the subject of safe drinking water which is most important to all concerned Canadians. The introduction of Bill C-221 concerning drinking water safety is encouraging.

Under the Canadian Constitution, resources, including water, are considered to be under provincial jurisdiction. It follows that the provision of drinking water and the legislation of standards and regulations are the primary responsibility of provincial governments, rather than the federal government.

The federal government has demonstrated leadership through the development of national guidelines for drinking water quality which have been undertaken largely on a collaborative basis between the federal and provincial levels of government.

The Department of National Health and Welfare fulfils the role of health adviser, as prescried under the Department of National Health and Welfare Act. Measures that are designed specifically to protect public health, such as the drinking water guidelines, are normally undertaken under the auspices of the Conference of Deputy Minsters of Health. A permanent subcommittee on drinking water, composed of representaives from all provinces and territories and from the Department of

National Health and Welfare, develops and revises the guidelines on a continuing basis.

The first comprehensive Canadian drinking water guidelines were pulished by the Department of National Health and Welfare in 1968. These were first revised in 1978, then again in 1987, and have now been revised as the fourth edition, released in 1989.

The guidelines are not legally enforceable, unless promulgated as regulations by the appropriate provincial agency.

The guidelines are the primary means of assessing the safety, from a human health perspective, of drinking water supplies for lifetime consumption. The guidelines also take into consideration aesthetic parameters such as color, taste and odour.

The guidelines, though, are not sufficient to ensure that problems with drinking water, arising from our modern society, are adequately addressed. Canadians from all provinces have recently become increasingly concerned about the quality of the drinking water which their municipalities deliver. In fact, in a survey that was conducted by a major Canadian magazine, 44 per cent of Canadians indicated that they believe tap water will not be drinkable by the year 2001.

Although major epidemics of typhoid and cholera are a matter of history in Canada, we cannot afford to be complacent about the presence of pathogens in drinking water. Giardiasis is emerging as a concern in Western Canada. There have also been outbreaks of viral diarrhea and occasional outbreaks of typhoid traced to water treatment plant failures, cross-connections and the flooding of wells. These have served to demonstrate the potential public health significance of organisms that may escape sanitary barriers. The current emphasis on chemical contaminants in drinking water, therefore, should not divert our attention from the need to control microbial pathogens in drinking water.

Over the last decade scientists have identified, and the media have reported on more than 1,000 organic chemicals that have occasionally been found to be present in drinking water. Fairly frequently, a dozen or more chemicals have been detected in a single water supply.

These have generally occurred at relatively low concentrations, in the parts per billion range, or less. This detection is largely a result of the significant advances made in our ability to measure such low concentrations. In most cases, concentrations are so low that they do not represent a health hazard, but, in other cases, guidelines or objectives are needed to enable an assessment to be made of possible harm to human health.

We know that the general public is concerned that conventional water treatment processes, which are designed primarily to control bacteriological contamination and to remove inorganic contaminants such as metals, may not adequately remove certain trace organic contaminants. This concern has been manifested by the purchase of home-use treatment devices. It is believed that in-home devices to treat municipal water supplies are used in about 3 to 10 per cent of Canadian homes.

Although many of these water treatment devices may be safe and useful, it must be noted that the quality and safety of these devices is not regulated by any government department, and that inaccurate advertising claims have been known to occur. It is apparent that some control over these devices is required, as has been expressed by consumer groups, provincial agencies and the public.

It is now known that some compounds, generated during the treatment of drinking water, may also present health hazards. One of the most widely used treatment chemicals is chlorine, which is used as a disinfectant. Chlorination can give rise to the formation of chloroform and other chlorinated by-products, many of which may be harmful under certain conditions.

A look at alternative disinfectants, though, suggests that the well-proven chlorination process should not be abandoned, since there is very limited knowledge about the alternatives. One example is ozone, which is becoming increasingly popular in Canada, particularly in Quebec. Ozonation reaction products are still relatively unknown, but they are being studied by scientists in the Department of National Health and Welfare. Another alternative is chlorine dioxide, which does not give rise to the undesirable by-products formed during the chlorination process. A major disadvantage, though, is the production of chlorate and chlorite, which may be of health significance when ingested regularly at high concentrations.

Some chemicals may enter our drinking water indirectly, as a result of the use of certain pipes, paints, coatings or other lining materials in water storage and distribution systems. Here, chemicals may be released in small amounts as the material ages, or contaminants of the original material may be released. Examples include asbestos from lined pipes and vinyl chloride monomer released from polyvinyl chloride pipes. Any new legislation should address the problems of lack of mechanisms to evaluate and regulate drinking water contaminants arising from both direct and indirect means. Bill C-221 does not mention them.

The bill before us today does not adequately address these issues. Nevertheless, this government is committed to introducing legislation on drinking water. The Minister of National Health and Welfare intends to introduce a Drinking Water Safety Act for all Canadians.

Guidelines for drinking water quality, including microbiological, physical, chemical and radiological characteristics, would continue to be established in a similar fashion to the present. For reasons outlined previously, these guidelines will not be mandatory Canadian standards, unless made so by the provinces, as is the case at present. The present system for establishing guidelines has worked well for the past 20 years, thanks to the continuing high degree of co-operation demonstrated by all the provinces and the territories. Thus, there would be no change in legislative status, but current practice would be given legislative authority.

Consideration is also being given to regulating devices sold for home water treatment. At present, there are no control requirements or performance standards to ensure both efficacy for the purposes claimed and the protection of human health.

A review of the current and emerging issues—

Madam Deputy Speaker: I am sorry but I must interrupt the hon. member.

The hour provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired. Pursuant to Standing Order 96(1), this item is dropped from the Order Paper.

It being two o'clock, the House will now proceed to Statements by Members pursuant to Standing Order 31.

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S. O. 31

[*English*]

MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport): Mr. Speaker, we as a nation can thank the Prime Minister for the constitutional mess we find ourselves in today. It is he who got us into the situation.

On the supremacy of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, we are to rely on a letter that has no legal value. In the definition of Canada, the aboriginal people are still left out, as are several million Canadians whose ancestry is other than English or French.

The promotion of the official languages, of great importance to linguistic minorities, is also relegated to some future date. The spending powers of the federal government are subject to the whim of the provinces. On the Senate, one province could become the power broker in future negotiations. What a strange way to practise equality.

Despite his promise of national reconciliation, under this Prime Minister Canada is more divided than ever, but that is what you get when you lock 11 in a dark room for six days. A constitution should be developed in daylight, not in darkness.

Will the Prime Minister ever learn that secrecy is not the road to nation building?

* * *

HOUSING

Mr. Doug Fee (Red Deer): Mr. Speaker, Canadians owe a great deal to the seniors of this country. The Government of Alberta and the Government of Canada have recognized the social debt and invested in residences, both apartments and lodges, to provide accommodation with varying levels of service for our seniors.

Last month, the minister of housing paid tribute to the Lion's Club in Edmonton for initiating the first seniors' residence accommodation in Alberta. The Lion's Club deserves to be praised, but we believe recognition for the first seniors' lodge in Alberta, possibly in Canada, belongs to the Kiwanis Club in Red Deer.

Working with the seniors in co-operation with the city and county of Red Deer, the Kiwanis Club started with financing approved by CMHC in 1953. A commercial housing project was opened in 1954 and the first lodge facility in 1955. The Kiwanis foundation remains active with support from numerous other groups and individuals.

Next year we will celebrate the thirty-fifth anniversary of the opening of the Piper Creek Lodge, which we believe to be the first senior citizens' lodge in Canada.

* * *

NATIONAL ACCESS AWARENESS WEEK

Ms. Joy Langan (Mission—Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, this week is National Access Awareness Week, a week dedicated to disabled Canadians, a week where communities in Canada are invited to celebrate the accomplishments of disabled persons. This is also a week for assessing the availability of services and facilities for disabled persons and planning improvements for the future.

Mr. Speaker, you are to be congratulated for your consistent support and leadership in making the House of Commons truly accessible to the disabled. Because this week is a time to reflect and plan to improve accessibility for the disabled, I would ask all hon. members to give serious thought to accessibility in their constituencies. Are their offices accessible?

I would urge all members to join some of my New Democrat colleagues and I and take advantage of the service provided by the Secretary of State to have business cards done in Braille.

Celebration of the accomplishments of the disabled is important, but we ought not join the celebration until our own job is done.

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[*Translation*]

MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Mr. Guy Saint-Julien (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, Saturday, June 9, 1990 was an important day for Canada. For the first time, Quebec was no longer isolated at the constitutional table.

In today's *La Presse*, Alain Dubuc wrote in his editorial under the heading "Quebec holds its ground": "The past week reminded us that Prime Minister Mulroney is one of Quebec's allies. Lévesque trusted him in 1984. Six years later, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Mulroney has delivered the goods. Throughout this past week, his attitude was impressive. Mr. Mulroney was a true statesman whose confidence and authority inspired his provincial counterparts to do the impossible".

Mr. Speaker, Canadians today admire the perseverance of the Prime Minister of Canada, the Right Hon. Brian Mulroney.

* * *

[*English*]

NATIONAL ACCESS AWARENESS WEEK

Mr. Bruce Halliday (Oxford): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity today to recognize that Canada is celebrating National Access Awareness Week. While we acknowledge a record of achievement for and by disabled persons, we are nonetheless mindful that there are many initiatives yet to be taken.

It is my hope that by focusing on the economic integration of disabled persons, we shall remove barriers which are preventing complete participation by these Canadians in every facet of our society.

Priorities and initiatives such as those announced recently by the Minister of Transport with respect to transportation are welcomed as evidence of our growing awareness that people with disabilities have been denied access to full participation.

The time has come for the Government of Canada to join in partnership with people with disabilities, the private sector, the voluntary sector, organized labour, and us as members of Parliament to inspire new initiatives aimed at economic integration. Our task will not be complete until every week reflects the initiatives highlighted through National Access Awareness Week.

* * *

MINERS' MEMORIAL DAY

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, today, June 11, is Miners' Memorial Day in Cape Breton. This day holds a special place in the hearts of Cape Bretoners as it commemorates the work of coal miners.

The life of a coal miner has changed through the years, but the danger of working underground continues to be a haunting element of that industry.

Today is a day when we recognize the hard work of our miners and remember those who have sacrificed their lives for that industry. Today is an emotional day for many. For some it brings back a sense of pride, and for others it brings back a sense of fear and sadness.

The coal industry has taken many of our miners. Today we reflect with respect, admiration, and a sense of loss upon those men who have died in our mines.

Today we also remember the families of our coal miners: the mothers, the wives, and the children who waited on the surface only to hear their worst fears come true.

On behalf of my constituents in Cape Breton—East Richmond, I salute our Cape Breton miners for their contribution not only to the economy of Cape Breton but also to our culture, our history, and sense of pride on our great island.

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[*Translation*]

MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Mr. Denis Pronovost (Saint-Maurice): Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to ask all Quebecers and all Canadians to do just a little more to make our country's future secure.

I wish each and everyone of us would take five minutes to read in full the agreement concluded on the weekend by our first ministers.

Canadians would then realize that the Meech Lake Accord makes everyone a winner.

It is time to stop this constitutional bickering which makes us forget what is really important for our future.

The Meech Lake Accord is not perfect. No constitutional document in the world has ever claimed to be perfect.

We also realize that however honest and sincere our attempts may be, we will never be able to please the Jacques Parizeau's, the Robert Libmans, the leaders of APEC and all those who, while not sharing the same ideology, are intent on defending their own selfish interests, unlike the majority of Quebecers and Canadians to whom this country still is, and always will be, the most wonderful country in the world.

[*English*]

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NATIONAL ACCESS AWARENESS WEEK

Ms. Catherine Callbeck (Malpeque): Mr. Speaker, June 10 to June 20 has been designated as National Access Awareness Week in Prince Edward Island and across the country.

This week is dedicated to creating a greater awareness of the needs of people with disabilities.

Islanders have been active in their commitment for equal access for persons with disabilities by improving designated parking spaces, wheelchair ramps, elevator lifts, and slanted sidewalks.

Islanders began National Access Awareness Week on Saturday with a kick-off party and open house. Other events include the employment "buddy" events, a sports night, as well as a host of other activities.

In order to create greater access and independence for persons with disabilities, we must work at all levels, especially the community level, to make our country the best place to live.

Together, we must ensure the needs of persons with disabilities continue to receive greater access.

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TRANSPORT

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, as a result of the free trade agreement and deregulation, the Canadian trucking industry is now moving toward a crisis situation with increasing numbers of truckers facing bankruptcy proceedings.

• (1410)

Competition has become so intense that the rates received by the truckers are insufficient to enable them to provide for their families and at the same time pay for and maintain their vehicles properly. The result is reflected in a spot inspection test done recently in Kamloops, British Columbia on the Trans-Canada Highway, which found one in five trucks unfit to operate, and almost half the trucks checked were failed for various

safety violations. Only 30 per cent actually passed inspection.

National safety standards are necessary across the country and they must be enforced. Minimal hauling rates must be established. Proper use of log books must be introduced, and operating authorities must be limited.

In other words a public review of the industry is now necessary, which would lead to re-regulation of the industry. The Minister of Transport should act expeditiously to ensure our trucking industry remains viable and that our highways remain safe.

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GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. John Harvard (Winnipeg St. James): Mr. Speaker, Canadians have been caught up in the Meech Lake drama for days, but if this government thinks for a moment that Canadians have forgotten about the goods and services tax, this government can think again. Canadians are still very upset about this unfair tax.

Last week I received a letter from a constituent of mine who is a hotel owner deeply concerned about the GST. The letter said that the proposed goods and services tax "may be the final straw in an already declining industry". The letter went on to say:

> I will also be circulating this information to my employees to let them know that their jobs may be at risk.

I urge the finance minister to come to his senses and cancel this regressive and unfair tax before it kills thousands of jobs and drives the economy into a recession.

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SOUND OF THE FUTURE

Mrs. Sheila Finestone (Mount Royal): Mr. Speaker, Canada is on the communication frontier once again. I was happy to join the Canadian Association of Broadcasters, the CBC, and the Department of Communications this morning in launching for the first time in North America the *Sound of the Future*, an historic, digital radio demonstration project in Ottawa.

Digital radio breaks new ground. It will eventually replace the AM-FM band. It will make interference-free, compact disc quality sound available on radio stations from coast to coast whether in the home, the car or on your portable radio. I can tell all members that the clarity, brilliance and range of the signal I heard this morning were truly magnificent. I could picture young and old alike enjoying everything from country to classical wherever they were through the wonders of digital radio.

In reaching out to bring the future to Canada, this digital radio experiment also proves Canada can remain at the forefront of global change in the communications area. Now the federal government must do its part by convincing governments around the world in 1992 to make room on the spectrum for this new technology. Then Canada can capitalize on the excitement this Canadian project has generated around the world and bring all Canadians the *Sound of the Future*.

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THE ECONOMY

Ms. Lynn Hunter (Saanich—Gulf Islands): Mr. Speaker, this government's economic policies are systematically destroying the manufacturing base of our economy. In the past year alone, 165,000 people in manufacturing have lost their jobs. In my own province of British Columbia, 20,000 manufacturing jobs have been eliminated this year. Who is to blame?

The Minister of State for Privatization told this House last week that workers who have lost their jobs have only themselves to blame. Workers find this hard to believe, as they have seen their real wages decline by 3.5 per cent since 1984, while executives and senior bureaucrats have had increases of 20 per cent to 30 per cent. Small businesses, which are being driven into bankruptcy by high interest rates and an overvalued Canadian dollar, would also dispute the minister's claims.

Businesses are folding, and good, solid jobs are being permanently lost while this government blames the workers and trumpets the creation of "McJobs" with "McWages".

When will this government listen to the people of Canada and work to save our economy instead of blame the taxpayers for all our problems?

MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester): Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the first ministers for their tremendous accomplishment in signing the agreement on the Meech Lake Accord on Saturday, June 9. Support for the Meech Lake agreement is now absolutely unique.

For the first time in history, out of 10 premiers, 13 have now endorsed this agreement, and 13 out of 10 is good at any time.

For the first time in history, the first ministers representing four parties, including Social Credit, Liberal, NDP, and Conservative, have endorsed the constitutional agreement.

For the first time, as far as I know, some premiers invited opposition leaders to attend the conference and play an active role in the results.

For the first time in history, the Prime Minister has signed this agreement not once but twice, not to mention that in this House of Commons we have unanimously had an all-party support for the Meech Lake Accord.

Never in our history has an agreement received such absolute, resounding support by the political leaders of this country representing every party in every corner of the country. I say let us move on now with optimism and enthusiasm and address the many challenges and issues facing us in the future.

On a quick personal note, I just want to say I was there for 16 hours yesterday—

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member's time has expired.

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[*Translation*]

MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Mr. Gabriel Desjardins (Témiscamingue): Mr. Speaker, today I wish to pay tribute to the ten provincial Premiers and the Prime Minister of Canada for their efforts and determination which, on June 9, lead to the ratification of the 1990 Constitutional Agreement, by which first of all, Quebec will now again become a member of the Canadian family.

Technically, to be legal the accord must first be ratified by the legislatures of New Brunswick, Manitoba and Newfoundland. New Brunswick and Manitoba have made it quite clear that they intend to have this accord adopted as soon as possible. The Premier of Newfoundland has just announced his decision to put the Accord to a free vote in his legislature, before June 23.

The Premier of Newfoundland has shown great leadership by honouring the signature he put on the constitutional document on the evening of June 9.

Mr. Speaker, I am convinced that the vast majority of the members of the Newfoundland legislature, like all other legislatures have done, will say yes to Quebec, because they believe in the strength and energy of a united Canada.

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[*English*]

CONSERVATIVE PARTY

Mr. Albert Cooper (Peace River) Mr. Speaker, today is the seventh anniversary of the election of Brian Mulroney as the leader of the Conservative Party.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Cooper: On behalf of our caucus, I would like to say that we appreciate his leadership over the last seven years, his vision and, as was demonstrated over this last week, his patience and love for our country.

Seven is a lucky number. We want to wish our leader and the Prime Minister another seven years in his role as leader of our party and of the country.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[*Translation*]

MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Acting Prime Minister. The process by which the Prime Minister and his provincial counterparts met behind closed doors on the weekend to resolve the constitutional impasse was termed unsatisfactory, faulty and imperfect, by the Premiers themselves and the Canadian public. Canadians are convinced that you do not build a country by twisting the arms of reluctant premiers. Under the Accord negotiated on the weekend, the first ministers made a commitment to review the process and include compulsory public hearings. I want to ask the Deputy Prime Minister or the Acting Prime Minister, whoever is going to reply, what kind of mechanism will be set up to

review this process and when the review demanded by Canadians will get into gear.

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, as hon. members are aware, the final decision was signed by Canada's first ministers early Sunday morning. Today is Monday. Prior to the process we want to implement, there will of course be consultation among representatives of the parties here in the House on the most effective ways to give substance to the agreement signed by the Prime Minister of Canada and the provincial premiers.

[*English*]

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, a commission with equal representation from each of the provinces and appropriate representation from the federal and territorial governments will study Senate reform and will report before the end of this year.

Will Parliament be asked to approve, by resolution, the federal participation in this commission? Will members of Parliament be included? Will the process include public hearings across the country? When will the process begin?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the next step is to have three legislatures ratify the agreement that was signed deliberately by the 11 heads of government late on Saturday night with their reasons stated that night and early on Sunday morning. That is the next step.

There are a range of details to be worked out. Certainly, it is the intention of this government to work out the details that relate to the House of Commons in close consultation with other parties in the House of Commons.

• (1420)

It is our expectation that there would be a general desire to have the commission to which the hon. member refers begin work early.

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, the proposed Senate changes would reallocate 10 seats; six from Ontario, two from New Brunswick and two from Nova Scotia.

Since this proposed amendment will have great impact on the representation of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia in Parliament, can the Acting Prime Minister tell us if this proposed redistribution of Senate seats becomes the floor representation in the House of Commons? In other words, will New Brunswick and Nova Scotia eventually lose House of Commons seats to accommodate this amendment?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, as I think the hon. member knows, the proposal to which he refers, which would have the result of a reduction in the Senate representation by Ontario, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia would come only if we were unable, through a process that was agreed by first ministers, to find a basis for a more thorough Senate reform.

I think there is a general understanding and disposition in the House that there needs to be a very serious pursuit by this House and by other Canadians of the goal of Senate reform that was agreed to by all the first ministers in their conference last week.

Certainly, I and the government anticipate that that pursuit will lead to an effective Senate reform. If it does not, there is a procedure set out that would take effect not before 1995. There will be ample time to consult the Acting Leader of the Opposition and his colleagues on that matter.

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PUBLIC SECTOR SALARIES

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the President of the Treasury Board and concerns the juicy pay increases and bonuses given to Deputy Ministers and heads of Crown corporations. This will result in $40,000 to $100,000 a year salary increases.

I want to ask the President of the Treasury Board why he told the House on May 11 that the salaries were limited to a 4 per cent increase in 1988 and 4.2 per cent in 1989? Will he now do the right thing and roll back these obscene $100,000 a year increases?

Hon. Robert de Cotret (President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague asked why I said to the House that the increases for the senior management category for 1988–89 were 4 per cent, and for 1989–90 were 4.2 per cent.

The reason is simple. It is the truth.

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, if someone's pay increase was $100,000 a year, imagine the basis it had to be to start with in order to create the 4 per cent.

[*Translation*]

I have a supplementary for the same minister concerning unethical increases granted certain officials.

I have here a Treasury Board document dated September 1989 indicating ministers' executive assistants received a 17.5 per cent increase over 20 months, while Canadian workers had to make do with 4.2 per cent per year.

Could the minister explain why it is caviar for Tory pals and stale bread for the rest?

Hon. Robert de Cotret (President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member would do well to check his facts before asking questions based on hearsay.

The budget for ministers' exempt staff has hardly gone up this year. As I said earlier, the budget for senior managers in the Public Service has increased at the same rate as that for all government employees, including senior officials. I feel I have to mention this because the article on which the hon. member based his claims contains a serious mistake where it says that bonuses are not included in the 4.2 per cent.

I can inform the hon. member that they are included. The 4.2 per cent includes benefits, salaries and bonuses. The wage bill for this group of employees has increased 4.2 per cent, as has the wage bill for unionized employees in the Public Service.

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[*English*]

ROUTE CANADA

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of National Revenue.

It was reported this weekend that the former owner of Route Canada withheld employee pension and income tax contributions in order to pay bills to other companies including, I might add, a noted Tory advertising agency.

In the same report, it is alleged that the owner, Manfred Ruhland, was given written authorization from Revenue Canada to not pay $5.4 million in employee tax benefits.

Did Revenue Canada write this letter as claimed, and if so, why? Would it not be an admission on the part of the government that it knew its privatization deal had gone rotten?

Hon. Otto Jelinek (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, obviously when I read those reports I immediately checked into it. We could find no record of any letter sent by Revenue Canada to Route Canada. We subsequently contacted the solicitors for Route Canada who confirmed to us this morning that, in fact, it was an erroneous statement made by Mr. Ruhland since the solicitors for Route Canada confirmed very categorically that no such letter was sent.

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona): Mr. Speaker, I hear someone say I should not believe everything I read in the paper. I did not. I asked the minister if it was true and he told me otherwise. We will see, over the next few days, what other things might come to light about this particular deal.

I want to ask the Minister of Transport, or whoever is answering for him, about the possibility of tabling the sale agreement between CN and Mr. Ruhland. The minister indicated in the House last Friday that he would be willing to table a letter written by CN explaining the deal. I checked with the Table this morning and that letter had not been tabled.

I ask the government, when it gets around to tabling the letter the minister promised to table, to also table the purchase and sale agreement for Route Canada so we can see just what commitments were sought by CN, what promises were made and by whom with respect to promises of job security that were given to workers and subsequently broken?

Hon. Jean Corbeil (Minister of Labour and Minister of State (Transport)): Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind my honourable colleague that the Minister of Transport reported in the House last week that a letter

had been sent to *The Toronto Star* by the vice-president of CN on June 7. It states specifically in paragraph three:

> CN, and no one else, decided to sell its subsidiary after discussions with more than 30 companies, beginning in 1985. Our negotiations on the sale were held directly with David Fingold, representing himself and his brother Paul as principal purchasers. Their financial credentials were very solid.

This indicates that the sale was decided by CN, and CN alone.

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona): Mr. Speaker, is the government saying, and perhaps someone could say this very clearly on behalf of the government, that neither the former Minister of Transport nor any other government official was involved in any way in the negotiations between CN and the buyers prior to the sale of CN Route? Is anyone on the government side willing to stand up and categorically state that the government had nothing to do at any stage with this particular fiasco?

Hon. Jean Corbeil (Minister of Labour and Minister of State (Transport)): Mr. Speaker, I will repeat again what my colleague, the Minister of Transport, has said repeatedly, and no matter how many times the question is asked, the answer is the same; the sale was negotiated by CN officials alone, alone, a-l-o-n-e.

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ROUTE CANADA

Mr. Joe Comuzzi (Thunder Bay—Nipigon): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Transport, my question is directed to the Acting Prime Minister.

New information about the mismanagement of Route Canada by David and Paul Fingold and Manfred Ruhland continue to come forward almost on a daily basis. We find out now that over $21 million was owed to employee benefit plans alone.

• (1430)

The question is fairly simple. Does the government not feel a moral, if not legal, obligation to come forward and look after the workers and their families who were seriously affected by this disastrous deal?

Hon. Otto Jelinek (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, we have in the past looked after the workers. In fact, some of the statements and figures that have come out in this case are quite erroneous.

In specific answer to the hon. member's specific question, if employees can show that the deductions were made from pay cheques we will, of course, recognize those deductions and give appropriate credits. That has not been the case in the past.

Mr. Joe Comuzzi (Thunder Bay—Nipigon): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the same minister. Included in that $21 million I just mentioned was $3.5 million in direct pension benefits, $3.7 million in workers' compensation payments owed to several provinces, and $3.9 million in income tax deducted at source.

The Fingolds and Ruhland ripped off eight unions, eight provinces, and Revenue Canada, but more important, they ripped off 1,900 workers and their immediate families. The amount owing the workers and their families is peanuts compared to the over-all picture of what has transpired in the sale of CN Route.

I ask the government once again, will it stop hiding behind this charade of a sale, show some compassion and caring and compensate the families and the workers affected by this terrible disaster?

Hon. Jean Corbeil (Minister of Labour and Minister of State (Transport)): Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out to my hon. friend that when Labour Canada learned that CN Route was going to close its operations in September, 1988, we immediately proceeded to audit the company's records under Part III of the code.

I am happy to report that we were instrumental in ensuring that employees received their wages owed up to the time of closing and vacation entitlements of $1.6 million.

We also instituted, under the Canada Labour Code, charges against the employer for failure to comply with the group termination provisions of the code and the company was eventually fined by the courts $10,000 on each of seven counts. After that the company went into bankruptcy and therefore this has become a procedure under the Bankruptcy Act to pay back the creditors.

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PUBLIC SECTOR SALARIES

Mrs. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the President of the Treasury Board. In an answer he gave earlier this afternoon, he indicated that somehow a bonus is not a bonus. It seems

to me if it looks like a pay increase, acts like a pay increase and, above all, spends like a pay increase, it is an increase.

The government has managed to increase the salary range for its highest paid employees by 31 per cent in the last three years while keeping the majority of its employees well below the rate of inflation, below 12 per cent, over the same period of time. Why is the minister being so outrageously generous with the best paid public servants in the land and so miserly with the rest?

Hon. Robert de Cotret (President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, I gave the numbers a few days ago and I will give the numbers again. For the senior management category in the Public Service the increase in total compensation, including bonuses, benefits, and salary, was 4 per cent in 1988–89 and 4.2 per cent in 1989–90. That is well in keeping with the pay increases that have been negotiated through collective bargaining for the rest of the Public Service.

Those, Mr. Speaker, are the real numbers.

Mrs. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West): Mr. Speaker, the President of the Treasury Board can ignore the real figures if he wants to. However, when the government is telling public servants and all Canadian workers they have to tighten their belts to make up for its mismanagement, how can he have a different message entirely for those who are the best paid and the least affected by the negative financial policies of the government?

Hon. Robert de Cotret (President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, I guess there is some advantage to having written notice of questions. I have said quite clearly in the House on numerous occasions now that the treatment afforded the senior management category—

Mr. Harvard: Just tell the truth.

Mr. de Cotret: Mr. Speaker, this is the truth. These are the numbers. The treatment given in terms of compensation for the senior management group in the federal Public Service is roughly the same as or very close to the treatment that was negotiated through the collective bargaining process.

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): My question is with regard to the same issue, Mr. Speaker. The Minister of Finance said the other day: "I don't believe labour should ask for more". That was in terms of compensation. He said: "The government will set an example for the private sector".

We were reminded some time ago that the Governor of the Bank of Canada and his staff gave themselves what can only be described as obscene increases as a result of being the major inflation fighter for the country. Then we find out that the heads of our 13 largest Crown corporations received between 15 per cent and 25 per cent pay increases.

Now we find that, to quote the President of the Treasury Board, "certain senior public servants received bonuses far beyond 4 per cent in terms of salary increases". That is selected senior public servants.

What signal does the Minister of Finance plan to send? Certain senior public servants are receiving huge increases, up to 30 per cent over three years. The Bank of Canada staff is given huge increases. The heads of our major Crown corporations are receiving increases of 30 per cent over two years.

What kind of a signal was the Minister of Finance referring to with these incredible salary and bonus increases?

Hon. Robert de Cotret (President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, I think it is useful to remind my hon. colleague that the management compensation package that is offered in the federal Public Service as well as in the Crown corporations is based on recommendations from a private sector commission that was appointed by the former government.

That commission had as its mandate to study the responsibilities and the functions of senior public servants and heads of Crown corporations and to compare those to the private sector to make sure that we could have a compensation package that was responsible in the total environment of the economy.

Increases are kept within an over-all range that corresponds to what is done in terms of collective bargaining. Some may get more, some will not. But we have to make sure that we retain our managers, that we retain the heads of our Crown corporations, and that the compensation package is fair and equitable throughout the system.

MANUFACTURING SECTOR

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the Minister of Finance. We found out on the weekend that Statistics Canada revealed that 165,000 jobs in the manufacturing sector were lost last year. The minister responsible for privatization said over the weekend that this was the result of greedy and lazy workers.

Does the Minister of Finance support those incredible comments by the minister responsible for privatization, or will he admit that the 165,000 jobs lost is more a reflection of his high interest rate policy and the free trade deal?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I would like it very much if the hon. member would table in the House where he got those words that he attributed to the Minister of State for Privatization. My understanding is that those words were never stated by the minister. They were some interpretation, if anything, by a journalist.

The very point we have been making as a government is that the cost structure of the economy has to be maintained intact or our ability to create jobs will be undermined.

In 1989 the unit labour costs of business in Canada started at an increase of 4.9 per cent. They ended the year increasing at 6.9 per cent. Throughout that same period of time in the United States they were level at about 4.9 per cent and they are a good deal lower in Japan and Germany.

If we lose our competitive position, we will lose business. If we lose business, we will lose jobs. It is for that precise reason that we have been taking the position that we have as a government to encourage business, labour, consumers, and all Canadians to do everything they can to maintain that competitive position.

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• (1440)

TRADE

Mr. Len Hopkins (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for whoever is answering for the Minister for International Trade.

The unjustifiable 15 per cent export tax on softwood lumber and an artificially inflated Canadian dollar propped up by high interest rates has taken 30 per cent off the top of the income of the lumber manufacturers and has caused massive job losses.

When is the minister going to negotiate his way out of the 15 per cent tax on softwood lumber? When will he talk to his Minister of Finance in order to bring some sanity back into the interest rate policy of the government in order to give the Canadian lumber industry a fighting chance to survive?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, as I think the hon. member knows from answers in the House, the government has put the United States on notice that we intend to return to discussion of the memorandum of understanding on softwood lumber. My colleague, the Minister for International Trade, as recently as the middle of May—I think May 18—in Toronto raised this issue again with American officials.

Naturally there have to be discussions with the industry and with the provinces in order to ensure that the Canadian side is in a position to negotiate effectively the issues raised by the memorandum of understanding. Those negotiations are being pursued.

Mr. Len Hopkins (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke): Mr. Speaker, the town of Renfrew has lost more than 1,400 industrial jobs in recent times, some of which can be directly related to free trade and others due to that famous term "industrial rationalization". It is a disastrous situation.

When is the government going to bring out its free trade adjustment programs which it promised to assist communities in Canada that are going through these horrendous economic problems with sordid times for many homes?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I am not in a position today, as the acting minister, to give a precise answer to that precise question. I will inquire as to the government's timetable and will advise the hon. member.

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, we see today the joint statement by the Presidents of Mexico and the United States initiating trade discussions between those two countries leading, as they say, to a new comprehensive trade agreement.

We understand that such negotiations will have substantial and major impact upon Canada and the trade agreement that we have with the United States.

In light of this announcement today, can the Secretary of State for External Affairs tell us what the government response is to the statement? Is the government prepared to share with the House and the public studies and analyses to show what impact it will have upon Canada so Canadians will have some understanding of the significance of this announcement today?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the question from my friend with respect to the possibility of some arrangement being reached between the United States and Mexico. He will know that there were questions raised in the House on the basis of incomplete information at an earlier time. Those questions might have had the effect of alarming Canadians about a sudden rush to an agreement, either between the Americans and the Mexicans or an agreement that might have implications for Canada.

What was agreed, as he would know from reading the communiqué from the President of Mexico and the President of the United States, is simply that they have directed two of their representatives, Carla Hills and Dr. Serra Puche, to undertake consultations and preparatory work which will allow the two presidents, when they meet in December, to consider whether they want to proceed.

As to Canada's position, we are keeping in very close touch on a bilateral basis, with Mexico on the one hand and with the United States on the other hand, to see what impact there might be upon Canada's interest.

An Hon. Member: How close is close?

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): I am asked how close is close. We have had very close consultations with the governments of both countries so that we will be in a position to judge whether the Canadian interest is affected.

The member asks me if there will be an opportunity for consultation with the House. My colleague, the Minister for International Trade, is scheduled to appear before the standing committee later this month. He looks forward to the opportunity to discuss with the hon. member and other members of the committee the questions that are raised by this agreement between the Americans and the Mexicans.

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): On a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, I want to clarify. I did not ask about consultation, I asked about direct public participation and open hearings in Parliament.

In view of the fact that this process will now be of a preliminary nature until December, can we get a commitment from the government today, first, that it will make public all its own studies and impact analyses that have taken place thus far and, second, that no decision of any kind will be taken by this government to involve Canada in any discussion or negotiation until there is an opportunity for this Parliament to hold open public hearings and to make a decision on what that participation should be?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the Mexicans and the Americans have decided to discuss whether they would enter into an agreement. That is where things are. The member is asking me if I have an impact study of their intention to discuss. Of course I do not, but if the hon. member is seriously interested in ensuring that there is a broadly based discussion in Canada as to the implications to Canada of any agreement that might be entered into between the Mexicans and the Americans, of course we agree with that.

I just said to him that my colleague, the Minister for International Trade, will be appearing before the standing committee in the normal course in the next couple weeks. He would look forward to discussing this matter with the hon. member and with others. We would welcome views expressed by affected industries, by provinces and by interested Canadians. We want any decisions that Canada takes to be based upon full information and informed public opinion and not to be based upon the kinds of fears that some members of the House were seeking to raise not very many weeks ago.

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LABOUR

Mr. Howard McCurdy (Windsor—St. Clair): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Acting Prime Minister. General Motors has demanded of the workers in Windsor that they substitute Memorial Day for Victoria Day, American Thanksgiving for Canadian Thanks-

giving, and Independence Day for Canada Day. This is a condition to keep their jobs.

Some Hon. Members: Get serious.

Mr. McCurdy: It is serious, it's bloody serious.

Will the Acting Prime Minister send a letter to the president of General Motors with a calendar showing Canadian holidays and a map indicating the territorial limits of our country and tell them that as a condition of doing business in Canada they obey Canadian laws and respect Canadian traditions?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I do not contest the information put on the record of the House by the hon. member. I have not had the opportunity to see it myself. Certainly it seems to me that a proposal of that kind is pretty unreasonable. That would be the view which the Government of Canada, were it in our jurisdiction, would express.

I would certainly hope that persons with whom the hon. member may have influence, Bob White among others, might also be encouraged to stand up for Canada on this issue.

Mr. Howard McCurdy (Windsor—St. Clair): Mr. Speaker, the Acting Prime Minister will know that I think it is outrageous for him to suggest that Bob White be more Canadian after they sold the country out with a free trade deal that gives American companies the opportunity to try to impose on Canadian workers American holidays. Maybe next we will have to swear allegiance to the American flag.

Will the Acting Prime Minister serve notice that this is not an appropriate kind of harmonization under the free trade agreement and that the cost of doing business in Canada for any American-owned company is to obey Canadian law and respect Canadian traditions?

• (1450)

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is doing violence to his reputation for sobriety and calm, rational argument in the House.

But he raises an issue that is, of course, important, and that has to do with the extraterritorial application of foreign law, American or any other, in this country. That is the principle that this government very vigorously opposes. We have done that in a number of cases, most recently, as the hon. member will know, with respect to attempts made by certain congressmen of the United States to take actions with regard to Cuba that would have an implication upon Canada.

That principle with respect to extraterritorial reality is of great importance to this government. We have defended it vigorously in the past and we will in the future.

He is raising another kind of issue. I have noted it and I have expressed my opinion, not my acting opinion but my opinion as Acting Prime Minister on the issue, and I will consider whether it would be useful to make a more formal communication to the parties involved.

* * *

[*Translation*]

TRADE

Mr. Francis G. LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso): Mr. Speaker, I should like to get back to the question raised earlier by my colleague concerning the agreement between the United States and Mexico. I direct my question to the Acting Prime Minister.

Canadians remember that the Prime Minister saddled the country with a comprehensive trade agreement with the United States after campaigning against the idea in 1984. This badly negotiated agreement gave rise to a very emotional debate in Canada, and now we learn that one of the results of this agreement was the loss of 172,000 jobs in the manufacturing sector. Will the Acting Prime Minister assure the House that Canadians will indeed be consulted before we enter into similar negotiations with the United States and Mexico?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): First, there are no negotiations involving Canada, Mexico and the United States. In fact, there are no negotiations between the Americans and the Mexicans. The presidents of both countries have agreed to consider whether such negotiations ought to be undertaken. Earlier today I told the House that the Canadian

government is keeping in close touch with Mexico and the United States to determine whether this might have an impact on Canada. If so, and under the circumstances, Canada will have to make a decision. I said that my colleague the Minister for International Trade intends to meet with standing committee members to discuss this issue. I believe I gave clear answers to the questions raised by the hon. member.

[*English*]

Mr. Francis G. LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso): Mr. Speaker, we know there has not been an agreement. We are just putting the government on notice that the Canadian people want to be consulted fully before any major decision is taken on this matter of vital Canadian interest. That is the only point of this question. That is why we are asking the question now before the government determines its position without consulting Canadians as has been the case in the past.

So I re-ask the question: what form of participation does the Acting Prime Minister have in mind for consulting Canadians on this question?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, let us look at the record of consultations on trade negotiations of Liberal governments and Progressive Conservative governments.

When this country entered the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade in the 1940s under a Liberal government, the matter was not brought to Parliament, it was not brought to the public, it was decided by the government as executive order ignoring the provinces, ignoring Parliament and ignoring the public. When the free trade agreement was introduced, as this country and the House know, there were the most extensive possible negotiations.

We do not know if there will be negotiations between the United States and Mexico or whether Canada's interest will be affected. But if Canada's interests are to be affected, those will be discussed by this government with the people of Canada in the consultative tradition of the Progressive Conservative Party and not in the secretive tradition of the Liberal Party.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

FISHERIES

Mrs. Coline Campbell (South West Nova): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans. As part of his response to the inshore draggers' 1990 quota allocation proposal the minister has brought in 130 millimetre square mesh for the inshore draggers on Georges Bank.

If the minister accepts that the large mesh size is a better conservation measure, why then is it not mandatory for the large offshore boats which are also fishing on Georges Bank and which are catching hundreds of thousands of pounds per trip?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, there is no suggestion from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans to take any action whose sole purpose would be to hurt our inshore fishermen on the Atlantic coast.

[*English*]

This suggestion that we will try to impose measures that will cause harm or trouble to the inshore fishery and leave the offshore to rape the resources and do whatever they want, is completely—

[*Translation*]

—I dare not use the word—

[*English*]

But we will not do that of course. I can assure the hon. member that we will be trying to work out the implementation of these conservation measures with both sectors of the fishery in Atlantic Canada, the inshore and the offshore.

Mrs. Coline Campbell (South West Nova): Mr. Speaker, I will repeat my question because I think the minister misunderstood.

At present the inshore fleet is using 130 millimetre square mesh brought in for this fishery by the minister for those boats under 65 feet which are allowed to fish there at certain times. The offshore, which can catch up to 400,000 pounds of fish a trip, is fishing at the same time, side by side, and it does not have the same 130 millimetre square mesh. In fact, it has diamond mesh which is very destructive.

I agree with the minister that we need conservation. But I do not see the reasoning for the small boat enforcing conservation while the large boat is not. I do not see how it is reasonable for one fleet, which is catching hundreds of thousands of pounds per trip, to be without it. I do not see how you can explain that to the people. If there is a reason for it I would like to hear it from the minister.

Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, I could play with the issue and ask the hon. member why, when they restructured the offshore back in 1982 and 1983, these measures which she now advocates against the offshore sector to protect the inshore were not taken. However, I know this would not add much to the debate.

The important thing is that we have to take measures to conserve our resources in the Atlantic Ocean. From my conversations with both the inshore and the offshore sectors we have determined to work together to implement measures to do that.

The hon. member suggests that within a matter of days or weeks we can turn around a whole way of harvesting fish. She knows that that is not possible. There has to be consultation and this is what we are doing with the fishermen. If we were not doing that, she would criticize me for not doing it.

* * *

TRADE

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Secretary of State for External Affairs, who suggested that somehow there is something hypothetical about these Mexican-United States talks, that they are talks to talk about whether to talk or not.

I want to quote from the communiqué which comes from the Embassy of Mexico which says: "The two Presidents have determined that a comprehensive free trade agreement is the best vehicle to achieve their ambitious objectives and, therefore, agree to move toward that end".

Does the Secretary of State for External Affairs not recognize, with this kind of commitment on the part of the two senior political leaders from these two countries, that it is time for Canada to get its act together and start taking a position? Will the minister tell the House what is the position of this country with respect to these talks?

• (1500)

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, for the third time, I hope that I am neither hypothetical nor hysterical in the House.

There has been an agreement by the Presidents of two other countries in this hemisphere to pursue the possibilities of a trade agreement. The hon. member read with remarkable clarity the communique jointly issued by the Presidents of Mexico and of the United States.

The position of Canada is to determine what impact, if any, those negotiations, if they occur, may have upon Canada's interests. If there is an impact upon Canada, we will then determine what course it is best to follow.

I was asked three questioners ago whether or not the government would be prepared to consult with parliamentarians as to how we might proceed. I have answered that my colleague, the Minister for International Trade, will be before the standing committee in the next couple of weeks. I hope the hon. member is there and I hope by that time he has a new question.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Essex–Windsor, a short supplemental.

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Mr. Speaker, I hope by that time the Secretary of State for External Affairs has actually read what has come from the Embassy of Mexico and from the President of the United States.

I ask the minister if, as in the case of the free trade negotiations with the United States, he is prepared to see established in this Parliament a special committee to investigate the various ramifications of this negotiation which is already taking place, or is this government simply going to sit back until such time as General Motors starts to ask Canadian workers to take a holiday on September 15, Mexican Independence Day?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I really feel sorry for the poor hon.

member that he does not have a question of his own; he has to borrow the question from the member for Winnipeg South Centre, or he has to borrow a line from his colleague. I have answered his question.

If Canadian interests are affected in these discussions, then Canada will develop a policy designed to protect Canada's interests. There will be consultations with Parliament. Those consultations, as I have said three times now in the House, this is the fourth, will begin when my colleague, the Minister for International Trade, meets with the standing committee later this month.

If there are particular proposals as to means of discussion that the hon. member wants to put forward, then I hope that he would take the opportunity of that committee hearing or other opportunities in the House to make that kind of suggestion.

* * *

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Andre: Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister, as was committed to by the Deputy Prime Minister last Friday, would like to come into the House and make a statement respecting the Meech Lake negotiations.

There has been a little bit of a delay. Normally that would be done under statements by ministers, but the Prime Minister will not be able to come until about four o'clock.

There have been discussions with the opposition and I think you will find unanimous agreement to revert to statements by ministers for the purpose of hearing from the Prime Minister and the opposition leaders at about four o'clock.

Mr. Speaker: The House has heard the proposition by the hon. government House leader. Is there agreement?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

Mr. Nowlan: Mr. Speaker, I started to rise before you put the question. Is this going to be an ordinary ministerial statement with only the House leaders responding, or will there also be an opportunity for other members to make comments on such a matter?

Mr. Speaker: According to the proposal put forward by the hon. government House leader, he asked the House to agree that we would revert to statements by ministers at four o'clock and we would be then bound by the usual rule which is that the minister, in this case the right hon. the Prime Minister, would speak and there would be a response from each of the spokespersons of the Official Opposition and the New Democratic Party in exactly equal time. That is the rule and that is what the House has agreed to.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I have received written notice from the hon. member for Hillsborough that he is unable to move his motion during Private Members' Hour on Tuesday, June 12, 1990.

[*Translation*]

The motion having been designated as votable, it is not possible to make an exchange in the order of precedence, pursuant to Standing Order 94. I order the Clerk to move this item to the bottom of the order of precedence.

[*English*]

Private Members' Hour will thus be cancelled and, pursuant to Standing Order 94, the House will continue with the business before it prior to that hour.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*English*]

PETITIONS

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Madam Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to 31 petitions.

[*Editor's Note: See today's Votes and Proceedings.*]

* * *

[*Translation*]

ENERGY, MINES AND RESOURCES

PRESENTATION OF FIRST REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

Mr. Charles A. Langlois (Manicouagan): Madam Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), I have the honour to present today a report prepared by the Standing Committee on Energy, Mines and Resources further to the study on the report entitled, "Energy and Canadians—Into the 21st Century".

[*Editor's Note: See today's Votes and Proceedings.*]

* * *

[*English*]

AERONAUTICS ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

Hon. Harvie Andre (for the Minister of Transport) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-76, An Act to amend the Aeronautics Act and to amend an Act to amend the Aeronautics Act.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Shall the hon. minister have leave to introduce the bill?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to, bill read the first time and ordered to be printed.

* * *

[*Translation*]

IMMIGRATION ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of Employment and Immigration) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-77, An Act to amend the Immigration Act.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to grant the minister leave to introduce the bill?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to, bill read first time and ordered to be printed.

* * *

[*English*]

NATIONAL HIGHWAYS ACT

MEASURE TO ENACT

Mr. Robert D. Nault (Kenora—Rainy River) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-313, An Act to establish a national highways system and a national highways authority.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Shall the hon. member have leave to introduce the bill?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Nault: Madam Speaker, it is my intention to introduce this bill for the specific reason of rectifying a flaw that we have in our national system. Under the present act, the National Transportation Act, there is no mention of the highways that we have to be called the national highways system of this country. I would like to make the explanation short, so that we can hopefully go on to debate this bill in the House. I hope all members will get involved in this debate, if it is accepted.

• (1510)

We are presently at a point where our roads are deteriorating quickly and the highway system is doing a disservice to the economic development of Canada.

It is hoped that by introducing this bill that the debate will enhance the process. It is also hoped that members will understand that without a national highway system, the national government cannot enhance regional development in all parts of the country. I am hoping, Madam Speaker, that you will allow us another opportunity to discuss this further, at which time it is my intention to explain in detail how important this is to Canada.

Motion agreed to, bill read the first time and ordered to be printed.

* * *

PETITIONS

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, it is indeed an honour to present a petition pursuant to Standing Order 36 on behalf of a large number of constituents from Kamloops, British Columbia, as well as other communities in western Canada, who are opposed to the goods and services tax being implemented by the government.

They point out a whole set of reasons why they oppose the tax. Basically, it will increase their cost of living which will result, presumably, in higher interest rates.

I am going to add a little section saying that they would like to call on the Liberal senators to kill the tax by voting against the bill.

To be fair, Madam Speaker, it does not say that in here, but I know that if they were here, they would want me to say that.

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Kingsway): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise to present a petition which has been signed by hundreds of residents of my constituency of Burnaby—Kingsway. The petition includes the names of teachers, staff and students at Burnaby North Secondary School who are expressing their concern about the Minister of Finance's proposed goods and services tax as an unfair form of taxation because it forces small businesses to carry a disproportionate share of the tax burden.

The petitioners point out that the tax will prove an implementation nightmare for small businesses, that it does not address the concerns of small business with regard to the manufacturing sales tax, and they call upon Parliament to reject the proposed goods and services tax, to consult with business, labour and consumer groups to reach a broad consensus on reform of the tax system before implementing alternatives to the manufacturers' sales tax.

Finally, they call upon Parliament to ensure that there is real reform of the tax system to provide a healthy climate for small business in Canada.

I present these signatures on behalf of the students and teachers of Burnaby North Secondary School. I congratulate them for their initiative in collecting the names for this petition.

Mr. Jack Whittaker (Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt): Madam Speaker, I once again rise pursuant to Standing Order 36 and present a petition which shows that people across Canada are against the goods and services tax.

In this particular case, people from the area in Ontario around Chesterville have signed the petition in great numbers, advising this government that they too, like the people in my province of British Columbia, are against the goods and services tax, and they want the government to implement a taxation system that is based on fairness to all Canadians, not just to the corporate and wealthy friends of the government.

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise to present a petition signed by hundreds of residents of the province of Newfoundland, a petition gathered by my hon. and gallant colleague from Bonavista—Trinity—Conception.

The petitioners, from communities such as Harbour Grace, Bryants Cove, Salvage, Bishop's Cove, Gooseberry Cove, and other communities in Newfoundland, oppose the government's proposal to introduce a goods and services tax. They feel that 31 tax increases in five disastrous Tory years are more than enough, and they call upon Parliament to reject this unfair and unjust tax.

[*Translation*]

PROTECTION OF LIFE FROM MOMENT OF CONCEPTION

Mr. Jean-Guy Hudon (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Defence): The day before the vote on Bill C-43, Madam Speaker, I received a petition to be presented to the House of Commons urging Parliament to pass legislation to protect life from the moment of conception, legislation which would seek to save the lives of both mother and child at the same time.

The signatories wanted me to present the petition that very day, but unfortunately it had not been certified. So I am pleased today to present, on behalf of my constituents who claim the right to be heard in the House of Commons, this petition duly certified by the Clerk of the House.

[*English*]

WHARFS AND HARBOURS

Ms. Catherine Callbeck (Malpeque): Madam Speaker, I rise today under Standing Order 36 to present a petition signed by some of my constituents who are very concerned about the poor condition of wharfs and harbours in Prince Edward Island.

This petition states that the Government of Canada has not maintained its responsibilities to the maintenance of wharfs and harbours in Atlantic Canada and that many of the wharfs in Prince Edward Island are in a deplorable and unsafe state and require major repairs.

These petitioners call upon Parliament to evaluate the state of wharfs and harbours, proceed with the necessary maintenance and repair, and ensure the safety and future of the fishery of Prince Edward Island.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Ms. Lynn Hunter (Saanich—Gulf Islands): Madam Speaker, it is my honour and duty to present two petitions pursuant to Standing Order 36, both from

Saanich—Gulf Islands and both from the Mayne Island portion of that riding.

These petitions are expressing my constituents' outrage at the imposition of the goods and services tax and are calling upon Parliament to withdraw this bill, Parliament consisting not only of the House of Commons but also the Senate, I am sorry to say.

Until that revision of our Constitution is intact, I call upon Parliament, consisting of the House of Commons and the Senate, to withdraw the bill on behalf of my constituents.

* * *

[*Translation*]

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Madam Speaker, I ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Shall all questions stand?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

• (1520)

[*Translation*]

GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES RESTRAINT ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre) that Bill C-69, an Act to amend certain statutes to enable restraint of government expenditures, be read the third time and passed.

Mr. Pierre H. Vincent (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to speak to Bill C-69. First of all, however, I would like to congratulate the Prime Minister of Canada on his concluding, for the second time, an agreement that is historic both for Quebec and the rest of the country. I also would like to emphasize the work done by the ten Premiers, and I think that is appropriate considering the subject of Bill C-69 which deals with transfers to the provinces.

Madam Speaker, Bill C-69 has various objectives and follows announcements by the Minister of Finance and the President of the Treasury Board, with respect to cutbacks in government spending. There will be cuts totalling $3 billion in 1990-91, and $3.8 billion in 1991-92, all of which will cut directly into government spending. This means we have a projected deficit of $28.5 billion for 1990-91 and $26.8 billion for 1991-92.

Madam Speaker, since 1984, this government has started managing the country the way it should be managed, by reducing the annual deficit, which was enormous, and at the same time gradually getting the national debt under control, a debt that was a legacy from the previous government.

So there have been cuts, madam Speaker, including cuts in transfers to the provinces. However, we should be careful when we talk about transfers to the provinces, because often people tend to confuse Established Programs Financing with equalization. Quebec, for instance, receives under Established Programs Financing, certain amounts of money, like all the other provinces. As you know, all provinces receive the same amount per capita under this program.

Furthermore, Madam Speaker, as you know, equalization payments are only paid to certain provinces. These are amounts of money for provinces who are considered the most in need. And Quebec is one of those provinces.

If we look at the figures for 1989-90, the province of Quebec will receive $9.9 billion. In 1990-91, this will be $10.3 billion, and in 1991-92, $10.6 billion. Madam Speaker, this means an increase of about 3 per cent per year. I agree the increase is not as high as the province or other provinces might have expected. However, as a result of Draconian measures we had to take to control the government's annual deficit and the growing national debt, we had to announce a number of reductions in annual increases received by the provinces.

Bill C-69 confirms that the provinces will receive more money next year than they are getting this year, and it also confirms federal participation in helping the provinces.

Madam Speaker, I may point out that since 1977, the provinces have the right to spend the money they receive from the federal government at their own discretion.

This means, and I am taking Quebec as an example, if the province receives $10.3 billion in 1990-91, it can invest that money in hospitals, schools, highways, day-care—whatever. That is its personal decision as a province. British Columbia can do the same, and Newfoundland as well. These are sums of money that are allocated in terms of the needs and expectations of each province, but itis strictly discretionary spending.

Madam Speaker, I believe this bill should be passed as soon as possible so that we can get on with our legislative and economic agenda.

[*English*]

Ms. Joy Langan (Mission—Coquitlam): Madam Speaker, one thing has become tragically clear as this government's mandate unfolds. Put simply, the Minister of National Health and Welfare has surrendered, without a fight, his responsibility for social policy in this country. It is clear that it is the Minister of Finance who now makes social policy for this government.

What is the result of this abdication of responsibility by the Minister of National Health and Welfare? It is Bill C-21, which will punish the unemployed for this government's failure to come up with a full employment policy. It is Bill C-28, which ends the universality of old age pension and family allowance. It is Bill C-69, which saddles the poor of this country with a disproportionate share of the national debt and which threatens the future viability of our health care system and our post-secondary institutions.

This process, most aptly described as social policy by stealth, has resulted in the polarization of Canadians. The facts are that what we are witnessing is a drastic decline in the numbers who can be considered in the middle class in this country. We are seeing more poor and more rich, with the disappearance of those in the middle; more highly paid jobs and more poorly paid jobs; more children and single parents living in deep poverty; and more people with only a part-time or marginal attachment to the workforce.

This bill, which the government is ramming through, is illustrative of the re-emergence of the Conservative belief in an ordered society, a society of haves and have-nots, a society of rich and poor. It is a rejection of the concept of collective entitlement and an embracing of paternalism.

The government asks that we all share in the strong medicine needed to control the deficit, but its actions betray its words. This government does not spread the burden equitably but punishes and overburdens those least able to cope.

In this House, as reported at page 10673 of *Hansard*, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance stated:

> The effort that we are requiring from the population with the cuts and the tax hikes is a collective effort on the part of all Canadians. We are asking everyone of them, whatever the province they live in, to share in this collective effort—

However, is this the case, Madam Speaker? Is everyone being asked to share? Of course not?

Bill C-69 is a direct attack on the income support of poor Canadians. It is a direct attack on those who are least able to put food on the table, to clothe and house their children, to find meaningful employment. This government has not gone after the incomes of the wealthy. It has not even sought out the deferred taxes of profitable corporations. It has sought out the powerless and gone after them.

As reported at page 10672 of *Hansard*, the parliamentary secretary also had the following to say about the ceiling placed on Canada Assistance Plan payments by this bill:

> The expenditure control plan will not affect the amount received by low income Canadian men and women.

Where in this bill are we to find this? Are we simply to take the word of the parliamentary secretary? If the purpose of this bill is to control expenditure, how can he say that it will not affect the amount received by poor Canadians?

The stated purpose of this bill is to force the provinces to absorb a greater share of the national debt. How, one must ask, are they to do that if they do not cut expenditures? How can the parliamentary secretary claim that no one will suffer a loss in income if the provinces are forced to cut income support payments because of the federal government's reneging on its constitutional and contractual responsibility to cost share these expenditures?

It is evident to all who care to look that to live on social assistance is to live in poverty. Absolutely nowhere in this country are social assistance rates above the poverty line, no matter which poverty line is used.

The shallowness of understanding demonstrated by members opposite is even more clear when one reads the words of the chair of the finance committee, as reported at page 10551 of *Hansard*, who had the following to say about Bill C-69:

> This bill is a sensible bill because it comes to grips with the EPF, the CAP, the growth of expenditures and the transfers made from the federal government to the provinces.

No reference is made to the abandonment of the poor, the abandonment of universality, the abandonment of the social safety net.

The difficulty with the observation of the chair of the finance committee is that it ignores the facts. The Canada Assistance Plan is not a transfer to the provinces; it is a transfer to individuals. The federal government writes the cheque to the province, but what it is paying for is previously agreed upon services and income support payments to those Canadians who are in dire need of this support.

To claim that the cap on CAP is an attempt to control transfers to provinces is to indulge in a purposeful misunderstanding of the Canada Assistance Plan and how it is used by the provinces.

• (1530)

The chairman of the finance committee went on to say on the same page that:

> We cannot pay our bills by encouraging profligacy in the hands of the provinces.

Profligacy means recklessly extravagant. Again, I hope through ignorance rather than a deliberate attempt to mislead, the hon. member reflects the dearth of knowledge on the government side of the House.

Payments made under the Canada Assistance Plan are demand led expenditures. They come from the commitment made by the provinces and the federal government to assist individuals in providing the most basic requirements of life for themselves and their families.

These expenditures are the result of the requirements of the act to provide services having as their object the lessening, removal or prevention of the causes and effects of poverty, child neglect or dependence on public assistance. Is the hon. member, his party, or the minister actually suggesting that the provinces are being recklessly extravagant in their spending in these areas?

Are they suggesting that neglected children should suffer while this government kisses the ring of the knobby finger of corporate Canada? The finance committee heard witnesses representing 20 groups and organizations, many of which are national organizations.

From these groups not one came before the committee to praise Bill C-69. They came to bury it. It needs to be noted that they often sat before the committee without the benefit of a single Tory member of the committee, save for the chair of that committee.

The absence of Tories from the committee room provided real and tangible evidence of the lack of concern this government has for the poor, for our universities and colleges and for our health care system. It demonstrated in more than a symbolic way the lack of understanding and caring which is becoming the hallmark of this government.

Before the committee, the Minister of State for Finance made much of his government's plan to get its fiscal house in order and that Bill C-69 represented a way to have the provinces share in that responsibility. It has chosen to do so by limiting its constitutional, contractual and moral responsibilities.

The government has chosen to do so despite the overwhelming evidence provided by a series of government-sponsored studies which demonstrate in unequivocal terms that the Canada Assistance Plan works. It is an effective and efficient use of government resources, and any changes to the Canada Assistance Plan should be made in co-operation with the provinces and those responsible for the delivery of the services covered by CAP.

Such changes should not be *ad hoc* as they are in this bill, but ones that provide for improved service delivery and a real commitment to getting people off welfare. It should not be a kind of punitive, mean-spirited measure that we see in this bill.

The most recently completed study of the Canada Assistance Plan is now in the hands of the minister, and one cannot help but wonder why he is permitting Bill C-69 to go ahead when he knows it will threaten the most basic component of our social safety net, when he knows that no one in this country with any knowledge of

CAP supports the imposition of a ceiling on federal expenditures.

This study brought together acknowledged experts on CAP and this is what they had to say: "CAP is something that is really the best we have got right now. If anything, we should look at improving it rather than taking shots at it."

Another said: "CAP has been called the best example of co-operative federalism—.The province's inputs were respected—.and they were committed to a new approach of social assistance which would eliminate all the vestiges of the poor law and make the concept of need really meaningful."

A third quote is: "The impact of CAP has been enormous—for good or for ill, anything that existed before was incredibly punitive—.It was a terrible, terrible system—.The level of brutality was spectacular."

A final quote is: "I would like to state that if anything happens to the CAP agreement and the transfer monies—effect on the provinces in the next five years would be chaotic. It would be one of the most disastrous things Ottawa could ever do."

Those quotes are from references submitted to the Program Audit Review directorate of Health and Welfare Canada by the DPA group incorporated.

I would suggest that it is the desire of the government to return to the brutality that is referred to in those quotes, to see a return to the belief which pervaded the poor laws, a belief which regarded the disadvantaged as at fault for their plight.

If this government was really concerned about saving money it would look to creative and positive ways to alleviate poverty in this country. It would be supportive of the provinces in their attempt to deliver the services low-income Canadians need. It would embrace a policy of full employment. This bill proposes to cut short that creativity and sentence the poor in Canada to further hardship. In short, this bill needs to be defeated.

In closing I would like to make reference to an article in *The Globe and Mail* of June 7, written by Hovi Echenberg from NAPO:

> So, despite the silence of ministers traditionally playing the lead in social-policy changes, the web of federal policy initiatives has changed things for the worse for people at the edges of the marketplace. It may be that what used to be a safety net is becoming a trap, or even a noose, for Canada's poor.
>
> In British Columbia, Alberta, and Ontario, the provincial governments will resist real increases in social assistance income levels because, for the first time in more than 20 years, these increases will not be cost shared by the federal government. In these same provinces, the same limit on cost sharing will likely preclude new child care spaces, or increased civil legal aid services to support appeals of any disentitlement.
>
> In every province in Canada, low income people will likely find that few health services are insured under medicare. Whether annual physicals, ambulance services or drugs prescribed during a hospital stay, new costs will be borne by individuals. Affordable housing units will be slower to come by on the market, as federal funding for non-profit housing programs is reduced.

Madam Speaker, my caucus agrees with Hovi Echenberg when she says that the safety net is becoming a trap, or even a noose, for the poor.

Mrs. Sheila Finestone (Mount Royal): Madam Speaker, I listened with a great deal of interest to my colleague from Mission—Coquitlam and I would like to compliment her on a very thoughtful presentation of the arguments. It was very well thought through.

I join her and members of my caucus to speak on Bill C-69, an act respecting restraint of government expenditures. This bill implements four measures for budget restrictions announced in the budget of February 1990. First there is the freeze to federal transfer payments to the provinces for post-secondary education and health care under the Established Program Financing. Second, there is the limit on the increase of federal transfer payments to Ontario, British Columbia, and Alberta under the Canada Assistance Plan, which includes social programs. Third, there is the elimination of the Canada Exploration Incentives Program which affects mining, gas and oil industries. Fourth, is the measure that freezes public utilities income tax transfers over the next two years.

This bill represents, in a sense, the entire lack of balance in this government's approach between what I have always called two important pillars of Canada: economic opportunity and social justice. In my view, the two must be pursued simultaneously for both are critical objectives if we are to have the kind of Canada we have always striven for.

To forsake one for the interests of the other is to fail. To blindly fight the deficit without regard for the human and social toll is also to fail as a government and ultimately as a society.

Yet, that is this government's approach, as this bill demonstrates. This government concerns itself solely with the deficit at the expense of all else. While concerning itself with the economic side of the balance, pursuing deficit reduction and what it calls economic stability, it is forgetting how important it is to have social stability and a truly caring society.

• (1540)

There is no question that the people of this country need policies that are fiscally sound. They need to address the deficit. They also need policies that have no regard to class or place but provide for equitable consideration. Only our government can be expected to serve as that dependable link and ensure non-discrimination between the densely populated areas of our country and small-town Canada. Towns and villages should not be preferred over our cities, or prosperous communities to the less fortunate. Equality of service has been a valued Canadian hallmark and it seems to me that it is being eroded on a daily basis. A wonderful safety net is becoming less and less so.

The government has not seen it this way. I believe it has chosen to disrupt, to dismantle and even destroy much of this country's vital infrastructure, conceived to answer our very unique geography. Our huge land mass, with communities of varying sizes dispersed around this vast region, many sparsely settled, all need service. Be it social service, education or health, they have to be shared with our provinces; be it the national mandate on job skills, retraining, communications and transportation, these are all the key elements in the building and linking of our people to ensure a bright future and a sense of national unity.

The government has cut back on the CBC. It says this was needed to fight the deficit, forgetting that it is a bridge for Canadians to bring a national voice to all parts of this land, with the technology and vital infrastructure which brings about an informed Canadian society.

Today, I was pleased to participate in the launching of *Digital Radio*, *La radio numérique*, which will fill in the blanks that you would normally have as you drive from your home to Ottawa when the sound fades and there is interference from American channels. We will have new technology to correct that.

We must not destroy that infrastructure. Without the money that the CBC needs, we will not have the required infrastructure to ensure that we will have the kinds of communication that we require across this land.

What else has the government done? It has torn down VIA Rail because of the deficit. Forget about the social costs and the hardship it causes the elderly, the sick and women who have to take their children from distant locations to Montreal but cannot travel on the buses because it is inconvenient and uncomfortable. It is the same hardship for the disabled and the handicapped who cannot afford air fare. They were forgotten while it dismantled the wonderful transportation net that we had set up. The government would rather forget about the social costs of removing vital links across this land; the deficit is the only thing that matters.

Bill C-69 continues to implement the cuts of the government's 1990 budget. As I mentioned, the CBC capital budget has been cut by $20 million. That would certainly affect radio transmission and, I suggest, cuts very important services to the north. Telefilm Canada was cut by $13 million, affecting our Canadian content for film and video. The Export Development Corporation which helps our companies compete around the world, which is supposed to be another goal of this government, was cut by $100 million. The Secretary of State was cut by $113 million, much of it to womens' support programs and aboriginal communication infrastructure. The Small Craft Harbours Program was cut by $29 million. The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation funding for social and co-operative housing was cut by $165 million in the face of acute shortages in low-cost housing and a growing homeless population in many of our major cities.

The trickery being played here is obvious. The government makes these cuts while its rhetoric speaks of strong undying support for the varied programs it is cutting. Who are those members they trying to fool? The smoke and mirrors are easy to see through. Canadians have certainly not been duped with these hollow words.

After six years, Canadians know all too well how the game is being played on that side of the House: a government claiming support for programs while cutting them; and a government claiming it has performed miracles of fiscal management, when it has doubled the national debt and taken Canadian taxpayers to the cleaners. There have been 31 tax increases, with the thirty-second in the wings.

I am not saying that we must ignore the deficit, not at all. Nor do I believe any of my colleagues believe that—

An Hon. Member: Sure, they do.

Mrs. Finestone: —but we must apply to any deficit action the traditional Canadian approach of balance between the economic and social goals.

I certainly would not use the hon. member's very narrow point of perspective. I remember him on one of my standing committees and it was not a pleasure.

In other words, we must examine the social cost of any given action on the deficit. If we give up on that principle, we give up on what has been one of the fundamental values of Canada. I would argue we would be vastly impaired, not fairly meeting all of our citizens' basic needs. It would pander to the well-to-do and be quite insensitive to the growing needs of the working poor.

With the budget, Bill C-69, and all the other blind cuts that have occurred, the government has failed on this question of social responsibility. I would suggest to the Minister of National Health and Welfare, if he is truly concerned, that his voice has been silenced. He has failed to have an impact on the thinking of his cabinet colleagues. He has failed to have an impact on the budget of the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance and he has succeeded only in loosening the web of the Canadian social fabric.

What a strange irony as we open the newspapers today and we see that the Minister of Finance is busy asking workers and unions to limit their wage increase demands. At the same time, the government treats its own public servants quite differently. I would suggest, again, that that fancy rhetoric does not really reflect reality. It is really quite a scandal, what we learned today.

We learned that, while telling workers to cut their wage demands, the Tory government has been quietly topping up the salaries of high level federal executives with bonuses of up to 25 per cent. I told the Minister of Transport that he should change jobs. At the 25 per cent limit, the estimate is that he would get a bonus of almost $40,000 as the head of VIA Rail and $100,000 as the head of Petro-Can.

I recall in Question Period today the President of the Treasury Board spoke in the most unctuous tones, using holier-than-thou terms. He ended by saying: "I've told you that the government bosses received exactly the same pay increases as the workers of the country. As unionized public servants, they got a 4.2 per cent increase." He just forgot about the bonuses. It seems to me it just banks all these people bank who certainly got more than 4.2 per cent. There has been a lack of full exposure of this issue.

The salary range for the Bank of Canada Governor, John Crow, has risen by 35 per cent since 1987. We had to get information, not through Canada's access to information legislation, but through the American access to information system. We found out that the five top executives at CN received pay raises averaging 18.7 per cent last year, the same year that CN's profits plunged. Then, two days ago, my colleague, the hon. member for Thunder Bay—Nipigon, came into the House and asked the Minister of Labour what he plans to do for the 1,900 CN workers who just lost their jobs—

[*Translation*]

I ask you, is that really fair? Personally, I find it really unacceptable.

[*English*]

The cuts we have had to the Canada Assistance Plan, in the provinces of Ontario, British Columbia and Alberta, will increase the strain on the already insufficient resources available, not only for the general welfare services but also for services for the disabled, for child care, for foster homes—the whole range of social services. This is the first time in the 24-year history of the Canada Assistance Plan that the federal government has placed a limit on its contributions. Created in 1966, this legislation provides the basis for social assistance in the country.

• (1550)

By cutting CAP, the federal government is hurting the poorest of the poor. Under CAP, the federal and provincial governments share equally in the cost of welfare payments and basic necessities such as food, shelter, clothing, utilities, and other household supplies. It also provides important services such as dental care for the poor, essential services for disabled persons, foster

homes for abused children, shelters for abused wives, and child care for low income families.

The data for 1987 shows that 49 per cent of Canada's poor families and 54 per cent of Canada's poor individuals live in these three provinces. The cuts that the federal government has imposed are unilateral, defying at least the spirit, if not the wording, of the CAP agreement with the provinces. The contesting provinces believe that under the CAP agreement, CAP can only be modified after a year's notice and with provincial consent. This is the government that is building a great sense of national reconciliation and goodwill. I will not comment further right now on that issue.

I would suggest to you that neither of these provisions have been met. Madam Speaker, don't look so upset. The truth is the truth, even if it hurts and makes you unhappy.

Mr. Nicholson: You didn't mention the 5 per cent increase the Ontario government was implementing.

Mrs. Finestone: Then what is the freeze that you are putting into place? You forget to take account of that.

The problem with the hon. members opposite is that they are a bunch of penguins. They do not read the documents. All they do is flap their wings and their lips.

Through capping the Canada Assistance Plan, the government claims it will save $151 million over two years. That is what it has done through capping. That is its bottom line. What are the costs? The Canada Council on Social Development has stated:

> Poor children will suffer when the federal contribution to the Canada Assistance Plan is capped for Alberta, B.C. and Ontario. The plan provides direct payments to poor people with no other income, 40 per cent of whom are children and half of whom live in the three provinces that are affected.

The poor in these three provinces are just as poor as those in other provinces and this is a very odd way for the government to come to the aid of those in need.

That is the human toll I am talking about, the cost in human and social terms of this deficit cutting action. Yes, perhaps the provinces will fill in the gap left by the federal government where they have been able to maintain their resolve and their commitment to the caring society. I say, thank goodness someone will, because it is surely not going to be those on the benches across the way who will act in the interest of our poor, especially our children.

Something is dreadfully wrong in the orientation and planning for our country. Something is wrong with the vision of the government.

While the Minister of Finance is very pleased with his budget, all he has done is transfer the burden of tax to the provinces and the municipalities. By the government's shirking of its duties to make its budget look better, other hands are going into the taxpayers' pockets to meet important needs in terms of assistance, health, re-education, and training.

Let us look at the Equalization Payment Fund and education cuts. What is the impact of the minister's cuts? What is the implication of these freezes, cuts, or whatever you want to call them? It is less money going into the province to support the importance of education and the future of our children.

Will the provinces faced with less than their expected federal contributions have any choice with provincial transfers being strained? Have they any choice but to give further limited resources to the universities? Will they have any choice but to increase tuition or to put capital projects or new equipment purchases on hold? Who suffers then? The student suffers because either tuition increases have closed the door to college or to university, or the institution cannot afford all the resources to prepare him or her for the fierce competition of life and career.

This only serves as a stumbling block in maximizing the potential of our young people who are our human capital of tomorrow. These are the kinds of things the government must be able to see and duly consider—the full consequences of its action and not just the effect on the balance sheet. Unfortunately, Canadians do not have a government with that kind of balanced vision. We do have a government that knows how to package pretty packages, empty boxes, but it does not remember its own strongly held view.

Unfortunately I have misplaced one of the minister's famous quotes, but it indicates that he does not feel we should be cutting on the backs of the hospitals, health care, or the universities when we look at how to plan. He

said this in 1982 but I guess when one becomes minister there is another reality that sets in.

These are not the first cuts to education transfers by the government. Cumulatively, since 1986, it has cut $31.1 billion from all EPF programs—$22.2 billion from health care and $8.9 billion from post-secondary education. Across the way, members may not call them a cut nor a freeze but any name they want. It is $31.1 billion: $22.2 billion plus $8.9 billion. Most people do not even know how many zeroes that is. They just know that it is a heck of a lot of money being cut from the needed services for their children and for their future.

This is being done at a time when inflation is running above 5 per cent, heating costs are up, library costs have risen, new equipment is sorely needed, and laboratory costs are on the increase. Again, the government has made the cuts in education transfers to the provinces just when what is really needed are greater resources for education, better facilities, and more professors to make our young people capable of competing in the 21st century.

In an address to a public policy conference for journalists convened by the C. D. Howe Institute in April, 1989, George Pederson, the president of the University of Western Ontario, issued a very severe warning saying that the university system in Canada is in trouble, serious trouble.

I am going to wrap up by saying that it is certain that we have pockets of excellence in our various educational institutions, but there is no single university in Canada that can compete with the best in the United States, Britain, Western Europe, not to mention Japan. If we want to be on a fair and equal footing to compete in the international world of tomorrow, we had better make sure there is a reinstatement of quality in our universities. That is what Pederson maintained and he is quoted in an article in *The London Free Press* of April 28, 1990.

When one cuts into the health care of the people and the basic promises for the infrastructure of our health services, and when the world looks our medicare system and says that this is an incredible system, this population is no longer prepared to accept the kinds of cuts the government has put in. We find that we are closing beds and have long waiting lists in our hospitals and overcrowded emergency wards—all things which are taking place as we cut $22.2 billion from the EPF. With respect to our health services, the cutbacks announced are absolutely amazing and 70 per cent of that $31.1 billion comes from that health care side.

Madam Speaker, I would have liked to continue. Another time I will have something else to say.

Madam Deputy Speaker: 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 Bonavista—Trinity—Conception—Fisheries; the hon. member for Dartmouth—Regional development; and the hon. member for Prince George—Bulkley Valley—Forestry.

Hon. John McDermid (Minister of State (Privatization and Regulatory Affairs)): Madam Speaker, I listened with great interest to the hon. member's speech this afternoon. She made three very interesting points. She criticized the government for cutting expenditures; she criticized the government for raising taxes; and she criticized the government for not handling the deficit problems.

There is a certain inconsistency in that type of speech. There are two areas where the federal government can save income or gain income. One is through taxes and the other is through cutting expenditures. If we do have a deficit problem the hon. member will have to admit to the House—at least I hope she would admit to the House—that one, the other or both is a way to try to get the deficit situation under control. That is what the Minister of Finance has done in a very responsible manner.

• (1600)

She talked about the deficit of this country. When we took office, it was $200 billion, it is now some $350 billion, 80 per cent of which is just compound interest on the $200 billion deficit that was left to us.

Mrs. Finestone: Why don't you do something about it?

Mr. McDermid: That is exactly what we are doing. The hon. member can stand up and criticize all she wants. That is very easy. The minute the Liberal Party has something concrete to put on the table to solve the

deficit problem, we will be very pleased to listen to it, and if it makes sense we will take action.

Mrs. Finestone: Madam Speaker, this government has been in place for over six years, six of the best earning years in the history of Canada, and all it has managed to do is double the national debt and not decrease the deficit. Go and find out what you are supposed to do. They didn't elect me to do it. They elected you to do it. Why don't you take your responsibilities seriously. And by the way, why don't you eat crow or fire Crow, but stand behind what you do?

Madam Deputy Speaker: The hon. member may want to speak through the Chair. It would be appreciated.

Mr. Len Hopkins (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke): Madam Speaker, I too have a question for the hon. member for Mount Royal. She mentioned during the course of her speech that members on the other side were not able to get their message through to the Minister of Finance. She made that point very well. She also made the point that the hon. member for Jonquière, the hon. member for Niagara Falls, and the hon. member for St. John's East, and finally the Minister for Privatization did not get their message through to her either, and I hope they never do, because she did a very good job.

The Minister of Finance said in Toronto in August, 1984 that he would not increase taxes in Canada in order to cut the deficit. He has raised them 31 times and is coming up to 32 times. He also said he would not make a battleground out of post-secondary education, hospitalization and medicare in this country, but he has done that very thing in Bill C-69.

While we are talking about inconsistencies, I would like to put this question to the hon. member for Mount Royal. Do you think these are greater inconsistencies than the phoney arguments raised by the Minister for Privatization?

Mrs. Finestone: Madam Speaker, I could not have said it better than my colleague, and I thank him for those remarks. I would just like to remind him about one thing the Prime Minister had to say. At the PC general meeting on August 25, 1989, he said: "This government will carry its fair share of the burden to ensure that all young Canadians receive a first-class education as they confront a world-class challenge". Certainly, the Minister of Finance did not hear that. I would like to remind him of what the Prime Minister had to say and recall his own words for reconsideration so he might withdraw the bill. On March 24, 1982, he said: "Cuts to the EPF could have disastrous effects on the universities and on the colleges, on the hospital funding and on the operation of the hospitals. Let us not make hospitals, universities and colleges a battleground between the federal government and the provincial governments: Let us solve those problems not on the backs of hospitals and universities; let us solve those problems outside of that area".

We think the Minister of Finance has a very sad, clouded vision of how to govern this country, and perhaps should listen to the minister of health and social welfare who would have better advice to give.

Mr. Rob Nicholson (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Madam Speaker, the hon. member has spoken very forcefully about salary increases. Has she had a chance to take up this matter with her colleagues in the Senate who voted themselves an increase? If she has, has it done any good?

Mrs. Finestone: Madam Speaker, I must say that I was wondering whether or not my hon. colleague has taken up with his federal minister the 25 per cent increase that he has just given to all these big functionaries? Do you know how much money you have just finished spending? You ought to be ashamed of yourself. It is obscene what you have done.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Jack Whittaker (Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt): Madam Speaker, I noted with interest some of the comments the hon. member for Mount Royal made on this particular bill. I note she went into the clawback of the old age pensions and alluded to the cutbacks to the Unemployment Insurance Commission, the CAP, welfare payments, the EPF cuts to hospitals and post-secondary education.

I have been in Parliament over the last year and a half, and as I look at this I see a thread of harmonization. Can the member see any tie-in with what this government seems to be doing with these cuts and the free trade agreement?

Mrs. Finestone: Madam Speaker, I would have to ask for a clarification on the nature of the question that was asked.

Mr. Arnold Malone (Crowfoot): Madam Speaker, I would like to ask the hon. member for Mount Royal a question, bearing in mind the comment in her speech that Canadian universities are not as high in excellence as those in other countries, such as the United States, England, and others.

First of all, I want to submit that while she may be basing her quote on a newspaper article, I do not think most Canadians or most international observers would agree with her. I would like her to indicate what universities in Canada she believes to be inferior to those international universities. I would think that the foreign students coming to Canada will claim that part of the reason they come here is because our universities stand in their excellence, *par excellence*, second to none. I ask her if she has any empirical evidence to support that unsubstantiated sentence.

Mrs. Finestone: Madam Speaker, I am not the research team. I have quoted extensively from some very important research. I would like to point out to the hon. member, that he is close to my era, perhaps a decade or so away. I would like to suggest that at the C. D. Howe Institute, which I think is rather a credible institute, the observation has been made that the quality of instruction available to university students today is not nearly as good as that provided to their parents who attended Ontario universities 30 years ago.

I would suggest the hon. member falls into that category. I would also suggest that one of the reasons foreign students come here is because our universities are much less expensive. It has nothing to do with the quality of the university.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The period for questions and comments has now expired. Resuming debate.

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Madam Speaker, I am reluctant to start a speech in the circumstances because I am aware that at four o'clock we will probably be interrupted when the Prime Minister arrives. Perhaps in the meantime I could start. Having a captive audience of over half of the Cabinet is a particular treat for me as it is very rare, during debate, to see so many here and I am delighted.

I want to say that discussing Bill C–69, the act to restrain government expenditures, is a misguided effort on the part of the government. We hear constant complaints about how we never make suggestions on this side of the House. I can tell the ministers opposite, through you, Madam Speaker, that I have made many suggestions for measures to do with the economy, such as cutting the advertising budget on the goods and service tax, which would save millions and millions of dollars for the taxpayers of Canada every year, cutting the size of this Cabinet in half, which would reduce expenditures significantly and possibly increase the effectiveness. It could not reduce it.

I say that we could consider all these suggestions and yet, when I have made them, I have been blithely ignored. The Minister of Finance has not even come in and made a speech in response, agreed, or said that he would not agree to my suggestions. They have been politely and firmly ignored.

• (1610)

I am afraid that this attitude on the part of the government is regrettable, and particularly so when it is the educational facilities of Canada that are suffering as a result of the cuts that are proposed in Bill C–69.

My own community has in it two universities; one of which is not directly affected by these cuts since it is funded solely by the federal government, being the Royal Military College. The other university is directly affected, as indeed are all universities across this country.

I want to confine my remarks on Bill C–69 to the educational aspect of these cuts so the Minister of National Health and Welfare can relax.

Mr. Beatty: I'm virtually comatose.

Mr. Milliken: He says he is relaxed already. I suggest that if he and his colleagues had a proper interest in health care delivery in this country, they would not relax when they are trying to pass this particular bill through the House of Commons. He knows, as well as I do, that this bill will significantly reduce the ability of the provinces to fund health care in their jurisdictions as a result of the federal government trying to dump the problem to the provinces.

On March 14, 1989, the Canadian Association of University Teachers wrote to the Prime Minister to make him aware of their particular concerns regarding post-secondary funding. That association argued that the transfer of funds under the Established Programs Financing Act, "has a direct and profound impact on the quality of our universities and of our research effort". That is not me talking, it is not some other member of the opposition bleating, this is the Canadian Association of University Teachers expressing their concerns about these cuts. They ask the Prime Minister to show his support for post-secondary education by announcing, in the government's Speech from the Throne, a renewed commitment to education funding.

How did the Prime Minister respond to this request? What did he do to strengthen Canada's post-secondary institutions? In his April 1989 budget, the Minister of Finance reduced by 1 per cent the escalator provisions used to calculate the level of funding that each government receives through EPF. This was in keeping with his decision in 1986 to lower the escalator by 2 per cent.

Continuing this assault, the Prime Minister now plans, through this bill that we are now debating, to impose a two-year freeze on per capita EPF transfers to the provinces. He plans to remove the inflation protection from these transfers precisely when the new goods and services tax bill, which is now sitting in the other place will, on the finance department's own admission, cause a 1 per cent jump in inflation.

We in the opposition know that those projections are incorrect. It will be more than 1 per cent and yet that is what the Department of Finance is maintaining, you cut the transfers to the provinces while you increase the costs through your own taxation measures. That is unfair and that is what this government is doing by these bills.

In addition, the rate of growth of the transfers will be restricted to 3 percentage points below the rate of growth in the economy when the freeze is lifted after 1992. This will result in a further erosion and deterioration of the moneys available to provinces for education purposes. The cumulative results of this government's assault on EPF transfers has meant that from 1986 to 1995, provincial governments will have lost $8.9 billion in post-secondary education funding. Of this loss, approximately $2 billion, that is about a quarter of it, is attributable to Bill C-69 alone.

Back in 1984 when the Prime Minister's party was trying to get elected, it wrote to the Canadian Association of University Teachers in a newsletter that they were "committed to sustaining the current federal financial commitment according to the formula set out in the 1977 agreement. We believe that financing post-secondary education is an important priority for both levels of government". I note that that was before an election. How their tune changed after the election, after they duped the Canadian people into voting for them, they changed their tune and then began slashing and cutting all over the place. Talk about honesty in government, talk about the obligation to maintain your promises, this is a shocking record. Since 1984 the government's support of post-secondary education has become so weak that the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada has projected that, as a result of Bill C-69 and the February 1990 budget, federal cash transfers in support of post-secondary education could disappear before the year 2000 in Ontario and before the year 2010 in the rest of the provinces.

The government's record fails to match its rhetoric and its promises. Instead of being given the straight goods on this bill and its effects, we are given fudged figures that cloud the issue and make it look as though this somehow is a bonanza for the provinces. It is not. The Canadian people know it is not and the government, in truth, knows it is not, but simply will not reveal the facts.

While the government has initiated some worth-while programs in the education field—

Mr. Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): Name one.

Mr. Milliken: My hon. friend from Winnipeg South Centre asks me to name one.

I must say I have not heard anyone over there suggest any because I do not think they know of them. But, in fairness, there has been an increase—and I will deliver a compliment—in the funding levels to the various research councils. On the other hand, the increase has been less in almost every case than the level of inflation. It is not much of an increase, but there has been some additional funding, and I am corrected every time I say that.

The EPF cuts will reduce the effect of these few positive initiatives because there are several factors to be borne in mind in relation to university research. Perhaps hon. members opposite would like to learn something about it. First, research work in the universities incurs expenses not covered by research grants. If a university receives a grant to conduct certain research, it has to hire staff and provide space and facilities of various kinds for the researcher to do the work.

The report of the task force on federal policies and programs for technology development prepared by the ministry of state for science and technology in July 1984 stated: "Because most federal funding covers only the incremental research costs such as supplies, technicians' salaries and equipment, it is estimated that each grant dollar a university receives from Ottawa via the research councils forces it to spend at least another dollar on facilities and other overheads". There has been no increase in the funding for universities for overheads and increased costs of research facilities, none whatever. This is another item the government leaves off the plate. It announces with great trumpet and fanfare that it will increase funding for universities, but it does not pay the costs. It gives you a little dollop and says: "Here you go, this is funded. All this money has been paid". The government will not pay the increased costs to universities that are obliged to make up out of the dollars that come from the province through EPF transfers, dollars that are not now coming at the same rate. They have dropped and Bill C-69 is one of the principal instruments by which these moneys dropped.

Mr. Bouchard (Roberval): It depends on the provinces.

Mr. Milliken: The hon. Minister for Science and Technology, who should know more about this than I do, says that it depends on the provinces. He should also know that the province of Ontario passes on the bulk of this money. I agree that perhaps the government of Premier Vander Zalm does not pass the money along to its universities, but that is a Social Credit government with close ties to the PC Party, and I am not surprised that it does not pass it on. Liberal governments are far less tight-fisted with the few federal dollars that they get from this minister.

Since it is the EPF transfers which pay for these other costs, it is obvious that cutting these transfers will mean that post-secondary institutions will not have the funds they need to make effective use of the research and development grants that they are now receiving, both from this government and from the provincial governments.

Speaking at the University of Waterloo in 1987, the Prime Minister himself said these words: "I have been speaking and writing about the urgent and pressing necessity of increasing our national commitment to R and D, not only in the amounts we spend, but in the way we spend. We cannot be satisfied with what we have accomplished". He was certainly right there. Things have got worse at his behest since 1987. This government has cut what it accomplished before. How can he be satisfied today? He was not satisfied in 1987. The implication of his speech—and I note that this was before an election campaign in 1988—indicated that he was not satisfied and felt the situation should be improved. I notice that this improvement has not occurred. This bill makes the situation worse.

• (1620)

I urge the Minister of Industry, Science and Technology to plead with his colleague the Minister of Finance to withdraw this bill so that we can increase payments to the provinces, not cut, slash and reduce in the way in which the government proposed to do.

Mr. Speaker: Before continuing, according to an order made with unanimous consent earlier today, I would say to the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands that he will understand the interruption. The hon. member will have the floor after the proceedings.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*English*]

FIRST MINISTERS' CONFERENCE

MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, it is with a sense of national pride that I rise to inform the House of the results of the recent First Ministers' conference.

Since I became leader of my party, I set out as one of my basic goals to bring Quebec back into the Canadian constitutional family. That goal is now within reach, and

if all goes well within the next few weeks that goal will become a permanent reality.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mulroney: Once the three remaining legislatures pass the Meech Lake Accord, Quebec will formally rejoin our constitutional family and Canada will be able to face its future united and strong. We will then be able to address ourselves to some other constitutional issues. In particular, Senate reform. It is so important to so many Canadians in the east and in the west. We will be free to concentrate more of our time and attention on creating the requisite economic and social conditions for Canadians to prosper and for Canada to thrive.

There is, as we all know in this House, a new world to be won. Canada needs to turn the page, at last, on a long, and controversial and often debilitating period of our constitutional history so that we can move with firmness and confidence into the next century.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, I think that will soon be possible with the passage of the Meech Lake Accord as is. I have consistently said that Meech Lake must be passed by June 23 and that other constitutional concerns would be met subsequently. Anyone who carefully reads the document we signed will see that I kept my word and that my government kept its word to Quebec and Canada.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Mulroney: I kept my word on the accord and, Mr. Speaker, I will also keep my word on the other matters on which we reached agreement last week.

It was taking a chance with Canada's future when, in 1982, it was decided to go ahead with constitutional amendments without the assent of the National Assembly of Quebec. Isolating Quebec once was once too many as we all recognized. I resolved that it should never happen again in this country. For Quebecers, it was a bitter outcome to the 1980 referendum because the whole 1980–82 constitutional round was undertaken pursuant to a solemn undertaking, given just six days before the referendum vote, by the then Prime Minister of Canada on behalf of all of us who were members of the "Non" committee. At the time, the Prime Minister said, and he spoke for all Canadians, and very eloquently, I may say, and I quote: "We're telling you in the other provinces that we won't accept that a "Non" be interpreted by you as an indication that everything is fine and can remain as it was before." Well, Mr. Speaker, and I say this without malice, there is no doubt things did change, but it was not the renewed federalism Quebecers thought they voted for when they voted yes or no to Canada on May 20, 1980.

On August 6, 1984, at Sept–Iles, I made a commitment to pursue Quebec's signature on the Canadian constitution, provided we could establish ground rules to meet the minimal conditions of success. Some people believed the 1980 referendum closed the books. As a Quebecer, however, I had my doubts, I had serious personal doubts. I saw it on the North Shore and I saw it throughout Quebec, and I thought that the sense of estrangement in Quebec was too deep and too broad to take the risk, because the 1981–82 process and its results had raised some serious questions throughout Quebec about the value of its ongoing association with Canada. I felt this was very unfortunate, because as a Quebecer, I have always thought that Quebec had a future, a brillant and dynamic future, within the Canadian federation. I was therefore very disturbed by what I heard across the province.

However, mindful of the sensitivity of this issue, we did not reopen the file until there was a federalist Premier in place in Quebec. My government decided to proceed with the reform process then because we did not think there would ever be more favourable circumstances for doing so. The harrowing memory of the Referendum was still fresh in people's minds, but a federalist government was and is today in office in Quebec: the Liberal government headed by Robert Bourassa. A spirit of reconciliation prevailed in federal–provincial relations. I refer now, Mr. Speaker, to 1986 and the beginning of 1987.

[*English*]

It was also obvious that the sense of alienation was not exclusive to Quebec in any way. The people in the east, west and north were also not satisfied with the *status quo*. Certainly, they appeared not to be. Without Quebec at the table, however, the result of the 1981–82 constitutional reform was effectively blocked. I saw that firsthand, and I discussed it with some of my NDP and Liberal colleagues in this House. We all saw it firsthand in 1985 when as Prime Minister of Canada I chaired the

First Ministers' Conference seeking a constitutional amendment for aboriginal groups. I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that we came within a whisker of success, but we eventually failed. I believe we would have succeeded, we would have avoided failure that day, had Quebec been participating fully in the Constitution, because the Government of Quebec had signalled clearly and publicly its support for the amendment.

• (1630)

Thus the first victims of 1981–82 were not Quebecers. They were our aboriginal peoples who should have received justice that day in 1985 and will now, with Quebec at the constitutional table, have an infinitely better chance at that justice they have been seeking so long.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Mulroney: At the same time my colleagues and I recognize that attempts to resolve all constitutional problems at once had generally failed in the past.

On July 14, 1986 I therefore wrote to the premiers suggesting that "the only realistic way I believe to proceed is, first, to bring Quebec back into the fold and to undertake a more extensive revision of the Constitution at a later stage".

The premiers agreed and, at their conference in August of 1986, the premiers of Canada issued the Edmonton Declaration. By that declaration, under the chairmanship of Premier Getty, they "agreed that their top constitutional priority" was "to embark immediately upon a federal-provincial process, using Quebec's five proposals as a basis for discussion, to bring about Quebec's full and active participation in the Canadian federation". They also agreed that other matters would be dealt with in a subsequent round.

Over the fall of 1986 and the winter of 1987, Senator Lowell Murray and his officials began a long, difficult and time consuming series of consultations with their provincial colleagues and with all others in Canada interested in the process, for example with aboriginal groups, with women's groups, and with those advancing the cause of special interests.

In April of 1987, I invited the premiers to Meech Lake to see, as I said in my Law Day Address on April 15, 1987, if we could reach an agreement or whether it was better "to close the books" on the entire question.

I wanted it clear before we got to Meech Lake that we were not engaging with *parti pris* but that we were going to take a hard look at it, examine it carefully in an objective atmosphere with all the best possibilities for success, but that if it did not work they would have to decide whether it was not better in those circumstances to cut it off once and for all.

I said then that to reach agreement would "require us to find an appropriate balance between the principle of the equality of all the provinces and the need to protect them and enhance the distinctiveness Quebec brings to Canada".

On April 30, 1987, as hon. members know, the first ministers met at Meech Lake and reached an agreement in principle. Over the next weeks, legal experts from all governments developed a constitutional test.

On June 2, 1987, first ministers met at the Langevin Block and agreed upon a legal document that incorporated improvements that met the concerns that had arisen in the interim. On June 3, 1987, the premiers and I signed the Meech Lake Accord.

The accord itself resulted from an obvious process of give and take. On that morning of June 3, 1987, I genuinely doubt, Mr. Speaker, if it had occurred to any of us that we would still be talking about this three years later. But then three governments changed and commitments that had been given were re-opened.

It is against this background that we have tried to create a new consensus, one that respected the Meech Lake framework while responding to concerns that have been raised in many cases quite unexpectedly over the subsequent or intervening three years. As members know, we have spared no effort to bring the dissenting provinces into the Meech consensus, while responding to their sincere concerns and to those of many Canadians that have arisen from both the process and the substance at Meech Lake.

The House established a special committee under the chairmanship of the member for Sherbrooke, the hon. Jean Charest, to conduct hearings on the New Brunswick proposal.

The Charest committee reported on May 17. I want to take this opportunity to thank all members from all parties of the Charest committee who worked so hard

and who gave such devotion to Canada, all members from all parties. This was a remarkable contribution, and in underlining the tremendous work—

[*Translation*]

—done, not just for Canada but for Quebec, by the Hon. Jean Charest, I also wish to express my unqualified appreciation for all members of all parties in this House.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear.

[*English*]

Mr. Mulroney: I wish to thank in particular the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Gray, and the Leader of the New Democratic Party, Ms. McLaughlin, for the sensitivity of their approach and for support they and members of their parties, some of whom I see on the front benches and elsewhere in this House, accorded the government on this issue of crucial national importance.

I wish to offer special thanks to Mr. Turner and Mr. Broadbent for the leadership they have provided on this issue from the very beginning. Canadians will remember that Mr. Turner never wavered from his deeply held conviction that the accord was right for Canada and that Canadian unity took priority over political considerations. Mr. Broadbent likewise stood firm in defence of the accord and deployed his considerable energy and persuasiveness on behalf of its adoption.

In retrospect, it is very clear to me that the success we achieved last weekend would not have been possible without the leadership and the support in the very beginning of John Turner and Ed Broadbent.

I want to thank as well all of those Canadians who helped so much in our darkest hours to keep the struggle for Meech Lake alive. Editorialists, constitutional experts, scholars, students, working mothers, and mill workers all contributed highly to our initiative.

In this past week in Ottawa the problems were complex and the disagreements were very, very difficult to narrow, but the premiers and I persevered for seven long days—it seemed like years—and bridged the differences and worked out an agreement. None of them had an illusions about the stakes involved.

Premiers Peterson, Bourassa, Buchanan, Vander Zalm, Ghiz, Devine, and Getty remained true to their vision of Canada and despite enormous political pressures stood by their original endorsement of the Meech Lake Accord.

Premier McKenna will be tabling the Meech Lake Accord and two companion documents in his legislature this week. Premier Filmon will be initiating the ratification process by convening public hearings shortly. Premier Wells phoned me earlier today to indicate that he will be submitting the accord for a free vote in the Newfoundland House of Assembly.

According to the terms of the agreement reached in Ottawa, Saturday, he will use every possible effort to achieve a decision prior to June 23, 1990. Once the accord is adopted, the Governor General will be advised to proclaim the amendment and the Meech Lake Accord will at last be entrenched in the Constitution and Quebecers can feel truly part of this great Canada.

Since the accord was signed three years ago, concerns have been raised by women, native people, northern Canadians, and minority language groups. The premiers and I heard these concerns. We have committed ourselves to seek approval as soon as possible by Parliament and the provincial legislatures of constitutional amendments directed to them.

• (1640)

We have agreed to make it explicit that the equality of the sexes is fully protected under the Constitution of Canada. We have also agreed that First Ministers' Conferences on aboriginal constitutional matters be held every three years, and that representatives of Canada's aboriginal peoples and territorial governments participate in the conferences at the invitation of the Prime Minister of Canada.

With respect to the territories, we all agreed that they be empowered, like the provinces, to submit names for consideration when vacancies occur in the Senate of Canada and the Supreme Court of Canada. It was also agreed that representatives of the territorial governments participate at annual constitutional and economic conferences in discussions of issues that, in the judgment of the Prime Minister of Canada, directly affect them.

We agreed to address the options for provincehood for Yukon and the Northwest Territories in future constitutional discussions. Agreement was also reached on

adding issues of interest to English and French speaking linguistic minorities to the agenda of constitutional conferences. It is most important that it never be forgotten that the protection of linguistic minorities remains a fundamental obligation of the Parliament and the people of Canada.

It was agreed that the equality of the two linguistic communities of New Brunswick be reflected in the Constitution.

We have further agreed to accelerate the process of Senate reform. After proclamation of the Meech Lake Accord, a commission will be established comprising federal, provincial and territorial government representatives to conduct hearings and to report to Parliament and provincial legislatures prior to the First Ministers' Conference on Senate Reform to be held in British Columbia by the end of this year.

The commission will make proposals to give effect to the following objectives. The first is that the Senate should be elected. Second, it should provide for more equitable representation of the less populous provinces and the territories. The third is that the Senate should have effective powers to ensure the interests of residents of the less populous provinces and territories figure more prominently in national decision making, reflect Canadian duality, and strengthen the Government of Canada's capacity to govern on behalf of all citizens, while preserving the principle of the responsibility of the government to the House of Commons. I have undertaken to report semi-annually to this House on progress toward Senate reform.

First ministers agreed to seek adoption of an amendment on comprehensive Senate reform by July 1, 1995. If, by then, comprehensive Senate reform has not been achieved, Senate representation will be amended automatically pursuant to a formula that we have all agreed upon.

Premier Peterson, on behalf of Ontario, proposed that his province relinquish six Senate seats. Premier Buchanan and Premier McKenna joined in this nation building gesture in giving up two Senate seats each. These 10 seats would be distributed to the four western provinces and to Newfoundland and Labrador, bringing their representation in the Senate to eight senators each, the same number as Nova Scotia and New Brunswick would then have once the modifications are in full play.

This provides for some rebalancing of Senate representation in favour of the less populous provinces in case Senate reform is not achieved by the target date, and notwithstanding the tremendous pressures that we have placed upon ourselves, on the institutions, and on members of this House to pursue very actively the objectives of legitimate and thoughtful Senate reform.

With respect to a statement of constitutional recognitions, we took note of the repeated unsuccessful attempts over the last 20 years to draft a text acceptable to all concerned. We agreed, as part of our future constitutional agenda, to refer drafts submitted by the Government of Canada and by the Governments of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Ontario, and British Columbia to an all-party committee of the House of Commons for public hearings starting July 16.

A report on the substance and the appropriate placement of the clause in the Constitution will be prepared for the consideration of first ministers at their constitutional conference later this year.

This, Mr. Speaker, in brief is a general outline of the main elements of the agreement.

With respect to the relationship of the distinct society clause in the Meech Lake Accord with the Charter of Rights, the concerns of Canadians were heard by the First Ministers and were considered with great care. The advice of eminent counsel was solicited. Based on that advice, First Ministers concluded that no amendment was required. We sought that advice to reassure all Canadians of our commitment to the Charter. For that reason, the opinion of counsel was appended to the communiqué.

In re-integrating into the constitutional family, Quebecers are saying yes to the statement of values contained in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. In its April 3, 1989, Speech from the Throne, the Government of Canada committed itself to strengthening the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in future constitutional negotiations. Accordingly, we welcome the commitment of all First Ministers to a continuing review of the Constitution and the Charter as part of the process of annual First Ministers' Conferences on the Constitution.

With respect to the amending process that we followed this past week, Canadians should know that by and large it is the same process that was followed in 1987, in 1982 and, indeed, with some variations all the way back to Charlottetown in 1865. We did not invent the process of the last few weeks or the last few years. We very clearly inherited a process. This process has proven to be increasingly unsatisfactory in several respects and must be changed.

There should, first and foremost, be ample opportunity for Canadians to participate in the process. I propose today that we change the rules of this House so that once this chapter in our constitutional evolution is over public hearings will in future become mandatory in advance of all constitutional amendments so that the people of Canada will truly be heard.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mulroney: Another aspect of the process that must be changed is that set out by Article 39(2) of the 1982 Constitution. That is the clause that mandated the three-year ratification period. In retrospect, it is obvious that that length of time makes our reaching agreement more difficult rather than facilitates it. Even if you are Harry Houdini, you could not get it done, and that must be changed.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mulroney: With respect to the spending power, I wish to state unequivocally that neither the Meech Lake Accord nor the agreement reached here last week diminishes the federal government's commitments on regional disparities and equalization—including programs to pursue the commitments set out in Section 36(1) of the Constitution Act of 1982.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, we should soon be able to turn the page on this chapter of constitutional reform but we must not forget some of the lessons we learned from it. It is clear that there are serious misunderstandings in this country that we cannot afford to ignore. And so I appeal to all Canadians to join us in healing the damage in the months ahead. We need to rebuild a sense of community and, especially, to promote more contact amongst Canadians right across this country. On one level, we need to recapture the sense of tolerance and common interest and common purpose that lies at the root of our success as a nation. At another level, we need to reaffirm the advantages we enjoy as a bilingual, multicultural country in a shrinking world.

My government will take a series of national policy initiatives that will both help to refurbish national unity and respond to the economic and social needs of all Canadians. At a time when it is becoming increasingly important to have a knowledge and an understanding of foreign cultures and international affairs, Canada is in a unique position to promote its own interests while helping developing countries. While western Europe is merging into a new, supra-national entity, eastern Europe is undergoing rapid change, Asia is experiencing spectacular growth, democracy is taking root in Latin America and economic development in Africa is at a standstill, Canada has interests to promote and a remarkable contribution to make.

• (1650)

Blest with one of the strongest economies in the world, Canada is part of a handful of countries that have a real and decisive impact on the international scene. I have said before, in other circumstances—

[*English*]

We do not want to make Canada a superpower; we just want to make Canada a super country.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mulroney: However, Mr. Speaker, all this would be impossible if we were not a united country.

As a Quebecer myself, I appeal to all Quebecers to join in the healing process. With the passage of the Meech Lake Accord, Quebec will achieve our essential objective: security for its cultural and linguistic distinctiveness. Quebec finally returns to the Canadian family by the front door. It was my dearest dream, because I could not conceive of Canada in all its splendour without Quebec. Today, Quebecers and all Canadians continue together again on the path to a brillant future.

[*English*]

Let us co-operate to reinforce the ties that bind this great country together.

Over the past several months, Canadians have said with one voice that they want to remain together in one Canada united and strong from St. John's to Victoria to the Arctic Islands. We have our differences in this country, even from time to time as we have them in this House.

But the history of Canada is one of perseverance and co-operation and tolerance. It is a history of aboriginal peoples, two major language groups and the multicultural mosaic, all seeking to respect each other's differences and each other's convictions.

I always felt that the greatest attribute of Canadian citizenship was the tolerance that it brought to each and every one of us, tolerance for minority groups, respect for others' religions, respect for others' values however different from our own, respect for the values that are brought to this country, to our shores by immigrants from all over the world. Canada began that way, and we have been enriched decade after decade. If we maintain that kind of vision, that kind of openness and that kind of spirit Canada will always remain a land of tolerance and opportunity. That is the commitment I am sure that exists on behalf of all members of all parties of this House of Commons.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mulroney: Because from our pluralism comes a tolerant society, a society that is ready to look out on the world again, rather than in onto itself, unfailingly.

The challenge of nation-building did not end with the BNA Act in 1867. It did not end with patriation and the Charter in 1982. It did not end with the Meech Lake Accord. Nation-building is much more than writing a constitution. It continues every day in this House and in your house—in the cities, towns, villages and farms across this country. It is an act of the heart. May it ever be so.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, like most Canadians, my colleagues and I closely followed the efforts of the Prime Minister and the provincial premiers in recent days to seek a resolution to the present constitutional impasse. We believe that the final communiqué signed by the provincial premiers and the Prime Minister this past weekend can provide the basis for the successful resolution of that constitutional impasse.

[*Translation*]

We understand the importance of the 1987 constitutional amendment, the purpose of which was to make Quebec a full member of the constitutional family. With Quebec back in, we can fully discuss all the constitutional changes being called for by groups and regions throughout our country.

[*English*]

We regret, however, that the Prime Minister waited so long to call a meeting of First Ministers. Canadians, generally, will recall that we on this side of the House have been calling for a First Ministers Conference for some months.

We believed that only when the provincial premiers and the Prime Minister were sitting and talking together at the same table would the dynamic arise that could lead to a breakthrough. We believe that the Prime Minister's delay contributed to the crisis atmosphere that pervaded the recent discussions among the premiers and himself.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Gray (Windsor West): This unfortunate crisis atmosphere has led to a situation whereby there is very little time for the provinces who have not yet approved the 1987 constitutional amendment to do so by June 23.

Another result of the Prime Minister's approach has been that the discussions have not been as open as they might have been. Therefore, the public feels that they have been excluded from the process. We share the concern of Canadians about the process that took place last week and about its lack of openness. Canadians feel, and rightly so, that they have been excluded from a process that affects their future and the future of their country.

We were encouraged, therefore, that the Prime Minister and the provincial premiers have identified the need to review the procedure for amending the Constitution.

We agree with Canadians that never again should we undergo this kind of stressful process. We believe that open public discussion and debate are essential to constitutional change.

• (1700)

Furthermore, we believe that, had the Prime Minister himself shown more leadership and begun to seek a resolution of the constitutional impasse sooner, rather than waiting for the proposals of Premier McKenna, we might well have resolved this matter some time ago. After all, constitutional negotiations are not labour negotiations.

Also, the Prime Minister spoke of taking steps to cure and to heal the divisions and damage that have arisen in our country in recent months. Canadians will recognize and remember what we consider to be the responsibility of the Prime Minister, the responsibility he must bear for the development of the unfortunate situation he now calls upon all of us to help cure.

[*Translation*]

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Gray (Windsor West): Mr. Speaker, I hope that the New Brunswick, Manitoba and Newfoundland legislatures will accept this agreement and thereby will approve the 1987 constitutional amendment before June 23.

[*English*]

In his televised address to the nation on March 22, 1990, in response to the proposals of the Premier of New Brunswick, the Prime Minister said: "I know" that the accord "is not perfect." That is what he said. In fact, in 1987, we submitted a number of amendments which we believe would have strengthened and enriched the accord. We believe, if the Prime Minister had listened us to us seriously three years ago, that we might not have ended up in the current impasse.

The process of nation building in Canada is never easy. It is never complete. It is an ongoing challenge which faces every government and every individual elected to a position of trust in the country.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, we have succeeded in building a stronger, more united Canada by listening to the Canadian people and trying to meet their needs. We will reach consensus through dialogue and discussion. But to do so, Canadians across the land must become active participants.

[*English*]

This country, in order to exist, needs all its people and all its regions. We need each other to build the kind of country we want for ourselves and our children. We need the people of Quebec, just as we need the people of Atlantic Canada, Ontario, the west and the north.

Everyone in this country must realize, yet again, that Canada is greater than the sum of its parts. Canada is worth preserving and must be preserved. If the country stays together, anything and everything is possible by way of constructive change and improvement in our Constitution and the way we live together.

We are all aware, for example, of the constitutional concerns of women, aboriginal people, minority language groups, multicultural groups, and the north, as well as of those calling for a reformed Senate. If Canada does not remain united, everything we have been discussing by way of reform of our institutions and the enhancement of our identity as Canadians will be meaningless and irrelevant.

The pressures that we saw last week at the conference centre in Ottawa have been transferred from the premiers and the Prime Minister to the members of the legislatures of Newfoundland, New Brunswick, and Manitoba. The members of those legislatures now have the burden and the responsibility for the future of the 1987 accord and what it could mean for the future of our country. I am sure they take these responsibilities very seriously.

I was very impressed by the words of Clyde Wells, the Premier of Newfoundland, to his legislature, the House of Assembly of Newfoundland, this morning. He said: "I am confident that the members of this honourable House, and indeed all Newfoundlanders and Labradorans, will express their views on the basis of their own sincere convictions and with the future of Canada foremost in their minds and hearts."

These are wise words, words of sincerity and conviction. Let these words serve as inspiration for all of us here in the House and for all Canadians. Let us always put the future of Canada foremost in our minds and our hearts.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, as I rise to respond to the Prime Minister's statement today and as we watched the events of the last week and saw the kind of pressures and stress that the First Ministers and the Prime Minister underwent—and all of those who were not a part of that process underwent—certainly, I am not here to criticize those people who were involved, but to say constructively that we have to be honest and say that the process has not been a great reconciliation. It has been a possible accommodation.

I appreciate the Prime Minister's comments on process and I, too, would like to address that as well. As I begin, I want to state clearly that the New Democratic Party sees constitutional negotiation from the first principle that we must work to strive for the unity of the country.

As a party, we have consistently supported the five principles put forward by Quebec, including the distinct society. We also accept that the current round of constitutional negotiations were primarily to bring Quebec into the Constitution.

[*Translation*]

We heard many passionate speeches last week. Unfortunately, the constitutional process rarely gives concrete expression to the deep love these many participants showed for our country.

[*English*]

As I have watched the constitutional process unfold over the past few years, I have come to the conclusion that too often we fail to come to terms with our identity as a nation. We fail to take that unique identity and turn it into a constitution that will guide us over the next few years, the next decade, and beyond. After this week, what we and all Canadians have seen is that we have to rethink that process of doing that. The process of executive federalism that we saw in action this week has been shown in some ways to be a flawed process. We must re-examine that.

[*Translation*]

Before embarking on a difficult and divisive constitutional process, we did not mange to achieve a national consensus on the identity of Canada.

[*English*]

People look at Canada and define it by our identity as a vast northern country, with the Yukon and the Northwest Territories; the existence of two separate groups in the country, identified by the distinctiveness of Quebec, its language and its culture; the existence of aboriginal people as a vital part of our society as the first nations of the country; and, the emerging nature of our multicultural and our multi-racial society.

[*Translation*]

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. McLaughlin: I deeply believe that our national identity, as defined by the characteristics I just mentioned, must be the basis of our Constitution. Even if we accept that this was the Quebec round of negotiations, and we do, some clauses of the Meech Lake Accord do not take into account the aspirations of other people and groups, in particular the North, native people, women and ethnic groups.

• (1710)

[*English*]

There has been talk of closing the circle of Confederation. I strongly hope that the signature of Quebec allowing Quebec to be a full participant in the Constitution that we saw on Saturday will begin that process, but the circle of Confederation will not be closed until the aboriginal people, northerners, women, and all Canadians become participants in the constitutional process.

The Prime Minister spoke to a commitment to opening up that process. I remind the Prime Minister that in this document it is the Prime Minister who has the ability to say when the territories and aboriginal people shall be present at the table. I will urge the Prime Minister—and I will continue to raise this issue with him—that aboriginal people and the territories be full participants in First Ministers' Conferences.

Particularly, Mr. Speaker, I want to mention that I hope when the first ministers meet in 1990 on the Canada clause aboriginal people are there when their rights are being discussed.

About a month ago the Charest report was released. It seems as quickly as that report was put together as a result of public hearings—it was in a short time frame—it heard about 160 witnesses. It was also the result of the hearing of some 800 briefs and presentations. The report was signed and endorsed by all parties. The Charest committee had a process and a result that we New Democrats could endorse.

However, it seems that in this process we had two parallel activities going on: the Charest report on one hand and the events of last week that we must say bore little or no relationship to each other.

[*Translation*]

The recommendations of the Charest Report are very similar to those the New Democratic Party made in 1987. Its recommendations are almost identical to a resolution the NDP adopted last December in Winnipeg.

[*English*]

The NDP has fought consistently for improvements to Meech Lake, recognizing and accepting the five important principles of Quebec. The agreement signed on Saturday that we are talking about today contains some of those improvements but not all. The victory has been at least getting the concerns on the table and in having the discussions take place.

I want to remind all members of this House that the issues of the aboriginal people, women, multi-racial and multi-heritage communities did not get on the table just because of us. They got on the table because those groups stood up and demanded to be heard. Now we as politicians must listen to those voices and ensure that they are incorporated in future constitutional talks.

In the strongest possible terms I want to say that as much as we appreciated that those issues were on the table for discussion and appear in this communiqué, my party and I cannot endorse the process as it took place last week.

What we witnessed was a nation literally with its faces pressed against the glass of the TV to try to get some bit of information not just about the future of the Constitution but about the future of the country. We saw women and aboriginal people marching outside the Conference Centre waiting as 11 people decided their fate, but they were not included.

We saw the elected Premier of Yukon and the elected Government Leader of the Northwest Territories on the outside of those negotiations and not included. We did not see openness. We did not see openness, we did not see consultation, and we did not see a public process.

[*Translation*]

I was saddened and discourged by the attempt I saw last week to reject the process and the accord. I do not reject the accord; it is the process I reject.

I do not reject the accord because the unity of this country has become the key concern. We must go beyond constitutional discussions and deal with other issues.

In conclusion, while I feel sad and discouraged, I say yes to the imperfect agreement reached last week. I cannot accept the events that took place last week.

[*English*]

I appreciate the Prime Minister's comment about mandatory public consultation, but we must also listen to those consultations and include their results in the final resolution. All of us must work, as politicians and as Canadians, to bring this country together.

The discussions on the future of our country have not ended. Let us strive as a united country to include all Canadians from sea to sea to sea in these discussions.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Mulroney: Mr. Speaker, with the permission of all hon. members of the House and pursuant to their remarks and mine, I would like to table the document called *The First Ministers' Meeting on the Constitution: Final Communiqué, June 9, 1990.*

[*Translation*]

With a French version, of course, to match the English, "The First Ministers' Meeting on the Constitution: Final Communiqué, June 9, 1990."

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES RESTRAINT ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

The House resumed consideration of motion of Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre) that Bill C-69, an act to amend certain statutes to enable restraint of government expenditures be read a third time and passed.

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, before I was interrupted by that tumultuous round of applause, I was speaking about the cuts in transfer payments to the provinces as contemplated in Bill C-69. I am sorry that the Minister of Transport is otherwise occupied.

As I was indicating, the cutting of these EPF transfers will hurt universities and colleges in many other ways. I would like to list some of them. First, the lack of funds will mean that new buildings will not be built, causing further overcrowding of both students and faculty. This overcrowding will force universities to start restricting employment levels, thereby reducing accessibility to higher education in Canada.

The lack of funds will mean that laboratories will not be updated and modernized and that library budgets will be too meagre to meet demands placed on libraries by students and faculty. Schools will not have the funds to hire new faculty. Thus the student-teacher ratio, which has increased dramatically over the last few years, will continue to increase.

For example, while the number of full-time university and college students in Canada increased by 31 per cent from 1977 to 1988, the number of full-time professors has increased by only 10.5 per cent. While everyone realizes that there has been more part-time faculty, the fact is that more full-time faculty has not been retained in the numbers that are commensurate with the increase in enrolment.

Despite the increase in enrolment, this government is slashing EPF transfers to the provinces, thereby debilitating the province's ability to pay the money to these universities and colleges. In fact, according to the estimates of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, about one-fifth of all federal program spending reductions over the next five years, as announced in the February 20 budget, will fall on transfers that are in support of post-secondary education.

Of course, with this government we can expect more cuts. The figure may be inaccurate because maybe in next year's budget we will have even more. At the moment, that is the way it looks from the figures that the Minister of Finance presented, as analysed by the Association of Universities and Colleges.

In addition to those policies, this government is pursuing the goods and services tax. This bill is one that the goods and services tax will affect in that, in addition to cutting the payment to the provinces as I previously indicated, the beneficiaries of those payments will now be paying out additional funds in the form of the goods and services tax. For some of those reasons the government of Alberta has taken a firm stand against this tax. It has recently come to my attention that the it has published the book *Protecting Alberta's Future, Why We Oppose the Federal Goods and Services Tax.*

• (1720)

The book is a government publication and I urge you to read it. It is published under the name of the Hon. Don Getty, Premier of the province of Alberta, and the Hon. Dick Johnston, the Treasurer of that province. It talks about the evils of the goods and services tax, evils we have been preaching about in this House. Unfortunately our pleas have fallen on deaf ears with respect to this matter and in terms of the government listening to us.

Here we have a case where the premier of one of the provinces has gone to the length of publishing a pamphlet outlining his difficulties with this tax. The disappointing thing is that the members from Alberta in this House have not been able to echo their premier's views on the goods and services tax. We have not heard about this publication from those members. Why have they not been criticizing this tax the way we have been when their own premier says that the tax is no good.

The only two members I have heard suggest that the goods and services tax is bad and ought not to proceed are now sitting on this side of the House as independents, the hon. member for Calgary Northeast and the hon. member for Calgary Southeast. And I understand the only reason they are sitting there is because they got the heave ho from the Conservative caucus. I see the whip is here, and I am surprised he would have countenanced this particular injustice to those members who, after all, were seeking to represent the interests of their premier in his opposition to this tax as outlined in this book.

I am not going to quote extensively from the book but I am sure that the arguments advanced in it are ones that support our objections to the goods and services tax. I am delighted to see we have an ally in the form of a Conservative premier in the province of Alberta. I am

very sorry that the Conservative members from Alberta do not feel free to speak their minds on this issue and criticize this tax.

I would enjoy hearing from the parliamentary secretary, or any of the other members from Alberta. I know that we have the views of two on the record.

Let me summarize again, going back to Bill C-69 and our problems with this bill.

We have a case where the government is cutting the transfers to the provinces for education. I have to ask the question, are these policies of cut, cut, cut, slash, slash, slash that the government has engaged in those of a government which has a clear vision of its country, a clear vision for the future for educational purposes of its young citizens? I suggest it is not.

Would a government with foresight and intelligence seeking to invest in the country's future pass legislation like Bill C-69? I suggest it would not. It would not even propose it.

I suggest that the government is not interested in securing our future through education. Instead, it is determined to cut the deficit at all costs without taking into consideration any of the long-term ramifications of its actions. I suggest it is cutting the deficit of our country in the wrong place.

How is this country supposed to compete in the world? We keep hearing from the Prime Minister that under the free trade deal Canada will move forward to greater competition in the world and will do extremely well and we will prosper under this deal.

How can we do that if we cut back on education payments, if we cut back on the amount of money that we invest in our young people. This particular government seems indifferent to that fact, notwithstanding its boasting about the free trade agreement.

What we are doing by these cuts is saying to our universities and colleges: "Cut back your enrolment, reduce the number of students, lower the quality of your education because we cannot afford to pay on the basis we have been paying in the past." That is the message the government is sending and I suggest it is the wrong message and it ought not to be sending it.

It is saying that for libraries and student facilities in universities, cut back. We cannot afford to have lavish expenditures on libraries; we cannot afford expenditures on classrooms and laboratories; we are going to have to cram more students into the space. You are going to have to cut back on enrolment; you are going to have to provide less faculty, fewer books, fewer quality books, and so on. That is the message the government sends. Cut, cut, cut.

I suggest it is doing it in the wrong area. The country cannot compete if it is restricted to its old ways. The government is cutting initiative with this bill. It is reducing the opportunity for expansion of educational horizons, educational opportunities and for education urgently required by students, younger persons starting out in life, and for more senior persons returning to school for educational purposes when we should be competing in a world-wide environment.

I suggest the policy adopted by the government is short-sighted and wrong and I urge the minister to withdraw this bill.

Mr. René Soetens (Ontario): Madam Speaker, I listened with interest to the comments of the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands. Obviously, his speech really was taken to heart because once he stood up the House cleared of many members. Having said that, I would like to comment on some of the things he mentioned.

The member is really concerned about the EPF transfer. He is a member from the province of Ontario, just as I am. In the province of Ontario this year the government was able to balance its budget, pay down some debt by about $400 million, set aside $300 million for a special fund for capital projects in education, increase spending by 7 per cent, increase funding for education by 7 per cent and increase health care funding by 12.8 per cent.

The federal government keeps its expenditure increases to 3 per cent. Does the member for Kingston and the Islands in the province of Ontario agree that Ontario should contribute and help deal with the financial problems of Canada? Does the hon. member agree that the deficit is a problem that should be addressed by the federal government? If so, does he agree that all sectors of the Canadian economy, all those who help spend taxpayers' dollars should contribute to help control the expenditure problem of the federal government? I would

be interested in hearing the member's comment on that situation.

Mr. Milliken: Madam Speaker, it is delightful to hear the hon. member for Ontario cite statistics showing the wonderful record of the Liberal government in office in Ontario. Like him, I am delighted that I live in a province which is blessed with a government that cares for the people, that believes in education, that believes in the importance of education for its people, and delivers on its promises.

The Ontario government of Premier Peterson promised in the last campaign that it would improve educational opportunities, that it would reduce the deficit in Ontario and bring the Ontario economy into a surplus position. It has delivered on its promises. What a comparison to the government that he supports in this House. It has a most disgraceful record of broken promises right down the line.

The hon. member says Ontario should help with the federal deficit. The responsibility for the federal deficit should be shouldered by the government here in this House, not by cutting transfers to the provinces. I think he may have missed the boat. He cited the example of the province that is best able to maintain itself in spite of these cuts. The purpose of the transfers is to equalize opportunity across Canada. If we cut transfer payments to provinces that cannot afford to maintain educational facilities without these moneys, we are going to make it extremely difficult for them to match the opportunities available in Ontario.

The purpose of transfer payments is to equalize opportunity across Canada. Cutting the transfer payments is not equalizing, it is destabilizing. It is unequalizing because, in a province that does not have the financial resources the province of Ontario happens to have at the moment, the educational programs cannot be maintained on that basis.

I urge the hon. member, if he thinks the payments that have been increased on education in Ontario are so great, to go to the universities and colleges and ask what they are getting in the circumstances. They are being faced with additional costs imposed by the province of Ontario and the federal government that have to be paid out of the 7 per cent increase given to education. They have to pay the goods and services tax out of those funds starting next January. It is fine to say that education is exempt but there are many things that are not exempt, and the hon. member knows that. That will have to be taken out of the 7 per cent.

• (1730)

There are, in addition, the increases in the unemployment insurance that this government has imposed through its budget. Those payments are made by the universities and colleges in respect of all their employees at very significant additional cost to them.

In addition, there is the new provincial tax which has replaced the OHIP premiums and the employment tax in Ontario which will have to be paid. There is additional money to be paid for equalization programs within the colleges and universities to bring wage rates for women in the universities into line with those paid to men. Those programs are also costing a significant sum to colleges.

So even if they were to receive a full 7 per cent, before they can start allocating that money, statutory claims on that money will reduce the effective rate to a very low one. I am not being critical of the province of Ontario, but the 7 per cent is barely enough to keep any progress going in universities and colleges in Ontario.

If the hon. member would take the time to meet with some heads of colleges and discuss these issues with them, I am sure he would find, as I have, that the situation is much worse than he describes, that money is urgently required.

The cuts proposed by the government in Bill C–69 are seriously hurting the ability of the province of Ontario to make the payments that are required to these places of learning when they are facing the Draconian measures imposed by this government. It is time to stop this whittling away of the transfers, to change this policy around and to get this bill out of here.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jean–Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Madam Speaker, this is the third time that the Conservative government has attacked Established Programs Financing, EPF. Altogether since 1986, the sizable sum of approximately $31.1 billion has been withheld, of which $22.2 billion was for health care and $8.9 billion for

higher education. In his most interesting speech, for which I congratulate him, the hon. member said that the government is obsessed with cuts, cuts here, cuts there, and of course services, both for post-secondary education and for health, would suffer because the provinces must find the necessary funds in these established programs or elsewhere, that is, from taxation. That means the provinces will have to get more money from their own taxpayers to pay for these services that we all recognize as essential for a country that wants to keep our commitment to our youth and the importance of a good education and proper health care.

My question for the hon. member is fairly simple, given the importance of Bill C-69, the impact it will have on the provinces and on the taxpayers in general of these provinces, I wonder if he does not agree with me that since the provinces were not consulted before the bill was brought forward, since the government is unilaterally deciding to cut already established programs that require prior consultation if they are to be cut, I wonder if he agrees with me that while the courts are being asked to rectify, change or correct this measure, it would be better for the government and this Parliament to suspend discussion on Bill C-69 until the courts determine if it is constitutional.

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier for his question. Yes I agree with him that the government would be well advised to withdraw this bill now before the House while court proceedings on its legality are under way, perhaps all the way to the Supreme Court of Canada. Quite obviously if the government goes on with the study of this bill the Supreme Court might declare it unconstitutional. I also believe that the changes introduced by this bill, where certain provinces are considered as being very rich and others poor and where transfers to some provinces are reduced while others are not, are a new attack against federal-provincial programs.

We would be better off with a program under which all provinces would get similar payments determined under a fair, equitable and written agreement. The new program advocated in Bill C-69 is a far cry from that. It is an indication of failure on the part of the government.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The time for questions and comments has expired.

Point of Order

[*English*]

I wish to inform the House that because of the ministerial statement, Government Orders will be extended by 51 minutes.

* * *

POINT OF ORDER

FIRST MINISTERS' CONFERENCE—FINAL COMMUNIQUÉ

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Madam Speaker, I have not had a chance to have any consultations with my colleagues, but just a few moments ago the Prime Minister tabled the final communiqué of the First Ministers' meeting on the Constitution. I wonder if you would seek unanimous consent to have this particular document appended to *Hansard* as opposed to it simply appearing some day in the appropriate papers. I am seeking unanimous consent, Madam Speaker, as I think it is of sufficient importance that it ought to be part of today's proceedings.

I apologize that I did not have a chance to raise this with my hon. colleagues, but I do think it is of sufficient value.

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Madam Speaker, during the Prime Minister's speech I made the recommendation to the government House leader that the document be tabled. I would certainly want to amend that, if possible, if the House agrees, to have the document appended to today's *Hansard*. It would be easier to find and easier to refer to when constitutional questions are raised.

Mr. Jim Hawkes (Calgary West): Madam Speaker, these things are usually decided through consultation but it is not a mammoth document and I think it would be relatively easy to print. It is a very important document for all of us. If it represents our way through the maze to a Canada that is more united and stronger for the future, then perhaps history should record it as an appendix to today's *Hansard*. We would give our consent as well to that initiative.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The House has heard the suggestion made by the hon. member for Kamloops. I understand there is unanimous consent.

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

[*Editor's Note: For text of above document, see Appendix.*]

GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES RESTRAINT ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre) that Bill C-69, an act to amend certain statutes to enable restraint of government expenditures, be read the third time and passed.

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Madam Speaker, I am delighted to have an opportunity to say a few words on the final stage of Bill C-69, but I think there has been a mistake made in the title of the bill. I should have drawn this to the attention of the government House leader earlier. It says that Bill C-69 is an act to amend certain statutes to enable restraint of government expenditures. Now, that is not very clear and perhaps we should have amended that. It should read that this is an act that attacks the sick people of the country, or that this is an act that attacks young people, or that this is an act that attacks students, or that this is an act that attacks the poorest of Canadian society. It is an attack on research and development at our universities. It is an attack on our health care system and will likely result in the creation of a two-tier health system.

It is an euphemism, as my hon. friend for Winnipeg—St. James says. The title of the act is not a very clear indication of what the government is doing. It is a form of doublespeak or mis-speak in which you say one thing and really mean another.

It sounds sick to say that this is an attack on the sick, but it is true. Anyone who has taken the time to look at what Bill C-69 does knows that it limits support for health care in Canada. It seriously curtails support for hospitals across the country. It tells the provinces that we are not going to share, in the way we usually do, in the support and development of Canada's health and medicare systems.

• (1740)

The province of British Columbia believes that this is even unconstitutional and is taking the federal government to court on this matter.

One might ask why Canada is involved in health care anyway. That is a provincial responsibility. Why is the federal government participating in this system at all, as it does in post-secondary education? Well, the truth of the matter is that we want to have in our country a health care system that is the same in Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island as it is in Alberta or British Columbia so that no matter where a Canadian citizen happens to live in this country, they have access to quality health care, just as they ought have to have access to quality post-secondary education, whether that means a technical school, a training institute, a vocational school, a college or university. That is why the federal government is involved.

For the first time in decades this Conservative government is saying that we are about to abandon that support, that we are not going to be providing the same level of support to the provinces for health care or post-secondary education or social services.

It is very serious when you pick out certain groups like the sick and the elderly and begin to attack them. More and more every year the predominance of people seeking support in our hospitals are those who are getting on in age, and the greying of Canada is a reflection of increasing health costs. At the same time this government says that we are not prepared to provide that type of support as we have done in the past.

Let us recognize what this actually means. This is very bad news for places that I represent. For example, in Kamloops the Royal Inland Hospital serves a vast area of central British Columbia. Here is what it is experiencing today. Wards are closed off, padlocked closed, because there simply are insufficient funds to run a hospital ward properly. There are over 400 special needs children in Kamloops requiring special therapy with no opportunity of receiving it whatsoever. As a matter of fact, the wait is three to four years. That is what is going on in Kamloops.

We have a waiting list for elective surgery of nearly 3,000 people. Nearly 3,000 people who need surgery are on a waiting list months and months long. A lot of people cannot wait months and months.

People who have a requirement for heart surgery are often told to go to the United States because there are simply no facilities in British Columbia to care for them.

We have serious shortages of nurses. We have problems with practical nurses and nursing aids who are being

under-utilized. Doctors are calling for a fairer fee schedule and are now at loggerheads on a battleground with the provincial government. Not only do we have a shortage of nurses, but nurses are calling out to be more involved in the health care system. Psychiatric and community health care nurses are right now very close to a strike situation because of the inadequate and unreasonable compensation they are receiving.

I could go on and on about the health care crisis, not only in the country in general, not only in the province of British Columbia in general, but specifically in the community of Kamloops where there are nearly 3,000 on the waiting list for surgery.

How does this government respond? It curtails financial support for health care. That is a direct attack on sick people. I do not think Canadians realize that is going on. If they did, they would be feeling very much differently about—well they could not feel much differently about this government. About 85 per cent now would like to turf it out. That would be about 95 per cent if people understood what the government is doing to those people in our country who are sick today and will be sick in the future.

That is not the end of it. Bill C-69 went to committee. When legislation goes to committee, the idea is to bring in witnesses from around the country who are experts in education, health care and various forms of social services. We ask these very knowledgeable experts what they think about this legislation. Is it good legislation? Is it bad legislation? Can it be improved?

Every witness who was brought in to review Bill C-69 was totally against the bill. They went on in their own areas of expertise to lay out whole sets of reasons why this bill should be torn up and abandoned; not improved, changed or modified, but abandoned totally.

When the most knowledgeable witnesses in the country on health care, education, and social services are virtually unanimous that this is bad legislation which should be rejected, one would think the government would do the honourable thing, pull the legislation, and start over again. But did it do that? No. It is jamming it through the House of Commons knowing full well that with its majority it can probably get it through. Then it will jam it into the Senate, the Senate will have a look at it, and so on.

We have seen that with piece after piece of legislation. Whether it is Draconian changes to unemployment insurance, clawing back pensions from people who have provided for their pension years, or clawing back family allowances from certain families, on all sorts of Draconian measures the government simply uses its majority muscle to ignore information and the experts who are knowledgeable about these areas in a father knows best or government knows best view.

When every witness says this is bad legislation, one would think that the government would at least pay some attention to it.

I am going to quote from one of the witnesses, Mr. George Pedersen, Chairman of the Board of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada. This is now moving toward post-secondary education. This man represents 89 different degree granting institutes across Canada. In other words, this is someone who speaks on behalf of tens of thousands of students and thousands of faculty and staff members from right across the country. He said:

> The combined results of Bill C-69, and Bill C-96 passed in 1986, mean that federal cash transfers in support of post-secondary education may well disappear before the year 2000 in Quebec and Ontario, and before the 2010 in all the other provinces. Yet there is nothing on the horizon to replace this cornerstone of federal support for post-secondary education.
>
> Bill C-69 imposes a two-year freeze on per capita transfers to the provinces in support of post-secondary education and health. The bill removes inflation protection from those transfers precisely during the period in which the GST will, by the government's own admission, cause a one-time jump in inflation.

The Chairman of the Board of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada is completely condemning this legislation and forewarning Canadians that in all provinces of Canada, aside from Ontario and Quebec, by the year 2010 the federal government will not be making any cash payments to post-secondary education or health care. They will be gone by the year 2000 in Quebec and Ontario. That is not far off. It is just a handful of years. There will not be a single bit of contribution.

Do we want the country to abandon its support for its most valuable natural resource: its young people? Who is going to be hurt by this legislation? The students in our institutions are primarily the ones who will be casualties in this battle between the federal and provincial govern-

ments in terms of funding. That is to say nothing of the faculty and the staff who work in these institutions. Of course that means that research and development programs will suffer. We will be setting ourselves back significantly.

If we look at the evidence we find that the United States is investing significantly more in its post-secondary education system on a per capita basis than we are. Its students are getting a better deal, to say nothing about the students in western Europe and countries like Japan. Those countries have recognized that the most valuable and significant investment they can make is in young people, in the development of their talents and expertise, because that is where the action of the future is going to occur. Those are the people who will be leading the way in industry, business, education, politics, religion, and the arts. That is the best investment. Yet this government is curtailing investment in students and in our universities and colleges. It is cutting back at the same time as all of our competitors are investing heavily.

• (1750)

That is madness. That is taking us as a country on a suicidal course to failure. We have to be able to compete with these other countries and, if we do not have the trained young people with the necessary expertise and background, we will be unable to do so. That is why some of us feel so strongly that to proceed with Bill C-69 now is absolute madness. One would have to look long and hard to find justification for curtailing expenditures on young people and our post-secondary institutions, to say nothing about challenging medicare.

One may ask what I mean when I say "challenging medicare" and what I mean when I talk about a two-tier health care system. That is what I suggested the bill should be called, an act for the creation of a two-tier health care system in Canada.

When representatives of the Canadian Medical Association appeared before the committee they said that this will create a two-tier health care system in Canada. They said that the richer provinces, the have provinces, would likely be able to sustain a reasonable level of health care but that there was no way for the poorer provinces. If you happen to be living in a poorer province your access to quality health care will be significantly less than if you live in a wealthier province. That is their definition of a two-tier system.

We must also look carefully at what is happening in Alberta and Quebec, but primarily in Alberta where increasing numbers of people are advocating a two-tier system. That means that we would have a general public health care system as we have today: regardless of who you are, where you live, what your income is, as a Canadian citizen you will have the right to access quality health care. However, if you have money and you can buy private health care, you will get special care and everybody else will be left with public health care.

We have seen that in England. That is now being advocated by a number of leading political voices from Alberta. I read with horror recently that Michael Walker of the Fraser Institute, that conservative think-tank in Vancouver—

Mr. Harvard: Ultra-conservative.

Mr. Riis: Ultra-conservative in some respects but just conservative in my mind. He claims, in a series of articles written last year, that the United States health care model was superior to that of Canada. There is no one in this House who has not experienced, through our constituents, the horrors of the American health care system. If you have an accident down there and you do not have proper insurance, God help you.

Nearly 40 million Americans do not have any health care coverage whatsoever. They just cannot afford it. If you are picked up by an ambulance there they ask you if you have a credit card first. If you do not have a credit card you might not get the kind of care that you would expect in a western country.

For the Fraser Institute to suggest that this ought to be a model for Canada is absolutely frightening. He goes on to say that we should have that type of a system. It is scary that the conservative think-tank is now suggesting that we have private health care, health care for profit.

From the very beginning my party has fought and struggled for the principle that you ought not to profit from sick people; you ought not to profit from someone's ill health. I think one of the things that makes Canada stand out among nations around the world is that one of

the rights of being a Canadian citizen is that you have access to quality health care.

Funding to post-secondary education, health care, and the Canada Assistance Plan, which directly funds the various social services systems that we have in the provinces, is going to be capped.

This is all happening at the same time as other things are happening. For example, the staff of the Bank of Canada gave itself a nice increase the other day. We think John Crow, the great inflation fighter, the model for the country, gave himself an increase since 1987 of 35 per cent. This is all secret, as you well know, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Milliken: Tory times are hard times.

Mr. Riis: Tory times are tough times for some people, but if you happen to be a privileged person like John Crow these are very good times. What is sinister about this is that we do not know the facts. This is all secret. We cannot get the information. This ought not to be the case.

We also find out that while the heads of our largest Crown corporations are telling their employees to take cuts in pay or make very modest demands, they are giving themselves some nice increases. One of the vice-presidents of CN, while asking his employees to take a 4 per cent increase in pay, himself last year took a 39 per cent increase in pay. This is an example of don't do as I do, do as I say.

This is to say nothing about some of our senior public servants. The Minister of Finance is saying that we have got to hold the line, yet some of our senior public servants were getting increases over the past three years of 31 per cent.

There is a lot the government could cut. It could cut the size of cabinet. It could cut the size of the Prime Minister's Office, the largest PMO in Canadian history in terms of personnel. It could certainly make cuts to the government propaganda that we are bombarded with almost on a weekly basis telling us how good the GST is and so on.

Speaking of cuts, what about cutting some of the breaks that our large, profitable corporate friends receive? This is not a criticism of our large corporate friends. It is a criticism of the government that permits thousands and thousands of large, profitable corporations to pay no income tax at all year after year.

Since those corporations do not pay any income tax at all, the government has to get some money some place. What does it do? It uses Bill C-69 to attack the sick and students by curtailing funds to our hospitals and post-secondary institutions.

You can gather from my comments, Mr. Speaker, that we do not support this bill. The New Democratic Party is opposed to this bill. As was every single witness who appeared before the committee, we are in complete and total opposition to this course of madness. That is the only way I can describe it.

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, I was interested in listening to the member for Kamloops and his usual erudite comments, but I was listening in vain. I sat here waiting and waiting for the magic formula that I was expecting to come out in this speech, that is, his clarion call to the other place to reject this bill when it gets there.

I know there is another step that has to be taken first, but he and I know that we get out-voted in this House on a fairly regular basis. We oppose this bill and the New Democratic Party opposes this bill, but it seems that in spite of our pleas many of the government members will vote for this bill.

I know that the member has found a new interest in the Senate. His party has changed its policy on the Senate. It no longer wants to abolish the Senate. It wants to preserve the Senate. It supports the Senate. It wants the Senate to chuck out government bills right, left, and centre. I wonder if it is now his party's view that the Senate ought to reject this bill if and when it gets there. I wonder if he could tell us about that.

Just so that he does not have to concentrate on one question that he might find a little embarrassing, I will ask a second one. The second question he could deal with is about the recent increases in Public Service and Crown corporation salaries which in the view of our party, as discussed today in Question Period, far exceed the wage rates the government is paying to other employees and far exceed the government's own guidelines. I wonder if he would care to comment on government waste in this regard as well.

• (1800)

Mr. Riis: Mr. Speaker, I am always pleased to respond to my hon. friend from Kingston and the Islands. His questions are not necessarily that thoughtful, often, but interesting nevertheless.

Let's tackle the last one first. He asked me what I feel about the increases that senior managers at the deputy minister level, including their bonuses, received in the last year or so.

I was looking at a graph which shows that over the past three years deputy ministers and senior managers received compensation increases of 31.2 per cent. To be fair, that is not across the board, but to a select number of the senior mandarins in our system. That is not bad, Mr. Speaker, when you consider that over that period of time almost everybody else received about a 10 per cent increase. The deputy ministers and senior managers received in excess of 30 per cent.

It is that kind of symbolism that bothers people. While the government states that it is trying to hold the line, we find out that there were many senior officials who received these huge increases in pay.

This is not an increase to a salary of $30,000, nothing of the sort. Quite the contrary. As a matter of fact, if we compare the rates of our senior civil service to those in the United States, ours are significantly higher. They are getting increases and bonuses on top of relatively high salaries to begin with. However, that is only one small area, but symbolically valuable.

More appropriate is what happened in the Bank of Canada, where all of the senior staff got huge increases, including the Governor of the Bank of Canada himself. That was what bothered people most.

My hon. friend talks about his friends in the Senate, the persons who just voted themselves a $153 a day bonus to show up for work. If they simply show up and sit there, they get $153 on top of all their other regular pay.

I want to clarify a point that my hon. friend made. He was not certain whether or not I oppose the Senate. He will remember very vividly, I suspect, just a few days ago when we had a vote in the House of Commons, and I might say at the NDP's urging, questioning whether we should even vote to provide operating funds for the Senate. We raised this and we decided to have a vote on providing operating funds for the Senate. I noticed with interest that all of the Conservatives voted in favour of supplying that money to the Senate to enable them to operate. All the Liberals in the House that day voted in favour of support for the Senate, but no New Democrats. The New Democrats voted unanimously against supplying a single cent of operating money for the Senate.

I do not know how much clearer you can get in terms of how you feel about the Senate.

Ms. Clancy: But you want them to stop the GST?

Mr. Riis: No. I said our position is to vote at every opportunity no money for the Senate. The fact that they are sitting there and are now getting an extra $153 a day, let them do something, particularly the Liberals over there, because the majority of the people in the Senate right now are Liberal appointees. We think that the Liberals sometimes speak two languages. I would not say double speak—yes I would, double speak.

On the one hand, they say that they are opposed to the GST, but I guess they did not mean the Liberals in the Senate were opposed to the GST. The Liberals here voted against it, but already in the Senate the Liberals have voted in favour, in principle, of the 7 per cent goods and services tax. We are suggesting to those Liberals in the Senate to do what their colleagues in the House of Commons did and vote against the GST, because it means that the bill will be killed. We will save the taxpayers of Canada an incredible nightmare, not only in terms of compliance, if you are a small business operator, but also the nightmare of having to pay out hundreds and perhaps thousands of dollars in additional tax every year.

I make an appeal to my hon. friend, the member for Kingston and the Islands to wander down the hallway, talk to some of his Liberal pals in the Senate and ask them to do what they do in the House, and say: "If we are going to say as a political party that we oppose the GST, surely to goodness you folks in there should now vote against it".

I encourage my hon. friend to do just that. While it is there, let's take advantage of this group. However, it seems like those appeals are going in one ear and out the other, as far as the Senators are concerned, because they do not seem to be taking the opportunity to defeat the GST very seriously.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): A supplementary question, the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands.

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): I would not call my question supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I do not know whether you noticed, but the hon. member for Kamloops did not answer the question I asked him. He made a lovely speech about the Senate again, trying to defend his party's cock-eyed policies in this regard.

On the one hand, they came in here with their little motion the other day suggesting we cut the expenditure to the Senate, while on the other hand, his leader is in Montreal trumpeting that she wants the Senate to block this bill. Honestly, Mr. Speaker, they cannot have it both ways. Either the Senate has its money so that it can operate and block the bill, or it does not get its money and it closes down, and we get rid of it.

The member for Kamloops has it all mucked up. His leader on the one hand says, "block the bill". He, on the other hand, says, "close her down". I really wish the party would make up its mind. However, I will leave that debate aside for the time being.

I will go back to the question I put to the hon. member. Does he now call on the Senate to block Bill C-69, if and when it gets there? This bill is undoubtedly going to pass in this House because undoubtedly the members opposite are going to vote for it when the vote takes place. I am asking the hon. member for Kamloops, never mind telling us all about his views on the Senate, will he call on the Senate to block this bill as his party has called on the Senate to block the goods and services tax bill, Bill C-62? That is all I ask, and I would be delighted to hear his answer.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): There are 30 seconds left for the hon. member's questions or comments. The hon. member for Kamloops.

Mr. Riis: Mr. Speaker, let me respond this way. We had a motion before the House a week ago reminding the House that the duties of the Senate are clearly understood, that they have the right and the constitutional authority to stop legislation. I do not like that idea, but that is what they have. As a matter of fact, that is why we brought in the motion to do away with them and put them out of their misery. At the moment, they do have the authority.

Every group that I am aware of that appeared before the committee on Bill C-69 has asked in one way or the other for this bill to be stopped. I am hoping that there will be consistency with my Liberal colleagues. We have not voted on this last stage. I assume that my Liberal friends will vote against this legislation. I assumed that they would also vote against the Senate, but they did not do that, so they surprise me from time to time.

However, I am going to assume that the Liberals will vote against this legislation because it is so Draconian. If they do, then I will also assume that their colleagues in the Senate will. Presumably, they act as a group. When I say Liberals, Mr. Speaker, I do not differentiate between Liberals who sit here, Liberals who sit there, or Liberals who sit in Ontario, Quebec, or anywhere else. Liberals presumably take the Liberal Party position. That is not the case. They seem to take different positions, depending on different parts of the country. I am assuming that however the Liberals vote here, the Liberals in the Senate will vote accordingly.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The questions and comments are terminated. On debate, the hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier.

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, we just heard another evasive answer from the NDP whose members avoid the question all the time.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The hon. member for Kamloops on a point of order.

Mr. Riis: Since we are talking about the Senate, and whether people respond or not, it appears that we have a new senator who has been appointed. Mr. Waters from Alberta has apparently been appointed to the Senate. The dynamics are already starting to change.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier on debate.

Mr. Gauthier: I am sure the Speaker will feel a warm sentiment towards that appointment.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to participate in this debate briefly, as I did at second reading, and make it clear that the Liberal caucus will be voting against this measure. We will, as we have all along this process, keep telling

the government how the proposal before the House is negative and bad.

• (1810)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, in my opening comments I would like explain that the purpose of Bill C-69 is to restrain the government's public spending by a two-year freeze on federal transfers to the provinces under Established Programs Financing, including post-secondary education and health care.

Second, this bill proposes to cap federal transfers under the Canada Assistance Plan to Ontario, British Columbia and Alberta at 5 per cent for the next two years.

Third, Bill C-69 proposes to eliminate the Canadian Exploration Incentive Program and finally, it proposes a two-year freeze on Public Utilities Income Tax Transfers to the provinces.

Mr. Speaker, two aspects of particular interest to me are of course Established Programs Financing which has a direct impact on Canadians because it affects health care and postsecondary education, and the Canada Assistance Plan which is also very important to Canadians because it plan helps families or individuals facing serious problems due to poverty to cope with these problems.

Mr. Speaker, cutbacks in transfers to the provinces for post-secondary education and health care—in fact, the three provinces that are most severely affected are Alberta, British Columbia and my own province Ontario—will force these provinces to accept a reduction in services, reduction in service quality or a reduction in access to these services, or if the provinces so decide, they will have to substantially increase the provincial tax burden of each resident. According to the figures I have before me, in the three provinces in question, the tax bill for each citizen will increase $576 during the next five years.

This is the third time, Mr. Speaker, that this government has attacked Established Programs Financing since 1986. All told, total cutbacks in program financing between 1986-87 and 1994-95 will reach the astronomical figure of $31.1 billion, as follows: $22.2 billion which should have gone to health care and $8.9 billion to higher education.

Were the provinces to choose not to raise their taxes they would have to shift these reductions on to hospitals—as I said earlier, fewer services, fewer beds, limit on costly surgery—or to students who will be expected to pay higher tuition fees in exchange for the privilege of attending overcrowded lectures and working with outmoded equipment which badly need to be replaced. The ultimate effect of all this will be lower post-secondary education quality throughout the country.

Mr. Speaker, let me remind you of a statement made by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) in March 1982. The Minister of Finance said to the House, and I quote his very words: "Let us not make hospitals, universities and colleges a battleground between the federal government and the provincial governments. Let us solve those problems outside of that arena".

That is what he said barely eight years ago, Mr. Speaker, but today the same Minister of Finance has changed his mind, as he often does, and imposes restrictive measures on universities and hospitals in spite of the fact that he once stated that we should not shift the fiscal burden on to these two services.

With respect to the Canada Assistance Plan, the lower benefits to poorer people in the provinces of Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia fly in the face of this government's commitment to help, and I quote, "— to help people in need".

Mr. Speaker, I should think that poor people in Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia are just as poor as other poor people who live in Quebec, Manitoba or Nova Scotia. Being poor is a sad situation, but we do have poor people in Ottawa—Vanier. Mr. Speaker, who will tell me that a poor man in Ottawa—Vanier does not have the right to the same kind of attention and the same kind of assistance as everybody else to meet his own needs? Who will argue that a poor man in Ottawa—Vanier is not as poor as a poor man in Nova Scotia or Quebec?

Mr. Speaker, I find this formula totally unacceptable and I object to it, and others have decided to take the matter to court. Hon. members would know that a province has gone to court to argue about the constitutionality of Bill C-69. I wish it good luck, Mr. Speaker, because this measure has been introduced by a government which is running out of steam, which is discouraging and discouraged, and which may well need help from

the courts to get back on course and steer the country properly.

As for mining exploration, I will let other colleagues speak to this issue because for the time being it does not seriously concern my constituents.

I would like to make a few remarks about two or three important aspects of education. In my riding, Mr. Speaker, are the University of Ottawa; a community college, Algonquin College; and a French-language college that is being set up. Besides suffering from the federal government's transfer payment cuts since 1986, these three institutions have been the target of many government policies. In addition to the extra costs for health insurance in Ontario, the University of Ottawa, which is entirely in my riding, will be hard hit by the new goods and services tax. I suggest that hon. members give a little thought to the impact this goods and services tax will have on university administrations. The Unemployment Insurance Act, Mr. Speaker, will cost them more; for example, for the University of Ottawa alone it will cost $400,000 more a year. With the freeze in fiscal transfers, we have reason to fear that the University of Ottawa will have to spend more time claiming the funds it needs than being concerned about an effective teaching program. That worries me, Mr. Speaker. When the administrators tell me that they spend more time asking for money and claiming their due, it is disturbing.

We listen to the students, Mr. Speaker. Here is what the Student Federation of the University of Ottawa said recently when it spoke against the freeze in transfer payments, and I know these students. It considers the freeze a major loss for post-secondary education. Marc Molgat, the vice-president for external affairs of the federation, said, "Post-secondary education is a right and an investment in our country's social and economic development." He thinks it is unfair of the federal government not to require that the provinces spend what they receive or not to spend fixed amounts on education. The federation is understandably opposed to any increase in tuition fees charged to students.

• (1820)

Mr. Speaker, I have tabled in this House petitions signed by hundreds and thousands of students in my riding who are worried about the condition of their institutions. I will read some of the complaints contained in their petitions: overcrowded lecture halls, deteriorating lab equipment, lock of library resources, high student-teacher ratio, elimination of certain courses, deteriorating buildings and facilities. All this is true. It is typical today of Canada's post-secondary education system. This is not just in Ottawa. It is like that across the country.

I shall continue: native students, the handicapped and other students who are socially and economically disadvantaged are under-represented at the post-secondary level. We all know that. These are the consequences of 12 years of declining financing per student since the present legislation on post-secondary financing was passed in 1977.

Mr. Speaker, this is still going on today. These students reject injustice, soaring tuition fees and other costs that today are a consequence of the deteriorating quality of our post-secondary education system. These students have sounded the alarm. They want us to understand, as Canadians, that this neglect on the part of the government will cost us dearly in that we will have to change our policy towards these post-secondary institutions and perhaps loosen the purse strings a bit.

When it appeared before the finance committee on May 16 this year, the Canadian Federation of Students protested these new measures and said it doubted the federal government's commitment to quality and fully accessible post-secondary education. I quote the federation: "Regardless of these pre-election commitments, the Conservative Party has repeatedly reduced the rate of growth of transfer payments for post-secondary education." The chairperson of the federation, Jane Arnold, stated, and I quote: "In constant dollars, the cuts to post-secondary education are even more drastic when consideration is given to the rise in course costs and educational materials. In addition, tuition has doubled at most institutions in the last 10 years. The crisis in education funding means larger classes, decreased resources for research, inadequate library facilities and deteriorating institutions."

[*English*]

For members of the House who represent universities and post-secondary institutions as I do, it is an important debate on the quality of education and the access to education.

I was reviewing my notes and looking at the history of EPF transfers. It is disquieting. It is worrisome to me to see post-secondary education and research in those institutions going down, and to see the access to those institutions being restricted to those who can afford to pay. I find that difficult to accept in my Canada, because I was brought up in that period of time when one went to university if one's father and mother had the money to pay. I thought we got rid of that. I thought that now post-secondary education was available to all those who met the basic requirements of admission to the institutions.

Every day I meet young people who say to me: "I cannot go to university because I cannot afford it." I thought we had addressed that problem. I guess we still have a long way to go before we have paid justice to that issue.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, I remember the Nielsen Report. I do not know if hon. members will remember it. But this statement that I am going to read is more disturbing than anything I have read so far. The Nielsen Report was prepared by the government, by their Deputy Prime Minister and a committee or task force charged with examining education and research programs. The Nielsen Report says that no longer contributing to the basic funding of post-secondary educational institutions would be justified because the Constitution gives the federal government no specific role in this field.

Mr. Speaker, that is the way the Conservative government is going. According to Statistics Canada, the federal government spent $6.7 billion for education and training, an increase of 1.8 per cent compared to a 3.6 per cent increase for total government spending. In 1975, 7.3 per cent of federal government spending was for education, whereas in 1988, it was only 6.7 per cent. Although the number of students attending post-secondary institutions rose 4.4 per cent between 1985 and 1989, government spending for education rose by 2.3 per cent (annually) compared to a 4.2 per cent (annual) increase for the consumer price index.

Before slashing the spending of higher education institutions by cutting transfer payments to the provinces, the federal government, together with the provinces, should draw up a specific plan setting forth a coherent policy covering the administrative and financial responsibilities for post-secondary education.

[*English*]

I know I only have a few minutes and I want to address the other very important question, health care.

I received a letter from a constituent of mine, Dr. Robert Walker, and I want to read one paragraph of that letter because it touches on the subject matter. Dr. Walker stated: "I am writing as a constituent and, in particular, as a family physician who works daily with economically disadvantaged families and individuals in an Ottawa community health centre. My concern is the ceiling placed on the Canada Assistance Plan moneys for Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia in the recent federal budget. I want to relate my strong disapproval of this decision. As it so adversely affects the lives of many of my patients, I request that you direct efforts to ensure that the proposed ceiling on federal dollars directed to the provinces for people in need be deleted from Bill C-69."

Dr. Walker goes on to explain that a large percentage of patients are either low-income or welfare recipients. Dr. Walker makes the case that these people need our assistance, need our help, and that Bill C-69 does not address the problems of those people.

Indeed, by voting against this bill, I will try to register in the name of all my constituents, a strong vote of protest against the government.

Ms. Mary Clancy (Halifax): Mr. Speaker, I rise to compliment my colleague, the hon. member from Ottawa—Vanier, and to say that, as a member from another city where the universities are an integral and vital part of the life of our city, I was particularly taken by his comments with regard to what the cutbacks in funding in this bill will do to our universities.

I would like to ask the hon. member if he has had much dealing with the students, in particular, with regard to the increases in tuition fees. I know it is not quite the same in the province of Ontario as in the province of Nova Scotia. The situation that is becoming more and more crucial in Nova Scotia is that as the

universities have to cut back, the tuition fees go up and the university students cannot any longer possibly earn the money to supplement student loans or find other sources of income to pay for their university tuition. Even if the student finds a job, it is just not possible to earn enough in one summer to supplement whatever he or she may have to pay tuition fees.

I am wondering if this particular problem exists in the Ottawa area as well.

• (1830)

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Halifax for her question. It is an important question because constitutionally, education is a provincial matter. We have a variety of programs in certain provinces so that access to universities is nearly a right, whereas in other provinces the access to universities is pretty near impossible.

I have some press clippings here from the Federation of Canadian Students which explains the lack of equality of access to post-secondary education across this country and how difficult it is to pursue a career with university training today unless one can go into post-graduate studies or, for that matter, graduate studies.

I know for a fact that in my riding many students planning to go into the sciences, arts or other faculties at the University of Ottawa cannot because of financial difficulties. Students must pay the academic fee that is required plus cope with the expenditures that they have living outside their homes.

We must never forget that every community, hamlet, village and every town of this country must have access to post-secondary education. We must have a program that is designed to give everybody, wherever he lives, a chance on an equal basis, to have access to not only the post-secondary education which he or she chooses, but the financing allowed.

We have some good programs. We have some good student loan programs, but we have to think up new theories and new good programs to give our young people wherever they live in this country, a chance for a post-secondary education.

Mrs. Beryl Gaffney (Nepean): Mr. Speaker, I too am very pleased to have an opportunity to speak again to Bill C-69. I feel that it is very important to speak, because this bill strikes at the very heart of what it is to be a Canadian.

If you ask a Canadian to define a Canadian, probably the initial reaction may well be that we are different and that we are special. But what is that difference? As Canadians, we are forever wrestling with defining that difference. We are seemingly wrestling with our identity, trying to define just exactly what it means to be a Canadian.

We know that we are different from our southern neighbours, yet we cannot always define what those differences are. Yet we are all tremendously proud to be Canadian.

Upon a closer look, there are many differences between our two nations, the most obvious being the social programs that we have in Canada. Canadians pride themselves in the manner in which they take care of their children, the poor, the elderly and the sick.

We take extra special care to make sure that all Canadians, regardless of their social, economic, cultural or linguistic backgrounds, are given every opportunity to succeed and lead a successful, satisfying and productive life. Canadians have always held on to these values as being distinctively Canadian.

We have always placed more emphasis on our government's role in these areas. The present government seems intent on becoming more American than on maintaining our sovereignty and programs that are essential to the Canadian value system. It seems intent on changing our value system and I say that that is wrong.

Bill C-69 cuts at the very heart of the Canadian value system. It sets a new agenda on how we spend money on post-secondary education, health care, and on assistance to the needy in this country. In 1982 the hon. member for Etobicoke Centre rose in his place in the House and declared that any cuts to Established Programs Financing: "could have disastrous effects on the universities and on the colleges, on the hospital funding and on the

operation of hospitals. Let us not make hospitals, universities and colleges a battleground between the federal government and the provincial governments. Let us solve those problems not on the backs of hospitals and universities; let us solve those problems outside of that arena."

That quote was from the hon. member for Etobicoke Centre in 1982. Had I been a member of this House at that time and on that day, and had I been sitting in this House I probably would have applauded that member of Parliament.

Since then, we know that he is on the government side of the House and has become the Minister of Finance. My only comment to him at this time is a great big resounding, "Boo."

Everyday Canadians are becoming less tolerant of the hypocrisy of the government. In particular, the Minister of Finance is one whose words are often radically different than his actions. If we look at the proposed goods and services tax, there are so many broken promises that I am now embarrassed for the minister. I wonder how he could go back on so many of his promises, as he has, and still look at himself in the mirror.

Look at the government's promises on child care, environment, unemployment, Atlantic fisheries and income tax. There are all kinds of examples. We can talk about what we read today on the front page of our local newspaper, *The Ottawa Citizen*. It states that while the government asks Canadians to tighten their belts, federal bosses received bonuses up to 25 per cent. Some of these bonuses work out to as much as $100,000. That is absolutely disgraceful.

Again, let me talk about what Bill C-69 will do to post-secondary education. I have said in this House in the past that funding for post-secondary education should not be seen as an expenditure. It is an investment in our young people and an investment in Canada's future. Bill C-69 is set to act upon the 1990 budget, which in effect freezes any growth in federal funding for post-secondary education.

The EPF helps the provinces to carry out their responsibilities with respect to health care and post-secondary education. Since the federal government provides equal per capital financial assistance to all provinces, the freeze means that the payments will grow only with the population increase of each province, or about 1 per cent nationally. The impact of the EPF cuts on federal transfers to the provinces will amount to about $3.1 billion over five years. When coupled with previous EPF reductions since 1983, the cumulative effect of the cuts is obvious and amounts to $8.9 billion.

The cumulative reduction in federal contributions from the 1986-87 to 1994-95 fiscal year amounts to an incredible $31.1 billion. All these cuts, coupled with the government's recently imposed 3 per cent fee on student loans will increase the cost of post-secondary education to all students, particularly to those who can least afford it.

Federal spending on education has increased at an average annual rate of 2.3 per cent since 1985, while the consumer price index has averaged 4.2 per cent per year. This shows that, despite its rhetoric, the present government is doing very little for education in this country. The government should be encouraging students to participate in higher education, instead of slashing its affordability. Ironically, early last month, the junior science minister complained that a lack of skilled scientists and engineers threatens the ability of Canadian industry to compete in the world. He pointed out that Canada has only 90 scientists and researchers for every 100,000 people compared with 280 per 100,000 in the United States and 240 for 100,000 in Japan.

While his complaints are justified, his accusations as to who is to blame or who is at fault are not. He puts the blame squarely on the backs of Canadian business, without mentioning the inaction of his own government.

• (1840)

While it is true that less than 3 per cent of Canadian companies are involved in R and D on any scale, the government must begin to accept its vital role in this important area. This is clearly not being done. Despite repeated promises by the Prime Minister to double the amount of money Canada spends on research and development, statistics indicate that Canada's percentage of R and D spending has actually decreased.

Recently in Edmonton the minister rejected a key recommendation for a major R and D funding boost from 10 provincial and two national science and technology advisory councils.

Canada has a negative trade balance and a growing trade deficit in every single sector of the advanced technology industry. According to Dr. Fraser Mustard, President of the Canadian Institute for Advanced Research, unless the Canadian scientific community receives more money, "we might not be a trading nation, we might be a fading nation".

The government is just standing by and letting our high tech sector become more and more of a branch plant economy. Increasingly, companies specializing in R and D, such as Lumonics, are being sold to foreign interests. If we look at what happened to Leigh Instruments as an example of the type of commitment foreign interests have for our workers, we are in big trouble. Dr. Polanyi, a Canadian Nobel Prize winning scientist advises Canadian scientists to go to the United States, which would result in a terrible brain drain if our brilliant young minds are forced to leave Canada for higher prospects elsewhere.

We need our scientists and researchers to remain in Canada. We need our scientific and technologic advances and potential to remain in Canadian hands if we wish to have long-term prosperity. It is the responsibility of the government to work with business to ensure this happens. Cutting back EPF transfers to the provinces does not go in that direction. It is a step backward.

The cuts to EPF transfers will also have a detrimental effect on health care here in Canada. The President of the Canadian Hospital Association, Mrs. Carol Clemenhagen, told the Standing Committee on Finance that:

> —prior to the February 20 budget, the CHA calculated that the cumulative loss the provinces have already experienced from 1986–87 to 1989–90 because of the 2 per cent reduction in EPF growth was $2.6 billion, and the projected cumulative loss to the provinces from 1990–91 to 1995–96 because of the combined 3 per cent reduction in EPF growth is $19.4 billion.
>
> Reductions in the EPF transfers challenge provincial governments either to reduce health care and post-secondary education budgets or to increase taxes. We believe a national framework, a stable and adequate EPF funding is a prerequisite to achieving health goals. In the case of health manpower, cuts to EPF threaten both the health system in which health professionals work and the educational system in which they were trained.

Let us hope that the government will realize before we have gone too far down the road to turn back, that by breaking the commitment to a vital social program, the government is breaking a long-standing Canadian tradition of caring for the sick. This bill lashes out at that fundamental Canadian belief. This is appalling.

Now I would like to turn to the cuts to the Canada Assistance Plan, which are cuts to the poorest in the provinces of Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia. The poor in Alberta, B.C. and Ontario are just as poor as the poor in the other provinces. It is my belief that the cuts to CAP contradict the government's commitment to come to the aid of those who are in need.

As I outlined at the second reading of this bill, under CAP the federal and provincial governments share equally in the cost of welfare payments and basic necessities such as food, shelter, clothing and dental care for the poor, and essential services for the disabled.

This is the first time in the history of the program that CAP has been limited. It is a shame. While the government has raised taxes 32 times since it took office and collects $48 billion more today than it did five years ago, I find it incredible that it has cut this essential program. It claims that it is cutting these things in the name of deficit reduction, but I believe that most Canadians feel that certain things are essential, and that health care is one of those things.

Cutting CAP will force the provinces either to raise taxes or more poor will become even poorer with no hope.

Finally, the government has also frozen public utilities income tax transfers over the next two years. These programs provide for over 95 per cent of the federal income tax collected from certain privately owned electric and gas utilities. The program was initiated in order to put private electric and gas companies which pay federal tax on an equal footing with Crown corporations in the resource sector which do not pay tax.

I firmly believe that Canadian opportunities must be fundamental to our way of life. They have been in the past and will continue to be in the future, especially when the present government is replaced by a Liberal government in two or three years.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, the present government has attempted to tear at the very heart of what it is to be Canadian and I firmly believe that Canadians will, nevertheless, maintain those same values. Canadians will stand up and overcome the hypocrisy of this present government. As I said at second reading, this government has lost all sense of propriety and this is a

reflection of the extreme limits to which it will go to force its will on the people.

Mr. Jack Whittaker (Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt): Mr. Speaker, I have looked at Bill C-69 and gone over the remarks of the Minister of State for Finance in first introducing this bill. Part of the difficulty I have had over the last 18 months that I have been in Parliament is my difficulty with the plan or the concept that this government seems to be heading toward. I looked at the remarks of the minister for some consolation in this particular area. I would like to just pull out some of the remarks that he talked about in referring to this bill.

The minister talked talks about the measures in this bill "having a clear goal, controlling inflation, and securing steady non-inflationary economic growth in Canada". He went on to say "that attaining this goal will lead to a bright economic future that, of course, we all want for this country". We have no argument with a bright economic future.

He went on to say that "the restraint measures as set out in this bill are part of the government's consistent comprehensive plan to ensure that Canadians benefit from a standard of living and a quality of life that is second to none". Once again, it is a goal that certainly we in Canada would like to strive toward. Later he goes on to say "this bill takes a further step along the path we have been following since 1984". I think that is the crux of the matter right there.

It is this path that this government has been following since 1984 and more and more seems to be leading Canada into a polarity; a polarity of economic regions, a polarity of economic roots and a polarity of individuals, some who are poor and some who are rich. More and more the legislation that we have seen put before the House of Commons has been an attack on middle income groups and the poor in this country.

Once again, as we look through Bill C-69, I suggest that this once more is an attack on that which the minister said we were striving toward, an attack on economic equality for the regions and for the individuals of Canada.

I point to an article in *The Toronto Star*, February 26, 1990. It is an article on social policy by Leonard Shifrin and I quote from it:

> The two-year freeze on federal contributions to the provinces for health and post-secondary education affects everyone. Freezing contributions for legal aid and cutting funds for social housing aims directly at the poor.
>
> And so does the ceiling on Canada Assistance Plan (CAP) contributions to Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia, because CAP is the funding program for welfare payments and services to the poor.

It points out in that article that all across the political spectrum, here in Ontario and in the rest of Canada, we have been appalled to learn that children are the largest group on welfare and the chief victims to the rules that keep mother-led families dependent on it. Once again, I point out through these quotes that what we have seen in the capping of the Canada Assistance Plan is a direct attack on the poor.

• (1850)

I wonder about the methods that have been used in this process, the process in the UI bill, in the clawback legislation and in the goods and service tax, of setting specific deadlines and then pushing to try to meet those deadlines. When looking at some of the history of this, I looked at the twenty-seventh annual premiers conference in Edmonton, Alberta, in August 1986, and what the provincial premiers saw when they looked at the Canada Assistance Plan and Established Programs Financing.

I want to quote from various sections of that conference to make the point that what we have seen is a breaking down of the consultative process between the government and the opposition, the government and the provinces, the government and the regions and the government and groups that will be affected by the legislation that they bring in. They quote, first of all, from the federal-provincial agreements section of the communiqué which states: "Premiers recognize that federal-provincial agreements and arrangements have become an important instrument of government. They expressed concern that unilateral changes to these agreements and arrangements are very disruptive".

Later, under tax reform, it states: "The premiers stressed that tax reform must not be used by the federal government as an excuse to erode provincial health and

post-secondary education support by further cutbacks and transfer payments. The process of tax reform must be open to consultation among all Canadians. The premiers emphasized the need for federal-provincial consultation, co-operation and consensus building".

What we see in this bill is a breakdown of that system. There have apparently been very few consultations. I recognize that the premier of the province of British Columbia, in his zeal to advise the federal government on how to manage its financial problems, suggested that it cut the Established Programs Financing and the transfer payments from the federal to the provincial government by up to 15 per cent, and cries when that has been done. That is not what we in British Columbia have been looking for. We have been looking for a proper priorization and a proper consultation process as to where some of these cuts, if they are needed, should take place.

The committee went through hearings in a very short time span, hearing some groups and refusing others the opportunity of appearing before the committee. Once again, the consultative process has broken down. The federal government has not consulted with the premiers, the provinces, the medical profession, the post-secondary education institutions or the poverty groups in trying to come up with some fair and equitable way for the future. Let me just touch briefly for those in the riding of Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt on exactly what this bill is and what it attacks. The Established Programs Financing is the method by which the federal government transfers to the provinces funding for such things as post-secondary education and health. It is put into the general provincial coffers to be used primarily for health and education, but not necessarily in that manner. The Canada Assistance Plan is to be used for welfare payments, social assistance, counselling and other things dealing with the social assistance and welfare areas.

Having said that, I would like to turn directly to the Established Programs Financing and look at how this will affect, in my province, things like hospitals and universities. Specifically, I fear, in looking at the cutbacks in these areas, and this fear has been set out by some of the university groups which have appeared before the committee, that we are looking at a move toward the gradual privatization of our universities. More and more, funding is being cut out from our post-secondary education units and more and more they are having to turn to the private sector to try to get their funding.

I have a fear of that move toward privatization because, as I said in my introductory remarks, this polarization we have seen, a polarization toward the poor getting poorer and the rich getting richer, is going to translate into the area of higher education. Access through privatization will be cut off, the cost will increase for tuition and, therefore, we are again going to set aside a whole group in our society who will be unable to attend university. We therefore put down those most in need of the assistance.

We have a problem within the Okanagan and Similkameen regions in that we have a very high percentage of seniors in those regions, in some cases triple the national average of 11 per cent. One of the larger hospitals in the area, the Penticton Regional Hospital, has done a paper that looks at age-related cost in their particular facility. The Penticton Regional Hospital is a 200-bed acute care referral hospital for the south Okanagan and the Similkameen regions and serves a population base of approximately 65,000 people. In reviewing some of the costs that they have added, over and above other areas within the province of British Columbia alone, they note that the hospital costs for our seniors is substantially higher. I point particularly to the populations in the towns, for instance, like Keremeos, where over 34 per cent of the residents of that community are over 65 years of age. Oliver is pushing 35 per cent of the population over 65 years of age, Osoyoos is in the area of 33 per cent, and it goes on.

This study used 1981 figures which are now substantially out of date and it states that in the over-all area it was almost 20 per cent at that time in 1981. Those figures have been shown, in a recent study, to be substantially lower. But the added costs in that area are for seniors, who have been shown to have additional hospital care costs, because of the very nature of the time of their life. The cuts in these particular programs are again attacking one area of our society.

• (1900)

We know that recently in the communities of Grand Forks, Merritt, Kelowna, and Oliver residents have gone through the traumatic experience of having one of their number not able to get adequate health care, in that they required transplants or specific operations to the heart or other parts of the body. They were not able to get that care without having their names placed first on long

waiting lists. By the time their names were at the top of these long waiting lists it was too late; they had already died. That is the type of thing that I am pointing to.

The nurses have made the situation clear in some of their submissions. They have said: "Pressure is growing to get rid of the medicare system Canadians know and cherish". They tell us further that medicare is in trouble. "Canadians had better watch out or there won't be a public health care system left in this country". Those statements come from a release dated May 1989, in which they referred to some of the cutbacks at that time.

They tell us that each day the nursing shortage in all provinces continues to grow. Each day our Canadian standards of safe, quality patient care is becoming just a memory. That is not what we in Canada want. We want a health care system that is a system second to none, that provides for all our citizens regardless of their ability to pay, their economic circumstances, or the region in which they live. We want to provide them with health care, post-secondary education, and adequate welfare payments so that they can live in some happiness and harmony as they go through their lives.

Mr. John Harvard (Winnipeg St. James): Mr. Speaker, I want to put a question to my hon. friend from British Columbia.

Let me say off the top that I happen to believe that strong federal government support for a national health care system is absolutely crucial. Without strong federal government support, I do not think we can have a universal health care system that will last that long into the future. When there is a slippage of government support, soon after there is talk of user fees, extra billing, and that kind of thing.

I would ask my hon. friend from British Columbia whether he is concerned about the coming of a two-tier health care system in the country. Once the erosion begins, once there is talk of extra billing and user fees, then it will not be long until there is a two-tier health care system. There will be a publicly paid for system for the poor and one for those who can afford user fees and extra billing. They will be the rich. That is how you get a two-tier health care system, if you do not have strong federal government support. I am wondering whether my friend has a concern in that area.

Mr. Whittaker: Mr. Speaker, I do not think there is any doubt about it. As we look at what has happened over the last six years in particular we have seen a major attack on our health care system and on our universal programs.

I firmly believe—and I pointed it out in my earlier remarks—that we are seeing the poor getting poorer and the rich getting richer. This is leading us to a two-tier system. We have already seen that in the hospitals in British Columbia. I would suggest that it is also the case in hospitals in other areas. If you have the money, you can get in to get your operations. If you have the money, you can get in to get your heart transplant or your bypasses. However, if you do not have the money, you sit on the rolls and wait for that opportunity. Sometimes, as I have mentioned, in places like Merritt, Grand Forks, and Kelowna that time did not come. It was too late for some.

It has been pointed out by Harry Lali, an alderman in Merritt that as a result of cuts in unemployment insurance more people will be forced into social assistance programs. Merritt is an area that has over 1,000 people on the unemployment insurance rolls now. The cap put on those programs by this particular bill will cause us to see that more and more people in the city of Merritt will have difficulty in keeping up to any semblance of being above the poverty line.

Another area I would like to touch on briefly concerns day care. In the city of Merritt the Snoopy Day Care Centre is no longer in operation because of a lack of funding. Funding for day care is provided through the Established Programs Financing. It gives an opportunity for day care facilities in those areas to operate. It is very difficult for those looking for jobs, single mothers and single fathers, if they do not have somebody who is near to look after their children. Now in that city there is no day care, thanks to both provincial and federal cuts. This is the type of thing that we have to look at and look after in the future.

Ms. Catherine Callbeck (Malpeque): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to take part in the debate this evening on third reading of Bill C-69, An Act

to amend certain statutes to enable restraint of government expenditures.

I spoke before on this bill during the second reading stage. At that time I explained to the House how poorly this government managed its affairs in the cancellation of the CEIP, the Canadian Exploration Incentives Program. The government announced the cancellation of this program without any consultation with the industry, without talking to the people involved.

The same thing happened with regard to CFB Summerside. This government announced its closure in the budget of April 1989 without any consultation with the people of Prince Edward Island, and obviously without any thought or planning for what would happen to Summerside and the entire area.

The role of government has always been managing the present while planning and organizing for the future. I grant that there are a number of times and situations when government cannot plan, but the goal and certainly the intention of government should always be to plan ahead.

Obviously this government is not planning ahead. Here we have another piece of legislation, Bill C-69, which is one more example of the government's lack of planning.

Within the title of this bill we see the words "enable restraint". Canadians want to see restraint take place but certainly not at a cost to the future development of the country.

Islanders also want restraint. They want to help and do their fair share in tackling the tremendous deficit that we have in this country, but, again, they do not want to do it at the expense of important policy programs such as health and education.

• (1910)

The government's financial plan for 1990-91 contains several measures which will cost the province of Prince Edward Island millions of dollars. The largest cut of course comes in the form of reduced transfer payments for education and health. Certainly we on Prince Edward Island, all Islanders, feel that education and health are top priorities. Transfer payments for education enable our young men and women to get a university or college education, remain on the Island, and put their skills to work for the province.

This helps Prince Edward Island develop as a province, makes it more self-sufficient and of course less dependent on the federal government, but here before us we have a piece of legislation, Bill C-69, which really works in the opposite direction. It would reduce federal spending, money that goes into post-secondary education. Thus it is not contributing to the development of the future of our youth and tomorrow's leaders.

Canadians are also very proud of their health system, and rightly so. We have one of the best health care systems in the world. It is certainly a system that we do not want to lose. Yet this legislation, Bill C-69, means that Prince Edward Island will receive less money for health.

As I just mentioned, Prince Edward Islanders put great emphasis on education and health care, but we are disturbed by the record of this government. As we know, the funding formulas for education and health are based on the GNP. As the Gross National Product goes up, so does the federal funding to the provinces for education and health. That is the way it was supposed to work, at least until this government got involved.

Since the Tory government came to power in 1984 it has on three separate occasions—not just one, but three separate occasions—reduced the amount of transfer payments to the provinces for medicare, hospital services, and education.

First it reduced the Established Programs Financing funding in 1986 by 2 per cent. Then it brought in Bill C-33 wanting to reduce that funding by another 1 per cent. Now we have before us Bill C-69 with which the government wants to freeze the payments. The impact of all these cuts will mean a loss of $155 million to my province up to the year 1995.

It is plain to see that this government is simply eroding the post-education system across our country. To put things in a political perspective, the Prime Minister promised before the 1984 election: "We are committed to sustaining the current federal financial commitment. We believe that financing post-secondary education is an important priority for both levels of government".

That is what the Prime Minister said before the election in 1984, but actions speak louder than words. The actions of this government have certainly not been to carry through on that commitment. I say that because we have had on three occasions transfer payments cut or reduced. This is the money that goes to the provinces to pay for health, hospitals and education.

The government has now certainly abandoned the commitment that the Prime Minister talked about, as we see in this legislation before us, and as we have seen in previous legislation. Clearly, this government does not know how to determine policy in view of the future of this country.

I had the opportunity to be a member of the legislative committee which studied this bill on the day the committee heard representatives of the Canadian Federation of Students who came before the committee to tell us what they thought of this legislation. I want to quote one sentence from their brief.

> The Federation shares the opinion of many in the educational community that Bill C-69 is one of a series of cutbacks which have resulted in the serious underfunding of our post-secondary education system.

They went on to indicate to us in their brief just how Bill C-69 will affect the education system. They indicated to us the negative impact that will be felt across this country in our universities and colleges.

The funding of universities and colleges is not the only way that students are being hit by this government. This government has also failed to update the student loan system which has not kept up with inflation and which discriminates against part-time students.

A student advisory group was set up to provide the government with input on these student aid matters. That group was in existence for over two years before the minister finally decided to meet with it to get its input. I understand that meeting took place in March. It was a very short meeting. The students feel that that meeting was to no avail.

So what we have is a government that is really continuing to ignore the concerns of students. That seems to be the story of this government. It really fails to consult with the people who are going to be affected by these decisions.

The same thing happened with the decision to close CFB Summerside. As I mentioned earlier, the government announced this decision in its budget of 1989. Out of the blue the government announced that it was going to close CFB Summerside.

There had been no consultation with Islanders, with the people who would be affected by this decision. Obviously, there was no planning whatsoever as to what was going to happen to the economy of Summerside, Prince Edward Island after the base closed. In fact, the lack of forethought put into this dramatic decision is really frightening.

The closure of CFB Summerside will mean the loss of 1,300 jobs. The effect of this announcement was to put the economy of that whole area on hold. It left the people uncertain about their future.

• (1920)

I would like to outline very briefly the order of events for my colleagues here in the House today so that they have a good understanding of how the people of Summerside and area have been treated by this government since the announcement of that decision in the budget of 1989.

The announcement was made public on April 27 of that year. For an entire year the people of Summerside and the surrounding area were left in limbo, not knowing what was in store for them. The people who work at the base did not know. They still do not know whether they are going to have jobs. They do not know whether they should try to sell their houses, move to Toronto or elsewhere to try and find a job. That still has not been cleared up.

What the federal government did in July is set up a federal task force which was headed by the Minister of Employment and Immigration. That task force was to look into the possibilities for CFB Summerside.

The Minister of Employment and Immigration visited the Island at the end of October. That was three months after the task force had been set up, and six months after the announcement that this base was going to be closed.

Another six months went by, until March 27 of this year, when the Minister of Employment and Immigration visited Summerside and announced that a development corporation would be established to take on the assets of CFB Summerside. That meant that interim

management would be appointed for the corporation to negotiate with any prospective tenants between now and 1992 when the base is to officially close.

One of the questions that Islanders are now asking is why this interim management for the corporation has not been appointed. Has it been appointed, but simply not been announced? It has been three months since the announcement. Yet we on Prince Edward Island have heard nothing.

Here again it seems the government has left everyone in limbo. It appears that there is no plan ahead at all.

The people in Summerside and area are really frustrated with this whole process. The chairman of the crisis centre in Summerside, which has been looking after the needs of those affected by the decision to close the base, said just this past weekend: "We are frustrated. We are gravely concerned. It has been 10 weeks since the announcement was made and still the interim management team is not in place".

That is how the chairman of the crisis centre feels. I think it is time that this government made some decisions and got on with it. As every day passes without interim management in place time is wasted. It is time that could have been spent in attracting tenants to the facility. I know that there have been tenants who have certainly expressed an interest.

I have a lot more to say about this situation. There was an announcement made months ago that interim management was going to be set up. We still have no information that it has been set up.

ACOA has been showing this facility to prospective tenants, but it has no authority to negotiate contracts with the tenants. In other words, there is nobody there to give any answers.

I think we need to know the answers to these questions. When will the interim management be put in place? What will be the terms of reference for this interim management? To whom will this interim management be accountable? How will it be accountable for that $900,000?

Since my time is running out, I would like to end my comments by saying that certainly Prince Edward Island wants to participate in the Confederation of Canada. We know that that means sharing the responsibilities of deficits as well as surpluses. We are certainly willing to do our fair share, but this government's economic policies go far beyond being fair and equitable.

What we have is a transfer of the deficit of the federal government to the provinces. It is certainly a burden which will erode the economy of my province and the quality of life in Prince Edward Island.

Mr. Len Hopkins (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke): I have a question, Mr. Speaker.

The hon. member discussed very succinctly the problems that are created by these cuts because they do not stop here at the federal government. We all know that the federal government is just dumping them on to the provinces and on down the line. They end up on John Q. Public's doorstep.

With regard to the cuts in post-secondary education and medicare, the moneys that the provinces must raise in order to keep up their services will eventually come from other programs that they are operating. How does the hon. member see these cuts affecting the services that the government in her home province would be witnessing? How does she see the moneys being taken from these other programs to finance post-secondary education and medicare affecting the other services that governments have to deliver?

We are not talking here just about the items mentioned in Bill C-69, the cuts in transfer payments to the provinces. We are talking about lesser services somewhere else because the difference must be made up, or the provinces in turn will have to tax the people much more heavily in order to meet their demands. How does the hon. member see this affecting the over-all picture of provincial governments?

Ms. Callbeck: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for his question. It is certainly one that concerns me a great deal. In order to provide these services you have to have the money.

It is very difficult for a small province like Prince Edward Island, but what is happening under Bill C-69 is that the government is cutting back on the amount of money that it is going to give the provinces for education and health.

That means that the province either has to cut services in health or education—and that is something that all Islanders would hate to see because we consider them to be top priorities—or it would have to increase taxes. Certainly, no one wants to pay more taxes. We are taxed to the hilt now. We will have an added tax, the GST, that

is coming in January of 1991. The average person just cannot afford to pay any more taxes.

• (1930)

We come to the third option of the provincial government and, as my hon. friend alluded to, that is taking money from other departments and putting it into health and education in order to provide the same quality of service in those two areas. What might happen is that money may have to come from the Department of Agriculture, from Fisheries, Tourism or what have you. The bottom line is that, in order to provide the service, the government has to have the money. One way or another, Islanders are going to have to pay for this.

When speaking earlier, I did not have time to talk about how Bill C–69 is going to affect Prince Edward Island in terms of health care. Seventy per cent of the Established Programs Financing transfers that come to the province are for health care, which means that that is the area that stands to lose the most.

This is the area which affects the sick and the elderly and on Prince Edward Island, we have a larger number of senior citizens as a proportion of the total population than the rest of Canada. That means our health care costs are going to be high. The province does not object to this at all. We believe that seniors have contributed greatly to society and they deserve the best quality care system that Prince Edward Island can afford. As I said, however, these federal cutbacks are threatening to reduce the quality of health care that the province can afford.

In answering the question, these cutbacks may show up, not only in education and health, but they may come in agriculture, tourism, fisheries or in any of our government departments. I am very concerned about this because I think it could have a severe impact on my province.

Mr. Francis G. LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso): Mr. Speaker, in rising to participate in this debate on Bill C–69, I would like to draw the attention of the House to a principle that goes back to the report of the Rowell–Sirois Commission of the 1930s. It has become so fundamental to the design of the Canadian federation that, in 1982, it was expressed directly in the Constitution. That is the principle that I would term as regional equity. It is commitment of Canadians living in more well–off provinces or regions to share their resources with less well–off regions, so that the latter may, as a minimum, enjoy the same or similar basic levels of public service without, I might add, being obliged to bear an undue burden of taxes.

It was the recognition in the early years of this century that a growing imbalance had occurred in the fiscal capacity of different provinces and regions that led to the formation of the Rowell–Sirois Commission. It was that commission's far–seeing report that began the establishment of the framework of federal–provincial fiscal arrangements that exist today.

The principle that all provinces should be able to provide their citizens with comparable levels of public services at comparable levels of taxes is the basis for the equalization payments system worked out since the 1950s. It has been supplemented by the combination of shared–cost programs and tax transfer programs, some of which were consolidated in the late seventies under the Established Programs Financing and which apply to federal transfers for health and post–secondary education, as well as the whole framework of other cost–shared programs which exist in Canada today.

This framework was supplemented in the 1960s by active programs to limit and ultimately to eliminate the problem of regional disparities, the widening of the gap in income opportunities across various regions of the country. These positive, progressive programs were introduced by Liberal governments over the years.

It is these programs and this framework of federal–provincial arrangements that are being undermined, that are under attack by this Tory government and have been since it took office in 1984. It is these same programs and the underlying principles that are under attack with Bill C–69.

One of the four components of Bill C–69, the one with the greatest fiscal impact, is the one that would alter the formula for federal payments to provinces under the Federal–Provincial Fiscal Arrangements and Federal Post–secondary Education and Health Contributions Act.

This component, which is expressed in clauses 5 and 6 of this bill, would freeze federal transfer payments to the provinces under Established Programs Financing for the next two years. With costs rising elsewhere, this actually translates into an effective cut in federal transfers to provincial governments.

In effect, along with those Canadians who, unlike its corporate friends, cannot escape this government's tax net, provincial governments are being asked to bear the burden of the belated preoccupation of the Minister of Finance with deficit reduction.

In 1990 and 1991, the total amount of these cuts across Canada will be in the order of $869 million. For the full five-year period the amount will be more than $7.3 billion. The effect of these measures on the fiscal capacity in particular of less well off provinces which the system was designed to help is being compounded by the government's high interest rate policies and the damper that this is causing on local economic activity, not to mention municipal and provincial borrowing charges.

Of course, Canadians are already bracing themselves for the impact of the GST which will be an unprecedented tax grab by the government.

The effects of cutbacks in Established Program Financing this year and in previous years has already meant provincial cutbacks in services and increases in taxes and charges to residents who can least afford to pay.

Let us take my province of Nova Scotia as an example. In his budget, released on Friday, April 27, the finance minister of Nova Scotia, Mr. Greg Kerr, reported that federal funding cutbacks for health and post-secondary education for 1990-91, alone, would cost the province of Nova Scotia $140 million.

Provincial revenues from this category which comprise about 9.3 per cent of total provincial revenues are actually expected to drop in absolute terms down from $377 million for 1988-89 to $350 million for 1990-91. Even if the provincial finance minister was a prudent manager of the provincial treasury, a drop of that magnitude in these difficult times would be tough to absorb without either losses in basic services or increases in taxes.

As we in Nova Scotia know, prudent management of provincial finances has not been a trademark of the Tory government of Nova Scotia. These are lessons it may well have imparted on the federal Tory government in Ottawa since it took office.

• (1940)

Nova Scotia has experienced, as a result of that budget, both an increase in taxes and a reduction in services. For example, children in Nova Scotia will now be charged an additional $3 fee for dental services and seniors will now be expected to pay fees for prescription drugs under the Nova Scotia Pharmacare Plan. These are costs the Nova Scotia government is now imposing indirectly on Nova Scotians as a result of cutbacks by the federal government in its transfers to that province.

Of particular concern in my riding of Cape Breton—Highlands—Canso is the upheaval these changes have produced in the secondary education system, particularly in rural Nova Scotia. The government of Nova Scotia has cut back on funds to municipalities and schools boards across the province with the result that schools in those areas already hard hit, which are strained to the limit, over-crowded and have not received capital funds over the years, are now being asked to bear an additional strain. The result is an attitude on the part of parents, students and teachers that enough is enough. There have been demonstrations of outrage at the cutbacks to education in communities across Cape Breton—Highlands—Canso and the province of Nova Scotia.

These cuts have also produced additional tensions in the school system. In Richmond County, parents and teachers are being asked to choose either closing schools and double-grading students or busing young students long distances to school.

In other parts of the province there is a conflict emerging between French and English classes. French immersion programs and English classes are competing for dwindling funds with the result that tensions arise between students where French immersion courses are offered.

The numbers of teachers have been cut and in some cases schools have been reduced or closed. All this is an indirect result of cutbacks by the federal government in its transfer programs. The result is additional tensions in rural parts of Nova Scotia.

These cuts have also had an effect on post-secondary education. Tuition fees in Nova Scotia are already among the highest in the country. These cutbacks by the federal government will put additional burden on our universities. As my colleague mentioned earlier, student loans

have not kept up with the escalating costs of attending university and therefore students face more difficulty attending university.

Cut-backs in job-creation programs for students in the summer are also placing a strain on students who are seeking summer work. I am encountering students who are coming to me and saying that summer has arrived and there are no jobs available for them. These are students who contemplate going to university, who will not have access to funding, who see university costs escalating and who, as a result, are faced with the possible choice of not going to university and not acquiring the education which we, in Canada, have led people to believe is their right. At least they should have the opportunity to get such an education.

These are the kinds of direct impacts which Bill C-69 is having and will continue to have on federal, provincial and municipal services, on our education system, and on our health system across the country, particularly in areas in which the fiscal capacity, the tax base, the capacity of provinces to bear the burden of these increases is the smallest. As a result, provinces like Nova Scotia increasingly are being asked to tighten their belts and cut back on basic services which we in Canada have come to expect as a kind of right of citizenship in this country, in this day and age.

In conclusion, I want to say that I am personally opposed to this legislation, to its thrust and to the implications which these cutbacks will have, particularly in those parts of the country which need these transfers the most.

I go back to my original point, which is the withdrawal of a basic fundamental service. This goes back to Rowell—Sirois. Canadians have come to accept this commitment as a fundamental part of our citizenship, of sharing, of enabling all parts of the country to have an equitable, comparable and equal level of public services for our citizens, without having to bear an undue burden of taxes. The key participant in this program is a federal government, which is committed to ensuring that fiscal equity is maintained and is not allowed to erode as this government has allowed this program to erode and as we have seen with Bill C-69 and so many other measures that have been introduced by this government since it has taken office.

I hope that members opposite will realize what is going on here, that they will see these measures in their broader perspective and, with the wisdom of the summer, will choose not to pass this legislation and will allow these transfer programs to be maintained so that the less well-off regions of the country can reach an equitable level of services and continue to provide for their citizens.

Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina—Lumsden): Mr. Speaker, I am not delighted to take part in this debate because I feel somewhat ashamed about my province and about this legislation. I want to start by pointing out that my province, with the same ideological drive as this government, is a province that deducts from welfare payments under the Canada Assistance Plan, federal benefits such as family allowances. It is the only province to do so and it makes deductions for orphans and survivor benefits. Now, that has to tell you something.

• (1950)

I do not blame the Government of Saskatchewan entirely for this. Because of the monetary and fiscal policies of this government, it has left provinces with little choice other than to make cutbacks. The problem is that provincial governments have made cutbacks in the wrong places. Imagine, Mr. Speaker, deducting family allowances from welfare payments and deducting payments for orphans and survivor benefits. It is un-Christian and uncivilized and immoral, if I have used enough adjectives.

The Tory government of Saskatchewan has set up a system where it decides who are the deserving and the undeserving poor. This sounds like the lords, the dukes, the kings, the queens and the princes of the Middle Ages. The government decides who are the deserving and the undeserving poor. If there is a breadwinner who will not take a job, why would you cut off the spouse and the children? Funds in Saskatchewan are being diverted from the Canada Assistance Plan to fund what is called Workfare programs. That sounds like Bill Vander Zalm of eight or 10 years ago, buy them a shovel. I do not recite this with any kind of pride, I feel some shame, because we were the province which led the way in

dealing with our poor, our unfortunate, our disabled and our sick and set an example for the entire country.

I want to say a word about the whole matter of keeping your word. Governments are no different than individuals. A person is only as good as his word. Whether you give it verbally with a handshake or whether you give it in writing, you do not change your word, unless you have negotiated a change with the person or other government to which you gave your word. If your word is no good, as far as I am concerned, you are no good as an individual. If the government's word is no good, this government is no good because previous governments, both Conservative and Liberal, gave their word under the Canada Assistance Plan, and under the funding for education and hospitalization and medicare, it gave its word.

I hope the province of British Columbia, supported by two other provinces, wins its case in the courts. I have a fond wish that this federal government would support those provinces, but then that would defeat its own case. The programs that this bill affects are the national programs, shared by federal and provincial governments, in which the federal government sets standards to apply everywhere, in rich and poor provinces as well as the middle ones. The provinces make the decisions as to what they are going to do under those programs which have been arrived at by agreement and under which governments at all levels gave their word.

Initially, in the late fifties, sixties and the early seventies under the various programs that had come in, the federal government was committed to pay half the cost as long as the provincial jurisdiction met the standards that were laid down in the national program to provide a degree of equity, fairness and co-operative federalism no matter where one lived in this country. At least, that is the way it was supposed to be, and that is the way it used to be. This bill destroys the way it is supposed to be now and the way it used to be.

When I listen to people talking about secondary education—an hon. member today made an excellent remark about what federal and provincial governments put into secondary education—it is not an expenditure. It is an investment. If one bought a blue chip stock on the stock market, it would be an investment. When the students graduate, they go on to the labour market teaching in universities or whatever. They earn good incomes. If one wants to look at it strictly as a private enterpriser, the amount of taxes the government collects from them more than recovers whatever the costs were of federal and provincial contributions to their university education. In fact, not only the governments, but the country as a whole is ahead of the game.

Also, I want to say something about poverty and food banks. I am a child of the dirty thirties, if you think I might be a little childish now. I grew up in those years. I remember. What kind of a commentary is it on our country? There are more people lining up now for food banks than there were for soup kitchens in the dirty thirties. Hundreds of thousands line up every month for food banks. It amounts to one million or two million a year in a country that is wealthy. The federal funds will not keep up with what it costs. God knows most of that is handled by volunteers.

Volunteerism has always been there. However, there are costs that even the volunteers cannot handle. Imagine. We have more people lined up now in food banks—that is a nice name for what were called soup kitchens—than in the dirty thirties. Under child care, it is a choice, but what kind of a choice is this? Less spaces? Or less income assistance? Or, a combination of both? In the name of God, why would any self-respecting government with any kind of conscience resort to that? I do not understand.

When one talks about welfare payments and the government of the so-called "Devine" in Saskatchewan who would pick on orphans, widows and those who get family allowance while eligible for welfare, it has to be some kind of a sad commentary on the state of mind of a number of governments in this country. I include my own province and this Parliament.

• (2000)

I want to say something about universality. After 1949, not long after Louis St. Laurent became Prime Minister of Canada, old age pensions were made universal and were increased very modestly. It was no big deal in terms of the amount of money. But I will never forget when Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent publicly accepted his first old age pension cheque when he reached 65, not because he was bragging about it but to shore up the

whole principle of universality. I am sure he did not need the money; that was the last thing that was on his mind.

I was an avid reader of *Hansard* in those days. I subscribed to it. M. J. Coldwell and Stanley Knowles got up and complimented him for shoring up the principle of universality. It is a matter of right of every citizen of this country.

I just drew my first old age pension cheque. It arrived last Friday. I know I do not look a day over 29.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Benjamin: It arrived two weeks late, and I must have some words with the minister about that.

I take that as a matter of pride. From about 1950 or 1951, during my working years on the railroad and as party secretary in Saskatchewan, every year when I made up my income tax there was a line in there that said: "Old Age Security Fund". You paid 3 per cent or 4 per cent of your taxable income for the old age security fund. For 20-some years I paid for my old age pension, as did hundreds of thousands of Canadians. It was an extra tax.

Now when I meet the Minister of Finance in the washroom on the fifth floor, I ask him why. The only place I can meet him is in the washroom. I am not lying in wait for him. I ask him why. I paid for the damned thing. Now why do you have to claw it back? He says I am making too much money. I say fine, if you want to hit me one or two points on my income tax, which is the most fair system of all, fair ball, but don't touch the old age pension cheque, don't touch the family allowances. Those are universal, those are a matter of right which has been built into our system for the last 30 or 40 years for every Canadian citizen.

My Conservative colleagues spend a lot of time trying to get rich. The Premier of Saskatchewan hit orphans, widows and family allowance recipients. He found $300 million and some for the Cargill grain company for a fertilizer plant. I call that nothing but male bovine excrement, and you can translate that any way you like in *Hansard*.

I say to my colleagues on the government side that there are no pockets in the shroud and there are no cubbyholes in the coffin. All of us who can afford to pay more should be made to pay some more, and I include myself. But those of us who are in a position of fortune, however limited it is, must pay more of a share. That means increasing income tax for high-income earners and corporations because, while we have been spending all the past months and years building a constitution, we must not build it at the expense of the poor, the deprived and those in deplorable situations through no fault of their own.

The test of how civilized and how Christian a society is, is how it treats its young, its sick and its old. This legislation flies in the face of those kinds of teachings. As Jesus said: "Inasmuch as you have done this unto the least of these you have done this unto me".

I urge government members to think about that, especially when they are having a prayer breakfast, and to apply it to this legislation and defeat it.

Mr. Girve Fretz (Erie): Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to the last part of the hon. member's speech. I want to take this opportunity to congratulate him on his birthday. He is certainly one of the members in this House who is well preserved. With the experience in debate that he brings, I am sure we all want to congratulate him.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, I think it is pure chicanery and fluff when the hon. member says in the debate that he is willing to see the government increase income tax to the same level that we are going to tax back part or all of our old age pensions from those people who are now in a position to be able to pay.

What difference does it make if the income tax is increased or the old age pension is taxed back? If the dollars were the same, what difference would it make? I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that this is pure semantics.

I appreciate the hon. member being able to quote scripture. That is honourable and enviable and we hope he will continue to do so.

Mr. Benjamin: Mr. Speaker, the difference is that when you have a universal program it is universal. You cannot be, if you will pardon the expression, half pregnant. It is either universal or it is not. If it is universal, you do not touch it with any other tax law.

That is the one side. Now let us separate it. The government needs more revenue. All the government has to do is go through its own books to see who is not paying their fair share. Damn it all, a teller working in a bank branch in Regina pays more income tax than the

bank she is working for. Don't talk to me about clawing back pensions.

I will only have three things when I am through in this place, although I am tempted to outlive my hon. friends around here. I will have my MP's pension, my Canada pension, and old age pension. That is it. I try to live up to there being no pockets in the shroud. As long as I have enough to be comfortable, to have a roof over my head, to keep my bills paid, to bury myself and go on a holiday or two a year, what the hell more do you need? That is not living like a monk in the hills.

• (2010)

Surely, it is time for my hon. friend and all of us to fight this appeal to the worst in all of us, greed and selfishness. When is that going to happen? Whatever happened to the principle of being our brother's keeper? You bring in a principled program, a universal program, and you do not touch it. You leave it off the income tax rolls. You leave it off the tax form completely.

Mr. Fretz: You said to include it in income tax.

Mr. Benjamin: No, I did not. I did not. I am sorry.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Questions and comments are now terminated. On debate, the hon. member for Burin—St. George's.

Hon. Roger C. Simmons (Burin—St. George's): Mr. Speaker, I too have a few words to say on third reading of Bill C-69. I listened with great interest to the gentleman from Regina—Lumsden who, among other things, told us that he was the recipient of his first pension cheque. There was some muttering up in this end of the Chamber, not from me I assure him, as to whether he was in some kind of conflict of interest receiving two pay cheques from the public purse, one on behalf of his job here and the other because of his age. Of course, nobody would suggest that seriously.

In responding to that point I want to say something that he had already implied, that he must have lied on the application because certainly that young fellow who just spoke is not 65 years of age.

Mr. Speaker, let me come quickly to the point. I understand you, sir, have some pressing duties elsewhere. Duty calls for you to be the umpire at a game between members of Parliament and the pages.

An Hon. Member: It's already over.

Mr. Simmons: It is never over until Mr. Speaker gets out there and invokes some of his rulings. If they are as good as the ones he invokes in this House, I have great fear for the pages.

I firmly believe that the proposed cuts in Established Programs Financing will have a disastrous effect on universities, colleges, hospital funding and the operation of hospitals.

"Let us not make hospitals, universities and colleges a battleground between the federal government and the provincial governments. Let us solve those problems, not on the backs of the hospitals and universities, let us solve those problems outside that arena".

Those who know the manner of my participation in the debates in this House will know that I rarely read directly from a script. I did so in the past few moments for a very particular reason. I will tell you what that reason is in a moment. Let me remind you what I have just said. I have said that I firmly believe that the cuts in the EPF funding would have disastrous effects on universities, hospitals, education generally, and so on.

I read that word for word because that conviction is mine. I am concerned that the cuts in EPF funding will do damage to the operation of hospitals, to the functioning of universities and colleges, and to the access of young Canadians in whatever province to an education beyond the secondary level. That is a conviction that I hold very strongly, and that is why I stand at this stage of the bill to protest one more time what the government is proposing to do.

I have read those words. Not only are they my conviction. They were, to be more accurate, also the conviction of the present Minister of Finance. A moment ago I read word for word what the gentleman who now occupies the post of the Minister of Finance said in this very House on March 24, 1982. Eight years ago and a bit the Minister of Finance in this government was saying exactly what I am saying here today: do not cut EPF, it will have a disastrous affect on universities, it will adversely affect hospital care. That is what the gentleman was saying eight years ago when he was sitting over here in opposition.

The first question is: Why did he change his tune? Why did he, the advocate as I am today and as I have been over the years of properly funded hospital care, of full participation by the federal government in the

funding of that hospital care, of adequately funded post-secondary education, and of adequate financial participation of the federal government in that post-secondary funding, change his tune on that particular issue? If we had the time we could show other inconsistencies between what the Minister of Finance said when he was in opposition and what he is perpetrating on the people of Canada at this particular time.

This bill brought in, in the guise of restraining the expenditure of government money, will indeed, as we have already said, play havoc with the lives of many people who because of the cutbacks in funding will not have as complete access to hospital care as they would have had without this cutback. It will play havoc with the lives of many young Canadians who because of these cutbacks will not have the same access to university education, community college education, or post-secondary education opportunities generally.

Let us for a moment look at the impact of some of the figures in various areas of this country. Do you realize, Mr. Speaker, that as a result of the actions of this Minister of Finance, this Prime Minister, and this government since they took office in 1984, the cumulative effects of the cutbacks in Established Programs Financing, and the reductions in federal transfer payments to the provinces in respect of this program amount to $684 million in the case of Newfoundland alone. That is from the time they started the cutbacks in 1986 until they run their course in 1995: $684 million. That is an awful lot of money for a small province such as Newfoundland and Labrador with a pretty limited capacity to pay and collect provincial tax revenues. At the same time it is an overwhelming burden in terms of the need to provide adequate university education and the need to provide adequate hospital care. That is $684 million less that the Newfoundland government will have received as a result of those particular cutbacks.

• (2020)

P.E.I, a smaller province than Newfoundland in terms of population, nevertheless will suffer a $155 million cutback over the life of the cutbacks in this bill and the bills preceding it since this government took office.

Nova Scotia will lose more than $1 billion that otherwise would have been transferred from the federal government to the provincial government in Nova Scotia so that that government could continue to meet its obligations in terms of post-secondary education and health care generally.

Often we hear the Prime Minister talk about how we are a caring society. Those are great words. It is difficult to see how that is supported by his actions as a leader of a government which is racking up new records in terms of its capacity to batter the weak, the less fortunate, and the old.

I submit to you, Mr. Speaker, that after six years this government is not working. I am not saying that the government is not doing things. I am not saying that it is not busy. I am not saying that it is not trying things, but it is not functioning any more. If you back off for a moment and ask what a government ought to do, you will see that it is not doing what a government ought to be doing. It has stopped functioning as an effective government.

You can be effective without being completely popular. That is a different issue altogether, but this government is not carrying out its mandate. It is not functioning as the government of this country. This government no longer works, for a number of reasons.

First, it has lost the collective goodwill of the people. People out there do not trust this government any more. They do not believe in or give the government the benefit of the doubt any more. Normally in polls asking what kind of job the Prime Minister is doing or what kind of job the government is doing on a given day, you will find a fairly large pool of people who are prepared to give the government the benefit of the doubt. They are prepared to say that the government or the Prime Minister is doing a reasonable job, and so on and so forth.

Now, almost for the first time I believe in Canadian history, we are finding, and to a degree not experienced in other countries like Britain, Japan, West Germany, or the United States in similar polls, an overwhelming rejection of the Prime Minister and of the government of the day. The polls are absolutely astounding. From my standpoint in opposition it is encouraging, but in over-all terms these are absolutely astounding results, watershed

results, Rubicon results, in terms of what the country is saying about the performance of this Prime Minister and the performance of this government.

This government has lost the goodwill of the people of Canada. This government has certainly lost the goodwill of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, the province that I have the honour to represent in this Chamber.

This government has also stopped listening to the people and the people sense it. What more graphic example could you have of that than what is happening in terms of the proposed goods and services tax. The government has been told by 85 per cent of the Canadian people, through a succession of polls, that the people of Canada do not like, do not want, do not believe in, or do not think they need the goods and services tax. Yet the government insists on ramming it down the throats of Canadians. This government is not listening to Canadians any more.

Third, it must be clearly evident to most Canadians now that this government is riding roughshod over the people of Canada. Many examples could be drawn of how this government and how the Prime Minister, in particular, ride roughshod over people's wishes, and how the Prime Minister takes the view that he is right all the time, whether it is on the cutbacks in Established Programs Financing, on the goods and services tax, on the closure of rural post offices, or on the abandonment of railway lines.

One of the more recent and more despicable examples occurred on national television in the last few days. I refer to the incident during the course of the Meech Lake coverage on Saturday morning, the case, as the press were calling it, of the missing clause. I watched the Prime Minister explain for about 10 minutes in the most complete detail. This was the case of the clause that was absent from the draft agreement Saturday morning, the clause that Mr. Wells, the Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador, wanted to have included in the document. That it was omitted was a matter of some concern for Mr. Wells.

The Prime Minister showed up and, in the scrum outside the Conference Centre, assured everybody that it was an innocent mistake and that if the press would stop asking him questions he would rush off inside the door and fix it all. He said that it was just a typographical error, that some typist had slipped up and forgotten to include the paragraph that Mr. Wells wanted.

We all know, as subsequent events have shown us, that that is not what happened at all. We all know that it was a very deliberate act to leave that out. We all have it on the authority of a number of people that an instruction was given that that paragraph not be put in there. Mr. Wells is a premier representing a province of this country equal, I was led to believe, with every other province in this country. One would wonder in terms of the treatment we have gotten the last few days, but that is another issue.

Not only was an instruction given to delete the paragraph, but the Prime Minister stood there publicly, after having given that instruction, and said that it was not so. He assured us all that it was a completely innocent oversight that he was going fix as soon as he got inside the door.

We saw that kind of lie, that kind of untruth being played out on national television by the master of sleight of hand. I am not saying the Prime Minister had to accommodate every concern. I have some feelings on that, and they are not different from those of Mr. Wells.

However, to stick with the example, whether or not all the concerns should have been accommodated, the very least you would expect from the Prime Minister is some candour on the issue, either to say nothing or to tell it as it is instead of standing there for 10 minutes reading into the record what in terms of subsequent events was shown to be a clear falsehood, an absolute untruth, with no basis in truth at all. His assertion that it was an innocent typographical error, that somebody erred in the typing pool and left out the paragraph and he was going to fix it as soon as he got in the door, was wrong. He knew at the time he said it that it was wrong, blatantly wrong.

When Canadians have come to expect that kind of duplicity, that kind of double-talk from the Prime Minister of this country, is it any wonder that I can read into the record what the Minister of Finance said a few years ago and then demonstrate to you by holding up Bill C-69 that now the Minister of Finance, with the acquiescence of the Prime Minister, is doing the exact opposite?

• (2030)

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, because I understand my time is just about up, I submit that it is unconscionable that we have this piece of legislation in front of us. However, it is not at all surprising when you realize that the artists who perpetrate this are the same people who put together that constitutional circus last week. The sleight of hand artists do one thing and say something else, tell you one thing while they are doing something quite different. They told us in opposition that Established Programs Financing would be protected for people who need health care and post-secondary education, but when they came into office, they did the same despicable kind of dancing around on money matters as they did last week on the Constitution.

On both matters, on financial matters in terms of this bill, and on constitutional matters, their duplicity will come back to haunt them. Not only will it come back to haunt them, unfortunately, it will also come back to haunt the country. That is the sadness of it, that a lot of people who are not responsible for this duplicity will have to pay for it in spades both constitutionally in the one case, and financially in the present case down the road.

There is so much more I could say but I see from your signal, Sir, that my time is up.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): On questions or comments, the hon. member for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke.

Mr. Len Hopkins (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member mentioned his own province and how this bill affects it. He discussed medicare and post-secondary education at some length. However, what does he see down the road as the real effects of these cuts? It is all right for the government members to get up and say that they have got to cut the deficit. We all know that. However, they are really doing it on the backs of the other governments in this country, and we have to include municipal governments because the buck will eventually stop there too.

What effect does the hon. member really see these cuts having on provincial government administrations? How does he see them affecting the division of the tax dollars between federal and provincial governments in Canada?

Another member talked about the Rowell-Sirois report, one of the most thorough studies of financial divisions and jurisdiction ever held in this country. How does he envision the available tax dollars being divided in the future if the federal government is going to continue to slough off what is their burden onto the shoulders of the provinces, the municipalities and John Q. Public in this country?

Mr. Simmons: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague and friend for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke for the question. I say to him, do not fall for that line about cutting the deficit, and I know he does not fall for it. I know he put it to me as a preamble to his question. But I say to the Canadian people and to myself, let us not fall for this absolute nonsense about cutting the deficit.

If cutting the deficit was such a priority, then let me use another cliché. I always believed and was taught that charity begins at home. If there is to be some effort in cutting the deficit, why is it that we see the government, the Prime Minister, and the ministers still living very high on the hog. This burning desire to cut the deficit does not seem to stop the Prime Minister when it comes time to fly the limousines down to Costa Rica or to generally live high on the hog here in Canada.

We can take examples that in dollar terms do not mean a lot to this government in terms of total budget, but they mean a lot to the people who are living out there on welfare and whose welfare is going to be further threatened by this particular bill.

So, I cannot get very excited, Mr. Speaker, about cutting the deficit when I watch the way this government operates.

Let me come to the second part of the question of my friend, the hon. member for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke. He asked, what do I see down the road as the effects. I say to him that we are seeing the effects. Already, I am talking to young people who cannot go to university. Already, I am talking to provincial finance ministers. I talked to the one from my own province in the last few hours who tells me that it is becoming very difficult to make ends meet, to meet the financial needs of the university and the hospitals in Newfoundland and Labrador because of the effects of this bill. The cumulative effect of this bill and the others before it since this government came to office is $684 million. That is $684 million less that Newfoundland is going to get to pay its

medical bills, its university bills than it would have received if this bill was not before us.

Provincial governments are going to have to either cut back services or raise their taxes. A larger segment of the total revenue is going to have to come from provincial tax dollars. There again, if there were time and I were to digress away from this issue, I could draw a parallel between what was happening last week in the constitutional talks and the way they were being manipulated and what is happening here. It is the same whole mug's game where you shift the blame all the time to somebody else.

In the case of this particular bill cutting back expenses, funding for university and health costs expenditures, the government is shifting the blame to the provincial treasurers, the provincial finance ministers, the provincial premiers so they will be blamed if they raise provincial taxes, if they cut back on health care and on university education programs.

I say to my friend from Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, that is the sadness of it all. The people most affected, the elderly, university students, the people on social assistance, are having to put up with this continuing smoke and mirrors game by this government that smiles while putting the knife in all the time.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Questions and comments are now terminated. On debate, the hon. member for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke.

Mr. Len Hopkins (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke): Mr. Speaker, this bill is so wide ranging that one can talk about almost anything. I would like to first outline the specifics of the bill. What Bill C-69 actually does is freeze federal transfer payments for the next two years to the provinces under the Established Programs Financing, which is another term for transfer payments with regard to post-secondary education and health care. It limits the increase for federal transfer payments to Ontario, to British Columbia and Alberta under the Canada Assistance Plan.

It is eliminating the Canadian Exploration Incentives Program which is hurting small exploration companies. It freezes public utilities income tax transfers over the next two years.

The budget cutbacks alone to these four programs amount to $1 billion in 1990-91, $1.8 billion in 1991-92, and a total of $8.4 billion over the next five fiscal years that the provinces are not going to get. The cutbacks to transfer payments to all provinces for these essential areas of post-secondary education and health care, and cutbacks to transfer payments to Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia under the Canada Assistance Plan, will force the provinces to simply increase taxes.

This government is not cutting the deficit, as my hon. friend just said a while ago. It is transferring the debt to the provinces, or passing the buck, as it is called. As a result of this bill passing, and the cutting of transfer payments to the provinces by this government, the provinces are going to have to collect another $576 per taxpayer in their provinces over the next five years. When Canadians see their provincial taxes go up, they are actually paying the taxes for this Minister of Finance who is passing the buck to the provinces.

• (2040)

This is not the first time it has happened. It is the third time that the Conservative government has attacked the Established Programs Financing or transfer payments since 1986. Cumulatively, these transfer cutbacks between 1986 and 1987 right up to 1994 and 1995 will amount to the astronomical sum of $31.1 billion, of which $22.2 billion should have been allocated to health care and $8.9 billion to post-secondary education.

I just want to repeat in particular, the figure of $22.2 billion that should be allocated to health care and is not going to be by this federal government. Is it any wonder that the people out there are worried about the medicare program across Canada because the federal government is backing away from its share of the contribution and indeed its responsibility. Then they say the people who talk about it are fear-mongering. What a farce.

An interesting conversation took place today between me and the Minister of Finance across the floor. I like to keep reminding the Minister of Finance that in a speech in Toronto in August, 1984 he said that he would certainly not attack the deficit by increasing taxes but would rather do it by cutting government programs.

Not only has he increased taxes 31 times, and the GST will be the thirty-second time, he has certainly kept his promise about cutting programs. Right here, we see where he is cutting these transfer payments to the provinces by over $31 billion in a five-year period. They are not just programs, they are institutions of this country, namely, medicare and post-secondary education.

He has cut the other government programs with a vengeance. The national debt is still growing. The sad part is that he is not making any gains because the national debt of the country has more than doubled since the government took office. The simplicity of the economic measures promised by the Minister of Finance in 1984 can simply be classified as schoolboy rhetoric.

If the provinces decide not to increase taxes, they will be forced to make cutbacks. In turn, hospitals will have to close beds, limit costly operations or find other reductions. Students will have to face higher tuition fees, overcrowded classes or other cost-cutting measures.

On March 24, 1982, the Minister of Finance had the following to say in the House, and I do not think this quote can be repeated often enough:

> Let us not make hospitals, universities and colleges a battleground between the federal government and the provincial governments. Let us solve those problems, not on the backs of hospitals and universities; let us solve those problems outside of that arena.

Here he has brought his very solution to it and he has brought those things right back into the arena. In Bill C-69 that is before the House today, he is doing the very things he suggested should not be done when he was sitting in the opposition in the House of Commons.

Today, he said that I was living in the past. When the Minister of Finance makes a promise or a commitment, if one reminds him of it, one is living in the past. I brought him a little more up to date and mentioned his recent statement with regard to post-secondary education and medicare. It seems that when the Minister of Finance makes commitments and one reminds him of them, one is talking about the past. I wonder what he would say if we criticized him for something we thought he was going to say in a year from now. I do not think that would be very good logic to follow. The Minister of Finance always has a way to slough these things off.

The reason for the Minister of Finance said that I was living in the past must be due to the fact that the minister has been making commitments for so long, that to him these commitments have become traditional, rather than becoming something new. As soon as he says them, they are old hat.

The real fact that we see in this bill today is the fact that the provinces are being dumped on by the federal government of Canada. The Minister of State for Privatization, when he was once before a legislative committee I was a member of, complained because the provinces had little or no debt and they should have. He was ready to dump on them then, and he certainly has since.

It is very important at this stage to come out simply with the real challenge about this. It was mentioned in the House today that the Province of Ontario had a balanced budget this year. Because the provinces have no debt, in the eyes of the federal government, that seems to be a sin. Because they have a balanced budget, it wants to dump more on to them.

When these transfer cuts were announced, a few days after the budget was tabled British Columbia and Ontario announced that they would challenge the cuts to the Canada Assistance Program in court. This legal battle could delay implementation of this measure until the court makes its decision. Alberta supports the action taken by these two provinces.

The contesting provinces believe that the Canada Assistance Plan can only be modified after a year's notice and with provincial consent. After all, the province must be given some notice if it is going to get its financial house in order, instead of having this cut thrust on it overnight.

Also, the government did not seek consent of the provinces, so neither one of these conditions have been met. Right now the provinces look as if they are in a very good position.

With respect to post-secondary education, the Prime Minister betrayed, once again, his own promise to have first-class education for our youth and, in so doing, made a mockery of the national task force on education that he had created. On August 25, 1989, the Prime Minister stated: "This government will carry its fair share of the

burden to ensure that all young Canadians receive a first-class education as they confront a world-class challenge".

One cannot challenge someone to do something one minute and pull the rug out from underneath them then next.

• (2050)

When the provinces are called upon to make up the difference in financing important items such as post-secondary education and medicare, the money must come from somewhere else. There is a very important part to that with respect to the Canada Assistance Plan. Cuts in assistance to the poorest in Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia contradict the government's commitment to "come to the aid of those who are in need".

The poor in these three provinces are just as poor as those in any other of the provinces. Moreover, British Columbia and Ontario, supported by Alberta, are carrying on their court case challenging that budgetary item right now as we study this bill.

These are great words by the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance, but there is no commitment. The additional financial pressure that will be brought to bear on provincial governments will affect other services provided by provincial governments such as the building of roads and forestry. Agriculture and forestry are industries that need a lot of help today, and energy projects are very expensive, as we know.

We have a major issue here in eastern Ontario with regard to Highway 17, travelling up the Ottawa Valley from Ottawa. There have been a lot of unfortunate deaths on that highway, but they have not all been attributable, by any means, to the highway itself.

I would like to make a very important point. The amount of money that Ontario lost when the federal government cut its transfer payments this year would have practically built that entire highway. The province has announced the building of Highway 316 from the 401 into Ottawa, four lanes. After 123 years of Confederation, it will be the first four-lane highway into the National Capital from southern Ontario. It has announced the continuation of building of a four-lane highway from the end of the Queensway to Arnprior. The highway continues from there is for another 75 miles or so. That will come, but I want to point out that financial stress has been placed on the province of Ontario by the lack of transfer payments from the federal government and indeed through Bill C-69 today.

It is very important to note that the province of Ontario, which faces drastic cuts in transfer payments, is now faced with major construction items in eastern Ontario to be done over a very short time-frame. There were 42 years of Conservative government at Queen's Park in Ontario and eastern Ontario was neglected. Today, the province of Ontario under Premier Peterson is faced with catch-up programs because of neglect during those more than four decades of Conservative government in Ontario.

There were times when 14 out of 15 members of the Ontario legislature from eastern Ontario were Conservative members. So there is no penalty for not voting the right way. They voted for the government and still did not get those improvements and eastern Ontario was neglected.

When the Hon. Joe Greene was Minister of Agriculture and later Minister of Energy, he called Highway 17 the Ottawa Valley's goat trail in a speech in the House of Commons more than 25 years ago. If he were here today, he would be very interested in the debate that is going on on that issue now.

I am simply saying that it is unfair to call upon the present provincial government under Premier Peterson to do in a half dozen years what the previous Conservative government failed to do in 42 years.

As a finale, I mention that I asked a question previously about the Rowell-Sirois report and the division of finances between the provinces and the federal government. I am absolutely convinced that, with the way we are going, we will need another in-depth study of the financial structure of the country.

The changes in transfer payments are undermining the basic financial arrangements of the country that have been in place for years. They have served the country well at both federal and provincial levels and now that they are changing, there will be some bad effects and things will certainly be mismanaged as a result of that.

No one wants to see another great depression such as the one in the thirties that brought about that report. It affected families. People could not even pay their taxes. It was a lost generation. Everybody has a right to fair education and to medicare in the country.

I can only say in conclusion that the government is going to have to change its mind. It is going to have to start living up to the basic agreements under the Rowell-Sirois Commission report and get back on track and pay proper transfer payments to the provinces if we are going to maintain any standard of living in that regard.

Mr. Simon de Jong (Regina—Qu'Appelle): Mr. Speaker, my original intention was not to enter into this debate, but when I realized that Bill C-69 is the largest cut to social programs in Canadian history—the largest cut that slashes health, education, welfare, child care and transition shelter spending—I would be negligent in my duty as a member of Parliament not to lend my voice in protest at the actions of the government.

Is it not ironic today that during Question Period we heard the government defend major increases to its top bureaucrats, increases of $40,000, $50,000, $60,000, and I heard in one case of over $100,000. The justification here is that we have got to make these top management positions competitive with the private sector.

Indeed, in the last number of years we have seen tremendous increases in the salaries and the dividends that the top of the corporate sector has received. On the same day that the government can justify these tremendous increases on the upper income scale, it is introducing Bill C-69 that would cap the transfer of the assistance payments from the federal government to three provincial governments, the governments of Ontario, Alberta, and British Columbia. Perhaps those are the provinces where the poor need assistance the most, because the cost of living and the cost of housing, particularly in cities like Toronto and Vancouver, have made it almost impossible for poor people to continue to live in those urban centres.

On the same day that the government attempts to justify these tremendous increases to its top echelons in the Crown corporations and departments, it attempts to move through a bill that cuts back on programs like medicare and post-secondary education. As a country we are in a period of tremendous economic transition, much of it brought about by things like the free trade agreement. This brings about tremendous human dislocation. People who have worked in their jobs, developed a career, developed skills, all at once find that those skills are no longer needed. It is a time when those people need some support, for education, for retraining and as a social net. This government has been attacking that social net. On the one hand, it has created a greater need for a social net, and on the other hand, it is yanking that social net away. I do not believe the people of Canada will endorse and support this.

• (2100)

Of course, we hear the government justify this because it says it is fighting the deficit. I have no problems with that. Let us not forget that it is not the poor of this country who are to be blamed for the deficit. They did not create the deficit, and the victims should not be attacked. We have heard Tories say that we are living beyond our means and that we should tighten our belts.

Looking at Canada's record, compared to the other industrialized countries, such as OECD countries, what we spend on social programs as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product is the second lowest. We spend less on social programs, on health, education, welfare, family allowance, medicare, you name it, as a percentage of our Gross Domestic Product than Holland, Italy, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Great Britain or Ireland. Only the United States, as a percentage of its Gross Domestic Product, spends less on social programs than we do.

Do not tell me it is the poor and the social programs of this country which have created the deficit. Do not blame the victims. This is the traditional Tory line of blaming the victims, and saying that the people on welfare have got it too good, that our medicare program is too rich, that our child care program is just too expensive and too costly. If the people in Germany, Holland, Italy, Sweden, and Denmark are able to afford programs that ensure that there is decent medicare, that there is child care, that the elderly are taken care of in dignity, that there is a proper education system, particularly in terms of retraining and higher education, then in heaven's name, I cannot understand why a country as rich as Canada, with our tremendous resources, with our sparse population is not able to afford the same.

I want to touch particularly on the cutbacks to the EPF program and the effect that this will have on higher education. Earlier this spring, I visited several universities around the country. When I visited Carleton University, here in Ottawa, I was told by students that at times there is a five or six day waiting period for a particular book at the library and even then, when they get there they might only be able to have this resource book for maybe an hour or two, because the university cannot

afford to replenish its library with the needed research material. I visited the university at the Lakehead, where I was told that the plant and equipment in their research facilities had been bought at the beginning of this decade and now need to be improved. Repairs are needed and equipment needs to be updated and they cannot afford it. Mr. Speaker, I visited the university at Lethbridge and the university in Calgary and I heard about the same problems, that the tuition fees are being increased, the size of classroom is being expanded and the ratio between the instructor and the number of students is increasing. The same problem exists at the university in my home city of Regina, a university that I attended. I was president of the students' council in the 1960s. At that time we talked about a community of scholars.

I walk in those university halls today and it is not a community of scholars. It is a McDonald's fast food chain. That is what higher education has come to in this country, a fast food outlet with huge lecture halls and professors with whom you will never have an opportunity to have an intellectual discussion or discourse. Forget about the notion of the community of scholars.

Our universities are becoming second rate. They do not have the research equipment in order to help graduate first-rate researchers. That is what this country needs. This is what we need if we are going to grow into the 21st century.

We need scientists. Our young people need a world first-class education. Unfortunately we are becoming a second-rate nation because our education system is becoming second rate.

That is the saddest part of all. We are denying and robbing our young people of the possibility of being able to get good jobs because they are not getting a first-class education. I find that so sad, Mr. Speaker.

What this government is doing with Bill C-69 is attacking the poor through such measures as medicare and post-secondary education, measures that help the young, the old, the aged and the sick. Now they must bear the burden of fighting the deficit.

Meanwhile the Governor of the Bank of Canada and his staff and minions are able to get large increases in their pay. The upper echelon of the Public Service is getting good, fat bonuses.

An Hon. Member: It is gross.

Mr. de Jong: Mr. Speaker, my colleague says it is gross. It is gross that on the one hand we have the attack by the Tory government on the poor, and on the other hand it is helping the well-to-do. What a mix of priorities.

I think we all feel ashamed to be Canadians when we begin to develop a record like this. It is denying our future; it is denying those who are less fortunate than ourselves in our society; it is resulting in a less caring society and so therefore a less civilized society, all in a country so rich with resources and wealth.

Those are the comments I wish to make in this debate. I join with my colleagues in protesting and speaking against an act which is the largest cutback in social programs in the history of this country.

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, I want to take a couple of minutes to commend my colleague from Regina for a very eloquent speech, commenting on Bill C-69.

This legislation in a very fundamental way will change the social contract of this country. These are changes that this Conservative government has embarked upon some time ago.

We remember all too well the promises the Prime Minister made that social programs were to be a sacred trust. We also remember that this same government, this same Prime Minister who promised that social programs would be a sacred trust, has cut back on benefits to the elderly, cut back on family allowances, and has cut back on unemployment insurance benefits.

As well, we know that the provisions of this government's so-called restraint—obviously there is no restraint for senior civil servants in this government—has frozen contributions for legal aid, has cut in real terms programs for young offenders, and we know they have cut funding for social housing in this country as well.

• (2110)

The effect of Bill C-69 is particularly serious in my province of British Columbia. As we know, it has imposed a cap on transfers under the Canada Assistance Plan of 5 per cent per year in the provinces of Ontario, Alberta, and my own province of British Columbia.

The combined effects of Bill C-96, the budget, and Bill C-33 will mean for British Columbia that up until 1995 we will have lost, in real terms, over $3 billion which would otherwise be directed to the province of British Columbia. That will be in the area of health care, in post-secondary education, and in a number of other important areas. All these areas under the Vander Zalm Social Credit Government are already reeling because of devastating cutbacks.

With regard to health care, we have seen people who are on waiting lists for heart surgery actually dying because of the heartlessness of the Vander Zalm Social Credit Government, now aided and abetted by the Conservatives.

We have seen devastating cuts in post-secondary education in my own constituency in Simon Fraser University and the B.C. Institute of Technology. Both of them are suffering from crowding, cutbacks in resources for libraries and research, and all the other areas that my colleague from Regina has pointed out so eloquently. We know as well that in terms of the health care effects of Bill C-69 this has dealt a very serious blow to the Canada Health Act. The executive director of the nurses' association has said that the Minister of Finance has just sounded a death knell to the Canada Health Act. As my colleague has indicated, and I see the Speaker signalling that I should wrap up my comments, this bill will attack the people who are already the poorest in our country.

I want to ask my colleague if he would like to comment briefly with respect to the impact that this bill will have, particularly on the poor in the provinces of Ontario, British Columbia, and Alberta where after all almost half the recipients of the Canada Assistance Plan are located. Many aboriginal people are already struggling in devastating poverty, a condition that has been described as a national shame by the chief commissioner of the Canadian Human Rights Commission. I wonder if my very distinguished colleague could comment on this point.

Mr. de Jong: Mr. Speaker, yes, indeed it gives me pleasure to respond to my colleague's question.

I suspect the best way of describing the results of these measures that the government has taken on the poor is to say that it is sentencing the poor to deeper poverty. It is affecting, in particular, poor people in metropolitan areas like Vancouver and Toronto and like Edmonton and Calgary as well where the price of housing increased significantly in the last number of years and where to pay the rent now has become a substantial part of people's incomes. Certainly the people in lower income groups have not seen their wages rise the way the cost of living has risen for them.

I remember one case of a person I know quite well who lives in the city of Vancouver. She is a single parent, works in a restaurant, and has some cooking abilities. She clears around $1,200 to $1,300 a month. She spends $450 of that on rent and $450 on day care. That amounts to $900, which leaves her about $400 to pay for her transportation, food, and all the other necessities in life. This is a hard working person who is trying to keep off the welfare roles and who wants to live an active and productive life. It is not easy for people in that situation. In fact it is darn hard. I wish the government would show some consideration and heart for these people, but it does not do so. Its fixation on the deficit is such that it is willing to inflict greater hardships on our poor people in order to solve the problem and the economic mess that it has created. I find that unconscionable.

Mr. George S. Baker (Gander—Grand Falls): Mr. Speaker, just a couple of words in the dying moments of this debate.

The bill before the House says in its title "restraint of government expenditures". The very areas that it restrains government expenditures in are in the areas of health and education. If there were two areas that one could come up with in which government should not restrain its spending, it would have to be in health and education. Those are the two main, basic areas. They are the two areas in which we need more expenditures, health and education.

Today, in the federal riding of Gander—Grand Falls we have to send people to Halifax, Nova Scotia, to receive certain types of medical treatment not available in the province of Newfoundland. I am referring to the fact that the only litho triptic machine in Atlantic

Canada is in a hospital in Halifax, Nova Scotia. That is the only one of which I know.

Four hundred and fifty Newfoundlanders a year get on a plane and go from one of our airports in their local community and travel all the way to Halifax, Nova Scotia, to wait in line for a relatively uncomplicated procedure that was invented about 10 years ago. There are machines that are perfected that cost around $2 million. When one talks about the cost of hospital machines one has to keep in mind that the major cost is in actually operating it sometimes.

There are 450 people a year who have to go to another province to receive treatment. The cost is very great to the provincial treasury, but it is greater to the people who have to make that journey. To modernize at a time when more expenditures are needed, when provincial governments are struggling to keep up-to-date with their machinery in hospitals, the federal government turns around and announces that it is cutting its money for the operation of hospitals. What used to be called the Hospital Insurance and Diagnostic Care Act was changed in 1977 and is now called block funding.

As well, a major problem with a student going to Memorial University in Newfoundland is this. Can the student take the course that he or she needs to take in order to go to a professional school? In other words, you go into someone's house and ask: "How is your son or daughter doing"? The mother looks up and says: "Well, not too bad, but they can't seem to be able to take the courses they need in order to get the degree or in order to go on to a professional school". Just imagine, in this day and age, a student registered in the university, paid the tuition and cannot do the courses they need to do because there are not enough places.

• (2120)

Ms. Clancy: Shame.

Mr. Baker: Just imagine the major problems of a student going to university today .

Mr. de Jong: It is shameful.

Mr. Baker: At a time when that is happening, what does the federal government do? It turns around and cuts transfer payments for post-secondary education to the provinces.

I suppose it would be bad enough if we could make up for it on the provincial end. If you cut $684 million in transfers from the budget of the province of Newfoundland from 1986 to 1995, if the federal government were doing something that would make up for the loss, then fine and dandy, we would end up square and would at least be able to progress.

Speaking of the riding of Gander—Grand Falls, we just had a paper mill close because the company is building a new one in Alabama. Another one is in Venezuela on the Oronoco River.

An Hon. Member: With faster growing trees.

Mr. Baker: Yes, faster growing trees, cheaper labour, encouragement of the federal Government of Canada to invest in the United States, invest in other parts of the world at a time when we face cuts in these areas, when industries are closing, on the encouragement of the Government of Canada, increasing their business in the United States, the Government of Canada turns around and actually issue up to 58 factory freezer trawler licences for foreign nations to fish off our coast.

Mr. de Jong: Who speaks for Canada?

Mr. Baker: They are licensed inside the 200-mile zone. If you were to say that is $1 a pound for every pound of fish they caught, on last year's figures that would be $1 billion.

If we were to tell the Soviet Union, Cuba, Norway, and all the foreign nations and all of these people that we want to go over there and fish off their coasts, we would be blown out of the water.

The Government of Canada has just increased their licences. For the first time in our history we have mackerel being caught off the coast of Newfoundland and Nova Scotia and in the Cabot Strait. The government just gave out licences last week to the U.S.S.R. to fish off Labrador and northern Newfoundland to within 12 miles of the coast. The point is if you made it up on a dollar-per-pound basis, that would be $1 billion and Newfoundland could build hospitals and get its litho triptic machines. But, we do not see any of that. We see just the reverse happening.

All in all, this bill should really be defeated by the House of Commons. It should be thrown in the ashcan of history. It does not deserve to be before the House at

this time or at any other time and we hope that government members will vote against it.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is the House ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The question is on the motion standing in the name of Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre).

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some Hon. Members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some Hon. Members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): In my opinion the yeas have it.

And more than five members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Call in the members.

And the division bells having rung:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Pursuant to Standing Order 45(5)(a) I have been requested by a representative of the chief government Whip to defer the division until a later time.

Accordingly, pursuant to Standing Order 45(5)(a), the division on the question now before the House stands deferred until tomorrow at 6 p.m. at which time the bells to call in the members will be sounded for not more than 15 minutes.

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[*English*]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

FISHERIES

Mr. Fred J. Mifflin (Bonavista—Trinity—Conception): Mr. Speaker, I rise on this occasion to discuss a question I asked in the House of Commons on April 3. The question was directed to the Minister of Fisheries.

My concern was that in view of the extraordinary gap in the surveillance and control mechanism off Canada's coastline, the longest in the world, and particularly in light of Recommendation 22 of the Harris Report, which talked about additional resources to undertake the task of surveillance and control, particularly in fisheries surveillance, I asked the minister to inform the House what plans he had to redress this well known and serious deficiency.

Either the minister misunderstood my question or he chose to answer one particular portion of it because, in fact, he did discuss one aspect but it was the aspect of the recent contract that had been signed. That was with Provincial Airways in Newfoundland for the two King Air 200 Beechcraft aircraft that were going to carry out their surveillance in lieu of the trackers. I think the contracts were to the tune of $28 million. I was delighted to hear that but I had already known that. In fact, let me read what Recommendation 22 of the Harris Report says: "The Government of Canada should undertake the provision of additional patrol vessels" and I stress patrol vessels, "for offshore surveillance to provide adequate on-site action in respect of violations reported by aircraft or by observers".

My concern is essentially for the vessels, which is a follow-up to any surveillance that may be done. Surveillance alone is not good. The business is surveillance and control, if you are interested in controlling your fisheries areas.

Since the mid-seventies off the east coast of Newfoundland, there has been a tremendous change in the pace in the fisheries. There have been more people involved, there have been more foreigners, more species being fished, better technology and larger ships going out to a much greater distance than had taken place in the mid-seventies.

Before I go any further, I would make the statement that it would be very hard to deny that the surveillance and control activities that we have now are probably less than we had in 1975, with a tremendous magnitude increase in the fisheries that are taking place.

When we look at surveillance and control in Canada, there are really three aspects of this. Right now, the offshore patrols are a combination of air surveillance, ship patrols and observers that we place aboard most of the foreign vessels out to the 200-mile limit. Let's forget about the observers. I will not talk about them any more this evening. I would like to concentrate on air patrols in a general sense.

Canada has the world's largest coastline, 60,000 coastline miles. To patrol that, we have a total of 18 Aurora aircraft; we used to have 25 or 26 trackers but they will eventually be gone. To my knowledge, in the east coast, we have recently contracted for two Beechcraft King Air 200s, which granted us a very effective aircraft with the new Litton radar. I believe there is one more in the making. That is 18, 19, 20, or 21 aircraft, if you count them. The 18 Aurora are long-range maritime patrol. The coastline is 60,000 linear miles.

• (2130)

The Netherlands has a coastline of 228 miles. It uses roughly the same number, 13 maritime patrol aircraft.

Japan has 5,000 linear miles of coastline. It has presently 130 maritime patrol aircraft and is about to order another 100.

If you want to put this another way, Mr. Speaker, Japan with one-tenth the coastline has 10 times the patrol effort off its coast, and Holland has roughly the same number of maritime patrol aircraft to patrol one-two hundred and fiftieth of the coastline.

Mr. Speaker, I think you can see the comparisons there which indicate that either these two countries are awfully high or we are awfully low. I would suggest that it is the latter.

I want now to look at the specific recommendation related to the patrol vessels. As I stand here tonight there are only patrols vessels off Canada's east coast. The two vessels are the *William Colley* and the *Cape Roger*. I believe the *Cape Roger* is in refit now. Statistically there is really one and a half patrol vessels to patrol the east coast of Canada and the south coast of Newfoundland.

When you look at the area that is covered, Mr. Speaker, and just picture now the south coast of Newfoundland, all the area of the northern cod out around the Grand Banks and way up as far north as Baffin Island, there are just two vessels. To say that that is inadequate is a gross understatement. In fact to say it is a token is ludicrous. It is nothing more than a joke. It is a joke. The brunt of the joke is Newfoundlanders and Atlantic Canadians. Out of the two patrol vessels one is stationed on the Banks pretty well all the time, and the other one therefore has to patrol that vast area.

Mr. Speaker, as anybody with a maritime background would tell you, that is a joke. That is the best way I can put it.

The point of this whole business is that surveillance and control is a team effort. The aircraft locate and identify, but they are incapable of actually taking any action that would force the proper follow-on from these illegal pursuits.

Aircraft certainly has some advantages, that is, they cannot be rammed by an aggressive trawler, as the *Saguenay* was rammed by the *Concordia* just before Christmas last year. I have to stress that you can locate as many fishermen as you can, but unless there is a surface vessel to go out and actually board and examine the catch, and unless there is enough aircraft to continue with continuous patrol, then you are in serious trouble.

I would like to make a suggestion. We have 21 trawlers now that seem to be of surplus use, I guess largely because of the reduction in the effort of the fisheries which has been a forced effort due to the dismal state of our stocks. These 21 fisheries vessels include the six mid-distance fleet off Newfoundland that have been decommissioned.

I would like to suggest that the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, the Minister of National Defence, and perhaps the Secretary of State for External Affairs get together to see if somehow we can acquire these vessels. We can lease them, rent them, or perhaps even buy them. We can man them with qualified skippers, maybe some of the skippers from these trawlers who are out of work. We might even consider putting them in the naval reserve and having them operate under the Maritime Coastal Defence Organization that was recently formed in Maritime Command.

Mr. Speaker, I can assure you that if this is not a no cost it is certainly a low cost recommendation that I believe—in fact I am seriously convinced—should have further investigation. I leave that to the goodwill and

imagination of the Ministers of National Defence and Fisheries and Oceans.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I regret that the hon. member's time has expired.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Michel Champagne (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of State (Forestry)): Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to speak on behalf of the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Valcourt) and remind the hon. member that recommendation 22 of the Harris Report suggests that the Government of Canada make arrangements to increase the number of ships assigned to maritime surveillance.

The purpose is to provide sufficient resources to be able to follow up on violations sighted by airplanes or pointed out by observers. This measure will also make it possible to combine the use of helicopters and smaller patrol boats for surveillance of coastal fisheries. Similar recommendations were made by the Scotia–Fundy task force on the ground fishery. In the course of departmental consultations throughout Atlantic Canada, the industry, fishermens' organizations and provincial governments also pointed out the need for more efficient and effective surveillance, both inside and outside the Canadian zone.

More efficient and effective surveillance and enforcement of the regulations will require full integration of all aspects of the surveillance program, including air surveillance, coverage by observers, surveillance at sea and ashore, and monitoring of quotas.

The Department of Fisheries and Oceans recently awarded a contract to Airways Limited for 3,815 hours of air surveillance of the deep sea fisheries in 1990–91. This represents more than twice the number of hours of surveillance provided by the trackers of the Department of National Defence in recent years. The new surveillance which will be in addition to 420 hours of flying by the Aurora aircraft provided free of charge by DND, represents a substantial upgrading of our deep sea fisheries air surveillance program off the Atlantic coast.

The minister realizes that effective management of fish stocks means that we must have appropriate and adequate air surveillance and control. To this end, the department will monitor and assess all components of its surveillance and regulatory programs to determine the levels of air, sea and land patrols to be maintained to guarantee effective management of Canada's fish stocks.

[*English*]

FORESTRY

Mr. Brian L. Gardiner (Prince George—Bulkley Valley): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today in the House to follow up on a question I put to the Minister of the Environment, which in his absence ended up being answered by the Minister of Forestry. This was on May 7, which was in National Forest Week. This was a very important week in Canada, something of which I think all Canadians are aware.

The question that I put to the minister at the time was along these lines. I asked him in light of the commitment and the talk from the government about the importance of our environment and the announcement of *The Green Plan* what kind of commitment there was from the government to plant some trees. It was a very simple question.

During National Forest Week and on Earth Day everybody across the country—indeed, across North America and the world—were out doing their thing for the environment. Part of that was people planting trees. Everybody was out planting trees except for this government.

The reason we call on this government to try and plant some trees I think is pretty obvious. We know all the concerns about global warming, the role our forests play in our ecosystems, and all the employment that people from coast to coast get from our forests. There are over 300 communities dependent on the forest industry.

How does the federal government plant trees? It does it through a very effective vehicle that many provinces have come to be aware of. It is through forestry agreements, as they are called, that are signed with all provinces. They have been used in different parts of Canada for different purposes, often for research, assisting with the development of new species, and what have you.

In British Columbia, my home province, and in my own riding there has been a great deal of assistance given to replanting harvested land. This is because the government of the day failed to do any serious work in reforestation or any intensive silvicultural work, which

left these lands unproductive with no seedlings to grow and no future for forests.

The government of the day came up with what are called the Forest Resource Development Agreements. I have raised this issue in the House on a number of occasions, primarily because we are faced now with the incredible situation that despite the rhetoric of the government and its so-called concern for the environment, it has allowed forestry agreements in Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta to expire well over a year ago. In British Columbia our forest agreement expired on March 31. We have been without a forest agreement for some 72 days now, despite six commitments by the Minister of Forestry to the people of British Columbia. One of the main commitments was that he would find the money in the Supplementary Estimates or elsewhere. We asked the department to produce that information for the forestry committee two months ago, and it has yet to find out any of that basic information.

• (2140)

The minister also made a commitment to us that he would have an agreement signed well before the planting season would start. The planting season for seedlings across the country varies, but in some cases in British Columbia it started as early as April. The time is coming fast, if it has not passed already, for contractors to gear up to plant trees. A number of contractors in British Columbia are now scaling down operations in the light of the absolute failure of the federal Conservative government and the Socred government in British Columbia to reach and sign a forest agreement. It is critical that we do that in this country.

I want to read into the record from Forestry Canada's own 1990-1991 Estimates. This is important information for all of us. It concerns how many trees we are planting versus how much we are harvesting and what we have left over. I quote:

> —in 1987, of a total harvest estimated at just under 1 million hectares, 285,000 hectares were successfully planted or seeded while a further 500,000 hectares are estimated to have regenerated naturally, leaving a shortfall of 210,000 hectares.

These figures are likely small *c* conservative. Just under 250,000 hectares are being added to the non-forested land in this country because of the lack of forest agreements, the lack of the kind of forest management policies that we should have in this country. We have called upon this government and the provincial governments to move as quickly as they can to ensure that those agreements are signed.

I understand that the Minister of Forestry is meeting this Thursday with the provincial minister in B.C. I urge them to get on with the job and sign those forest agreements. Let us start planting some trees for once.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Michel Champagne (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of State (Forestry)): Mr. Speaker, I was greatly interested in the comments of my colleague who, in the course of his remarks, stated that in recent years the federal government, our government, the Progressive Conservative Party has not accomplished anything at all in terms of reforestation. I would remind him that since 1984 our government increased the forestry budget by more than 300 per cent. Our government also signed in excess of $1.2 billion worth of investment agreements with the Canadian provinces, including British Columbia, Quebec, Newfoundland and all the other provinces. We are talking about investments of more than $1.3 billion dollars' worth of seedlings we have planted.

My colleague ought to acknowledge the boost our government has given to Canada's forest sector by establishing a full-fledged Department of Forestry. He should also admit—and it is unfortunate that he would not say so—that most cases related to public forests fall under provincial jurisdiction. This is something the federal government takes into account in all such agreements signed with British Columbia and Quebec. He cannot ignore the fact that it is the provinces' responsibility.

The Minister of Forestry said yes, we are prepared to work together. Yes we are prepared to renew the forest agreements inasmuch as each province demonstrates genuine interest in this natural resource. Mr. Speaker, that is our approach in the ongoing negotiations.

I would remind my colleague that the March 31 agreement has ended, It is true, there is a certain delay. But it is better to take the time required to sign an agreement that will benefit the provinces, the forestry industry and our young people's future than to sign an agreement prematurely to satisfy the very short-term needs of individuals who want to keep their original businesses running some way or other. The goal of the federal government and the Department of Forestry is to reach solid, lasting agreements for sustainable development in the interests of future generations. That is what we want, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The motion that the House do now adjourn is deemed to have been adopted. The House therefore stands adjourned until tomorrow at 11 a.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

The House adjourned at 9.46 p.m.

FIRST MINISTERS' MEETING ON THE CONSTITUTION

FINAL COMMUNIQUÉ

June 9, 1990

1990 CONSTITUTIONAL AGREEMENT

WHEREAS on April 30, 1987, the Prime Minister of Canada and the Premiers reached agreement in principle on means to bring about the full and active participation of Quebec in Canada's constitutional evolution;

AND WHEREAS on June 3, 1987, all first ministers signed the 1987 Constitutional Accord and committed themselves to introducing as soon as possible the Constitution Amendment, 1987 in Parliament and the provincial legislative assemblies;

AND WHEREAS the Constitution Amendment, 1987 has been authorized by Parliament and the legislative assemblies of Quebec, Saskatchewan, Alberta, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, Ontario and British Columbia:

1. THE MEECH LAKE ACCORD

The Premiers of New Brunswick, Manitoba and Newfoundland undertake to submit the Constitution Amendment, 1987 for appropriate legislative or public consideration and to use every possible effort to achieve decision prior to June 23, 1990.

2. SENATE REFORM

After proclamation, the federal government and the provinces will constitute a commission with equal representation for each province and an appropriate number of territorial and federal representatives to conduct hearings and to report to Parliament and the legislative assemblies of the provinces and territories, prior to the First Ministers' conference on the Senate to be held by the end of 1990 in British Columbia, on specific proposals for Senate reform that will give effect to the following objectives:

— The Senate should be elected.

— The Senate should provide for more equitable representation of the less populous provinces and territories.

— The Senate should have effective powers to ensure the interests of residents of the less populous provinces and territories figure more prominently in national decision-making, reflect Canadian duality and strengthen the Government of Canada's capacity to govern on behalf of all citizens, while preserving the principle of the responsibility of the Government to the House of Commons.

Following proclamation of the Meech Lake Accord, the Prime Minister and all Premiers agree to seek adoption of an amendment on comprehensive Senate reform consistent with these objectives by July 1, 1995.

The Prime Minister undertakes to report semi-annually to the House of Commons on progress achieved towards comprehensive Senate reform.

The Prime Minister and all Premiers, reaffirming the commitment made in the Edmonton Declaration and the provisions to be entrenched under the Constitution Amendment, 1987, undertook that Senate reform will be the key constitutional priority until comprehensive reform is achieved.

If, by July 1, 1995, comprehensive Senate reform has not been achieved according to the objectives set out above under section 41 of the Constitution Act, 1982, as amended by the Constitution Amendment, 1987, the number of Senators by which a province is entitled to be represented in the Senate will be amended so that, of the total of one hundred and four Senators, the representation of Ontario will be eighteen Senators, the representation of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Newfounland will be eight Senators each, and the representation of all other provinces and the territories will remain unchanged. In the case of any province whose representation declined, no new appointments would be made until that province's representation had by attrition declined below its new maximum. In the event of such a redistribution of Senate seats, Newfoundland would be entitled to another Member of Parliament in the House of Commons under section 51A of the Constitution Act, 1867.

3. FURTHER CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

(1) Charter—Sex Equality Rights

— Add section 28 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom to section 16 of the Constitution Amendment, 1987.

(2) Role of the Territories

— In appointments to the Senate and the Supreme Court of Canada.

— In discussions on items on the agenda of annual constitutional and economic conferences where, in the view of the Prime Minister, matters to be discussed directly affect them.

(3) Language Issues

— Add to the agenda of constitutional conferences matters that are of interest to English-speaking and French-speaking linguistic minorities.

— Require resolutions of the House of Commons, the Senate and the legislative assembly of New Brunswick to amend that province's Act Recognizing the Equality of the Two Official Linguistic Communities in New Brunswick (Bill 88).

(4) Aboriginal Constitutional Issues

— First Ministers' constitutional conferences to be held once every three years, the first to be held within one year of proclamation; representatives of aboriginal peoples and the territorial governments to be invited by the Prime Minister to participate in the discussion of matters of interest to the aboriginal peoples of Canada.

The Prime Minister of Canada will lay or cause to be laid before the Senate and House of Commons, and the Premiers will lay or cause to be laid before their legislative assemblies, a resolution, in the form appended hereto, and will seek to authorize a proclamation to be issued by the Governor General under the Great Seal of Canada to amend the constitution of Canada as soon as possible after proclamation of the Constitution Amendment, 1987.

4. AGENDA FOR FUTURE CONSTITUTIONAL DISCUSSIONS

(1) Creation of New Provinces in the Territories

The Prime Minister and all Premiers agreed future constitutional conferences should address available options for provincehood, including the possibility that, at the request of the Yukon and Northwest Territories to become provinces, only a resolution of the House of Commons and Senate be required.

(2) Constitutional Recognitions

The Prime Minister and Premiers took note of repeated attempts by First Ministers over the past twenty years to draft a statement of constitutional recognitions. All such attempts were unsuccessful.

The Prime Minister and Premiers reviewed drafts submitted by the federal government and Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Ontario and British Columbia, and agreed to refer immediately the drafts to an all-party Special Committee of the House of Commons. Public hearings would begin across Canada on July 16, 1990 and a report on the substance and placement of the clause--in a manner consistent with the Constitution of Canada--would be prepared for consideration by First Ministers at their Conference in 1990.

(3) Constitutional Reviews

The Prime Minister and all Premiers agreed jointly to review, at the constitutional conference required by section 49 of the Constitution Act, 1982: the entire process of amending the Constitution, including the three-year time limit under section 39(2) of that Act and the question of mandatory public hearings prior to adopting any measure related to a constitutional amendment, including revocation of a constitutional resolution.

Pursuant to section 50 of the Constitution Act, 1982, as proposed in the Constitution Amendment, 1987, the Prime Minister and the Premiers also committed to a continuing review of the operation of the Constitution of Canada, including the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, with a view to making any appropriate constitutional amendments.

5. SECTION 2: CONSTITUTION AMENDMENT, 1987

The Prime Minister and Premiers took note of public discussion of the distinct society clause since its inclusion in the Meech Lake Accord. A number of Canada's most distinguished constitutional authorities met to exchange views on the legal impact of the clause. The Prime Minister and Premiers reviewed their advice and other material.

The Prime Minister, in his capacity as chairman of the Conference, received from the above-noted constitutional authorities a legal opinion which is appended to the final Conference communiqué.

6. NEW BRUNSWICK AMENDMENT

— Add a clause that within New Brunswick, the English linguistic community and the French linguistic community have equality of status and equal rights and privileges.

— Affirm an additional role of the legislature and government of New Brunswick: to preserve and promote the equality of status and equal rights and privileges of the province's two official linguistic communities.

— The Prime Minister of Canada will lay or cause to be laid before the Senate and House of Commons, and the Premier of New Brunswick will lay or cause to be laid before the legislative assembly of New Brunswick, a resolution, in the form appended hereto, and will seek to authorize a proclamation to be issued by the Governor General under the Great Seal of Canada to amend the Constitution of Canada as soon as possible after proclamation of the Constitution Amendment, 1987.

Signed at Ottawa,
June 9, 1990

Fait à Ottawa
le 9 juin 1990

Canada

Ontario

Québec

Nova Scotia
Nouvelle-Écosse

New Brunswick
Nouveau-Brunswick

Manitoba*

British Columbia
Colombie-Britannique

* Subject to the public hearing process

* Sous réserve du processus d'audiences publiques

Prince Edward Island
Île-du-Prince-Édouard

Saskatchewan

Alberta

Newfoundland *
Terre-Neuve

* The Premier of Newfoundland endorses now the undertaking in Part I of this document and further undertakes to endorse fully this agreement if the Constitution Amendment, 1987 is given legislative or public approval following the consultation provided for in Part I.

* Le premier ministre de Terre-Neuve endosse maintenant l'engagement figurant dans la Partie I du présent document et s'engage en outre à endosser la totalité de la présente entente si la Modification constitutionnelle de 1987 reçoit une approbation législative ou publique à Terre-Neuve suite aux consultations prévues à la Partie I.

OTTAWA
June 9, 1990

Dear Prime Minister:

In response to certain concerns which have been expressed in relation to section I of the proposed Constitution Amendment, 1987 (Meech Lake Accord), it is our pleasure to confirm our opinion on the following.

In our opinion, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms will be interpreted in a manner consistent with the duality/distinct society clause for the proposed Constitution Amendment, 1987 (Meech Lake Accord), but the rights and freedoms guaranteed thereunder are not infringed or denied by the application of the clause and continue to be guaranteed subject only to such reasonable limits prescribed by law as can be demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society, and the duality/distinct society clause may be considered, in particular, in the application of section I of the Charter.

The Constitution of Canada, including sections 91 and 92 of the Constitution Act, 1867, will be interpreted in a manner consistent with the duality/distinct society clause. While nothing in that clause creates new legislative authority for Parliament or any of the provincial legislatures, or derogates from any of their legislative authority, it may be considered in determining whether a particular law fits within the legislative authority of Parliament or any of the legislatures.

Gérald-A. Beaudoin, O.C., Q. C.
Professor of Law
University of Ottawa

B. Jamie Cameron
Associate Professor
Osgoode Hall Law School
York University

E. Robert A. Edwards, Q.C.
Assistant Deputy Attorney General
Government of British Columbia

Peter W. Hogg, Q. C.
Professor
Osgoode Hall Law School
York University

Katherine Swinton
Professor, Faculty of Law
University of Toronto

Roger Tassé, O.C., Q.C.
Barrister and Solicitor

Motion for a Resolution to authorize an amendment to the Constitution of Canada

The (Senate) (House of Commons) (legislative assembly) resolves that an amendment to the Constitution of Canada be authorized to be made by proclamation issued by His Excellency the Governor General under the Great Seal of Canada in accordance with the schedule hereto, but only after the Constitution Amendment, 1987 comes into force.

SCHEDULE

CONSTITUTION AMENDMENT

PART I

Constitution Act, 1867

1. Section 25 of the Constitution Act, 1867, as enacted by section 2 of the Constitution Amendment, 1987, is amended by adding thereto, immediately after the word "province" wherever it occurs therein, the words "or territory".

2. (1) Subsection 101C(1) of the said Act, as enacted by section 6 of the Constitution Amendment, 1987, is amended by adding thereto, immediately after the word "province" wherever it occurs therein, the words "or territory".

(2) Subsection 101C(4) of the said Act, as enacted by section 6 of the Constitution Amendment, 1987, is amended by adding thereto, immediately after the word "province" where it occurs therein, the words ", or territory,".

3. Section 148 of the said Act, as enacted by section 8 of the Constitution Amendment, 1987, is renumbered as subsection 148(1) and is further amended by adding thereto the following subsection:

Participation of Territories

"(2) The Prime Minister of Canada shall invite elected representatives of the governments of the Yukon Territory and the Northwest Territories to participate in the discussions on any item on the agenda of a conference convened under subsection (1) that, in the opinion of the Prime Minister, directly affects the Yukon Territory and the Northwest Territories."

Constitution Act, 1982

4. Section 43 of the Constitution Act, 1982 is renumbered as subsection 43(1) and is further amended by adding thereto the following subsection:

Amendment to New Brunswick Act

"(2) An amendment to the Act of the Legislature of New Brunswick entitled An Act Recognizing the Equality of the Two Official Linguistic Communities in New Brunswick, chapter 0-1.1 of the Acts of New Brunswick, 1981, may be made by proclamation issued by the Governor General under the Great Seal of Canada only where so authorized by resolutions of the Senate and House of Commons and of the Legislative Assembly of New Brunswick."

5. (1) Subsection 50(2) of the said Act, as enacted by section 13 of the Constitution Amendment, 1987, is amended by adding thereto, immediately after paragraph (a) thereof, the following paragraph:

"(a.1) matters of interest to English-speaking and French-speaking linguistic minorities;"

(2) Section 50 of the said Act, as enacted by section 13 of the Constitution Amendment, 1987, is further amended by adding thereto the following subsection:

Participation of the Territories

"(3) The Prime Minister of Canada shall invite elected representatives of the governments of the Yukon Territory and the Northwest Territories to participate in the discussions on any item on the agenda of a conference convened under subsection (1) that, in the opinion of the Prime Minister, directly affects the Yukon Territory and the Northwest Territories."

6. The said Act is further amended by adding thereto, immediately after section 50 thereof, as enacted by section 13 of the Constitution Amendment, 1987, the following section:

Constitutional conference

"51. (1) A constitutional conference composed of the Prime Minister of Canada and the first ministers of the provinces shall be convened by the Prime Minister of Canada within one year after this Part comes into force and at least once in every third calendar year after the first such conference is convened.

Participation of aboriginal peoples

(2) Each conference convened under subsection (1) shall have included in its agenda matters of interest to the aboriginal peoples of Canada, and the Prime Minister of Canada shall invite representatives of those peoples to participate in the discussions on those matters.

Participation of Territories

(3) The Prime Minister of Canada shall invite elected representatives of the governments of the Yukon Territory and the Northwest Territories to participate in the discussions on any item on the agenda of a conference convened under subsection (1) that, in the opinion of the Prime Minister, directly affects the Yukon Territory and the Northwest Territories.

Non-derogation

(4) Nothing in this section shall be construed so as to derogate from section 35."

CONSTITUTION AMENDMENT, 1987

7. Section 16 of the Constitution Amendment, 1987 is amended by adding thereto, immediately after the reference to section 27 where it occurs therein, the following: "or 28".

PART II

Constitution Act, 1867

8. All that portion of section 22 of the Constitution Act, 1867 following item 4 and preceding the last paragraph thereof is repealed and the following substituted therefor:

"which Four Divisions shall, subject to the provisions of this Act, be represented in the Senate as follows: Ontario by eighteen Senators; Quebec by twenty-four Senators; the Maritime Provinces and Prince Edward Island by twenty Senators, eight thereof representing Nova Scotia, eight thereof representing New Brunswick, and four thereof representing Prince Edward Island; the Western Provinces by thirty-two Senators, eight thereof representing Manitoba, eight thereof representing British Columbia, eight thereof representing Saskatchewan, and eight thereof representing Alberta; Newfoundland shall be entitled to be represented in the Senate by eight members; the Yukon Territory and the Northwest Territories shall be entitled to be represented in the Senate by one member each."

9. Section 27 of the said Act is repealed and the following substituted therefor:

Reduction of Senate to normal number

"27. In case of such addition being at any time made, the Governor General shall not summon any person to the Senate, except on a further like direction by the Queen on the like recommendation, to represent one of the Four Divisions until such Division is represented by the number of Senators provided for by section 22 and no more."

Transitional provision

10. Notwithstanding section 22 of the Constitution Act, 1867, any province that is represented in the Senate on the coming into force of this Part by more Senators than are provided for under that section may continue to be so represented, but no additional persons may be summoned to the Senate to represent that province until the number of Senators representing that province falls below the number set out in section 22, and thereafter, subject to section 26, the number representing that province shall not exceed that number.

11. (1) This Part shall not come into force if an amendment in relation to the Senate that is consistent with the objectives set out in the 1990 Constitutional Agreement signed at Ottawa on June 9, 1990 is made before July 1, 1995.

(2) If an amendment described in subsection (1) is not made before July 1, 1995, this Part shall come into force on that date.

Citation

Citation

12. This amendment may be cited as the Constitution Amendment, (year of proclamation)

Motion for a Resolution to authorize an amendment to the Constitution of Canada

The (Senate) (House of Commons) (legislative assembly) resolves that an amendment to the Constitution of Canada be authorized to be made by proclamation issued by His Excellency the Governor General under the Great Seal of Canada in accordance with the schedule hereto.

SCHEDULE

CONSTITUTION AMENDMENT

Constitution Act, 1867

1. The Constitution Act, 1867 is amended by adding thereto, immediately after section 133 thereof, the following section:

Interpretation

"133.1 (1) The Constitution of Canada, as it relates to New Brunswick, shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with the recognition that, within New Brunswick, the English linguistic community and the French linguistic community have equality of status and equal rights and privileges.

Role of legislature and Government of New Brunswick

(2) The role of the legislature and Government of New Brunswick to preserve and promote the equality of status and equal rights and privileges of the two linguistic communities referred to in subsection (1) is affirmed.

Rights of legislatures and governments preserved

(3) Nothing in this section derogates from the powers, rights or privileges of Parliament or the Government of Canada, or of the legislature or Government of New Brunswick, including any powers, rights or privileges relating to language.

Citation

Citation

2. This amendment may be cited as the Constitution Amendment, (year of proclamation) (New Brunswick).

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, June 12, 1990

The House met at 11 a.m.

Prayers

[*Translation*]

PETITIONS

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to the Government House Leader): Madam Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the government's response to eight petitions.

[*Editor's note: See today's Votes and Proceedings.*]

* * *

[*English*]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

BILL C-66 AND BILL C-67—REPORTS OF LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEES

Mr. Brian White (Dauphin—Swan River): Madam Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the reports of the legislative committees on Bill C-66 and Bill C-67, with amendments.

TRANSPORT—THIRD REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

Mr. Pat Nowlan (Annapolis Valley—Hants): Madam Speaker, I have the honour to report, in both official languages, the third report of the Standing Committee on Transport, which is its review of the document entitled *Strategy on Substance Use in Safety Sensitive Positions in Canadian Transportation*.

Pursuant to Standing Order 109 the committee requests a comprehensive response to this report with 150 days.

[*Editor's Note: See today's Votes and Proceedings.*]

CRIMINAL RECORDS ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

Mr. Don Blenkarn (Mississauga South) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-314, an act to amend the Criminal Records Act and the Criminal Code in consequence thereof.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Shall the hon. member have leave to introduce the bill?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Blenkarn: Madam Speaker, this bill arises out of the fact that when a young person, for example, receives an absolute discharge from a court he finds out sometimes three, four, or five years later when he seeks employment that he still has a criminal record.

The object of the absolute discharge and indeed the conditional discharge as produced in the Criminal Code was to make sure that young people in particular and people who receive absolute and conditional discharges do not have a criminal record.

Under the current circumstances they have, and that criminal record can only be removed by an application to the National Parole Board. That is a travesty and this act attempts to clean up that matter in law.

Motion agreed to, bill read the first time and ordered to be printed.

* * *

PETITIONS

VIA RAIL

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Madam Speaker, it is an honour to present a petition, pursuant to Standing Order 36, on behalf of a number of constituents from Kamloops, British Columbia. They point out a whole set of reasons why they are disappointed with the government's decision to cut back on passenger rail service in Canada.

They are asking the government to reconsider that action and, quite frankly, not only to reverse the decision but to invest in a first-class passenger rail service as we would find in virtually every other country of similar size in the world.

CHILD POVERTY

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Madam Speaker, I have a second petition to present.

The petitioners are again from Kamloops and from Stratford, Ontario and point out that one-sixth of all Canadian children live in poverty. The number of children living in poverty in Canada has increased by 13 per cent between 1980 and 1986. The number of children living in some provinces is as high as 26 per cent of the child population.

• (1110)

They are asking that the House of Commons move to rectify this situation, and the first step they suggest is the production of a comprehensive bill of rights for children.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Madam Speaker, I have another petition to present on a third matter, the one that I repeat most days. Again it is on behalf of a number of constituents from Kamloops, British Columbia.

The petitioners point out their opposition to the government's 7 per cent goods and services tax. They suggest that any tax which taxes virtually everything, now including I guess in corner grocery stores all food in an indirect way by having one levy on all commodities, is regressive and ought not to proceed.

They suggest that Parliament do whatever it can to stop it, which means that the Liberal dominated Senate should stop the tax.

[*Translation*]

TAX BENEFITS FOR NORTHERN AND ISOLATED AREAS

Mr. Guy Saint-Julien (Abitibi): Madam Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I hereby present 16 petitions from Lebel-sur-Quévillion and Chibougamau, in response to the recommendations of the Task Force on Tax Benefits for Northern and Isolated Areas.

The signatories reject the Task Force's conclusions, Madam Speaker.

[*English*]

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Douglas Young (Gloucester): Madam Speaker, on behalf of 100,000 Canadians I have the honour to present a petition duly accepted by the clerk of petitions concerning the goods and services tax.

This petition has been signed by nearly 35,000 people in the province of Quebec and 30,000 people in the province of Ontario.

[*Translation*]

In particular, Madam Speaker, I want to thank the people who worked so magnificently to ensure that the government was aware that the GST legislation which has been approved by the House of Commons, must nevertheless be rejected because it has harmful implications for the Canadian economy.

[*English*]

Newfoundlanders, Nova Scotians, New Brunswickers, Albertans, people from Saskatchewan and British Columbia—107,804 people—signed these petitions.

I am very pleased to give particular recognition to the hundreds of people who operate bowling alleys and whatnot across the country because they helped out in this in a very significant way, recognizing the tremendous damage that the goods and services tax will do to the economy.

The petitioners beg the Senate to do everything possible to block this nefarious tax.

NORTHERN BENEFITS

Mr. Réginald Bélair (Cochrane—Superior): Madam Speaker, I would like to present seven petitions under Standing Order 36 in which the petitioners call upon Parliament to reject the report of the task force on tax benefits for northern and isolated areas.

The petitioners are residents of my riding of Cochrane—Superior, namely from the town of Hornepayne, Ontario which is situated 100 kilometres north of Highway 17 and some 500 kilometres from the town of Thunder Bay. Along with Manitouwadge, it is the most isolated community in my riding below the 51st parallel.

On average, food and gasoline prices are 25 per cent higher than any heavily populated city of Canada. This tax benefit is the only compensation these people have and should not be taken away.

On behalf of the 527 petitioners who rely on this tax I must reiterate the importance of this tax deduction to northern communities.

The government is presently studying the report. It is imperative that it rejects the recommendations of that report in its entirety.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise to table a petition signed by numerous residents of the province of Newfoundland concerning the goods and services tax.

The petitioners note that the government has imposed 31 tax increases already since September 1984. They are opposed to this tax and say it will cause serious and unfair hardship for low and middle income Canadians, in particular. It will create an onerous burden on small businesses in Canada.

For those and for many other reasons these petitioners pray and call upon Parliament to reject the goods and services tax proposed by this government.

* * *

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

(Questions answered orally are indicated by an asterisk.)

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Madam Speaker, the following questions will be answered today: Nos. 267 and 289.

[*Text*]

STUDIES OR AGREEMENTS WITH PROVINCE OF QUEBEC WITH REGARD TO PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF A LOCK FOR PLEASURE CRAFT ON THE RIVIÈRE-DES-PRAIRIES

Question No. 267—**Mrs. Gibeau:**

Has the Government undertaken or participated in any (a) environmental (b) legal (c) economic (d) costing studies or any agreement with the Province of Quebec with regard to the proposed construction of a lock for pleasure craft on the Rivière-des-Prairies where it is bounded along its south shore by the constituencies of Bourassa-Ahuntsic and Anjou—Rivière-des-Prairies and along its north shore by Duvernay, Laval and Laval-des-Rapides and, if so (i) what are they, (ii) is the government prepared to make them public?

An Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Industry, Science and Technology): Insofar as the Department of Industry, Science and Technology is concerned, the response is as follows:

The federal government, under the Canada-Quebec Subsidiary Agreement on the Economic Development of the Regions of Quebec, in cooperation with the province of Quebec, commissioned a study on the possibility of opening up the Des Prairies River. This study focused on the project costs, commercial feasibility and economic costs/benefits, without considering the environmental aspect in any great detail. Before considering publication of the said study, the Management Committee of this Sub-Agreement intends to submit its recommendations to the Ministers responsible for the Sub-Agreement.

NUCLEAR REACTORS IN CANADA

Question No. 289—**Mr. Caccia:**

For each nuclear reactor currently operating in Canada (a) does the government expect a particular method of de-commissioning to be used and, if so (i) which one (ii) at what estimated cost in 1990 dollars (iii) which agency is expected to pay this cost (b) is there an estimated cost of permanently dealing with high-level radioactive wastes and, if so (i) what cost (ii) estimated over what period of time (iii) using what method (iv) which agency is expected to pay this cost?

Hon. Arthur Jacob Epp (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Atomic Energy of Canada Limited reports as follows:

(a) (i)—(iii)

Each nuclear facility owner is required to submit a decommissioning plan to the Atomic Energy Control Board. The selection of a decommissioning method and the costs thereof are the responsibility of the nuclear facility owner. Substantial reactor decommissioning experience exists today. Since 1960, some 65 research, test and demonstration reactors world-wide have been decommissioned.

For the prototype nuclear facilities decommissioned by AECL, a method of long term isolated, secured storage for the reactor system has been used. All active process materials are removed from the system and then the reactor containment building is sealed and secured for a period of about 50 years. During this period, radioactive decay will very substantially reduce the radiation fields present when final decommissioning is subsequently carried out, making the work easier and safer. Most of the nuclear facility area outside of the reactor contain-

ment building can be cleaned and reused immediately. This includes the administration buildings, most of the service area and the turbine hall. Based on experience, through the decommissioning of the Nuclear Power Demonstration (NPD) reactor in Ontario, and the Douglas Point (Ontario) and Gentilly (Quebec) prototype power reactors, typical costs for this method would be expected to be about $30M (1990) for a commercial power reactor. The cost of final decommissioning after the 50 year radioactive decay period is estimated at $60M (1990). Potentially, the site would then be used for a new nuclear facility.

It is expected that the utilities would follow this practice. The utilities are already charging a small amount in the power bills, which is being accumulated with interest, to cover the cost of decommissioning. This amounts to 1 percent or less of the price of electrical energy produced.

(b) (i)—(iv)

In 1981, the governments of Canada and Ontario announced the review process for the concept of deep geological disposal of nuclear fuel waste. The process provides for regulatory and public hearings before site selection for a disposal facility begins. The governments stated that no site selection would proceed until after the concept had been approved. However, conceptual design studies related to site selection and the construction and operation of a disposal vault are being addressed. These are conceptual in nature and deal with reference situations with respect to both schedule and cost. No firm schedule or costs exist at this time. Accurate estimates can only be given when a specific site is selected and an actual vault designed.

Although no nation has yet disposed of its used fuel permanently, there is considerable experience in a number of areas related to disposal, e.g. mining, immobilization, packaging, transportation. Costs of a reference disposal vault including design, construction, commissioning, operation, transportation, decommissioning, and other activities have been estimated. Ontario Hydro has estimated that disposal of all used fuel from Pickering, Bruce, Darlington, and a future Darlington-type station could be carried out at a cost of $8.5 billion (1988 dollars), expended over a period of 80 years. These costs are estimated to be 5.1 percent of the levelized unit electrical energy cost (LUEC), of a future Darlington-type station.

This estimate is consistent with cost estimates of International Atomic Energy Agency member countries, whose estimates range from 2 to 10 percent of electricity production costs. The Ontario Nuclear Cost Enquiry has noted that there is no practical way of checking the validity of Ontario Hydro's cost estimates at this time. Nevertheless, the Enquiry points out that, although the expenditures will be high when they are incurred, they comprise a very small portion of the levelized unit electrical cost, because of the long time-frame involved.

Canadian nuclear utilities include a charge in customer billing to cover future costs of nuclear fuel waste disposal.

[*English*]

Madam Deputy Speaker: The questions as enumerated by the parliamentary secretary have been answered.

Mr. Cooper: Madam Speaker, I ask that all remaining questions be allowed to stand.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Shall the remaining questions be allowed to stand?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

INCOME TAX ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill C-52, an act to amend the Income Tax Act and related acts, as reported (with amendments) from the Standing Committee on Finance.

Hon. Shirley Martin (for the Minister of Finance) moved that the bill be concurred in.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

An Hon. Member: On division.

Motion agreed to.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Martin (on behalf of the Minister of Finance) moves that the Bill be read for the third time and carried.

Mr. Pierre H. Vincent (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, I would like to express the government's support for Bill C-52, which the Finance Committee reported to this House on the 7th of this month.

Bill C-52 constitutes a revision of the regulations governing retirement savings providing entitlement to a tax advantage, such as registered pension plans, deferred profit sharing plans and registered retirement savings plans. By setting out the objectives of tax advantages more clearly, this reform makes it possible for Canadians to accumulate a reasonable income for their retirement years.

With your permission, Madam Speaker, I would like to point out that the proposed measures are added to other reforms carried out previously to meet the need to promote retirement income security for our population. This, in a nutshell, is the proposal: Improvements in the benefits payable under the Canada Pension Plan and the spouse's allowance program; amendments to the contribution rates to guarantee the funding of the Canada Pension Plan; major improvements in the minimum contribution standards governing private pension plans, including particularly a shortening of the benefit purchase period and an improvement of the benefits to be paid to the surviving spouse.

This reform of the tax regulations is important because the present ceilings on tax assistance for retirement savings are not structured so as to help Canadians provide for an adequate retirement income. They vary widely depending on one's employment status; there is hardly any possibility of compensating for the loss of savings during past years; and, finally, it allows certain taxpayers to obtain excessive tax benefits by using various tax planning techniques.

The measures proposed in Bill C-52 deal with these problems directly. They provide for a standard ceiling equal to 18 percent of earnings, up to a maximum number of dollars. This uniform ceiling applies to all types of retirement savings with a tax benefit, whatever the plan or combination of plans.

They make it possible for taxpayers to use RRSP contributions to complement the savings they build up in employer-sponsored retirement plans—again up to the 18 percent ceiling. This uniform ceiling is therefore accessible to all Canadians, whatever their employment status.

By making it possible to carry unused RRSP contributions over for 7 years, they give Canadians a better chance to compensate for losses of savings sustained in previous years.

Finally, they are more equitable and provide for better cost control because they eliminate a number of tax planning mechanisms which allowed high income individuals to obtain excessive tax benefits.

The members of the Finance Committee have thoroughly studied the measures proposed in Bill C-52. They also heard a large number of witnesses and held consultations with labour organisation representatives and pension plan specialists. Following this consultation process, the Committee suggested a number of major changes in both the Bill and the regulations. Those changes were meant to simplify some of the legislative measures and to give plan administrators more flexibility in improving benefits and in offering additional pension entitlements in the case of family related leave or early retirement due to plant closures.

• (1120)

On June 7 last, before this House, the Minister for Privatization and Regulatory Affairs expressed the government's commitment to amending the first draft of the Income Tax Regulations to make it possible to implement the changes recommended by the Finance Committee.

On behalf of the Minister for Privatization and Regulatory Affairs, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the members of the Standing Committee on Finance for the diligent manner in which they conducted their detailed examination of a lengthy and complex piece of legislation.

You will undoubtedly allow me to point out, Madam Speaker, that the tax payers of the electoral riding of Trois-Rivières are anxiously awaiting this Bill, which provides for a major improvement of pensions in Canada and for the best possible combination of different pension plans.

In closing, Madam Speaker, I would point out that the examination performed by the Finance Committee followed a lengthy period of development and consultation concerning these important measures to improve the security of Canadians' income.

I hope that the Members will see fit to adopt this Bill, which is necessary and important for all Canadians, as rapidly as possible.

[*English*]

Mrs. Diane Marleau (Sudbury): Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak in favour of Bill C–52. I must be very honest and say that it is not a perfect bill. There are many problems with trying to correct inequities within the pension field, but I feel that this bill will right some wrongs and therefore I can say, as the lead speaker for the Liberals, we will support the bill.

Bill C–52, as amended, is designed to correct the inequities of the existing tax system which treats retirement savings for people who are members of the defined benefit pension plan differently from those for members of, for instance, deferred profit–sharing plans, and differently again from the ordinary self–employed Canadian or the employee whose company does not offer a pension plan at all.

This bill will also eliminate excessive and unintended tax deferrals. There have been, over the past few years, some loopholes, so to speak, which have allowed some very high income earners to use the tax system to accumulate very lucrative forms of pension. We feel that these loopholes must be closed. This bill addresses these loopholes and will prevent any further abuse of the system, we hope.

The objective of the tax reform in Bill C–52 is to ensure, with reasonable limits, fair and consistent access to tax assistance for retirement savings to encourage increased private savings now to meet pension needs in the future. We all agree that the current system is in need of revision and has been for some time.

Bill C–52 and its proposed system, as originally introduced in the House of Commons, needed a great deal of study. At the finance committee, we heard numerous witnesses, gave the bill much thought, and come up with a very different bill which is being considered today. The bill has been amended. There is an agreement to draft regulations that will implement all the suggestions that the finance committee has made. The finance committee and all parties worked together co–operatively to bring about perhaps the best bill possible at this time.

In the past, the system of pensions in place in the past was simple. The only tax reporting was for employee pension contributions, deferred profit–sharing pension contributions, and RRSP contributions. There were no carry forwards. If one did not use up to one's RRSP limit in one year, one lost it.

The present pension regime is very inequitable. All non–contributory defined benefit plans are treated equally, regardless of how generous benefits are, as are all contributory defined benefit plans. Therefore, employees with very poor pensions and employees with very rich pensions all were able to contribute $3,500 to RRSPs according to their income. However, an employee with a poor 1.25 per cent contributory plan with a 5 per cent contribution earning $35,000 was restricted to an RRSP contribution of $1,750.

The proposed legislation attempts to right this inequity. I have talked about some abuses of the present pension system and we have all heard terms such as "flip–flop", "double–dipping", "off–side plans", and "designated plans"—a host of loopholes that benefited very high income earning people. We have absolutely no objection to high income earners preparing for retirement with a very high pension, but we object to them having tax assistance to do so. All people have to be treated equally with regard to tax assistance up to a certain level. If one wishes to have a better pension plan, then one is free to invest one's money, but after tax.

Canadians with company pension plans and those without will be given more equal treatment when it comes to saving for retirement. About two out of every three private sector workers do not have corporate plans, or about six million people out of a total workforce of 14 million. Currently, people building pensions only through RRSPs do not get the same tax assistance as those with company plans. Bill C–52 enables those self–employed persons to have the same tax relief as those with employers to invest in pensions for them. This bill will equalize the treatment between these groups. That is the main purpose of Bill C–52.

There are two basic types of plans. The first, to which most pension plan members belong, is the defined benefit plan. A defined benefit plan means certain benefits are guaranteed upon retirement. There is a wide range of plans. A rich plan may guarantee upon reaching the age of retirement 60 per cent or 70 per cent of the average salary earned five years prior to retirement. A good defined benefit plan may have the pension fully indexed. Some have no indexation whatsoever. It all depends on the kind of plan. Basically, these plans give a guarantee of what one will get on retirement.

The other basic type of plan is a money purchase plan which has a defined level of contribution, but no fixed level of benefits. What one receives in the end depends on how well the investment of these funds has done. The legislation attempts to equalize all kinds of systems.

• (1130)

The current limits place many Canadians at a serious disadvantage in saving for retirement. This includes many of those who are dependent on RRSPs, a group which includes the self-employed and employees without pension coverage. We know that in Canada the small businessmen, self-employed people in small businesses, are the ones who create the largest number of jobs, especially in the last few years. It is the biggest growing sector in our economy.

It is extremely important that these average Canadians—and they are very average Canadians who are out there working very hard trying to earn a living—also have the opportunity to invest in a reasonable type of pension. In this case if you are self-employed, then it will be through RRSPs. You will also be able to benefit from a similar advantage upon retirement after 35 years.

It is especially important to make these changes to the pension system now while the baby boom generation ages and prepares for retirement. The present pension system with all its unfairness in retirement tax assistance is improved under Bill C-52.

In the next 40 years the percentage of Canadians over 65 will double to 30 per cent.

The new rules attempt to standardize by 1995 the amount of tax relief for retirement savings which a person can receive from the government by contributing to a pension plan, a deferred profit- sharing plan or to an RRSP. The proposal would set a uniform limit of 18 per cent of earnings that are eligible for tax assisted retirement savings.

One of the reasons for the 18 per cent is that if you invest 18 per cent of your wages over a 35-year period, you will be guaranteed roughly a 70 per cent return, or 70 per cent of your best three to five years of earnings in those five years. That is why the 18 per cent is used and not 20 per cent as is presently in place.

Most members of company pension plans will be able to contribute more money to their RRSPs under these changes. This bill, say many tax experts, goes a long way to correcting the unfairness and inflexibility of the current 13-year old pension system.

If individuals do not make their maximum RRSP contribution in a given year they will be allowed to carry forward for seven years these unused amounts. This will allow them to contribute more than the prescribed RRSP limit in one year, if they have under-contributed in a previous year. But pension income cannot be rolled over into RRSPs.

Why is there a seven year carry forward? It has been observed by the Department of Finance over the years that high-income Canadians are regular users of RRSPs over the course of their careers. However, the average taxpayer tends to concentrate RRSP contributions over the last 15 working years, which are particularly good economic years.

The average family in its early work life will save to buy a home and have a family, all extremely harsh economic realities which all families face. As the family ages, the children grow up. When the last few years of employment are reached, one may be in a better economic position. Children may have left home, or be self-supporting. The family home will probably be paid for. Therefore there will be more income to dispose of and one is more able to invest in RRSPs. That is the beauty of the seven year carry forward.

It will allow one to save that RRSP room, if one cannot make it this year or next year because a house was purchased. Perhaps four years from now one will receive a bonus and wish to use it to catch up on RRSP contributions. This can be done, thereby safeguarding

one's retirement years. Even though this may not always be done each year, there is a catch-up time.

Those who use RRSPs exclusively will have this seven year carry forward. Those who have pension plans ranging from poor plans to good plans will have in effect close to working lifetime carry forward periods. This provides a very positive incentive to establish even poor pension plans.

You have heard of the factor nine, Madam Speaker. There is quite a bit of controversy over the factor nine. The factor nine is a factor used to establish the value of the pension adjustment, an amount that will be shown on a person's T-4 slip. That in itself is what will give the person with a pension plan the amount of RRSP room that will be available for them to invest on a yearly basis.

If one has a poor pension plan, then clearly one will be better off dramatically because of the seven year carry forward. If one has a maximum pension plan, then one will be worse off. Those with average pension plans these will be considerably better off.

There is a form of rough justice. It is not perfect, and we are very much aware of that. It is felt that people contributing to pension plans under the age of 45 may be far more penalized in that their pension contributions before the age of 45 are not worth as much as what this pension adjustment will be. However, we are also very much aware that younger people tend not to take advantage of the RRSPs. The seven year carry forward will offset some of these disadvantages.

Under the pension reform in Bill C-52 very definitely the winners will be self-employed Canadians who do not belong to any pension plan at all. The winners will also be those who belong to very poor pension plans. They will experience the largest increase in RRSP contribution limits. The average Canadian is very much the one considered by this legislation.

I would like to describe the new RRSP limits proposed under Bill C-52. If you are not a member of a pension plan, currently you can contribute $7,500, or a maximum of 20 per cent of earned income to a registered pension plan. In 1991 this dollar limit will rise to $11,500, or 18 per cent of the previous year's earned income. The limit will then rise by $1,000 a year until 1995, when the limit will be $15,500 per year. After 1995, the limit will be indexed to inflation.

If the individual is a member of a contributory pension plan where both the employer and employee make contributions, you can currently put $3,500 minus your pension contribution into an RRSP. In 1991, you will be able to contribute up to 18 per cent of your earned income, or $11,500 minus this pension adjustment, or PA as it is called.

This pension adjustment will be a figure that is calculated for each individual by their employer. It will be put on their T-4 slip. The greater the benefits from the pension plan the larger will be the pension adjustment. This pension adjustment will also include a $1,000 tax free area so that people in a defined benefit plan will still be better off than those just investing in RRSPs.

If you are a member of a non-contributory pension plan where only the employer makes contributions, you are currently allowed to put up to $3,500 in an RRSP. In 1991, this limit will increase to $11,500, minus your pension adjustment.

• (1140)

If individuals do not make their maximum RRSP contribution in a given year, they will be allowed to carry forward for seven years these unused amounts. This will allow them to contribute more than the prescribed RRSP limit in one year if they under contribute in a previous year.

We know that pension reform has been long overdue. It has been put off for far too many years. I would like to point out some of the recommendations made by the parliamentary Task Force on Pension Reform set up by the Liberal government in 1983 and chaired by my predecessor, the member for Sudbury, the Hon. Doug Frith, which made the following recommendations.

First, it was recommended that people without pension plans be put on the same tax footing as people with pensions plans regarding RRSP limits. This has been addressed in Bill C-52.

It was also suggested that the existing system of RRSP tax deductions be converted to a fairer system of tax credits. This has not been implemented by Bill C-52, although the finance committee did study the implica-

tions of it. There was no easy answer. I will address this particular point as I go on with my speech this morning.

Third, it was recommended that a homemaker's pension be established and funded through the Canada Pension Plan and Quebec Pension Plan. That issue has not been addressed by this bill.

Fourth, the government should establish a 25-year contribution rate schedule for the CPP. Again, that has not been addressed by this bill.

Fifth, all private and public pension benefits should be indexed to some extent. Again, that has not been considered in this bill.

Some of these recommendations are not within the scope of this bill. Some others we will be looking into as quickly as possible.

In 1984 the then Liberal government in its budget proposed the very limits that are being proposed today because it was felt that it was only fair to allow the average Canadian to invest in an RRSP to ensure a pension at retirement.

In 1985 the present government promised pension reform. After announcing in the May, 1985 budget a new 1986 RRSP limit of $7,500 with further planned increases in the maximum RRSP contribution limits to 1990, in October of 1986 the finance minister announced that these future increases in RRSP limits were being changed. He announced that the maximum RRSP contribution limits for subsequent years would be lowered from what he had announced in 1985.

In June of 1988 before these changes could take effect the Minister of Finance announced that there would be a freeze in the maximum RRSP contribution limit for 1988, after which the maximum limit would rise to $8,500 in 1989; $10,500 in 1990; and rising by $1,000 a year until a limit of $15,500 was reached in 1995.

In August, 1988 the finance minister announced that these planned increases in the maximum RRSP contribution limit from $7,500 to $8,500 for 1989, which were announced in June of 1988, would be cancelled until after the election. In December of 1989 the government introduced the current pension reform legislation.

I have said that we do support this bill. We have some very serious fears in some areas where we feel that the legislation is perhaps not the best. Perhaps it is an issue of timing. The timing is wrong. We want to continue to support this bill. But we feel that the pension reform package and the goods and services tax, which will both take effect in 1991, will discourage consumer spending at a time when the economy is predicted to be slowing down. We wish that were not so. I would rather see the government withdraw the goods and services tax than withdraw Bill C-52.

Higher RRSP limits will encourage savings and discourage consumer spending. The GST will also discourage consumer spending and encourage saving. Both take effect at the same time.

This pension reform will benefit average and better off Canadians who are in a financial position to take advantage of RRSPs. Many social groups such as the National Council on Welfare and the Canadian Council on Social Development have stated that these tax savings for relatively well off Canadians are excessive.

In 1986, 61 per cent of individuals with incomes over $45,000 made RRSP contributions averaging $4,057, while only 28 per cent of tax filers with incomes between $1,500 and $30,000 made RRSP contributions, averaging $1,987. Clearly, the better off received the majority of the tax benefits from RRSPs. By "better off" I am talking about people who are just above being very poor. They make up the bulk of the taxpayers. They are the ones who help finance the social programs which help the poor. We must allow that group of people the right to save toward better retirement.

We must also consider the problems of the poor. We at the finance committee have suggested that we study the Canada Pension Plan within the next year. We think it is extremely important that we consider the position of poor people, but not to the exclusion of average Canadians.

Another problem in terms of the timing of this pension reform package is that at the same time the government is giving this RRSP tax break to average Canadians, it is also implementing the clawback of senior citizens' pensions, imposing the GST and cutting unemployment insurance for the unemployed. The net result is that the burden of deficit reduction is being shifted from the wealthy on to the backs of lower income Canadians and the unemployed. Those least able to pay are being forced to pay more.

That bothers me very much because we are really not fully indexing the old age pension. We are not fully indexing the family allowance benefits, we are clawing them back. At the same time we are recognizing that full indexation is needed with pension reform so that after 1995 the $15,500 limit will be fully indexed.

In actual fact this proposal reduces what low income Canadians can contribute to RRSPs. For example, a person currently earning $25,000 and not part of a company pension plan can now contribute up to 20 per cent of their income to an RRSP, or up to $5,000. Under the new rules this amount will be reduced to 18 per cent of income, or $4,500 in 1991, $500 less than before. So while someone earning upward of $35,000 will have RRSP contribution limits increased, low income Canadians will be able to contribute less to their RRSP than before this particular bill. That is the fact.

It is also a fact that low income Canadians find it very difficult to invest in RRSPs, especially when they start off in their careers. It is hoped that because of the seven-year carry forward they will be able to recoup some of this loss.

• (1150)

We realize it is not an absolute answer, but 18 per cent is very much on what a lifetime pension is based. Thus we must for the sake of all stick with this 18 per cent.

The tax proposal does not require the indexing of pension benefits for all private and public pension plans, as was recommended by the 1983 Parliamentary Task Force on Pension Reform.

Ninety-three per cent of all members of private sector pension plans have no indexation against inflation for their pension benefits. It would have been very nice had this bill been able to put in place that type of indexation, but I believe it is not within the scope of this bill.

RRSP tax deductions are an unfair way of distributing income because the tax benefit from a $1,000 RRSP contribution is larger for higher income individuals than for low income people. The fairer solution would have been to convert RRSP tax deductions into tax credits. Currently, the tax benefit from a $1,000 RRSP contribution provides a tax saving of $450 for a person earning $45,000. The same $1,000 RRSP contribution provides a tax saving of only $264 for someone with an income of $15,000. High income people save more in taxes because their marginal tax rate is higher.

Because of this unfairness caused by the deductibility of RRSP contributions, the 1983 Parliamentary Task Force on Pension Reform recommended that these deductions be converted into tax credits. With a system of tax credits the tax benefit from the $1,000 RRSP contribution would be the same for all taxpayers regardless of income. This would be a far more progressive and fair way of distributing the tax benefits from RRSP contributions.

The finance committee studied the implications of tax credits versus tax deductions. Consider, for instance, if we were to give a 26 per cent or 29 per cent credit to individuals. This would clearly benefit low income taxpayers with little or no adverse consequences for high income earners. However, the Department of Finance has estimated that such a move could add $1 billion annually to the costs. As you know, Madam Speaker, these are times of very strict budget controls. It is not at this time something that the government was prepared to recommend, nor was the finance committee prepared to recommend that at this time.

The recommendation of the finance committee is that it be studied so that perhaps a graduated percentage can be used. It has to be done in an economical way so that it does not cost the government gobs of money to implement.

We have asked the Department of Finance for a report on the possibility of changing tax deductions for retirement savings into tax credits. Included in this study would be the possibility of having more than one rate of tax credit, such as what is currently used for charitable organizations.

Under stage one of tax reform most deductions were converted into credits, a move that was supported by Liberals and social groups as being an improvement for the tax system.

Our present finance minister declared then that converting deductions to credits is a key element in achieving a fairer income tax system because credits give the same tax savings to all.

I know that an answer can be found when it comes to RRSP contributions. It must be found as quickly as possible.

Another problem is that Canadians will have to rely on their employers to calculate correctly a completely new number called the pension adjustment which will determine just how much they can contribute to their RRSPs. They may not have that figure as quickly as they would like, especially in the first few years. I believe that if most employees consult with their employers, they can be given a rough estimate of the amount of RRSP room they will have.

If they miscalculate in some way and are not given the total amount they would be allowed to invest in RRSPs, then because of the seven year carry forward they will be able to catch up that amount the following year. That will ease the transition. It would be far more serious if it were as it is today. That is to say, if you do not use it, you lose it. If, because we are not as comfortable with the new system as we should be, the wrong information is given out, then all is not lost. The following year you will have an opportunity to recoup.

One of the recommendations of the 1983 Parliamentary Task Force on Pension Reform was homemaker pensions. This is a very serious problem in Canada. It is a problem that by and large affects women. Women sometimes do take breaks in their careers. They do stay home. By and large, they are the ones who stay home and raise their children. They are often the ones who end up, perhaps, looking after an elderly relative. As a result, when they reach their retirement years they may have very little retirement income. It is a serious problem. It is a problem today when we look at many of our seniors, especially senior women who live on very, very low incomes. It is a problem that must be addressed.

This legislation does not set up a homemakers pension. I believe that the Canada Pension Plan people should definitely look into the matter. What this legislation does is allow that carry forward. For instance, say you have worked for 10 years and you could have invested in RRSPs but did not because you were interested in buying a house, buying furniture, getting established and then you start your family and leave the workforce. You would be able to carry forward those seven years of that RRSP room which you had not used in the last seven years of your work life. If you do not work for 10 years, then when you do go back to work you can have a substantial portion of that carry forward in order to invest in RRSPs when you do return to the workforce.

That in itself is very much an improvement over the *status quo*. I know that there are many women out there who will be pleased with this. Again, it certainly does not go far enough. I will be the first one to say it. I have no illusions.

We must as a government give serious consideration to implementing a homemakers pension so that these people who do provide a very essential service within the home, the family and the community have the chance to accumulate some kind of retirement income.

The other area that is not considered by this bill is retirement income for part-time workers. Again, these people who work part-time, sometimes for the better part of their lives, must also have a chance at a good pension plan. There has to be some answer for these people. This is not within the scope of the bill. I recognize that, but I hope that in future we can right that wrong also.

• (1200)

The government's proposed Bill C-52 really does not address the issue of portability of pensions. Again, that is an issue which has to be considered. Other than a few minor technical changes nothing in Bill C-52 improves the portability of pensions, that is the ability of individuals to transfer lump sums from one pension plan to another when they change employers.

The 1983 task force made several recommendations that would give employees the right to take their accumulated pension benefits with them when they move to a new job. That has not been addressed in this case.

During the course of the finance committee's hearings on the bill we heard much testimony about the complexity of Bill C-52. There is no doubt in my mind that this was and continues to be an extremely complex bill.

For example, in a brief to the committee from the Canadian Institute of Actuaries the following was stated: "The degree of complexity inherent in the proposed system introduces the following problems: the level of comprehension of the new system among retirement plan members may be quite low, particularly in the first

two or three years, thereby threatening the acceptability of the system by the public."

I am convinced the changes that have been made to Bill C-52 take into consideration a lot of that complexity. I think the bill has been simplified to a very large degree, and I think that is extremely important.

The finance committee's eighth report to the House has tried to simplify the legislation to address most of these concerns. We as a Liberal Party want something in place, and that is why we are supporting this bill.

The eighth report has been tabled, so I do not want to go through the full report. I believe anyone who wishes to read it may do so and will realize that some of the suggestions in Bill C-52 have been totally removed, such as pension adjustment reversal. That would have included in the bill an extremely huge component of complexity. By removing these PARs from Bill C-52 I believe that we have by and large reduced the level of complexity of the bill.

This bill definitely will not satisfy everyone, but we felt that by removing some of the complexities of the bill we were making the legislation simpler. We are leaving a certain amount of rough justice in the bill, and I believe that it important.

It is important that we have a pension bill which is easier to understand and easier to administer. It is always extremely difficult when one adds reams of complexities. It becomes an accountant's dream come true but an administrator's nightmare. We want to keep that nightmare down as much as possible.

Let me end by saying that I sat on the finance committee dealing with this bill. The huge amount of co-operation among all parties made me believe in this parliamentary system. I believe the finance committee should often, and perhaps at all times, work in this co-operative manner for the good of Canadians.

I realize that this was an impossible task for the committee when we were dealing with the GST legislation, but it felt very good to be able to work as a group with this particular piece of legislation and to add as many changes as we felt were feasible, with the co-operation of all parties and with the finance officials.

We as a Liberal Party are aware that it is not a perfect bill, but it is better to have an imperfect bill than to carry on the way we have for the last number of years. It was absolutely essential that we curb all excesses and that we close those loopholes. The closing of those loopholes means that the changes this bill is bringing forward will in effect be revenue neutral.

It is important that we not impose harsher penalties on the economic system of this country and on deficit reduction. I am pleased to see that that is a part of it. Perhaps the timing of the bill is not right, but that is not the bill's fault. It may be the fault of other pieces of legislation before this House with which my party and I happen to disagree.

I will end by saying that we are supporting this bill.

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Madam Speaker, this bill in front of us this afternoon in fact is a piece of legislation which is tremendously important to people in the millions right across the country. We are going to see marked changes occur in the system by which the tax system of this country assists people to put money aside for pension purposes in the future.

I have to say that I am disappointed a minister has not come from the government to present this bill and to answer some of the criticism put forward from different directions since the final version of the bill was reported back to the House last week. I think some of those questions deserve answers. The correct and responsible people to be putting those answers forward are in fact members of the ministry of this Conservative government. It is very unfortunate that they are not here to meet those responsibilities.

The finance committee which has looked carefully at this bill reported back some changes the government agreed to accept. They were the consequence of significant negotiation between the finance committee and the Department of Finance. As members of the finance committee, many of us are here to take part in this debate today, but it has to be said very clearly that many of the points we wish to see brought forward as a finance committee had to be moderated in the negotiation with the Department of Finance because of its strong views with respect to this legislation.

If indeed it had been the finance committee itself which had been drafting this piece of legislation, it would have been a different piece of legislation than that which is before the House at the moment. This again puts the onus on the ministers responsible to be here to defend

this legislation and its many important ramifications for those receiving pensions, those contributing to pensions, those contributing to RRSPs and so forth in the years ahead in Canada.

• (1210)

The NDP has three main criticisms with respect to Bill C–52. The first and most basic criticism is that back in the 1960s we started in Canada to put in place the Canada Pension Plan, a plan which would be organized as pension plans are in so many other countries in the world through the public governmental system of this country. This would permit people to contribute throughout their working lives. Regardless of where they worked, whether they worked for someone or were independent small business owners, they could contribute to that plan. If they moved from job to job they could still contribute. There would be no cost for moving from one place of employment to another. There would be no cost in deciding to open a small business for a period of time and then coming back into the workforce. The Canada Pension Plan was something which would give people a pension to which they could contribute under any circumstance and in which they could accumulate benefits on a consistent continuing basis from year to year regardless of their circumstances.

Instead of recognizing the significance of the Canada Pension Plan initiative in the 1960s as the basis on which to move forward, with this approach to pension reform the government decided instead to take the Registered Retirement Savings Plan deductions available to people in the tax system and mesh this tax break with the private pension plan system in the country: registered retirement plans which take the form of defined benefit plans, money purchase plans, and profit sharing plans. There would be an heroic attempt to mesh together these different systems.

Inevitably in the process there have been some serious problems, difficulties, and inequities created. Although the finance committee has tried to improve upon them, we have certainly not been able to come up with anything close to effective and comprehensive answers to the ridiculous complexities and inequities created by the RRSP system, which in many respects should be the tail of the much larger pension dog. Instead in this approach we have the tail of the pension dog wagging the whole system. We have the RRSP system and the need to make some kind of fair access to it for people in different circumstances in respect of private pension plans. We have that goal shaping what happens to the broad pension plan system. In the process, we miss the fact that we had a basic Canada pension plan system that could and should have been expanded. Therefore it would have given a system of portability and indexing that responds to Canadians and which would have been straightforward, fair and the same for people regardless of whether they were in small businesses in good parts of the economy or in declining parts of the economy.

The Canada Pension Plan would have provided fairness and equity. Also, it would have given a level of retirement earnings to people across the country once they were outside the workforce. This would have provided security for them once they faced older age. That is not the approach which is taken.

The other thing an approach relying on the Canada Pension Plan would have done is what has happened in Quebec, for instance.

[*Translation*]

One can see in the province of Quebec that a public savings system has created a large fund to promote development within the province. The Quebec Deposit and Investment Fund, for example, is a product of the public pension plan.

[*English*]

This kind of approach, which would have given us funds created through pension plan creations and contributions, would have given us a basis for really promoting economic development fairly and effectively throughout the country. We have missed that, too, by the fact that this approach to pension plans and pension reform has not made the Canada Pension Plan the central part or central concern of pension reform.

Our second broad criticism is that Bill C–52 gives most of its benefits to relatively well–off Canadians. It does so by expanding the RRSP contribution limit from $7,500 a year to $15,500 per year for those outside a pension plan. It is true that this higher limit is phased in until 1995. In 1995, the projections are that it will be at a level of 2.5 times the average industrial wage, which is in fact a lower

level than was the case in the past for maximum RRSP contributions.

Nevertheless, it is a significant increase in benefits to those making between $40,000 and $80,000 per year. The cost of these improvements to those relatively well-off Canadians comes first from eliminating something with which we agree, a series of abuses by high income earners in our pension system. I will talk more about that later. I will talk more about that later, Madam Speaker.

• (1220)

Second, the cost of these improvements for better off Canadians also comes from a reduction in the amount of RRSP contribution which is possible for some existing pension plans in which there are high employer contributions and low employee contributions. For example, the telecommunications workers' union in British Columbia will see their members lose from $1,000 to $2,000 per year in potential contributions to RRSPs.

It does not make sense to see losses for lower income Canadians such as those in the telecommunications workers' union in B.C. coming at the expense of benefits going to those high income earners who are going to receive these extra benefits from the significant increase in RRSP limits. That cannot make sense if we are talking about improving equity in the pension reforms that are before this House.

Finally, the last crucial criticism we make of this legislation is that the rest of the income tax system now works on the basis of tax credits. Tax credits provide a benefit to those people who are low-income earners, which is just as important to them in dollar terms as the tax credit provides to higher income people. If you have deductions instead of tax credits, the consequence is that the person who benefits most is the person with the higher income who is in that higher tax bracket. Therefore, there is a bigger gain from the same amount of benefit because it is a deduction at a higher tax bracket.

Our party argued hard within the finance committee to move to a system of tax credits. This is what we have in the rest of the tax system now. It has been proved that it is not impossible to do. But in fact the Department of Finance was not prepared to give ground on this issue. They have agreed, and it is an important agreement which our finance committee has managed to achieve, to investigate this and come back with a report to the finance committee to see if there is some way of putting tax credits into effect in the future in the pension system. But it is something that should have been done before this broad set of pension reforms came into effect rather than as an afterthought.

There are improvements which our work in the finance committee managed to achieve. As originally drafted, the bill reduced significantly the possibility of trade unions bargaining for improvements in company pension plans through new collective agreements. We fought for and won changes in the regulations so that unions will have much more scope to bargain for such improvements.

For instance, the original bill blocked early retirement options in the case of plant closures or automation. We fought for changes to this and we were successful. Women were hit in the original bill by limits on the period of broken service for child rearing which they could take advantage of. These limits have been extended from five to eight years and made more flexible. This is another victory about which we feel good.

The original bill had a strong bias against defined benefit pension plans, the kind that most unions work out with their employers. These biases have been changed by simplifying administrative procedures, by increasing the amount of RRSP contributions that members of these plans can make in a number of cases and by making the rules clearer for pension portability.

Finally, we won commitments from the Department of Finance to examine tax credits for use in the future and also to look at how it is possible to use RRSP contribution space in a way that limits it for higher income earners in the future. We also won commitments from the finance committee to review the system in operation in three years and to examine how the Canada Pension Plan itself could be expanded in the future.

There are problems that remain but the last point that we would want to stress, is that this bill does plug some very important loopholes by which upper-income individuals were taking massive advantage of the tax system. We put pension maximums in place for higher income earners. A person with a $86,000 income will be able to

get 70 per cent of that as a maximum pension. You will not be able to go up to massive levels as in the past.

The current practice for many senior executives was to give themselves maximum RRSP room until close to retirement, then create a pension plan into which they could make retroactive payments. That double dipping is blocked.

We have blocked a number of important loopholes but we still do not have the pension reform system which our party envisions. We should have started, but did not start, in this case, from the Canada Pension Plan and which would have given us a chance to give portability, a chance to give fairness and a chance to give openness to every employee throughout this country.

I hope in the future that that is what we achieve in pension reform.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Phillip Edmonston (Chambly): Madam Speaker, I have been listening to my colleague, and I found him very eloquent and most interesting when he discussed the reform of the retirement pension system in Canada. I am always interested in knowing, when he talks about tax credits vs. deductions—I know that the government is carrying out a study to see how it could perhaps do one or the other, how it can use tax credits to reform pensions, but I would like my colleague to explain why, in the past, the government has objected to use a system which appeared much more progressive, more sensible, a system which, I can say it here in the House of Commons, is rational. Why has it refused until now to resort to a tax credit system? Secondly, if the government had objections to using such a system, what were they?

Those are my two questions, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex–Windsor): Madam Speaker, I agree with my colleague that it is difficult to understand why the government did not accept suggestions to have a credit system rather than a deduction system. But I think it may have had two reasons to do so. The first reply given by the government was that it was too complicated to grant credits rather than deductions. But I find that very difficult to believe, Madam Speaker, because we already have credits throughout most of our income tax system.

• (1230)

We have credits for charitable donations, and we also have credits for such things as the expenses of children attending university. We can continue with this part of our income tax system.

If it is not too complex for this part of our income tax system, I do not think it can be said, then, that it is too complex for our retirement pension system.

The other objection raised by the Department of Finance, to the effect that it may cost more than at present, is in my view very difficult to understand, considering that the credit system can be organized in such a manner as to give the same result for income as for expenditures, just as we have now with the deduction system.

I really do not think that this reply is acceptable. The Bill would need to be amended considerably to establish a system of credits, but then it has already been amended considerably in other areas. I believe it is possible to do the same thing with regard to the credits.

[*English*]

Mr. Howard Crosby (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Treasury Board): Madam Speaker, I want to put a brief question to the member for Essex—Windsor.

In his presentation, he mentioned the practice of double-dipping. This concept has provided difficulties over the years. I suppose there are arguments that might be made in favour of double-dipping. If a person has legitimately earned a pension and after retirement can provide services that have a specified value, it is proper that they make a claim for those services.

The case that we often find is where two payments are being made from the same source, particularly when that source is public such as the Government of Canada, and a person is receiving both a pension and a salary or fee for services.

However, one could argue that the combination of past government services and a fee or salary from the private sector is all right. If it is all right in those circumstances, why should the government not take

advantage of services from persons who have already retired and are receiving a pension?

I would like to ask the member for a more definitive statement from his point of view. Is he in favour of two payments being made to one person from the same source, whether that source is government or a private concern? If he is not in favour, does he think legislation should be enacted to prevent it?

Mr. Langdon: Madam Speaker, I appreciate the question. Frankly, one of the things which is a problem with pension legislation like Bill C-52, is that it has a special, complicated vocabulary all of its own. We spent hours in the finance committee talking about PAs and PARs and PSPAs and all sorts of other acronyms that I am sure left many people who were watching the committee completely confused. At times it left many of us as committee members completely confused.

Double-dipping, as used with reference to this bill and in discussing what the bill attempts, is a different issue than the one raised by the hon. member. The member has raised the question of whether somebody who has been appointed, for instance, to head the CBC or something like that, should be receiving a pension as, for example, for time spent as a member of Parliament. I could make some personal comments with respect to that. I cannot make a comment with respect to our party's position on it, so I would prefer to stick to the meaning which is dealt with in the bill itself.

In the bill itself, double-dipping refers to the practice whereby people make RRSP contributions to the fullest possible extent for the period of their working life. This tends to apply especially to the owners of corporations and businesses of various kinds. Having made those massive RRSP contributions which would not be possible if there had been a pension system in place in the operation previously, just before they are due to retire they create a pension system for the business. They make back payments which make it possible for them to receive, after they retire, both the complete benefits of a pension plan and the complete benefits of the largest possible RRSP contributions. They would not have been able to do that if the pension plan itself had actually been in effect all those years that they were making RRSP contributions.

• (1240)

This bill prevents that kind of back payment from taking place and therefore prevents double-dipping. It is in that sense that we very much support what is suggested in this bill.

Mr. Jack Whittaker (Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt): Madam Speaker, I would like to commence my little talk here today with a quote that I would like to expand on as I go along.

This quote comes from the Hon. Stanley Knowles, the former member of Parliament for Winnipeg North Centre, who stated in the House of Commons on November 9, 1964:

> What I like most of all about the Canada Pension Plan—about the two stage plan which we are now developing for Canadians in their years of retirement—is that we are trying to reach a position where we are providing pensions that are adequate—I do not suggest that the levels which will be achieved by combining the Canada Pension Plan, at its best, with old age security, at its present level, are really the last words in adequacy, but at least we are talking about pensions of quite a different order from that what seemed to be accepted a few years or decades ago. I hope that, having accepted the principle that retirement security should be on the basis of adequacy, we will go on improving that basis, finding means and ways of raising the levels of our pensions so that all Canadians can look forward to a retirement in decency and dignity.

I would suggest that what we have at present is a continuation of that thrust toward adequacy, decency, and dignity. I wonder whether in fact we are choosing the route that we should be taking when we look at the lower and middle income earners in Canada.

Personally, I have no objection to some form of registered retirement savings plan that all Canadians can benefit from by putting away some of their extra earnings now to be used at a future date. It ensures that they do not have to live in abject poverty and that they can live in some comfort in their older years.

However, I question the thrust we are going in. If this is pension reform that we have on the table before us, then I question the direction in which we are proceeding in that pension reform.

It seems to me and the New Democratic Party that we should be looking at more basic reforms that look at the adequacy of the Canada Pension Plan and reforms that look at ensuring that all Canadians, regardless of how much money they have in their younger years, can live at

least at the same level, or at a reasonable level, in their retirement years.

Can that be done through the present registered retirement savings plan? Certainly, if we look at the changes that are before us, we can see that in the present system those who have $7,500 in additional income at the end of any one year can put that money away for later years, tax-free for the time being. They can draw on that and pay the taxes perhaps at a lower income level. I do not have too many difficulties with the concept, but let us look at what we have in this bill.

The proposal is that in 1991 the registered retired savings limit will go up $4,000 to $11,500; in 1992 to $12,500, in 1993 to $13,500, in 1994 to $14,500, and finally in 1995 to $15,500. It is interesting to note that those who will be able to contribute the limit in 1995 of $15,500 are those who earn $83,111. How many people in Canada will be able to use that?

I would suggest that people with earnings in the $80,000 plus bracket have other means of investment, and can look after their retirement years without the necessity of looking at a program that allows them to defer even more taxation.

This brings me to another section of this bill, which drops the limit from 20 per cent to 18 per cent of earnings. Who does that drop help, or who does it hinder?

Dropping the earning limit to 18 per cent as the maximum which can be put in registered retirement savings plans again hits out at those in the lower and middle-income scales, those of us who make $30,000 or $40,000 and are able to take some of that money each year and invest it for our retirement. I would put an asterisk beside that because at some of those rates it is very difficult for a one-earner family to make a living, and support children and a spouse. However, if there was money left over at the end of that period time, if you were an excellent money manager and wanted to put in the maximum amount, we have seen the maximum amount eroded for those in the lower-income levels.

Where are we going with our legislation? Is this how we are going to look after the vast majority of people in Canada? I would suggest no, because perhaps 5 per cent of the people of Canada will benefit by the upper limits by 1995 of $15,500. Where is the fairness? Where is the equity for average Canadians? It is not within this bill. There are definite problems, I believe, with dropping that limit. It strikes out at the 95 per cent of wage-earners in Canada who do not have an $83,100 income and the ability to use the maximum. As I stated, it is those in the upper limits who really do not require that additional amount of money.

There is now a deferral system within the new legislation which allows contributions to be carried forward for seven years. I have said this in the past and I would like to repeat it. On the surface, it appears this is and can be a provision that can be used reasonably by Canadians who, perhaps, one year through some particular problem within their own employment area have had an income drop and they have the ability to carry forward. However, once again for the most part, this is a provision that can be used most beneficially by those in the higher income brackets.

It is not hard to imagine a person in a higher income bracket finding an investment opportunity to invest part of the money he would normally put into a Registered Retirement Savings Plan. He invests that money because, for one reason or another, he can get a higher return on it than he can deferring his $15,500 in tax through the Registered Retirement Savings Plan and the following year or years he then takes the money, adds on, and receives the tax deferral. I would suggest that this will be of limited benefit to lower and middle-income Canadians.

• (1250)

I cannot emphasize strongly enough that to benefit the majority of Canadians, the thrust of pension reform must be through a proper reform of the Canada Pension Plan. Then all Canadians, regardless of the amount they earn during their working years, can live with some dignity and comfort, as was stated by Stanley Knowles in the House of Commons in 1964.

Would it not be nice to be able to have a Canada Pension Plan system in place that allowed all Canadians a reasonable income of one-half of their earnings throughout their lifetime. This is not beyond our grasp. If it is something that we as parliamentarians want and set as a priority, I would suggest that it is within our grasp, something that is attainable.

All Canadians deserve to be treated reasonably and fairly in their declining years. As the population curve for seniors goes up, we know that across Canada 11 per cent of our population are over 65 years of age. The projections show clearly that will be doubled within approximately 30 years.

From my own personal experience in the riding of Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt, there are pockets of population within Canada where the seniors' population is sometimes triple the national average. People cluster together. People go to areas that are easier on them in their old age. As we go on into the next 30 years, these people need some assurances that there will be something to assist them in their declining years, not simply because they have had the good fortune to be high income earners—some of the 5 per cent—but because we as Canadians are willing to assist each other with our equalization payments.

We are proud Canadians. We are proud because we have through history assisted and helped each other. We have the start of a system that can be second to none, but we need the political will to proceed with that system and to do exactly what I have stated. Let us give seniors and our own generation some hope for the future, some hope for that dignity, some hope for that decency, some hope for that equality in the retirement years.

Let me move on to some of the other measures within the bill and some of the problems about which other people have spoken.

In a news release on June 8, 1990, the Telecommunications Workers Union talked about the legislation and emphasized that the only people who will be helped are the higher income earners. Mr. Larry Armstrong, president of that union, stated in that release:

> There is no good reason for this legislation. It will harm pensions plans. It will harm individual Canadians. It will make our prospects of adequately taking care of an increasingly older population much more bleak. The only clear beneficiary will be the government treasury.

He goes on to state:

> Starting in 1991, if this bill passes, Michael Wilson knows that he no longer will have to give millions of Canadians as much tax relief for saving for pensions. This could well add up to billions of dollars of tax revenue for the government.

Mr. Armstrong tells us further that the minor changes recommended by the chair of the finance committee will not undo the terrible damage this legislation will create.

A recent article on the pension bill in the *Financial Post* stated that actuaries were opposed to the provisions which are before the House today. In the article it states that they:

> —object to the committee's proposal to drop provisions known as pension adjustment reversals (PARs) to simplify the new rules.
>
> The legislation reduces individual registered retirement savings plan limits if the worker is part of a corporate pension plan. The formula used to reduce the RRSP limit is called a pension adjustment (PA).

The article quotes pension consultants at William M. Mercer Ltd. as saying:

> —the proposal means young people who switch jobs lose retirement savings opportunities. They said some measure must be adopted to reflect the age of a pension plan member.

The amendments proposed by the finance committee make matters worse. "If PARs, pension adjustment reversals, are dropped, pension adjustment must be adjusted by age. The amendment approach is a disaster", states vice-chairman, Robert Dowsett, of William M. Mercer Ltd.

Another Canadian Press release of June 8 states:

> —one pension expert said last-minute amendments have turned the legislation into a disaster for younger workers who may change jobs several times during their careers.

The article quotes Mr. Mercer as stating that because the bill no longer lets people increase their RRSP contributions to make up for lost pension benefits when they change jobs that this particular section is a disaster.

It appears that there are many difficulties with this legislation. The difficulties are not simply in some of the things that the pension adjustment people have pointed out. I would suggest part of the problem is the complexity of the terms and conditions within the bill.

How do we, the average wage-earner in Canada, look at these bills and find out how they are going to affect pension plans that we have within our unions, within our companies or, for that matter, carry forward some of the provisions within the bill. How is the bill going to affect us, the average wage-earner?

I would suggest that many of us legislators do not fully understand all of the implications and provisions of this bill. In looking at what some of the experts have said, it is obvious they feel that this is a disastrous bill. The complexity is one of the things that has been criticized by tax experts and adjusters.

How are we, the average wage-earners, going to find out where we should go? We are going to have to pay out more of our hard earned income to go to tax experts to have them tell us how we can best use this bill, how we can invest for our future, instead of having a simple system of deductions for Canada Pension Plan.

That is the route we should be going in the future, a look and a review of the basic Canada Pension Plan so that all Canadians, regardless of income, can live their ancient and dying years in comfort.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I thank the hon. member. After Question Period we shall proceed with a period of questions and comments relating to the speech.

It being one o'clock, I do now leave the chair until two o'clock this day.

At 1 p.m. the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S. O. 31

[*English*]

MEMBERS-PAGES ANNUAL BASEBALL GAME

Mr. Doug Fee (Red Deer): Madam Speaker, a parliamentary tradition was fulfilled last night when the pages met the MPs on the ball diamond.

It was a hastily organized match that even required assistance from *Hansard*. We forgot the need for bats and balls, but Bob Allen from *Hansard* was there with what we needed.

The MPs spotted the pages an average of 25 to 30 years. It was a classic match of experience versus youth and enthusiasm. All three political parties were represented, and the outcome proved that when we in this House co-operate, play by the rules and work together, the outcome will be obvious.

The MPs broke tradition and easily defeated the pages. We won in more ways than on the field. We got to know a few of the pages better, and the more I know of these young Canadians the more impressed I am. They have served this House well during the past year, and they have proven to be a credit to themselves and to this country.

We owe them our gratitude. I thank them for their sportsmanship, their patience, their sense of humour and for being young Canadians of whom we can all be proud.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

* * *

FREE TRADE

Hon. Ralph Ferguson (Lambton—Middlesex): Madam Speaker, the Prime Minister told Canadians that free trade would mean lower prices for consumers who would save $800 a year as tariffs were removed on manufactured products. Now, consumers are being told by the government that, with the GST, they can expect the cost of manufactured goods to drop 6.5 per cent.

I have a list of prices for manufactured goods such as washers, springs, flanges, saw blades and so on covering 1988-90 which shows the Canadian consumer was sold a bill of goods on free trade as prices have increased on an average of 5.2 per cent while tariffs have decreased by 2.3 per cent.

With free trade, consumers called for independent monitoring of prices to ensure the consumer benefit. The government said the market will take care of it. The market players did take care of themselves.

Now with the GST, the government is again ignoring consumers' calls for an independent monitoring to ensure savings between the MST and GST are passed on to consumers. Again, the government says the market will take care of it, meaning that the market players will take care of themselves.

It is time this government took care of the taxpayer, instead of taking care of only big business.

S. O. 31

[*Translation*]

NATIONAL ACCESS AWARENESS WEEK

Mr. Gilles Bernier (Beauce): Madam Speaker, since this is National Access Awareness Week and also International Literacy Year, I would like to emphasize the importance of providing literacy training for people with functional disabilities.

In a rapidly changing world, where competition is becoming increasingly fierce, it is a foregone conclusion that education is more important than ever before.

A good education offers better employment opportunities. It opens the door to a whole new world of ideas, to new knowledge and skills that will help the individual realize his full potential.

However, for some disabled persons, access to education may be limited due to the very nature of a functional disability that makes it harder for them to learn to read and write.

Since this is International Literacy Year, Madam Speaker, I urge those who work with the disabled and are involved in teaching to join forces, in order to adapt literacy training to students with special needs and thus give them a chance to take full advantage of the opportunities that come their way.

* * *

CITY OF LAVAL

Mr. Vincent Della Noce (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Revenue): Madam Speaker, last week, the three members from Laval—Guy Ricard, former member of the Laval executive, Jacques Tétreault, first mayor of Laval, and myself, a permanent resident of this beautiful city for 24 years, jointly tabled three bills aimed at changing the names of the ridings of Laval-des-Rapides, Laval and Duvernay.

Madam Speaker, today Laval, which consists of 15 former towns, celebrates its twenty-fifth birthday—25 years of love and friendship.

When I entered politics in 1984, Madam Speaker, believe it or not, the riding of Duvernay was designated as Montreal—Duvernay, which I had changed to Duvernay. I fail to see why the federal ridings still bear the names of former towns, and I am thinking of my own riding, Duvernay, which includes five of these former municipalities: Auteuil, Vimont, Pont-Viau, Saint-François, Saint-Vincent-de-Paul and Duvernay.

The new bills will substitute Laval East for Duvernay, Laval Centre for Laval-des-Rapides and Laval West for Laval.

These changes will make it easier for Laval residents to identify with their respective federal ridings.

Thank you, Madam Speaker, and happy birthday to all the people of Laval!

* * *

[*English*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Rex Crawford (Kent): Madam Speaker, over one year after the *Exxon Valdez* violated the Alaskan ecosystem with 270,000 barrels of oil, Canadians are still waiting for the report of The Public Review Panel on Marine Spills. The panel, announced by the Prime Minister last June, is all the more important while Petro-Canada courts disaster on the Grand Banks off Newfoundland.

PetroCan is drilling a wildcat well, but is unable to drill a relief well to contain a blow-out. An oil spill 32 times greater than the *Valdez* could occur without necessary emergency response. The chances of a spill from the well may be remote, but that is what they said about the Alaska tanker route during its years of safe operation. Until last March.

In the event of a major chemical or oil spill in the Great Lakes or on either coast, the Coast Guard, Transport Canada, the Auditor General and even the interim report on spills say that the government is not ready.

I urge the government to finalize the marine spill report so Canadians know that all plans and policies are in place for a disaster in our waters.

* * *

RADIO LICENCE FEES

Ms. Lynn Hunter (Saanich—Gulf Islands): Madam Speaker, in January, the government removed exemptions to radio licence fees for municipalities. The li-

cences cover radios used by emergency services such as ambulance, fire and police.

The new regulations which in effect downloads costs on to local governments have had an enormous impact in my riding. Municipalities from Saanich to Sidney are faced with increases of 400 to 1,400 per cent. This not only imposes an excessive tax on over-burdened municipal budgets, but clearly demonstrates this government's willingness to raise revenue at the expense of health and safety.

This creative bookkeeping may help the federal balance sheet, but it hardly meets the needs of taxpayers. Forcing another level of government to choose between public safety and reductions in other services may be the most cynical deficit-cutting move the Conservatives have attempted.

Once again, this government has failed to consult. It has failed to act in the interest of the people it is supposed to serve, and it has failed to admit an error and roll back the radio licence fees. On behalf of my constituents, I strongly protest this outrage.

* * *

FIRST NORTH AMERICAN INDIGENOUS GAMES

Mr. Willie Littlechild (Wetaskiwin): Madam Speaker, The "City of Champions", Edmonton, the Hobbema Four Nations and Enoch, Alberta, will host the First North American Indigenous Games from June 30 to July 8. I invite all members of this House to attend these historic games and encourage all their constituents to do likewise.

The games will open with a traditional Ceremonial Run from Wyoming, after elders offer prayers in our spiritual ceremonies. Todd Buffalo and Dennis Samson's rodeo will follow at the Penee AgriPlex in Hobbema on June 20.

Welcome to all those 3,000 plus indigenous athletes from North America and elsewhere who will be competing in these Olympic-style games. Events include archery, basketball, shooting, wrestling, soccer, track and field, volleyball, canoeing, boxing, lacrosse, a marathon, swimming, softball and golf. Welcome also to those who will be participating in the cultural events, which is the important centre of our way of life.

Thank you in advance to two brothers, Charles Wood and John Fletcher, the sponsors and the hundreds of volunteers who are making my dream come true. This is a good, positive contribution that will encourage indigenous youth all over to pursue excellence, whether it is physically, mentally, culturally or spiritually.

* * *

HOUSING

Mr. Joe Fontana (London East): Madam Speaker, this government's high interest rate policy is crippling the housing industry in this country and killing the hopes of thousands seeking affordable housing.

Housing starts and sales are down 40 per cent from last year. Thousands of construction workers and thousands of workers in related industries are losing their jobs.

Housing is a very important contributor to the Canadian economy and to our social well-being. It represents $43 billion and 670,000 person years of employment; that is 5 per cent of the total employment in Canada.

Housing is more than bricks and mortar, it is about people, young families, seniors and the physically challenged. This government, instead of telling Canadians "don't worry, be happy", should immediately reduce interest rates, scrap the GST and recommit itself to housing Canadians, especially the homeless and those on waiting lists for social and co-op housing.

Housing is not only good economic policy, it is good social and family policy and it is good environmental policy.

* * *

• (1410)

[*Translation*]

PARISHES OF ST. IGNATIUS LOYOLA, IN GIFFARD, AND ST. GREGORY'S, IN MONTMORENCY

Mr. Charles DeBlois (Montmorency—Orléans): Madam Speaker, in the life of every community, there are milestones that should be pointed out. This is the case for St. Ignatius of Loyola parish in Giffard, which is

proudly celebrating the 75th anniversary of its founding this week, and for St. Gregory's in Montmorency which throughout the year is celebrating its 100th anniversary.

Madam Speaker, I wish to pay tribute today to the builders of these two communities in the riding of Montmorency—Orléans who have laid the foundations for the economic and social development of their communities.

Now part of greater Beauport, these two formerly independent municipalities contribute actively to the development of Quebec's fourteenth largest city.

I want to thank the celebration organizers for their dedication. Thanks to them, the people of Giffard and Montmorency will have an opportunity to find in their past the values and examples that will help them ensure the future of their community and of the generations to come.

* * *

[*English*]

EMPLOYMENT

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Madam Speaker, last week Statistics Canada informed Canadians that 165,000 jobs were lost in the manufacturing sector last year. The Tory government's disastrous policies have claimed another victim. This morning, it was announced that Fruehauf Canada, this country's largest trailer manufacturer, is closing its Brantford plant, resulting in a loss of 334 direct jobs and as many as 1,500 indirect jobs. It is quite clear that a trio of Tory policies are directly responsible for this closure: free trade, deregulation and high interest rates.

In 1988, United States freight companies hauled about 15 per cent of all freight in Canada. This year that will rise to 60 per cent. The result is that Canadian manufacturing jobs are being lost and Canadian industries are being killed off.

Quite clearly, the level playing field promised by the Mulroney government is anything but level. Equally as clear is the fact that the government's free trade deal, its blind drive to deregulate and its policy of squeezing out Canadian jobs with high interest rates are killing the Canadian manufacturing sector.

[*Translation*]

SENATE REFORM

Mr. Mark Assad (Gatineau—La Lièvre): Madam Speaker, I was very surprised to learn that the leader of the Parti Québécois in the National Assembly, Jacques Parizeau, prefers appointing senators to electing them. It is especially surprising given the opinion of former Quebec Premier René Lévesque that the Senate should be abolished.

For many years, at least twenty, Madam Speaker, Quebecers like Canadians from coast to coast believed that the Senate needed to be thoroughly reformed, not totally abolished.

Therefore the arguments the leader of the Parti Québécois is making in the National Assembly to Premier Bourassa are directly opposed to what Canadians and Quebecers want on the question of Senate reform.

* * *

[*English*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Patrick Boyer (Etobicoke—Lakeshore): Madam Speaker, these days just about everyone is an environmentalist and that is a very good development.

It is also important to be an informed environmentalist. A lot of members of parliament, broadcasters, journalists, and others, quite often refer to aerosol sprays as containing CFCs. I know, because a lot of these products are made in Etobicoke—Lakeshore.

Since 1976 industry itself has been phasing out the use of chlorofluorocarbons or CFCs as propellants in aerosol sprays. In fact, only a small number of aerosol sprays, those that are used in prescription pharmaceuticals, which are less than 5 per cent, are still used in Canada.

Within the next two weeks, regulations will be promulgated under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act which will further solve this problem by closing off any remaining imports of aerosol sprays with CFCs.

THYSSEN–BEAR HEAD INDUSTRIES

Mr. Francis G. LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso): Madam Speaker, Canada has always been recognized around the world as an international peacekeeper. We have the prospect of being a world leader in environmental technology. There is a project before the government that can support both objectives.

Thyssen–Bear Head Industries has proposed to provide our Armed Forces with a modern multi–purpose vehicle for use in peacekeeping and other defence–related activities. In addition, it promises to bring to Canada access to German environmental technology that is state of the art and in use across Europe.

Thyssen–Bear Head Industries, therefore, could be a vehicle by which Canada becomes a world environmental leader. Moreover, Thyssen–Bear Head, along with Scotia Synfuels, offers two of the most promising industrial opportunities for the Strait of Canso area, an area where lasting jobs are urgently needed. We have the facilities: a world–class superport and excellent industrial training centres. Our skilled tradespeople are second to none.

I have spoken before in support of the Thyssen–Bear Head Industries project and the economic benefits it would provide in eastern Nova Scotia. I want to express this support again.

I urge the Canadian government to act soon to enable this project, which has been in abeyance since 1988, to go forward.

* * *

UKRAINIAN CANADIANS

Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Madam Speaker, few Canadians know that between 1914 and 1920 thousands of Ukrainian Canadians and other east Europeans were interned unjustly in 26 camps set up across Canada.

Subsequently tens of thousands more were designated as enemy aliens, disenfranchised, and subjected to various other discriminatory measures legislated by the Government of Canada. The property of many so–called enemy aliens was confiscated and never returned. This is a shameful episode in our history.

Today I met with the redress committee of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress. The Ukrainian Canadian Congress has joined with Italian, Chinese, and Japanese communities to form the National Redress Alliance.

The New Democratic Party supports the creation of a national redress commission to deal expeditiously and justly with these dark episodes in our history.

I call on the government to establish immediately such a commission to deal with the issues of Ukrainians and other groups which deserve a fair hearing for the injustices of the past.

* * *

EUROPEAN BANK FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Larry Schneider (Regina—Wascana): Madam Speaker, I would like to congratulate the government on its decision to participate in the newly formed European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. This bank will assist east bloc countries make the transition from socialist economies to free market economies.

I know that many people across Saskatchewan will welcome this effort to assist their friends and relatives in improving their lives. After 40 years of stagnation and repression it would be almost impossible for these nations to rebuild without help from the west. As well, Canadian participation in the bank will help to enhance the Canadian business access to commercial opportunities in eastern Europe.

I believe that despite our own difficult financial situation it would be short–sighted and inappropriate to ignore the plight of newly reformed democracies in eastern Europe.

* * *

CZECHOSLOVAKIAN ELECTION

Mr. Pat Sobeski (Cambridge): Mr. Speaker, the National Institute for International Affairs sponsored a delegation to observe the June 8 and June 9, 1990 Czechoslovakian election, the first truly competitive election since 1946.

I was pleased an invitation was extended to me to join this observer team. The delegation was led by U.S. Senators John McCain of Arizona and Chris Dodd of Connecticut. In addition to business representatives, parliamentarians from Panama, Hungary, Chile, Columbia, Australia, and other nations were present.

The election marked the culmination of a remarkable series of events that have transformed Czechoslovakia during the past seven months. The election demonstrated the vitality of Czechoslovakia's democratic culture and the country rejoining, at least in part, the European community to which it historically belonged.

We should also congratulate Elections Canada for contributing advice in the planning of the Czechoslovakian voting. Its guidance and assistance was noted to me by the Czech election committee.

I was most pleased to be invited to be a witness in this historic event. I saw a country that has now just ran the first yard of a 100-yard dash and, in their own words, Czechs and Slovaks acknowledge they have many hurdles yet to overcome.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[*English*]

MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister.

In his speech to the House yesterday, referring to his recent closed door marathon sessions with the provincial premiers, the Prime Minister said:

> This process has proven to be increasingly unsatisfactory in several respects and must be changed.
>
> There should, first and foremost, be ample opportunity for Canadians to participate in the process.

Yet, in an interview published today in *The Globe and Mail* referring to these recent seven-day marathon closed sessions he held with the provincial premiers, the Prime Minister said:

> That's the way it had to be done. You're asking me if I had any regrets? None whatsoever.

I ask the Prime Minister: How can Canadians take the Prime Minister seriously when one day he says he wants to change the process and the next day he says he has no regrets about it whatsoever?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Because, Mr. Speaker, there is no contradiction whatsoever. In regard to the process that we followed, it was a process that I inherited pursuant to both past practice and events that developed from the 1981-82 constitutional debates and negotiations here in Ottawa.

• (1420)

Yesterday I was speaking of my personal opinion in regard to this process, which personally I find unacceptable and I announced yesterday will be changed presumably by the House of Commons for all constitutional matters in the future.

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, our Constitution as adopted in 1982 does not require the sessions between himself and premiers on constitutional change to be marathon sessions, nor does it require these sessions to be held in secret. Certainly he was not bound by anything in that regard in our Constitution.

In the same interview in *The Globe and Mail* the Prime Minister, speaking of this meeting with the provincial premiers, said:

> I told (my advisers) a month ago when we were going to meet. It's like an election campaign; you count backward. I said: "that's the day we are going to roll the dice."

Yet, for weeks the Prime Minister left the impression with Canadians and with this House that he and Senator Murray were engaged in a difficult search for common ground as a prerequisite, as a basis for calling a First Ministers' Conference and not deliberately waiting until the last minute to call a First Ministers' Conference in order to roll the dice with the country possibly at stake.

I ask the Prime Minister: Why did he tell Canadians that he was trying to find consensus among the provinces before calling a First Ministers' Conference when he now admits that all he was doing was waiting until the last minute to roll the dice with the premiers? Is this the way the Prime Minister is really attempting to carry out national reconciliation and build the future of this country?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I do not know why the Leader of the Opposition is so offended. The process produced the signature of 10 premiers promoting the concept of a united Canada. I would have thought he would would celebrate that.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Mulroney: There is nothing very mysterious or sinister about the statement. When on May 11 I met with my advisers the first thing we had to look at was the entire schedule of commitments I had entered into as Prime Minister of Canada from June 23 leading back to May 11.

At that point in time this was the relatively fixed schedule that I faced. The Charest committee would report the end of the following week, and during that week there was a state visit of President Gonzalez of Spain. After the Charest report on May 17, Senator Murray would carry out consultations across the country with each premier. That took three days and had to be done before any calling of a conference.

My friend will remember that a House order had already been passed in regard to Bill C-43. Along with most members of the House I was here until late the night of May 23 with the report stage votes.

I began extensive meetings with each premier a day and a half later. They took place over four days from May 25 to May 28. These meetings were obviously necessary before convoking a full conference.

On the day of the last meeting, May 28, there was an official state visit to Ottawa by the Secretary General of the United Nations, and I had undertaken on behalf of all Canadians to speak at a state dinner in his honour in Toronto that night.

On the next day President Gorbachev of the Soviet Union arrived for May 29 and May 30.

Some Hon. Members: Time, time.

Mr. Mulroney: That left three days before the First Ministers' Conference. My hon. friend should be congratulating the Prime Minister of Canada for doing all that with his colleagues, representing Canada, and trying to bring Canada together with the support of all members of the House of Commons.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister did not give any of those explanations to the *Globe and Mail*. Why, in his interview with the *Globe and Mail*, did he only mention how he planned the process like an election campaign? There was no reference to the Prime Minister of Spain. Even though he said in the interview that he had no regrets about the methods used, will he give us a commitment today that he will seriously try to change a process everyone now says must be changed?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, of course I do not for a moment question what was reported by the *Globe and Mail* journalists. Certainly not! I said yesterday in the House that it was an outdated procedure that obviously needed to be changed. I announced yesterday that we intend to change the procedure to provide for more active participation by all Canadians before a new constitutional amendment is ratified.

The hon. member talked about methods. In 1981-82, we had a Constitution with nine provinces out of ten. I managed to get ten out of ten.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

* * *

[*English*]

ROUTE CANADA

Mr. Joe Comuzzi (Thunder Bay—Nipigon): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the House was advised that shortly after Route Canada failed there were charges laid under the Canada Labour Act.

We are not dealing here with employer-employee relations. We are dealing with over $21 million of taxpayers' and employees' trust money that was spent out of trust. Mr. Speaker, when money is spent out of trust by a company like Route Canada or Route Canada Enterprises, you can pierce a corporate veil and look to the directors of the company for reimbursement of those trust funds.

I ask the Minister of Transport to pierce the corporate veil and make sure that the directors of that corporation, including the Fingolds, reimburse the employees of Route Canada and the taxpayers of this country in excess of $21 million.

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my hon. friend's comments about the corporate veil and trust. My hon. friend will know that the company holds those funds in trust for the various government departments and is required to remit those to the department.

Once a company goes into bankruptcy, all the assets are seized by the receiver in bankruptcy who takes charge of the assets, calculates the liabilities, and pays the appropriate liabilities, whether they are secured or preferred, out of the funds that he or she receives.

I expect the Registrar in Bankruptcy will take care of that matter in due course.

Mr. Joe Comuzzi (Thunder Bay—Nipigon): Mr. Speaker, I guess the essence of the question to the same minister is: if there is a shortfall, does the minister intend to go after the directors of that company to make up the shortfall in the trust funds that were spent out of trust by the directors of Route Canada and Route Enterprises Canada Limited?

I think what this situation needs is a full, open and complete investigation into all the affairs as they affect the disposition of Route Canada by CN and CN Rail. I ask the minister to commence a complete, open investigation into this aborted transaction.

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, to the best of my knowledge the bankruptcy proceedings have not been wound up. I would think that in the normal course of events the Registrar in Bankruptcy will report as to whether or not there have been any illegalities.

All the creditors will be paid in accordance with their preference, preferred or secured. I do not think it would be appropriate to step in with a full investigation until the bankruptcy proceedings are completed.

* * *

[*Translation*]

THE CHAREST REPORT

Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister. About a month ago, the Charest Report was published. The committee had heard 160 witnesses and received 800 briefs and papers. It was an exercise in public consultation. Now we hear that the Prime Minister already had the whole thing planned, even before the committee started its work. It would seem the Charest Report has now become the "charade" report.

I have the following question for the Prime Minister: Is the Prime Minister saying that the committee's work was just a façade to hide the government's real agenda?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I have already had occasion to praise the hon. member for Yorkton—Melville, from Saskatchewan, who was an active participant in the committee, so I think it is clear I was very serious about its proceedings.

I said earlier to the Leader of the Opposition that the explanation was quite simple. The Charest Report was released on May 17, before a long weekend. We had three weeks left. During the first week, we had Senator Murray's visits and my meetings with the Premiers. During the second week, which started on May 27, I had an official visit by Perez de Cuellar and the official visit of President Gorbachev, and in the third week we started the process of meeting with the Premiers on June 3. So there is nothing out of the ordinary in all this.

It was simply a matter of looking at our agenda for the period from May 11 to June 23 and deciding when we could send Senator Murray on his mission, when I could meet the provincial Premiers, individually and together, at my residence, and when I could fulfil my international obligations on behalf of Canada, with the meetings with President Gorbachev, the Secretary General of the U.N. and the president of Spain. I did all that, and then I held our meeting.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear.

• (1430)

[*English*]

Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, obviously the Prime Minister cannot answer the question. The members of this party participated in the Charest committee in good faith. The public participated in the Charest committee in good faith. Yet this government has not shown good faith with the public of Canada.

I would like to ask the Prime Minister about the process that happened over this past week. We know that late Thursday night the Prime Minister's office met with Jean Chrétien's national chairman, his policy adviser and one of his lawyers, while aboriginal people and women stood on the outside.

Even though the future of aboriginal people and women was at stake, can the Prime Minister explain why meeting with Mr. Chrétien's campaign officials was so central to his plan?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, there are many things that I have in mind for Mr. Chrétien but that is not one of them.

I think my hon. friend should know that I spent the time before the meeting of the First Ministers meeting, as well on the Sunday, with the leaders of the territorial governments, Yukon and the Northwest Territories, both of whom had an agenda very largely committed to the concerns that my hon. friend has just raised.

I trust that my hon. friend will not blame me for failing to meet with anyone other than First Ministers and territorial leaders. I sought to meet with many more but there are only so many hours in a day.

I think that my hon. friend, had she the time to listen to the speeches made by the territorial leaders late Saturday night at the Conference Centre, would agree that they seemed to indicate generally that they were very pleased with the way the matter had been conducted and that they were very pleased with the results, and hoped for even better results in the future.

Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, aboriginal people were on the outside of this process. Women were on the outside of this process. Yes, the Prime Minister's office met with the elected premier of the Yukon, the elected government leader of the Northwest Territories.

Will the Prime Minister explain to this House what the role of Mr. Chrétien's advisers was in his plan which he said was necessary to bring forward the constitutional talks of last week?

Mr. Gauthier: He's the next Prime Minister, your successor.

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I was asked by the Liberals to say it is because he is the next Prime Minister. They also asked me to say that about the last leader of the Liberal party, and I do not want to damage Mr. Chrétien before he starts.

My hon. friend raises some very good questions. With regard to the issues that are raised, I think she would be pleased to note that in the final document that was published there is great care in the matter of gender equality, which was a matter of concern to the Leader of the NDP in Manitoba for example. There are provisions to ensure a fundamental new process—

Ms. McLaughlin: Are those Mr. Chrétien's provisions, or what?

Mr. Mulroney: Mr. Speaker, I am trying to answer the Leader of the NDP on a very important matter.

Ms. McLaughlin: Answer the question.

Mr. Mulroney: We put in place a brand new series of provisions for a constitutional process for aboriginal Canadians.

The Northwest Territories were ensured of a priority analysis of their provincehood requirements, not based on 1982 but going back to Confederation, namely, provincehood on the basis of an agreement between the federal government and the territories themselves.

There was further consideration in respect of appointments of senators and justices of the Supreme Court from the territories. There was very ample consideration given to the concerns of the north as reflected by the statements of the two territorial leaders.

If my hon. friend is blaming some member of my staff or anyone else for listening to constructive ideas from members of the Liberal Party or the NDP, then I do not think that that would be appropriate. I listened to and received very many constructive ideas and helpful suggestions from the NDP and from all kinds of Liberals. I acknowledged that publicly yesterday.

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PRESENCE IN GALLERY

Mr. Speaker: I wish to draw to members' attention the presence in the gallery of Volodymyr Yavorivsky, National Deputy to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. and Ukraine and Vice President of Rukh.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: I also wish to draw to members' attention the presence in the gallery of Volodymyr Mokry, Deputy to the Polish Parliament.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

TRADE

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister.

While the Prime Minister has been preoccupied with constitutional matters, I am sure he is aware of the important decision taken by the Presidents of the United States and Mexico to begin talks leading toward what the U.S. President calls a North American trade agreement. I think he also recognizes that it is equally important that Canadians understand what this government intends to do about it.

In those circumstances I would like to ask the Prime Minister to confirm that the cabinet has already met on this very important item and has decided not to become involved in negotiations. Will he confirm that that decision has been made? Will he tell us what in fact the cabinet has authorized government officials to do to respond to this very crucial initiative that will affect Canada in a dramatic way?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, the cabinet has made no decision as to whether we wish to be further involved in this matter or not further involved in this matter because the matter has hardly even commenced as yet.

There has been a decision between the U.S. and Mexico that they wish to have preliminary discussions and consultations to see whether or not they wish to engage in negotiations with reference to a free trade agreement.

Our own government is reviewing the situation to make a decision after we consult with the provinces and after we consult with the private sector to see whether or not we want to be more closely involved in that.

We are certainly going to be very close observers of what happens in any event. But as to whether we want any closer connection than that, we will decide in due course.

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister.

It is reported that discussions were held between the Prime Minister and President Bush on this very topic yesterday or the day before.

In the press conference yesterday, the U.S. President's spokesperson announced that he sees these discussions leading toward a North American trade agreement.

• (1440)

I would like to know if the Prime Minister indicated to President Bush that Canada is in agreement or disagreement with the objective of leaning toward a North American trade agreement? Did we convey that we are not going to be part of these discussions and negotiations? In other words, what is the position that the Prime Minister took in relation to this very important negotiation with the U.S. President?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, on Sunday night, I believe, the President of the United States called me in advance of his meetings with President Salinas to tell me that it was his anticipation that this matter might be raised by President Salinas. It was a courtesy call to advise me of that.

With regard to the question of a North American trade agreement, it never came up at any time in discussion with President Bush, least of all Sunday night.

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CONSUMER INFORMATION OFFICE

Mr. Eugène Bellemare (Carleton—Gloucester): My question is directed to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

Today, the minister announced his so-called Consumer Information Office to prevent consumers from being exploited by the hidden goods and services tax.

Can the minister really expect us to believe that a Mickey Mouse outfit of 20 people can keep 20 million consumers informed on the pricing of goods produced by over 1.6 million businesses?

Hon. Pierre Blais (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs) and Minister of State (Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I announced this morning a body that is going to look after and help consumers to monitor the situation and to make sure that we will pass on the benefit of the actual federal sales tax to the new GST.

I must point out that with Mr. Nicholas Murray, who was the President of the Canadian Consumers Association, as the Chairman it will be a very good body.

[*Translation*]

It will be very good for Canadians, Mr. Speaker. It will help Canadian consumers be better informed on what is happening. An informed consumer can make better buying decisions. Consumers will be in an excellent position to do so on January 1, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Eugène Bellemare (Carleton—Gloucester): According to the minister, the GST consumer information office will have to make sure that the expected "savings" will be passed on to consumers.

How can the minister make such a statement if the information office will have no authority to file complaints or to lower prices and only 20 people to do all the work?

Hon. Pierre Blais (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Minister of State (Agriculture)): Mr. Speaker, I am a little surprised at the hon. member's reaction, since the great majority of those who spoke at the hearings of the Standing Committee on Consumer and Corporate Affairs in recent weeks recommended against having a price-control organization. Mr. Speaker, in this country, we must not take consumers for fools. They are quite able to make a valid choice when they buy. They just need to be well informed. I am surprised at what he said because even people in his own party who took part in these discussions, just like members of the New Democratic Party, were not in favour of having such a body that could roll back prices. I do not think, also, that Canadian consumers want to be in court for two or three years to find out if they paid too much for their refrigerator. What they want is accurate information so that when they buy in January and February, they will pay a fair price, Mr. Speaker.

* * *

[*English*]

CORPORATE TAXATION

Mr. John R. Rodriguez (Nickel Belt): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Revenue, the minister who is in charge of arranging tax holidays for large corporations.

The minister was quite categorical on April 4 when he told this House that he was urging all Canadians being clawed back on their old age pensions and family allowances to pay the tax, even though the legislation had not received Royal Assent.

Will the minister stand in this House now and be just as forceful and categorical in urging large corporations, most of which have been on tax holidays for years, to begin paying the large corporations tax?

Hon. Otto Jelinek (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, you will know that we have been encouraging large corporations to comply with Bill C-28, the large corporations tax, which is currently stuck in the Senate.

In the first year we had anticipated over $400 million of revenue as a result of the passage of that piece of legislation which is stuck in the Senate. We have been able to collect less than half of that.

For this fiscal year, the anticipated revenue is some $900 million. Therefore, I urge my hon. friend and all members, particularly my Liberal colleagues across the way, to encourage senators to pass this bill so that Canadians can take advantage of the positive elements and so that the Canadian government can reap the benefits of the revenues due it.

Mr. John R. Rodriguez (Nickel Belt): Mr. Speaker, I want to remind the minister that the function of the government is not to beg corporations but to demand that they pay their fair share of taxes.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Rodriguez: As the minister knows, interest may be charged to the corporations that do not pay the tax until the bill is approved in the Senate.

Can the minister give a guarantee in no uncertain terms that those corporations that do not pay the tax until the bill becomes law will be charged interest? Will the minister guarantee Canadians that large corporations will not be treated differently from those Canadians collecting pensions or family allowances? Let them pay the interest, the same as ordinary folks do.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Otto Jelinek (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, instead of acting for an Academy Award for the cameras, the hon. member should do his homework. If he did do his homework he would know that in fact once this bill is passed by the Senate—and we hope that the

Senators would get off their bums and pass this bill at the earliest opportunity—that it is retroactive to January 15.

In fact, if the hon. member would do his homework instead of practising to be a movie star or Academy Award winner he would know that interest will be charged retroactively to January 15.

* * *

FIRST MINISTERS' CONFERENCE

Mr. Derek Lee (Scarborough—Rouge River): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister.

Yesterday, the Premier of Manitoba alleged publicly that the cellular telephones of the Manitoba delegation to the First Ministers' Conference had been monitored. The Prime Minister has also stated that he had warned the premiers that such eavesdropping of private communications could occur.

Will the Prime Minister confirm to the House that electronic monitoring of the premiers' conversations did take place last week and that such monitoring is a criminal offence? Will he tell the House just what he is prepared to do about these serious allegations?

• (1450)

Mr. Blaikie: Are you bringing in Erik Nielsen again?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I am being heckled by the NDP on a matter of electronic bugging, and that surprises me.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mulroney: Mr. Speaker, indeed, at a point during the conference it was brought to my attention that a press report existed to the effect that members of the Manitoba delegation, in particular, because of the presence of the two opposition leaders, were communicating with one another using cellular telephones. I simply took the liberty of telling all the participants to be very careful in their use of these kinds of devices because we had been advised by Government of Canada security people in the past, in entirely different circumstances, that these are considerably less than secure.

I pointed that out to the participants in the hope that they would exercise prudence. I have every reason to believe that they did.

Mr. Derek Lee (Scarborough—Rouge River): Mr. Speaker, last February during a budget lock-up here in Ottawa, government officials revealed to the press that they had put technology in place to detect leaks and eavesdropping through cellular phones.

If that technology was already in the hands of our government, and if the Prime Minister knew that cellular monitoring was going to take place during the First Ministers Conference—

Mr. Mulroney: And if my mother-in-law were a bus.

Mr. Lee: —did the Prime Minister use the technology to protect his own communications? If so, why did he not make the same security measures available to the provincial premiers at the Conference Centre?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Prince Edward—Hastings.

* * *

TRUCKING INDUSTRY

Mr. Lyle Vanclief (Prince Edward—Hastings): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport.

The Canadian trucking industry is being crippled by past actions of this government and the present inaction of this government. Bill Swan, a transportation lawyer in the United States, said last week: "If something is not done to deal with these problems in the next three to five years, Canada will have precious little trucking industry left".

What concrete action is the government taking to level the playing-field that even the Americans say is tipped 20 per cent in their favour?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, my hon. friend will know that during the recent difficulties in Windsor I met with the Ontario Minister of Transport and took a look at what we could do on a federal basis in all provinces *vis-à-vis* the trucking industry.

We agreed to a crackdown on cabotage which we came back and discussed with officials from National Revenue and Canada Employment. That crackdown is in place with the co-operation of the various provinces.

We agreed to deal with unfair business practices, given any evidence that came to our attention.

We agreed to look into the possibility of a different type of taxing on fuel that is brought into the country.

Those discussions are ongoing with the various provinces. We think we have done everything we can at an official level to deal with the problems of the truckers.

Mr. Lyle Vanclief (Prince Edward—Hastings): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is directed the same minister.

The reason I bring this to the minister's attention is because I have yet another trucking firm in my riding that is negotiating to move into the State of New York for reasons of high interest and fuel taxes that tip the scale in the wrong way.

For example, in order for a Canadian trucking firm to get permits and licences to go into a U.S. state, it must give permission for the U.S. government to audit its books here in Canada to see that the proper taxes are paid into the U.S. state.

However, American firms refuse to have the reverse be the case. They refuse to have their books audited.

Will the minister tell me specifically what is being done to ensure that Canadian truckers using Canadian highways and Canadian roads are paying their fair share toward the upkeep of those through the fuel taxes they owe us here in Canada?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I believe the question is: What is the government doing to make sure that Canadian truckers pay their fair share—

Mr. Boudria: American!

Mr. Lewis: Yes, read the "blues".

—their fair share of taxes in Canada?

I am sure that the Canadian truckers are doing that.

When my friend examines the "blues" he will find out that is what he said.

Mr. Crawford: That was not the question.

* * *

LABOUR

Mr. Cid Samson (Timmins—Chapleau): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Labour.

Today marks the fifth day of protest by older workers in the Cape Breton construction industry. These workers took extreme measures to make their plights known.

The Program for Older Worker Adjustment currently in place does not provide assistance for these people, even though they are in desperate need of this assistance.

I want to ask the minister whether he will agree to meet with their representative and whether he is prepared to call for a review of the current OWA Program?

Hon. Jean Corbeil (Minister of Labour) and (Minister of State (Transport)): Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member knows that the Program for Older Worker Adjustment was the result of lengthy and extensive negotiations with federal and provincial representatives. It was designed to help long-service older workers who have no prospects for re-employment following major, permanent lay-offs.

All industries, including construction sector employees, are eligible provided they meet the criteria that were established by this federal-provincial committee.

As for the last part of his question, I would like to inform him that the people in Cape Breton have arranged for a meeting with the provincial labour minister on June 27, and I have agreed to meet them here in Ottawa on July 5.

Mr. Cid Samson (Timmins—Chapleau): Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for his response.

However, he says that they have to meet the criteria in order to qualify for the program and then said, as reported in an article, that these construction workers are liable to be recalled to work. I would be interested in his response to the fact that these workers' benefits are now running out.

He is claiming that this is an industry that is on recall constantly, that construction workers are recalled all the time, and that they are able to go back to work.

How do you explain the fact that these workers are now running out of benefits, but they cannot apply for the Older Worker Adjustment Program?

Hon. Jean Corbeil (Minister of Labour) and (Minister of State (Transport)): Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind the hon. member again that this program was designed to help older workers to adjust in cases where they are the victims of a major, permanent lay-off and

have no prospects for re-employment. This is what the program was designed to do. It was negotiated with federal and provincial authorities. It is the program that applies at the present time.

* * *

[*Translation*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Guy Saint-Julien (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of the Environment.

The federal program called "Partners in the Environment" aims at establishing lasting partnerships to benefit the environment.

The Conservative government intends to give subsidies to local groups to enable them to protect, preserve, improve and restore the environment at the community level.

My question is this: I know you are a man of action; are you ready to announce today subsidies to community groups in Canada?

Hon. Robert de Cotret (President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, as my colleague certainly knows, the federal government has set aside $50 million over five years for the "Partners in the Environment" program.

So far, 164 projects have already been approved and $6.8 million in federal funds have led to some $37 million in projected expenditures by all partners.

* * *

[*English*]

LABOUR

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, my question is also directed to the Minister of Labour. I want to thank the minister for agreeing to meet with the Cape Breton construction workers on July 5, 1990.

• (1500)

The minister will know that the Program for Older Worker Adjustment is a joint agreement between the Government of Canada and the Government of Nova Scotia. The Government of Nova Scotia said in a letter to the minister on April 24, 1990, the following:

> —if they are indeed not covered by the current POWA agreement, may I ask if the Government of Canada would be prepared, at this time, to either amend the existing agreement or consider separate documents to accommodate the traditional construction worker in the POWA-like program—

In view of the fact that the Government of Nova Scotia has now changed its mind and wishes to have these workers included in the existing agreement, will the minister not now give an undertaking to that government to amend that agreement in order to include the Cape Breton construction workers?

Hon. Jean Corbeil (Minister of Labour) and (Minister of State (Transport)): Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind my hon. colleague that this program, as I mentioned before, was the result of extensive negotiations among all provinces and the federal government. If there are to be amendments to the present program, we will have to reconvene the discussions among all provincial ministers responsible for labour and look at the possibility of amending this program.

However, I have not seen any intention by the ministers from the provinces to modify this program at the present time.

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the same minister. The minister will know that the unemployment rate of construction workers in Cape Breton is 75 per cent. Those who are unemployed will continue to be unemployed for an indefinite period of time. The possibilities of getting work are very, very remote.

In view of that crucial fact, would the minister not give serious consideration to this request which was made years ago by the construction workers in Cape Breton in order to include them in a Program for Older Worker Adjustment? Would he give that kind of undertaking to those workers?

Hon. Jean Corbeil (Minister of Labour) and (Minister of State (Transport)): Mr. Speaker, I have already indicated that these workers will meet with the minister responsible for labour in the area on June 27 and I will be meeting with them on July 5. We will take their representation under consideration.

Mr. Speaker: That concludes Question Period.

* * *

POINT OF ORDER

COMMENTS DURING QUESTION PERIOD

Mr. Lyle Vanclief (Prince Edward—Hastings): Madam Speaker, I do not wish to leave the impression that I misled the House in my question in Question Period. It was my intention to say "U.S." not "Canada". I thought I said U.S. and I would like *Hansard* to show that.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

INCOME TAX ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre) that Bill C-52, an act to amend the Income Tax Act and related acts, be read the third time and passed.

Madam Deputy Speaker: When the House rose at one o'clock the hon. member for Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt had just completed his speech. We will now proceed with questions and comments following that speech. The hon. member for Sudbury.

Mrs. Diane Marleau (Sudbury): Madam Speaker, I listened very carefully to my colleague's speech and I must say that I do agree with many of his comments. Bill C-52 is certainly not a perfect piece of legislation. The complexity of the pension reform has made it very difficult for us to judge absolutely every aspect and to make sure that everything is as equitable as it should be.

As a result of that, we have insisted that there be a full and complete review of the legislation and of the pension system after three years of implementation of Bill C-52. We certainly hope that any problems that have come up during that time could be addressed, if not even prior to the three years.

On the other hand, my hon. colleague mentioned that his party believes that we should have a beefed-up Canada Pension Plan. I would like to remind the hon. member that we have also requested that a review of the Canada Pension Plan be done by the finance committee within the next year. I personally feel that there is a place for Canada Pension Plan but that there is also a place for Registered Retirement Savings Plans and that both can exist together and complement each other.

I do not know if the hon. member would like to comment on these two aspects of Bill C-52.

Mr. Whittaker: Madam Speaker, to take the last part of the comments of my colleague from Sudbury first, I do not disagree at all that the two programs can co-exist. In fact, I think they have done fairly well. What I am afraid of is a continuation of what I see as the thread of what has been happening since 1984 with the privatization of a number of programs. I fear that with the raising of the limits of the Registered Retirement Savings Plan and dropping the percentage of earned wages from 20 to 18 per cent, we are moving closer and closer to privatization of pension plans.

If the review is done with the idea of ensuring that all Canadians will ultimately benefit through an expansion of the Canada Pension Plan, Old Age Security, or the Guaranteed Income Supplement, that is fair enough. But what I fear is that the program as set out in Bill C-52 will ultimately erode the system that we have and we will depend more and more on privatization. In other words, people will be encouraged to invest in private pensions plans as opposed to plans such as the Canada Pension Plan which people like Mr. Knowles and Tommy Douglas have fought for in the past.

The review process, in the absence of any real amendments, is an excellent idea as long as it takes into consideration all Canadians from all walks of life rather than, as we have seen in the past with the goods and services tax and the Unemployment Insurance Commission, a very limited number of people being able to give their ideas and impressions on the Registered Retirement Savings Plan. I want to have a system where people can actually be listened to and heard. I do not want a system under which we set deadlines and then leave out most of the people who want to speak as we did on the goods and services tax. On that legislation we heard less than 300 of well over 1,000 representations that requested to be heard.

So let us listen to all suggestions and use some of those suggestions in order to make the Canada Pension Plan system better for all of us.

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to have an opportunity to say a few words regarding Bill C-52, an act to amend the Income Tax Act relating to RRSPs. While I had intended to speak at some length I do not believe that is necessary. The member for Essex—Windsor and his colleague from Kootenay East worked very diligently in the committee examining Bill C-52. I want to commend them for the job they did in that committee. While there are still many problems associated with this legislation regarding RRSPs, as a result of their work and that of others in opposition it is tremendously improved. On behalf of us all I want to recognize the efforts that the opposition made in improving this legislation.

• (1510)

I also listened carefully to my hon. colleague and friend from Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt. He largely laid out the concerns the New Democratic Party has with the general thrust of this legislation.

The legislation starts, in my judgment, at the wrong point. It aims to allow everyone earning up to $86,000 a year to shelter from taxes the same percentage of income. Obviously that is going to benefit those in the upper income brackets.

On principle we have to ask ourselves whether it is the role of legislation to identity those who are the wealthiest and in relatively privileged positions in our society and arrange legislation such that they benefit much more than people from a low income bracket.

I believe that not only is that the wrong starting point, it also means that tax sheltering of our income becomes the major thrust of most pension-related savings as opposed to the approach which expands the Canada Pension Plan in order to provide satisfactory pension levels for everyone in the Canadian workforce.

Stanley Knowles and many others dedicated their entire lives to improving the Canada Pension Plan. Today, as opposed to improving the Canada Pension Plan so that all Canadians can benefit, we are tinkering around with tax legislation that enables certain people to avoid tax as they set aside money for their retirement years. We are seeing a departure from a trend over the years to improve the Canada Pension Plan. Now we are seeing a trend toward the privatization of our pension system.

It is important to recognize that only 20 per cent of all tax filers take advantage of RRSPs. Five per cent of Canadians earning under $15,000 contribute to RRSPs whereas nearly 60 per cent of Canadians earning over $50,000 contribute to RRSPs. We see with a glance at these simple statistics that the RRSP legislation is earmarked for those who are in the upper income brackets of our society.

The work of the committee has brought about positive changes including improvements to pension affordability, the provisions to allow for earlier retirement, changes in definition of designated plans and respect for existing contribution levels under collective agreements. I want to acknowledge and recognize these and other improvements, as well as saying that I and my colleagues depart from the major thrust of the legislation which is essentially pension reform through tax alteration, which is not the approach that we feel is most appropriate.

I would remiss if I did not note from the comments of previous speakers and the work of my colleagues on the committee the continuing complexity associated with this legislation. I read with interest the evidence of the professional actuaries who spoke to the committee and suggested that the incredible complexity of this legislation will make it essentially unworkable. In the minds of these experts, the legislation cannot work, it is simply too complex.

As a result of the efforts of my colleagues in opposition, a three-year review period has been introduced so that at least every three years we can revisit the changed legislation to see if in fact it is working and serving the purposes for which it was intended, even though we might question those purposes.

It has been suggested that these changes in Bill C-52 will cost employers an estimated $60 to $70 million in start-up costs and an annual reporting cost of between $10 and $15 million. With high interest rates, with the goods and services tax coming, with the changes to the unemployment insurance legislation that will expect more of employers, and now with Bill C-52, how much can a government abuse the small and medium sized business sector? There is a limit, and I suspect that we have nearly reached it now.

In conclusion, while we recognize that improvements have occurred in this legislation as a result of the excellent committee work and an acknowledgement by the government that changes to this legislation were desired, we will oppose the legislation on the grounds of

principle and the fact that the actuaries say that this legislation in its present form will make the RRSP program unworkable.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Question.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: On division.

Motion agreed to, bill read the third time and passed.

Mr. Milliken: Madam Speaker, there has been some discussion, and I think there would be unanimous consent to proceed with Private Members' Hour for the purpose of dealing with Bill S-16.

If the House gives its consent, we could move now to Private Members' Hour and deal with that bill.

Mr. Riis: Madam Speaker, we have had adequate briefings on the legislation. It is a straightforward piece of legislation.

On behalf of my party I can say that we are anxious to act expeditiously on this bill.

Mrs. Sparrow: Madam Speaker, I would like to have the right to introduce Bill S-16.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS—BILLS

[*English*]

CANADIAN INSTITUTE OF MINING AND METALLURGY

MEASURE TO AMEND

Mrs. Barbara Sparrow (Calgary Southwest) moved that Bill S-16, an act to amend the act of incorporation of the Canadian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy, be read the second time and referred to a legislative committee.

Mr. Milliken: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I think there would be unanimous consent that the motion read that it be referred to Committee of the Whole rather than to a legislative committee.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is there unanimous consent?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Mrs. Sparrow: Madam Speaker, it is with pleasure that I introduce and present this Private Member's Bill S-16 to the House today. The bill is based on a petition that was presented to Parliament by the Canadian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy to enact a name change for the institute to the Canadian Institute of Mining, Metallurgy and Petroleum.

The institute, which has its head office in Montreal, is a non-profit corporation that has been in existence since before the turn of the century. In fact, it is very interesting to all my colleagues to note that the Canadian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy was incorporated by Parliament under Chapter 96 of the Statutes of Canada in 1898.

The objectives of the institute are to promote the arts and sciences connected with the economical production of valuable minerals and metals by means of meetings for the reading and discussion of technical papers and the establishment of a central reference library; to take concerted action upon matters as affect the mining and metallurgical industries in Canada; and, of course, to encourage and promote these industries by lawful and honourable means.

• (1520)

The institute publishes a number of journals in which the most worthy of its technical papers are featured. These journals provide a forum for the exchange of technical information among approximately 11,000 people who are currently members of the institute.

In any given year, 10 to 15 technical meetings are organized and held in various parts of Canada. These meetings are attended by some 6,000 to 7,000 delegates who participate in as many as 1,300 technical information sessions that are held each and every year.

The members are grouped into eight technical divisions according to their professional disciplines and field of interest—coal, geology, industrial minerals, metallurgy, mineral processing, metal mining, maintenance engineering, and petroleum. There is also a geographical

grouping made up of six districts integrating the 65 branches located in most cities with a mining or a petroleum background.

The petroleum society of the institute has been assuming a greater role of importance in the affairs of this organization for many years. It has about 2,500 members in its ranks and represents the fastest growing division within the institute.

A task force was appointed in December 1987 to study the consideration of a name change to include petroleum, and this change was proposed to the general membership which overwhelmingly favoured it. So the wheels were set in motion to petition Parliament to pass a bill to change the name of the institute to the Canadian Institute of Mining, Metallurgy and Petroleum, which truly reflects the interests of its membership.

This change of name is one of the purposes of Bill S-16 before us today. As you can see, Madam Speaker, the bill was passed through the Senate on June 5, 1990.

The bill also contains a few technical and incidental changes to the corporation's charter. One amendment would clarify the corporate powers and management of the institute and at the same time remove a restriction on the total value of real estate that may be held at any one time by the institute.

Another amendment is designed to provide the institute with general borrowing powers which it does not have today and which of course can restrict the operation. This establishment does not rely on government funding and therefore these particular changes are at no cost to the Government of Canada.

Madam Speaker, Bill S-16 is straight forward. I have reviewed the amendments with you and with my colleagues here in the House today. I would very much like it to go through all stages today so that we can report it back as carried.

Mrs. Diane Marleau (Sudbury): Madam Speaker, we have absolutely no objections to this bill. We support it and we would like to see it go through all stages today.

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Madam Speaker, when Bill S-16 first came to our attention, the first question we had was to what extent the membership favoured this name change. Often that might be concern of the executive or a small group of people. The information that was provided—and I think it was excellent information—was that 11,285 ballots were mailed out to the membership of CIM, and of the 4,924 ballots returned 4,256 were enthusiastically in favour of this name change.

We concur that this and the other amendments the hon. member has brought to our attention are appropriate changes to the legislation.

With the purpose of the institute being to promote the arts and sciences connected with the economical production of valuable minerals and metals by means of meetings and for the reading and discussion of technical papers, how could anyone not enthusiastically support this legislation?

I am pleased to say that my party not only wants to pass this bill, but we will move it through all stages quickly today to get the good news to the people of the institute.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Question.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time, by unanimous consent considered in committee, reported, concurred in, read the third time and passed.

Madam Deputy Speaker: 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 Nanaimo—Cowichan—Fisheries; the hon. member for Surrey North—Housing; and the hon. member for Prince Albert—Churchill River—The Environment.

SITTING SUSPENDED

Mr. Murray W. Dorin (Edmonton Northwest): Madam Speaker, at this moment it would be my intention to seek unanimous consent of the House to suspend the sitting, for a few minutes, to the call of the Chair, which we would anticipate being about four o'clock, for the purpose of Royal Assent.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The House has heard the suggestion made by the hon. member. Is there unanimous consent?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

The sitting of the House was suspended at 3.29 p.m.

[*Translation*]

SITTING RESUMED

The House resumed at 4.49 p.m.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

Madam Deputy Speaker: I have the honour to inform the House that a message has been received from the Senate informing this House that the Senate has passed Bill C-65, an Act to provide borrowing authority, without amendment.

* * *

ROYAL ASSENT

Madam Deputy Speaker: I have the honour to inform the House that a communication has been received as follows:

Rideau Hall
Ottawa,

June 12, 1990

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that the Honourable John Sopinka, Puisne Judge of the Supreme Court of Canada, in his capacity as Deputy Governor General, will proceed to the Senate Chamber today, the 12th day of June, at 4:30 p.m., for the purpose of giving Royal Assent to certain Bills.

Yours sincerely,
Léopold H. Amyot
Secretary to the Governor General

THE ROYAL ASSENT

[*Translation*]

A message was delivered by the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod as follows:

Royal Assent

Madam Speaker, the Honourable Deputy to the Governor General desires the immediate attendance of this honourable House in the Chamber of the honourable th Senate.

Accordingly, Madam Speaker with the House went up to the Senate chamber.

And being returned:

• (1700)

Madam Deputy Speaker: I have the honour to inform the House that when the House went up to the Senate Chamber the Deputy Governor General was pleased to give, in Her Majesty's name, the Royal Assent to the following Bill:

Bill C-25, an Act to amend the Geneva Conventions Act, the National Defence Act and the Trade-marks Act— Chapter 14.

Bill C-53, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (arson)— Chapter 15.

Bill C-59, an Act to amend various Acts to give effect to the reconstitution of the courts in British Columbia—Chapter 16.

Bill C-60, an Act to amend various Acts to give effect to the reconstitution of the courts in Ontario and to provide for other related matters—Chapter 17.

Bill C-61, An Act to amend the Divorce Act (barriers to religious remarriage)—Chapter 18.

Bill C-65, an Act to provide borrowing authority—Chapter 19.

Bill S-10, an Act respecting the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants.

Bill S-15, an Act to amend the Act of incorporation of Desjardins Mutual Life Assurance Company.

SITTING SUSPENDED

Mr. Plourde: Madam Speaker, on a point of order.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, on a point of order.

Mr. Plourde: Madam Speaker, I believe we have unanimous consent to suspend the proceedings of the House until the vote at 6 p.m.

[*English*]

Madam Deputy Speaker: The House has heard the suggestion of the hon. member. Is there unanimous consent to suspend the sitting until 6 p.m.?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

The sitting of the House was suspended at 5.02 p.m.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 6 p.m.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*Translation*]

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES RESTRAINT ACT

The House resumed from Monday, June 11, consideration of the motion of Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre) that Bill C-69, an Act to amend certain statutes to enable restraint of government expenditures, be read the third time and passed.

Madam Deputy Speaker: It being six o'clock, pursuant to Standing Order 45(5)(*a*), the House will now proceed to the deferred division on the motion of the Minister of Finance for third reading of Bill C-69, an Act to amend certain statutes to enable restraint of government expenditures.

Call in the members.

The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:

(*Division No. 286*)

YEAS

Members

Anderson
Atkinson
Beatty
Bernier
Bird
Blackburn (Jonquière)
Bouchard (Roberval)
Boyer
Browes
Cardiff
Chadwick
Charest
Cole
Cooper
Couture
Danis
DeBlois
Della Noce
Dobbie
Dorin
Epp
Feltham
Fontaine
Friesen
Gibeau
Greene
Gustafson
Harvey (Chicoutimi)
Hicks
Hogue
Horner
Hudon
Jelinek
Joncas
Kempling
Langlois
Leblanc (Longueuil)
Lopez
MacDougall (Timiskaming)
Andre
Attewell
Belsher
Bertrand
Bjornson
Blenkarn
Bourgault
Brightwell
Campbell (Vancouver Centre)
Casey
Champagne (Champlain)
Clark (Yellowhead)
Collins
Corbett
Crosby (Halifax West)
Darling
de Cotret
Desjardins
Domm
Duplessis
Fee
Ferland
Fretz
Gérin
Gray (Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine)
Guilbault
Halliday
Hawkes
Hockin
Holtmann
Horning
James
Johnson
Jourdenais
Landry
Layton
Lewis
MacDonald (Rosedale)
MacKay
Malone
Masse
Mazankowski
McDermid
McLean
Monteith
Nicholson
Plamondon
Porter
Redway
Ricard
Robitaille
Saint-Julien
Scott (Victoria—Haliburton)
Shields
Sobeski
Sparrow
Tardif
Thacker
Thorkelson
Turner (Halton—Peel)
Van de Walle
Venne
Vien
Weiner
White
Wilson (Etobicoke Centre)
Worthy—133
Martin (Lincoln)
Mayer
McCreath
McKnight
Merrithew
Moore
Nowlan
Plourde
Pronovost
Reimer
Richardson
Roy-Arcelin
Schneider
Scott (Hamilton—Wentworth)
Siddon
Soetens
Stevenson
Tétreault
Thompson
Tremblay (Rosemont)
Valcourt
Vankoughnet
Vézina
Vincent
Wenman
Wilbee
Winegard

NAYS

Members

Allmand
Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing)
Bélair
Blaikie
Boudria
Catterall
Comuzzi
de Jong
Ferguson
Fisher
Foster
Funk
Gardiner
Grey (Beaver River)
Harvey (Edmonton East)
Hopkins
Jordan
Karygiannis
Kristiansen
LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso)
MacLellan
Maheu
Marleau
McGuire
Mifflin
Nault
Ouellet
Rideout
Robichaud
Samson
Stewart
Taylor
Whittaker
Young (Gloucester)
Angus
Baker
Benjamin
Blondin
Brewin
Clancy
Crawford
Dionne
Finestone
Flis
Fulton
Gaffney
Gauthier
Harvard
Heap
Hunter
Karpoff
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)
Langan (Mission—Coquitlam)
Lee
MacWilliam
Manley
McCurdy
McLaughlin
Milliken
Nystrom
Prud'homme
Riis
Robinson
Speller
Stupich
Walker
Wood
Young (Beaches—Woodbine)—68

Madam Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Bill read the third time and passed.

[*English*]

Mr. Harb: Madam Speaker, unfortunately I was delayed at a meeting. Had I been here, I would have voted with my party on this bill.

Mr. Andre: Madam Speaker, I think perhaps you might find unanimous agreement if we were to call it ten o'clock and proceed with the late show.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I understand that there is unanimous consent to call it ten o'clock?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Adjournment Debate

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[*English*]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I see that none of the members who had requested to participate in this motion are now present.

Accordingly, the motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. This House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

The House adjourned at 6.32 p.m.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, June 13, 1990

The House met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S. O. 31

[*English*]

VIOLENCE ON TELEVISION

Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, elementary and secondary school pupils spend roughly 1,000 hours per year in the classroom.

Recognizing the importance that the curricula plays in school and in education, parents, students themselves, teachers, public servants and the ministers of education for whom they work have been working extremely hard, and will continue to do so, to remove violence and negative and inappropriate stereotyping from curriculum found in schools.

It has also been noted that these same young people spend roughly the same amount of time watching television. What has been the minister's response to this concern about the impact that violence on television could have on these young people? Well, he has turned it over to the CRTC. That is not a bad first step but I would ask the minister to take a personal initiative here to address this important issue immediately and to bring forth guidelines.

[*Translation*]

Canadian parents expect the minister to do everything possible to remove violence from television and the media.

[*English*]

THE HON. CYRIL BEVERLY SHERWOOD

Mr. Greg Thompson (Carleton—Charlotte): Mr. Speaker, July 1 is Canada's birthday. It is also the birthday of one of New Brunswick's and, indeed, Canada's finest citizens.

On July 1 the hon. Cy Sherwood will turn 75. Senator Sherwood has served his country well. Cy was first elected to the New Brunswick legislature in 1952 and was subsequently re-elected in 1956, 1960, 1963, 1967 and 1970. Cy Sherwood served as New Brunswick's Minister of Agriculture from 1952 to 1960, and also served as the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the P.C. Party in New Brunswick, from 1960 to 1966.

Cy Sherwood retired, or at least thought he retired, from politics and chose not to run in the 1974 election. However, Cy was appointed to the Senate by the Rt. Hon. Joe Clark on October 3, 1979. Needless to say, Cy Sherwood continued to serve his province and his country with the same level of commitment and integrity that has been the hallmark of his life.

On July 1, 1990, Cy Beverly Sherwood will retire from the Senate of Canada. On behalf of all the members in this House, I wish Senator Sherwood and his wife Madilene a most happy retirement.

* * *

HIBERNIA

Mr. Ross Harvey (Edmonton East): Mr. Speaker, last night the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources destroyed one of the few remaining arguments in favour of the Hibernia megaproject—that it would increase Atlantic Canada's energy security. He agreed, during a meeting of the legislative committee on the Hibernia bill, that the government could not even guess what proportion of Hibernia oil would actually be refined in Newfoundland or anywhere else in Canada.

S. O. 31

In fact, there are indications that most of Hibernia's oil will flow south to the United States, straight off the Hibernia platform. More than $3.5 billion of Canadian taxpayers' money will be placed at risk, including a gift of over $1 billion, which could have gone to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, but which will instead go to subsidize American energy consumers. This is on top of the inadequate and unsecured employment and industrial development benefits from the project, coupled with the project's negative environmental impacts. A more disgusting illustration of this government's contemptible energy policy is difficult to imagine.

* * *

[*Translation*]

WORLD FOLKLORE FESTIVAL IN DRUMMONDVILLE

Mr. Jean-Guy Guilbault (Drummond): Mr. Speaker, "The world at your door" will be the theme for the Ninth World Folklore Festival in Drummondville, from July 6 to July 16.

Some thirty folk dance groups from five continents will bring you the magic of song, music, dance and folklore of various nations.

Fifteen hundred participants from Canada, the United States, France, Brazil and countries as far away as Israel, Cameroon and Russia, will amaze you with their performances of traditional dances, full of charm, beauty and feeling.

More than 1,800 volunteers are working very hard to make this cultural festival the best ever. Last year, we had 750,000 visitors, and the festival was proclaimed "tourism event of the year" in Quebec.

Mr. Speaker, I invite all my colleagues and all Canadians to attend this international festival.

The warmth, energy and enthusiasm of the people of Drummondville, together with the spectacular program offered during this ten-day festival, will make your visit unforgettable.

[*English*]

KOREAN WAR

Mr. Len Hopkins (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke): Mr. Speaker, June 25 marks the fortieth anniversary of the beginning of the Korean War.

Between June, 1950, and July, 1953, a total of 26,791 Canadians volunteered their services under the United Nations Charter. Five hundred and sixteen lost their lives and more than 1,000 were wounded. The United Nations intervention in Korea was a move of outstanding historical significance. For the first time, an international organization with a multinational force had intervened effectively to stem aggression.

To date, our Korean veterans have received two medals from the United Nations and the Commonwealth. Their service has yet to be officially recognized by the Canadian government.

It is time that the Canadian government gave recognition to the generosity of spirit that inspired young men and women to risk their lives in the name of peace, freedom and security.

The striking of a distinctive Canadian Volunteer Korean Service Medal would be applauded by all Korean War veterans.

Let us take a moment, on June 25, to remember their great contribution.

* * *

• (1410)

NATIONAL ACCESS AWARENESS WEEK

Mr. Ken James (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, this is National Access Awareness Week, a time to focus national attention on the contributions and concerns of Canadians with disabilities. The spirit engendered by this week is clearly intended to last all year round. Canadians across the country are invited to commit themselves ever more deeply to the full integration of people with disabilities in the life of our society.

This year we are privileged to have the generous sponsorship of nine corporate partners; Bell Canada, Cadillac Fairview Corporation, Canadian National, Esso Petroleum Canada, Ford Motor Company of Canada Ltd., IBM Canada, McDonald's Restaurants of Canada Ltd., Royal Bank and Sears Canada Inc. Each of these

corporate sponsors is committed to promotion of employment equity, full and equal access to goods and services for all Canadians and the accurate portrayal of persons with disabilities in advertising and communications.

The active involvement of the private sector at the provincial and local level is fast becoming a tradition during National Access Awareness Week. It clearly reminds us that this week was indeed founded on the principle of partnership among Canadians from every sector of society.

Let us use this occasion to thank this year's corporate sponsors who are promoting the ideals of a barrier-free Canada in every practical way.

* * *

[*Translation*]

NATIONAL ACCESS AWARENESS WEEK

Mr. Jean-Marc Robitaille (Terrebonne): Mr. Speaker, I rise today in the House to pay tribute to the dedication of all Canadians who throughout the year help 3.5 million disabled persons in Canada to be participating members of our society.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to mention the continuing dedication of agencies and volunteers in my riding, such as the *Association de la rose bleue, Les Amis de Repentigny,* the Richelieu Club and the Lions Club, to name only a few.

This kind of commitment, which should be an inspiration to us all, receives special attention during National Access Awareness Week, from June 10 to June 16.

The purpose of National Access Awareness Week is to make significant changes in the daily lives of all people who have a disability and to assess the progress achieved during the past year.

And, above all, this week should be an opportunity for reflecting on what remains to be done.

* * *

[*English*]

CORPORATE TAXATION

Mr. John R. Rodriguez (Nickel Belt): Mr. Speaker, the first nominee for the corporate welfare bum of the week is Trilon Financial. It received a tax credit of $17 million on profits of $218 million in 1988.

The second nominee is Steinberg. In a statement released yesterday the company bragged of how it managed to avoid paying hundreds of millions of dollars in capital gains tax. It used something called a "butterfly" transaction to float away with taxes from the federal treasury. It floats like a butterfly and stings Canadians like a bee.

The third nominee is the Great Lakes Group which paid only $1.9 million on profits of $96 million in 1988.

The envelope, please. And the winner is Trilon Financial. Like many other financial companies, Trilon has benefited from tax breaks that allow holding companies to avoid income taxes. For paper shuffling its way out of paying its fair share, Trilon Financial is the corporate welfare bum of this week.

* * *

ROMANIA

Mr. David Walker (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about the situation in Romania. We heard overnight news reports that the Romanian government has moved into University Square and cleared out the demonstrators.

When I and other members of this House had an opportunity to speak with these demonstrators we found they were not the vagabonds described by president-elect Ion Iliescu but Romanians concerned about their future and concerned about the democratic life they were trying to achieve.

We have just heard from the Secretary of State for External Affairs that he is prepared to allow the Candu project to continue despite the fact there are numerous human rights violations by the Romanian government. The verdict is still out on that government and we call upon the Canadian government to hold a public inquiry to investigate conditions in that country so that we do not end up being responsible for another Chernobyl.

* * *

[*Translation*]

ADVERTISEMENT IN MEDIA

Mr. Denis Pronovost (Saint-Maurice): Mr. Speaker, this morning on page 31, the *Journal de Montréal* published an ad, in very poor taste, in connection with the Saint-Jean holiday in Quebec.

In the ad, readers of the *Journal de Montréal* are offered a T-shirt which shows a Quebecer walking and tearing up the Canadian flag.

Like many other Quebecers, I cannot condone advertising a T-shirt intended to arouse feelings of hatred and contempt in our two founding peoples. The Canadian flag also belongs to Quebecers.

Mr. Speaker, millions of Quebecers felt humiliated when residents of Brockville, Ontario, trod on the Quebec flag on September 6, 1989.

I am sure that today, most Quebecers will join me and members of this House in condemning this advertisement and asking the *Journal de Montréal* to withdraw the ad immediately.

Quebec is capable of celebrating its national holiday and parading its flag with respect, dignity and pride.

A Happy Saint-Jean to all Quebecers!

* * *

[*English*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport): Mr. Speaker, after six years in power, the government is finally listening to Canadians on the environment.

The green paper for public discussion is simplistic and outdated, but it is not discouraging Canadians from participating constructively in large numbers. Their message to the government is this: Act now. The water, air, soil and natural resources need urgent attention. Since the economy is built on the environment, stop treating the two as being separate. Government will be able to protect the environment and promote sustainable development only when departments and agencies adopt such a responsibility.

Canadians have high expectations. Their patience is wearing thin. Their ideas are well ahead of those in government. They are encouraged by the participation of the part-time Minister of the Environment. But does he realize that time is of the essence?

We urge him to meet public expectations by acting expeditiously and by ensuring an environmentally sustainable future for Canadians and the global community.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[*English*]

THE SENATE

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister in the absence of the Prime Minister.

Since Monday, when the Prime Minister announced the appointment to the Senate of Stan Waters who was elected by the people of Alberta to represent their province in the Senate, the Prime Minister has said that he does not want any more such elected senators for at least five more years.

The Prime Minister can hardly expect Canadians to take him seriously when one day he says he is in favour of an elected Senate, and the next day he says he does not want any more such elected senators for at least five years.

I ask the Deputy Prime Minister this: Does the Prime Minister have a commitment from all the provinces on this and, if so, exactly what is it?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, the difference between this government and the government of which the Leader of the Opposition was a member, prior to 1984, is that we are taking Senate reform seriously. That government talked a great line, but did nothing.

As all hon. members know, for the first time in the history of Canada we have laid out an arrangement for comprehensive Senate reform which is based upon the fact that the Senate should be elected. It should have effective powers while retaining and preserving the principle of responsibility of the government to the House of Commons. As well, it should preserve the principle that the Senate would be more equitable in terms of its distribution, so that the less populated areas would have greater participation in the decision-making process in Canada. There is a time-frame that is laid out for that.

I think the hon. Leader of the Opposition should applaud the Prime Minister for clearly demonstrating his commitment to the principle of Senate reform and his clear commitment to the principle of an elected Senate.

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I will certainly applaud the Deputy Prime Minister for the way he skated around and failed to give any direct answer whatsoever to my question.

Yesterday, speaking in the Alberta Legislature about that province's procedure for electing senators, Premier Don Getty said:

> I talked to the Prime Minister about this: Alberta has the legislation and Alberta will use that legislation whenever it sees fit. There has been no commitment to do anything else.

Is the Deputy Prime Minister saying today that the Prime Minister will not accept any senators chosen democratically through election by the people of any province, including the province of Alberta, for the next five years? Can he give us a clear and direct answer?

• (1420)

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, that is a pretty hypothetical proposition that the hon. Leader of the Opposition puts forth.

I have the same press report that he has and it points out that Mr. Getty said he would use the Senate selection proposals when he sees fit to do so.

We have here an agreement that has been signed by all First Ministers which outlines a process. Mr. Getty is an honourable man and I suspect that he will honour that process.

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I would like the Deputy Prime Minister to give some explanation. He seems to be saying that he and the federal government consider that Premier Getty has given a commitment not to put forward the names of any Senators elected by the people of Alberta during the next five years. Yet, Premier Getty has said in his legislature that he has made no such commitment.

I would like him to explain that contradiction.

[*Translation*]

Furthermore, what justification does the Deputy Prime Minister have for the fact that representatives elected by the people of a province such as Alberta would not be able to sit in the Senate for the next five years?

[*English*]

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, there is absolutely no contradiction.

The Prime Minister and the Premier of Alberta are very major architects in terms of the constitutional reform process that has been ongoing and particularly with respect to the program outlined for Senate reform. It is clearly outlined and I can assure the hon. member, if there are any differences of interpretation. the Prime Minister and the Premier will clearly iron that out.

I should also advise him that today there have been ongoing discussions and there will continue to be ongoing discussions. For the information of the hon. Leader of the Opposition, the Prime Minister called the new senator-elect, Senator Waters, and invited him to the Chamber. We look forward to his participation.

I think that in itself is the clearest recognition and the clearest acknowledgement of Senate reform. Certainly, it is much more progress than was made in the time when the hon. Leader of the Opposition was in government.

* * *

ROUTE CANADA

Mr. Joe Comuzzi (Thunder Bay—Nipigon): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of National Revenue.

Further to the ongoing tragedy of this terrible sale by CN Route to Route Canada and Route Canada Enterprises, records show that tax deductions at source were not remitted to Revenue Canada for over a 12-month period. We all know that, if this happened with any other business in Canada, Revenue Canada would have been on its doorstep and confiscated its assets to protect the taxpayers of the country.

I want to know from the Minister, through you, Mr. Speaker, why this particular company was given such special favoured treatment in the payment of trust funds by the employees. Why?

Hon. Otto Jelinek (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, as I have said before in the House, no such provisions were given to this company by Revenue Canada. Every effort was taken to obtain the funds due

to that department. I can assure the hon. member and the House that the majority of the funds owing to the government of Canada have been recovered.

Mr. Joe Comuzzi (Thunder Bay—Nipigon): Mr. Speaker, I direct my supplementary question to the same minister.

Yesterday, we talked about trust funds. I have here a letter dated June 17, 1986, from the then transport minister, which agrees with the sale and advises the President of CN to consider all of the employee rights and to be particularly cautious about the assets to be transferred in the sale.

There was an alleged concern about this transaction prior to June, 1986. There was an obvious lack of concern about the employees after June, 1986.

Will the minister assure the House that the capital assets of the directors of the company who are personally responsible, Messrs Fingold, Cole, and Ruhland, be garnisheed or seized to protect the taxpayers and the employees?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that my hon. colleague raised the alleged letter. This gives me an opportunity to offer to table the letter and put it on the public record.

The first paragraph of the letter which was omitted from the sensationalist article in *The Toronto Star* says: "You may recall that while concurring with the decision of the CN Board of Directors to sell CN Route—". That is what is left out of the article, and that is what my hon. friend has not referred to. But it is clearly the case that it was CN that decided to sell Route Canada.

As to my hon. friend's question, he knows very well that it is the duty of the bankruptcy proceedings to follow through and decide if things were handled properly. Also as my hon. friend knows, there is an RCMP investigation going forward according to the media. Surely, that is the place for criminal proceedings to commence or for other charges or action to be taken by the Registrar in Bankruptcy through the bankruptcy court proceedings.

MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister.

So far, the government has not given a precise indication of what is intended to be put before the House as a result of the First Ministers' Conference last week. I want to remind the Deputy Prime Minister that this party cannot be expected to give its full support until we have seen such precise wording.

Can the Deputy Prime Minister confirm that there is still some problem about the wording of the companion constitutional amendment, and whether his government is committed and is prepared to say today that it will ensure that the companion constitutional amendments will come forward as outlined in a communiqué from the First Ministers?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I can confirm that.

Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, that is a short answer. I take it as a commitment of the government, and we will be holding it accountable. Perhaps if we got more short answers which actually came to the point, we might get further in Question Period.

The agreement from last week's First Ministers' Conference states that, in the 1990 Constitutional Conference, the wording of the Canada clause will be considered.

Owing to the exclusion of aboriginal people last weekend from all the talks concerning the Constitution and again seeing aboriginal people standing on the outside, can the Deputy Prime Minister commit on behalf of his government that aboriginal people will be full participants at the table with a voice when the 1990 Constitutional Conference which is going to discuss the Canada clause is held?

Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Madam Speaker, I am sure the hon. members of the House know that ministers of the government—the Minister of Justice, the minister responsible for intergovernmental affairs and the Minister

of Indian Affairs and Northern Development—have met regularly with aboriginal leadership over the past several months leading up to the important and historic discussions of last week.

There were regular consultations with the leadership of the aboriginal peoples involving government officials last week. I, myself, and other ministers will be meeting again tomorrow with the leadership of the four representative national groups in Ottawa.

I can assure the hon. member that these discussions will be ongoing. If the hon. member would refer to the wording of the actual agreement signed last Saturday evening, she would understand that First Ministers' constitutional conferences on aboriginal issues are to be held once every three years. The first is to be held within one year of proclamation, and the representatives of aboriginal people and the territorial governments are to be invited to participate in these conferences.

Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, the answer of the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development begs to be like the answer from the Deputy Prime Minister which is short and to the point.

I am not talking about the constitutional conferences that are referred to in the agreement. I am very familiar with the agreement.

Will the Deputy Prime Minister commit on behalf of his government two things: first, that the federal government has a policy of supporting aboriginal people being designated a fundamental characteristic of Canada in the Canada clause and that that is the government' negotiating position; and second, that aboriginal people will be a participant and have a voice at the constitutional conference which discusses the Canada clause?

• (1430)

Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, I think I am capable of answering the question.

The agreement reached last Saturday evening provides, under clause 4(2), for a process to define and develop language relating to constitutional recognitions. This process will focus on a recognition of the fundamental characteristics of Canada, beginning with the fundamental role of the aboriginal people in the establishment and foundation of our country, that of our two founding linguistic groups and our multicultural communities.

The hon. members of the NDP know that aboriginal people will be invited to appear before special hearings to be commenced July 16 by a special committee of the House of Commons in which they will participate. They will have a full and complete role in the development of this language on constitutional recognition.

* * *

ROUTE CANADA

Mr. George S. Rideout (Moncton): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport. We know that the government was actively involved in the transfer and sale of Route Canada and we know from the letter to which the minister referred that the government was to be kept fully apprised of developments.

Would the minister please advise whether the government was aware that Route Canada intended the real estate split?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I would like to refer once again to the letter which was typed May 26 and dated June 17.

My hon. friend will know full well from the documents which were released through Access to Information that the agreement of purchase and sale was dated April 4, 1986. Any documentation thereafter was to expedite the sale.

The words that are used in the letter are "the consummation of the sale". Therefore, anything that the government did thereafter was at the request of CN and CN's lawyers in an effort to consummate the sale.

What my hon. friend refers to was not part of what was referred to the government for expedition.

Mr. George S. Rideout (Moncton): Mr. Speaker, my question was very simple. It was just whether the government was aware of the intended real estate split prior to the deal being concluded. Obviously, the government does not want to answer.

We know the government was actively involved in the transaction and tried to protect itself by putting in a useless good faith clause, purportedly trying to keep the company operating for three years. We know that there

wasn't any good faith in the deal and that Ruhland stripped the company of its assets.

Why would the government not, at the very least, put in an iron clad guarantee for the workers?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, this takes me back to a former Liberal cabinet minister who gave all sorts of iron clad guarantees that were not worth the paper they were written on. There is no way you could put in an iron clad guarantee. My hon. friend knows that. A best efforts undertaking is the normal undertaking used in legal transactions. The best efforts of CN were used.

With reference to the question of the real estate split, the government was not involved in the sale in that way. It was involved in any policy matters. Therefore, the answer is no.

* * *

EMPLOYMENT

Mr. Bob Speller (Haldimand—Norfolk): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister for International Trade, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister. The president of Fruehauf Canada has now announced he is closing the Brantford, Ontario, trailer plant because of the free trade deal, high interest rates and deregulation in the trucking industry.

What plans does the minister have to save these 334 jobs, many of which are in my riding?

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Industry, Science and Technology): Mr. Speaker, first I would like to say that what my friend said about free trade is wrong. We still have tariffs of 12 per cent. They were at 15 and they are now still at 12 per cent. The problems at Fruehauf have nothing to do with the free trade agreement. There are many factors which are involved, particularly the fact that the competition is very strong in that sector and they have to compete with the United States and many other companies.

The Minister of Employment and Immigration and myself are working very closely with all the programs in her department to help those workers.

Mr. Bob Speller (Haldimand—Norfolk): Mr. Speaker, maybe the minister should talk to the president of Fruehauf Canada who said yesterday that it was specifically related to the Canada–U.S. free trade deal.

Given the minister's unwillingness to do anything to save these jobs, will the minister at least keep his government's promise of the last election to bring in these special adjustment programs that are supposedly set up to help these workers?

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Industry, Science and Technology): Mr. Speaker, I want to repeat again that with tariffs of 12 per cent this problem has nothing to do with the free trade agreement.

Second, there is a bill on the other side of my friend's wall that has been stalled by the Senate for many, many months. If the member wants to do something to help his people he should ask the senators to pass the bill, please.

* * *

PRESENCE IN GALLERY

Mr. Speaker: I wish to draw to members' attention the presence in the gallery of Mme Adriana Munoz, member of the Chilean Parliament and Leader of the Chilean Socialist Party.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

* * *

MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton—Melville): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister, responding on behalf of the Prime Minister. It is a follow-up to a question asked by my leader a few minutes ago on the Canada clause.

As we all know in this House, under the agreement in the communiqué issued last Saturday there will be participation of aboriginal people during the aboriginal round at the table of the FMC, but can the Deputy Prime Minister give a commitment today that aboriginal people will be participating at the table at the First Ministers' Conference in Vancouver later on this fall when the First Ministers are discussing the Canada clause as it pertains to the aboriginal people in Canada? That is the commitment we want from the Prime Minister.

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member knows that there is a clear process outlined with respect to bringing about a

better consensus and understanding with respect to the so-called Canada clause.

As is indicated in the preamble, the Prime Minister and premiers reviewed various drafts which were submitted by the federal government, the Manitoba government, the Saskatchewan government, the Ontario government and the British Columbia government, and it was undertaken that all of these drafts would be submitted to the committee for further consideration.

The hon. member raises an interesting point but it would seem to me that his suggestion might be somewhat premature having regard for the fact that this work will probably be ongoing at that particular time. We will certainly take that suggestion into consideration and obviously I will convey his interest in that regard to the Prime Minister.

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, on a supplementary question. Surely the Deputy Prime Minister recognizes that it is up to the Prime Minister to show leadership at this very critical time when aboriginal peoples are feeling a sense of exclusion as a result of the last process that took place.

Does the Deputy Prime Minister not recognize that in view of the fact that an essential component of the Canada clause is the recognition of aboriginal peoples as distinct societies with distinct cultures and languages in this country, it is fundamentally unacceptable for First Ministers to sit around the table and discuss that issue without the participation of aboriginal peoples? Will he not include aboriginal peoples at the table at the First Ministers' Conference in December?

• (1440)

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I do not want to undermine the good intentions of the hon. member, but I think that what he is proposing here is a short-circuiting of the process that has been laid out.

He talks about leadership. There never has been more outstanding leadership in this regard than that which has been displayed by the Prime Minister.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mazankowski: The hon. member should know as well that there has been agreement reached as to a process which I think he should allow to take its normal course of action. Why would he want to interfere with that and subvert a process which has been agreed to by all First Ministers?

* * *

GUN CONTROL

Hon. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice. When the minister visited the Montreal *Ecole Polytechnique* in April, the students presented her with 25 boxes of petitions with over 500,000 signatures requesting more effective gun controls. On that occasion the minister promised to table a bill in this House before the end of May.

It is now June 13, with only four more days before the summer recess, and there is still no such bill.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

An hon. member: That's not what J.R. told us.

Mr. Allmand: Five days, six days.

Mr. McKnight: Warren for House Leader.

Mr. Allmand: Mr. Speaker, when will the minister present this bill? Will she keep her promise and do so before the summer recess?

Hon. Kim Campbell (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his question and I thank him for giving me an opportunity to point out that as a result of my visit with the students at *Ecole Polytechnique* I was able to bring back, from their report, other issues which I have asked the Department of Justice to review and which will be included in the package which I want to present to the House.

I never made a commitment to have something in the House before the end of May. I may have said that I would hope to have it by the end of May. The commitment that I made was to have it in the House before the end of this session. I hope the hon. member will not suggest that anything precipitous be done in order to prematurely foreshorten the session and make it difficult for me to meet my commitment.

Hon. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce): Mr. Speaker, the students understood the minister's promise to be to present a bill before the summer recess, whenever that will be.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Allmand: Let's stick to the principal issue. On June 5, the Canadian Federation of Municipalities endorsed a plea by the city of Montreal to ban all semi-automatic combat weapons. The minister knows that the Ruger semi-automatic used to to kill the 14 young women at the University of Montreal could fire up to 50 rounds of ammunition and is in fact used by several police SWAT teams.

Will the minister respond to this serious and reasonable request and make a commitment to ban that type of weapon? Will she put that in the legislation that she tables?

Hon. Kim Campbell (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I believe the hon. member is in fact misquoting the resolution by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities which I think was directed to military and paramilitary type weapons. But those issues will be addressed in the package that I am bringing before the House.

* * *

[*Translation*]

INTEREST RATES

Mr. Alfonso Gagliano (Saint-Léonard): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Finance. The minister's monetary policy is having a disastrous impact on the economy of Quebec, which is on the verge of a recession, according to François Dupuis, of the *Mouvement Desjardins*. When will the Minister of Finance revise his monetary policy and reduce interest rates?

[*English*]

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, we review the monetary policy on an ongoing basis. I had a meeting with the Deputy Governor of the Bank of Canada on Monday. I had a meeting with the Governor the previous week. This is something we do on an ongoing basis.

I have made very clear in this House the basis on which we are following monetary policy. We are concerned about the inflationary pressures which are undermining the competitive position of our economy. If we do not get these inflationary pressures under control, companies are going to lose business which will cause a loss of jobs on an ongoing basis. It is this that is driving the monetary policy of the Government of Canada.

As soon as we can see some pressure subsidizing, yes, we will see interest rates decline. Until that time, we must continue to follow the policy that we have been following.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alfonso Gagliano (Saint-Léonard): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary is directed to the same minister. In the past twelve months, 51,000 manufacturing jobs were lost in Quebec because of the disastrous policies of the Minister of Finance. When will the minister finally start listening to the Premier of Quebec, the *Conseil du patronat*, the Quebec Minister of Finance and all economic partners in Quebec who are asking the minister to reduce interest rates before it is too late for Quebec's economy?

[*English*]

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal Party of Canada, the New Democratic Party of Canada, and the premiers have been calling upon us to reduce interest rates for almost two years now, but consider what would have happened had we taken that advice in the summer of 1988 or even the summer of 1989. We would have had a rip-roaring inflation problem today that would be doing lasting damage to the competitive position of our economy.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): I hear some disagreement from the members opposite. Let me ask the members opposite to consider the fact that the unit labour costs of Canada at the start of 1989 were increasing at a rate of 4.9 per cent. At the end of 1989 they were increasing at a rate of 6.9 per cent. At the same time unit labour costs in the United States were increasing at 4.9 per cent throughout the year.

That is the measure of the loss of competitive position. That is the measure of the loss of jobs that we will encounter if we do not get these inflationary pressures under control.

ROUTE CANADA

Mr. Iain Angus (Thunder Bay—Atikokan): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport.

The government has consistently been attempting to place itself at arm's length from the decision to sell off CN Route to the private sector. In fact on June 4 the Minister of Transport said: "It was sold on an arm's length transaction with advice coming to the government from CN as to the best offer".

The sentence in the letter which the minister quoted from earlier today, which he did not complete, goes on to say: "The ministerial task force on privatization asked for some additional information on severance provisions and other employment and service considerations and on the value of land to be transferred to the purchaser by virtue of the sale."

If this was only a one-way situation, that CN was only providing advice, why was the Government of Canada, the Minister of Transport of the day, asking for specific information if it was not for the purposes of modifying the sale agreement which although agreed to had not been finalized at that point in time?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, as I indicated earlier, the sale agreement was executed on April 4, 1986 and the sale was consummated on December 6, 1986. Between those times it was necessary for the government, in order to complete the sale, to go through certain matters and certain Orders in Council as requested by CN.

I refer my friend back to the letter which says: "while concurring with the decision of the CN board of directors to sell CN Route".

I refer him also to the letter from Canadian National to *The Toronto Star* dated June 7, 1990, which has been tabled. It says: "CN and no one else decided to sell its subsidiary."

Mr. Iain Angus (Thunder Bay—Atikokan): I have a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker.

I think it is obvious to everyone that the Government of Canada has a policy of privatization. Whether it is a particular Crown corporation or the government itself that initiates the process is irrelevant.

It is clear from the minister's answers that this government had the opportunity to ensure full protection of the employees and full protection for the taxpayers of Canada, and it failed to meet its obligation.

Will the Minister of Transport now table in this House the actual sale agreement so we can see once and for all what was in there, what protection if any the government demanded and got for the taxpayers and for the workers?

• (1450)

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I would quote once again from the letter from CN to *The Toronto Star*: "Our alternative to the sale was to close down CN Route and lay off all staff in 1985."

Obviously this was a better deal for the employees than closing down and closing the door. The government left the sale in the hands of CN because it was a subsidiary of CN. For that reason it was the decision of the board of directors of CN to sell the company, not of the government.

* * *

[*Translation*]

RAIL TRANSPORT

Mr. Guy Saint-Julien (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport. In 1987, CN unlawfully closed the Franquet-Chapais branch line in Abitibi to railway traffic, thus contravening the decision of the Canadian Transport Commission which obliged CN to keep the line in service. On January 31, the National Transportation Agency ordered CN to maintain service on the branch line and to put the line back into service by July 31.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister ask CN management to observe the NTA's decision so that there will be regular service by July 31? If they do not, I think CN management in Montreal should be thrown in jail for civil disobedience, to get them off our backs!

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, CN has given me the assurance that the line will be opened on time, in accordance with the NTA order.

[*English*]

FISHERIES

Hon. Roger C. Simmons (Burin—St. George's): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans who will be aware that inshore fishermen and plant workers in Newfoundland are in need of quite immediate financial help.

The minister is aware that the winter fishery of the south west coast of Newfoundland was a disaster. He will know that the inshore fishery in Fortune Bay, in Placentia Bay, and off the Port au Port Peninsula is a complete failure. He must know that he must act on a separate aid package for those people.

Will he agree to act quite soon to help end some of the pain, suffering, and frustration these people are going through these days?

Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, it is quite significant that the members of the Liberal Party who were in government for so long in this country prior to 1984 were never able to put in place measures in Atlantic Canada to address the needs that people of Newfoundland and Labrador are experiencing right now.

We have put in place this fisheries adjustment package. Part of this package is a plant workers' adjustment program for plant workers and trawlermen. We have also indicated that through consultation and inviting the unions, the fishermen, the workers, the provinces, the companies, and the inshore sector to work together we will design a program to take care of the future. Unfortunately I cannot rewrite the past. Right now we have programs in place.

My colleague, the Minister of Employment and Immigration, has a host of programs which she is trying to deliver in Newfoundland in order to come to grips with the problems it is experiencing. We have to do more than just take care of tomorrow. We have to look at the future, and that is what we intend to do.

Hon. Roger C. Simmons (Burin—St. George's): Mr. Speaker, I agree that the minister does a fairly clumsy job of rewriting the past. The problem we are facing now is due to the French, Spanish and Portuguese overfishing which was not going on when this side was in power. There was no overfishing until 1985, none.

I ask the minister to stop playing politics with the issue and to recognize that those people are hurting. They are hurting now and they are looking to him to deliver on the promises he made soon after he became minister.

Will he be a man of his word and give those inshore fishermen and plant workers something to buy their groceries with, not some more rhetoric and cheap talk?

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, we have worked very hard on this long-term package that is going to be very beneficial to all areas of Newfoundland.

I should point out as well that we are aware there is a very specific problem in the area that the member is discussing. Within the program and within the context of Bill C-21, there are some things that we can do that will be of great assistance to the people in that area. I would urge the member to assist us in getting those things ready so we can do it.

* * *

TRADE

Mr. Réginald Bélair (Cochrane—Superior): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister for International Trade, I will direct my question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs who said a couple of days ago in this House that the Minister for International Trade gave notice to the Americans that he wanted to renegotiate the memorandum of understanding concerning the surtax on softwood lumber.

The next meeting is scheduled for October. The sawmill industry cannot wait that long. Will the minister undertake here and now to issue the cancellation notice to terminate this unfair surtax which is crippling the softwood lumber industry?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member understands that the situation is a little more complex than a unilateral order issued by one level of government in Canada on a matter that has both international and interprovincial implications.

I indicated that we have served notice of our intention to the Government of the United States. I also indicated the other day that we are in discussion with the relevant

provinces and with the industry to try to set this situation right as quickly as we can.

Mr. Réginald Bélair (Cochrane—Superior): Mr. Speaker, since July of last year the Minister of Forestry has indicated that the government was gathering evidence in order to cancel the memorandum. There is a stipulation in that memo that if there are many changes it will be renegotiated. The changes have occurred: high interest rates, high Canadian dollar, and exports are down to nil.

When will the government finally do something for the industry?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member, with a little more time in the House, will recognize that overstating a case does not make up for not having one.

* * *

DIEFENBAKER CENTRE

Mr. Stan J. Hovdebo (Saskatoon—Humboldt): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister.

Yesterday the University of Saskatchewan sent out layoff notices to employees of the Diefenbaker Centre and announced that the centre's doors would be closed on June 30.

The people of Saskatchewan are angry and dismayed that this government would force this kind of action because last week in this House the Minister of Communications told my colleague from Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing that the funding would be in place.

Is the Deputy Prime Minister in a position now to announce firm funding for the Diefenbaker Centre, or is it the government's intention to close down the centre deliberately?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I can advise the hon. member that there are still some details that are being worked out with the Government of Saskatchewan with respect to the establishment of a foundation.

I can assure the hon. member that the centre will not close. We will be able to provide the University of Saskatchewan with the necessary comfort to keep the Diefenbaker Centre open. I am sure that will be welcome news to the hon. member and all hon. members in the House.

Mr. Stan J. Hovdebo (Saskatoon—Humboldt): Mr. Speaker, we have been hearing that answer for the last four months. The uncertainty in funding is an indication of the kind of incompetence that this government is showing across the country. It is disrupting the business operation of the University of Saskatchewan.

Why is the government insisting on this crisis orientation as far as funding of the Diefenbaker Centre is concerned? The same thing happened four years ago.

Does the government intend the centre to be well used by the scholars, the universities, and the people of Saskatchewan? Or, is it intending to make it a marginal operation at the University of Saskatchewan?

• (1500)

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member should know, if he is not aware, that this is a unique request inasmuch as the university owns the assets of the Diefenbaker estate rather than the government.

I can tell the hon. member that has made the issue somewhat more complex. We have been able to work these details out and the final details are still being refined. As I indicated to the hon. member, I can assure him that the institution will remain open and we will provide the necessary comfort to the University of Saskatchewan for that purpose.

* * *

[*Translation*]

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Eugène Bellemare (Carleton—Gloucester): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. Yesterday, the minister said that the so–called consumer information office for the GST would provide information on the GST according to product type or industry, while the new director of the office, Mr. Murray, said the exact opposite, stating that he would provide information on individual products and companies. Who is telling the truth?

Speaker's Ruling

[*English*]

Hon. Otto Jelinek (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, allow me to respond.

There is no contradictory position on the part of the minister or Mr. Murray, the head of the Consumers' Association of Canada who, by the way, consumers right across Canada should be delighted to have as the individual heading this very important agency for the protection of the consumer.

I can assure the hon. member and this House that every step will be taken by the unit to make certain that all consumers in Canada will benefit not only from the market forces which will automatically, in general terms, allow the passage of the reduction of the cost to the consumer, but through the provision of information to the consumer as well.

Mr. Eugène Bellemare (Carleton—Gloucester): Mr. Speaker, why does the government insist on making consumers believe that the new GST consumer information office will be able to monitor the implementation of the GST when last month, Mr. Murray, the new chairman of the office, questioned the value of such a monitoring agency because the information would be too general to identify abuses. Why does the minister not admit that this new consumer information office is just a PR job for the GST?

Hon. Otto Jelinek (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, that is the normal type of negative nonsense that comes from that side of the House.

Obviously, if Mr. Murray did not support the initiative of this government he would not have accepted the job as head of this agency. Can that hon. member not get it through his thick head that this is for the benefit of consumers and had we gone the route of the Liberals or the NDP the consumer would suffer as a result?

The steps taken by this government were to look at the options available to us; either sticking with the *status quo* or going the route that the Liberals probably would favour, which is to create a great big bureaucracy for a six-month period and initiate something like wage and price controls, which we oppose by the way. We have gone the moderate route to allow the market system to operate, along with the information office.

* * *

POINT OF ORDER

TABLING OF DOCUMENT

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, in keeping with the undertaking I made during Question Period, I wish to table herewith a letter from the Hon. Don Mazankowski to Doctor J. Maurice LeClair, Chairman and Chief Executive, Canadian National Railway. The letter was typed May 23, 1986 and dispatched June 17, 1986.

Mr. Iain Angus (Thunder Bay—Atikokan): Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I am pleased the minister has tabled that letter. Would he now table the sale agreement?

* * *

PRIVILEGE

DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. Speaker: On Thursday, March 8, 1990, the hon. member for Skeena rose on a question of privilege to bring to our attention certain actions by the Department of National Defence which in the hon. member's opinion breached his rights and those of all members of the House.

In order to place this matter before the House, the hon. member referred to and quoted extensively from several confidential documents of a sensitive nature. He agreed to provide copies of the documents in reference to the Chair, to the hon. government House leader and to the House leader of the Official Opposition. The recipients of these documents agreed to respect their confidentiality and the Chair undertook to review the documents, to be in contact with the three parties and to return to the House on this matter at an appropriate time. On March 27, 1990, the hon. member for Skeena wrote to the Chair to provide further relevant information. On May 3, 1990, in response to the hon. member for Skeena's inquiry, I reported that discussions on this matter were proceeding.

[*Translation*]

The Chair is placed in a rather awkward position in a situation such as this. Serious allegations have been

made publicly on the floor of the House respecting breaches of members' privileges, yet the documents on which the allegations are based cannot be made public.

The Chair had hoped to reach a negotiated solution to these difficulties and to inform the House of the terms of that solution, but that was not possible. Accordingly, the Chair will attempt to deal with the matter in the customary fashion, bearing in mind, however, the constraints imposed on this case by confidentiality and the sensitive nature of the material under consideration.

[*English*]

It is part of the public record that the hon. member's claim relates to the investigation of a Department of National Defence scientist by the name of Dr. Mendoza, and that the Human Rights Commission of Canada is seized with those aspects of the matter pertaining to the human rights of Dr. Mendoza.

The hon. member for Skeena set out his claim in three points. He indicated first, that the matter involved his rights as an individual member of Parliament because the investigation extended to telephone calls to his office and his Prince Rupert constituency office. In the second and third instances, the hon. member maintained that the rights of all members of the House were affected because documents pertaining to the investigation suggested:

> —that Canadian law be violated—by the Minister of National Defence during Question Period—

And:

> —revealed a view by the Department of National Defence that "the House" should not be advised of the specifics of these investigations.

I should like to deal with these latter two points immediately.

In support of these points, the hon. member for Skeena read into the record, and I refer to *Hansard*, page 8965, parts of what he termed, "the key document, Department of National Defence file number PSIF 438 558 462, Record of Conversation".

There are four minutes in that particular document and two attachments to it. As the hon. member has already read three of the minutes and one of the attachments into the record, I think it important to record the fourth and final item. It reads as follows:

> 4. In the end I suggested to—

At this point, the name of whoever it was the author is suggesting "to" is blanked out. It goes on:

> —that we at least wait for the question. The draft responses (not used) are attached.

One of these draft responses was that which was read into the record by the hon. member for Skeena as recorded at page 8966 of *Hansard*.

In his intervention in the discussion of this question of privilege on March 8 last, the hon. government House leader stated in relation to the "key document" the hon. member for Skeena referred to:

> —he seems to have a document which describes potential strategy being worked out by some officials that might be deployed by the Minister of National Defence in terms of dealing with a particular political issue. But as I heard the Hon. Member, as they devise strategy they seem to be saying that unfortunately this strategy would involve violating the law. You are able to conclude from that, if you choose, that they went ahead anyway. If there is evidence to support that I would like to hear it. Or, you can conclude that they have sat down, worked out a strategy and found that unfortunately they could not proceed with it because it violates the law—

Having had the opportunity to thoroughly review and discuss all the documents presented to the Chair, and having reviewed in its entirety "the key document", on which the hon. member for Skeena placed so much reliance in developing his second and third points, the Chair cannot find that a *prima facie* case of privilege has been made out in this respect and accordingly I must, with respect, dismiss the second and third points of the hon. member's claim.

• (1510)

I should like now to turn to the first point the hon. member for Skeena set out in his claim, that is, that his privilege as an individual member had been breached because the investigation extended to, in his words, "accessing of calls made to my offices". In the evidence that the hon. member put on the record on March 8, 1990, it was clear that:

1) the Special Investigations Unit of National Defence attempted and apparently succeeded in obtaining the hon. member's phone numbers, both in Ottawa and in his constituency; and,

2) a search warrant was issued by Judge Leven in Calgary Provincial Court to search Alberta government telephone offices at Calgary for records of long distance

phone calls charged to Dr. Mendoza's residence phone. The warrant was executed.

[*Translation*]

I think the Chair might be permitted to take judicial notice of the fact that the hon. member's telephone numbers are not closely held. In fact, he lists nine telephone numbers, plus two fax numbers and two Zenith numbers on his official letterhead. That being the case, it could hardly be seriously contended that ascertaining the hon. member's telephone numbers involved any type of clandestine operation or any breach of confidentiality or privilege.

[*English*]

As to the search warrant, it would not appear that the execution of the warrant involved any intrusion into, or interference with, the office or records of the hon. member. It would appear that the investigators simply obtained the telephone numbers of the hon. member which are public knowledge and attempted to match these with the legally obtained record of long distance calls made from Dr. Mendoza's residence. The only information which could be thus obtained was whether or not a call had been placed to the hon. member's office.

As the Chair understands the matter, neither the identity of the parties to any calls, nor the nature or content of any calls would be thus revealed. In these circumstances, the Chair cannot conclude that the hon. member's privileges have been interfered with and accordingly, cannot conclude that a *prima facie* case of privilege has been made out.

It may be that the hon. member wishes to challenge the information upon which the search warrant was based. In that case, there is a mechanism in the court system for do doing. The Judiciary and Parliament are carefully segregated under our constitution and this House and, in particular, the Chair, cannot sit in review or appeal of the decisions of any court in the land.

In concluding his remarks on this issue on March 8, the hon. member for Skeena said: "When one takes the time to look at the documents that I now have, in sum, one can see that there is something going on that is violating the rights of the members of this House".

[*Translation*]

The Chair wants to assure the hon. member that the Chair takes this matter very seriously indeed. The Chair has listened with great care to the hon. member, has exhaustively reviewed the documents presented by the hon. member and held discussions with representatives of all parties on this issue prior to deciding that no *prima facie* case of privilege has been made out in this instance.

[*English*]

It may be that the hon. member could, by the presentation of a cogent argument supported by evidence of true probative value, establish a *prima facie* case of privilege based on the pattern of events at issue here. The Chair does not preclude that possibility. In deciding as I have, the Chair only signals that such a case has not been successfully made and accordingly, the matter cannot be afforded privileged treatment. In referring to the hon. member's comments of the case, in sum, I repeat, the Chair has taken very serious consideration of the entire situation.

I thank all hon. members for their co–operation and patience in respect of this important matter.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*Translation*]

ORDER IN COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS

TABLING OF APPOINTMENTS AND REFERENCE TO STANDING COMMITTEES

Hon. Marcel Danis (Minister of State (Youth), Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table, in both official languages, a number of Order in Council appointments which were made by the government.

Pursuant to the provisions of Standing Order 110(1), these are deemed referred to the appropriate standing committees, a list of which is attached.

* * *

PETITIONS

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the

honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to 48 petitions.

[*Editor's Note: See today's Votes and Proceedings.*]

* * *

[*English*]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

BILL C-44—REPORT OF LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Mr. Bob Corbett (Fundy—Royal): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present the report of the legislative committee on Bill C-44, an act respecting the Hibernia Development Project and to amend certain acts in relation thereto, with amendments.

[*Translation*]

JUSTICE AND SOLICITOR GENERAL—TABLING OF SECOND REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

Mr. Bob Horner (Mississauga West): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to table the second report of the Standing Committee on Justice and Solicitor General, in both official languages.

[*English*]

ENVIRONMENT—THIRD REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

Hon. David MacDonald (Rosedale): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present the third report of the Standing Committee on the Environment, the first part of our Changing Atmosphere series.

I want to emphasize that this report comes at a very key time with respect to the meetings in London shortly, which will be renegotiating the Montreal protocol on the ozone layer.

In our view, we must act urgently to deal with the CFC problem. If all the CFCs presently in existence were to be released into the ozone layer, it would likely be so badly damaged that it would be destroyed. We must take action now. This report is an attempt to set out a framework and a way in which we can find suitable substitutes and act together. Without an international action with respect to the threat to the ozone layer and to the atmosphere of our planet, we are indeed in great jeopardy.

BILL C-37—REPORT OF LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Mr. Fernand Jourdenais (La Prairie): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present the report of the legislative committee on Bill C-37, an act to establish the Canadian Heritage Languages Institute, with amendment and in both official languages.

FINANCE—NINTH REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

Mr. René Soetens (Ontario): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the ninth report of the Standing Committee on Finance.

During the hearings on the goods and services tax, the finance committee received many submissions that the government ought to review its expenditures. The finance committee struck a subcommittee to allow those who had that opinion to further elaborate. This report deals with that subcommittee.

I might add that I find that, as members of Parliament, we have some responsibility to further educate our constituents as to how we, the Government of Canada, spend their taxes.

BILL C-55—REPORT OF LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Mr. Neil Young (Beaches—Woodbine): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the report of the legislative committee on Bill C-55, an act to amend the Customs Act, without amendment.

[*Editor's Note: See today's Votes and Proceedings.*]

* * *

STANDING COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE AND SOLICITOR GENERAL

REFERENCE TO STANDING COMMITTEE

Hon. Marcel Danis (Minister of State (Youth) and Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, I have five motions to present to the House.

The first one is the following, I move:

That pursuant to subsection 14(1) of An Act to amend the Parole Act and the Penitentiary Act, Chapter 34, 2nd supplement, Revised Statutes of Canada, 1985, the Standing Committee on Justice and Solicitor General be the committee to undertake a comprehensive review of the provisions and operation of sections 21.2 to 21.6 of the Parole Act and the schedule thereto and subsection 25(5) to (7) and Section 26.1 of the Penitentiary Act; and that the said Committee report no later than Monday, December 31, 1990.

• (1520)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to.

* * *

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE CSIS ACT AND THE SECURITY OFFENCES ACT

DATE OF REPORT OF COMMITTEE

Hon. Marcel Danis (Minister of State (Youth) and Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): The second motion is the following one, I move:

That, further to Order made June 27, 1989, the Special Committee on the review of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service Act and the Security Offences Act report no later than the first normal sitting day after Labour Day, 1990.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to.

* * *

[*Translation*]

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

AUTHORIZATION TO TRAVEL

Hon. Marcel Danis (Minister of State (Youth), Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons) moved:

That the Standing Committee on Public Accounts be authorized to travel to St. John's, Newfoundland from July 8 to July 11, 1990, to attend the Annual meeting of the Canadian Council of Public Accounts Committees, and that the necessary staff accompany the committee.

[*English*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to.

* * *

ENERGY, MINES AND RESOURCES

AUTHORIZATION FOR STANDING COMMITTEE TO TRAVEL

Hon. Marcel Danis (Minister of State (Youth) and Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, the next motion is the following, I move:

That the Standing Committee on Energy, Mines and Resources be empowered to travel to Edmonton, Fort McMurray, Cold Lake, Lloydminster and Calgary during the week of September 16, 1990 in relation to its study of the Oil Sands Project, and that the necessary staff accompany the committee.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Member: Agreed.

Motion agreed to.

* * *

[*Translation*]

STANDING COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE STATUS OF DISABLED PERSONS

AUTHORIZATION TO TRAVEL

Hon. Marcel Danis (Minister of State (Youth), Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons) moved:

That the Standing Committee on Human Rights and the Status of Disabled Persons be authorized to travel to Calgary on September 28, 1990, in order to hear witnesses from Western Canada on Canadian initiatives regarding disabled persons and in order to continue its work in the area of economic integration of disabled persons, and that the necessary staff do accompany the committee.

[*English*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the said motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to.

[*Translation*]

PETITIONS

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to present a petition signed by a number of Canadians from Newfoundland. The petition was received by the hon. member for Bonavista—Trinity—Conception.

These Canadians object to the government's proposed GST which they consider unfair, and your petitioners call upon this Parliament to reject the tax.

[*English*]

LOW-LEVEL FLIGHT TRAINING

Mr. Dan Heap (Trinity—Spadina): Mr. Speaker, it is my honour and pleasure to present a petition from some 2,484 persons living in many different parts of Canada who are concerned about the government's policy of low-level flight training in Labrador.

The petitioners ask Parliament to join with the Assembly of First Nations, the Innu of Labrador, and other aboriginal peoples of northern Canada, in opposing the use of their lands for NATO-NORAD attack training.

They ask Parliament to oppose establishment of NATO operations in Canada and to demand that the Canadian government end all NATO-NORAD low-level flight training in Canada and to redirect Canada's NATO-NORAD funding toward enabling Canada's aboriginal peoples to regain control of their lands and livelihood toward promoting sustainable development for all Canadians.

VIA RAIL

Mr. Dan Heap (Trinity—Spadina): Mr. Speaker, I also have a petition signed by 1,145 people from many parts of Canada who are concerned with the government's policy against VIA Rail.

The petitioners ask Parliament to reject any proposed reduction and elimination of VIA Rail service, to modernize existing equipment so that VIA Rail can provide a world-class service to Canadians, and to build a high speed passenger train between Montreal and Windsor.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Dan Heap (Trinity—Spadina): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition signed by some 3,590 Canadians from all parts of the country who are concerned with one particular aspect of the government's goods and services tax.

The petitioners point out that since Confederation, and without hiatus, it has been the policy to apply zero rate of tax to magazines, books, and newspapers, but now the government proposes to include them in the goods and services tax. Because they believe that uninhibited dissemination of the printed word, as a corner-stone of democracy, culture, education and a literate, productive society, would be negatively affected by this application of the GST, they therefore call upon Parliament to reaffirm the historic principles embodied in the tax-free status of the printed word by retaining the zero rate in the GST legislation and regulations.

Mr. Neil Young (Beaches—Woodbine): Mr. Speaker, I, too, have the honour to present a petition that describes the proposed goods and services tax of the finance minister as an unfair form of taxation because of its lack of regard for a taxpayer's ability to pay.

The petitioners call upon Parliament to reject the current proposal for a goods and services tax, to reform the taxation system so there is an effective minimum tax on wealthy individuals and corporations, and to ensure that, if and when there is a broad public consensus on a sales tax measure to replace the manufacturers' sales tax, this reform will not be an opportunity for the government to impose a massive tax grab.

Mr. Stan J. Hovdebo (Saskatoon—Humboldt): Mr. Speaker, it is my honour and duty to present, on behalf of a number of citizens of Nova Scotia and Ontario, petitions which point out that the government's taxation system is unfair, that changes to it in the form of goods and services tax just exacerbate the unfairness, and that the government should reject that proposal and go back to the reform of the tax system from the basic principles.

Mr. John Brewin (Victoria): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present a petition, pursuant to Standing Order 36, signed by many constituents from my riding of Victoria who oppose the goods and services tax, call on

the Parliament of Canada to reject it, and call for a proper reform of the tax system so that it is fair.

I have the honour of presenting this petition on behalf of my constituents.

VICTORIA HARBOUR

Mr. John Brewin (Victoria): Mr. Speaker, I also present a petition opposing vigorously the visits of nuclear vessels to the harbour of Victoria.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition which has been signed by approximately 500 residents of my constituency of Essex—Windsor, and adjoining constituencies, calling upon Parliament to address the goods and services tax in a different approach than that which has been taken.

The petitioners suggest that the government has not addressed the unfair tax system that is currently in place which permits wealthy individuals and corporations to pay little or no federal tax while forcing low and middle-income taxpayers to bear more of the national tax burden.

The petitioners are also very concerned about the attempt to tax reading, haircuts, diapers, coffins, and home heating fuels, and they suggest very strongly that the goods and services tax should be withdrawn by the government.

INCOME TAX ACT

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton—Melville): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition on a totally different topic. It is a petition organized by two Yorkton mechanics, Allan Pilon and Randy Moore, regarding some of the changes that mechanics would like to see in the income tax legislation.

Their petition was signed by approximately 7,000 Canadians and it calls upon the following: "Wherefore the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the Parliament of Canada to establish a one-time deduction from taxable income of the value of existing tools and equipment owned by registered journeymen and apprentice technicians. The said tools and equipment are essential in order to earn a living and to support our families. Therefore, we humbly request a full tax credit for all tools and equipment purchased annually in order to earn a living to ensure that the tax burden is fairly spread among all taxpayers."

• (1530)

I think they have a very valid point for having this exemption from income tax for the tools that they buy to carry on their livelihood, to carry on their work to support themselves and their families. I hope the government will take heed of their request and implement very soon into legislation the appropriate amendment to the Income Tax Act.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Jack Whittaker (Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise pursuant to Standing Order 36 and present another petition against the goods and services tax.

The people of Canada, regardless of whether they are on the west coast, the east coast, or in central Canada are speaking out with unanimity and stating that they do not like the particular tax that this government has put before them with the goods and services tax and they are asking, they are pleading with the government to come to its senses, stop the goods and services tax and bring in a tax that is fair to all Canadians.

VIA RAIL

Mr. Brian L. Gardiner (Prince George—Bulkley Valley): Mr. Speaker, I have the pleasure today under Standing Order 36 to present two petitions to the House. The first is signed by Canadians from a host of communities, Toronto, Winnipeg and others all across the country calling on the Government of Canada to bring in legislation that would ensure essentially that we end up with a modern and efficient VIA Rail passenger rail system.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Brian L. Gardiner (Prince George—Bulkley Valley): The second petition is regarding the grief and suffering tax, as it has come to be known. This petition is signed almost completely by the residents of 150 Mile House in the central interior of British Columbia. The petitioners call upon the government to withdraw the goods and services tax and bring in fair tax legislation. They share my concern that the Liberal Senate has already given second reading to the GST bill and they express their shame and outrage at that.

Mr. Ray Funk (Prince Albert—Churchill River): Mr. Speaker, it is my honour and privilege to rise to present a petition to this House signed by approximately 200 people from the Kapuskasing area in northern Ontario.

The petitioners, like millions of other Canadians, oppose strenuously the government's goods and services tax. They see it as making an unfair tax system even more unfair and placing higher income Canadians in a better position *vis-à-vis* lower income Canadians. They call on Parliament, and I presume they mean those parliamentarians in the other place who can still act on this measure, to act to withdraw this tax now and kill the tax.

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, it is my honour to present a petition from a number of constituents from Kamloops, British Columbia, which brings the total now in excess of 20,000 constituents who have registered by petition their opposition to the goods and services tax.

Mr. Cooper: What about the other 80,000?

Mr. Riis: The question that they raise is, why would we want to tax reading material? For that reason alone they are opposed. I am pleased the Minister of Finance is present. That would make Canada the only country in the world that would tax reading. It is not the kind of thing that you do, Mr. Speaker, when you are concerned about high illiteracy rates—

Mr. Boyer: Are you presenting a petition or are you on debate?

Mr. Riis: I am just saying that they do not understand why the government would want to tax reading material. Actually there are other items as well. They cannot understand why the government would want to put a special tax on coffins, funerals, home heating fuels and whole sets of other things.

Mr. Cardiff: It will be less.

Mr. Riis: Well, on funerals there are no taxes, to be fair.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I would hope the hon. member would stick to his petition and get it over with.

Mr. Riis: Not get it over with, Mr. Speaker. I was being provoked here by my colleagues.

To wrap it up, the petitioners are in opposition to the goods and services tax and they too call upon the Liberals in the Senate to do the honourable thing and defeat this tax.

CHILDREN'S BILL OF RIGHTS

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): On another topic, Mr. Speaker, the petitioners again from Kamloops, British Columbia are pointing out the increasing number of children in Canada who are living in poverty and are calling on the government to introduce a comprehensive bill of rights for children in an effort to reduce the number and eliminate any child in Canada having to live in poverty in a country as rich as ours.

VIA RAIL

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Lastly, Mr. Speaker, the petitioners who are all employees of CN Rail out of Kamloops, British Columbia, are asking the government to reconsider its decision to curtail support for a first-class passenger rail service in Canada and do the thing that every large geographic country is doing, which is to invest in passenger rail service in the country, and the petitioners are calling upon the Government of Canada to come to its senses and do just that.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Mr. Speaker, I have the duty and honour this afternoon to present a petition from several dozen Canadian citizens who are calling upon the government to abandon its plan with regard to the goods and services tax.

You know, Mr. Speaker, that this tax is opposed by 69 per cent of all Canadians. So far the government is continuing to press forward, in spite of this opposition to the goods and services tax, which will have an unfair disadvantage to low income Canadians, to people living in the regions of the country and to small business people who will be unfairly penalized by it.

I would hope that the government would respond in a positive way to these humble Canadians petitioning for justice and fairness in the tax system.

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, I ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Shall all questions stand?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

[*Translation*]

MOTIONS FOR PRODUCTION OF PAPERS

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, I ask that all notices of motions for the production of papers be allowed to stand.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Shall all notices of motions stand?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[*English*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): On a point of order, the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands.

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, it appears that this may be the last Wednesday we will be sitting for some period of time, possibly until September, from the rumours that are circulating around this House.

On October 25, I placed a Notice of Motion for the Production of Papers on the Order Paper. I have been on my feet at least four times asking for assistance. I have pleaded with the deputy House leader. I have pleaded with the parliamentary secretary. I may even have gone on bended knee to the House leader himself. I do not recall who all I have raised this with.

However, here we are on June 13. We are not coming back probably until September, possibly October, and that will be a year that this motion has been sitting here waiting for an answer.

The conduct of the government in this case has been nothing short of disgraceful. I ask the parliamentary secretary to stand up and let us pass the order today. He can table the documents later, but at least let us get it adopted as an order of this House. Surely he can agree to that so we can get somewhere with this. It is simply ridiculous what the government is doing to this House.

Mr. Cooper: Mr. Speaker, I once again want to apologize to the hon. member. I have heard his pleas. I have seen him on bended knee. I have done everything in my power to assist the hon. gentleman because we know he is a most distinguished member of this House. He is the kind of individual we all look up to and we want to, if at all possible, do everything in our power to respond to his needs no matter how trivial or how urgent they may be.

In this case, I once again must apologize. I cannot fulfil this wish and I really do offer the hon. member my very deep personal regrets.

Ms. Lynn Hunter (Saanich—Gulf Islands): Mr. Speaker, as we are drawing toward the summer recess, I was wondering if the parliamentary secretary could give some indication as to the government's plans with respect to my Motion P–24 which concerns the presence in Canada of one Francisco Nota Moises.

I have been requesting a comprehensive review of Mr. Moises' status in Canada since early in 1989. I have conducted correspondence with the Minister of Employment and Immigration, the Secretary of State for External Affairs and the Solicitor General. So far, my efforts to establish a clear picture of the events leading to the decision to admit Mr. Moises to Canada and the reasons for his continued presence in Canada have been thwarted.

By moving a motion for the Production of Papers, I am hopeful that the position of the Government of Canada on this matter will be made clear.

Citizens in the Victoria area are particularly anxious to learn on what grounds Mr. Moises was ever admitted and to learn the results of investigations into his activities with Renamo.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I think that is sufficient for the parliamentary secretary to give a reply.

Mr. Cooper: Mr. Speaker, I did check into the hon. member's motion in the hopes that we could table it this morning. I understand that motion is in the minister's office for a decision now and hopefully we will have it in the very near future.

• (1540)

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, I believe you will find consent for the following motion:

That,

on Monday, June 18, 1990, Mr. Nelson Mandela, Deputy President of the African National Congress, address members of House of Commons and Senate, in the Commons Chamber, at 11 o'clock a.m., and

That Mr. Mandela's address and customary related remarks by the Prime Minister and Speakers of both Houses be printed as an appendix to the House of Commons debates of that day, and form part of the records of this House, and be televised according to the House guidelines.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

PLANT PROTECTION ACT

MEASURE TO ENACT

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill C-67, an act to prevent the importation, exportation and spread of pests injurious to plants and to provide for their control and eradication and for the certification of plants and other things, as reported (with an amendment) from a legislative committee.

Hon. Michael Wilson (for the Minister of Agriculture): moved that the bill, as amended, be concurred in.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre) (for the Minister of Agriculture) moved that the Bill be read the third time and passed.

Mr. Murray Cardiff (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, it appeared as though the House was going to accept Bill C-67. If we are going to have debate on it, I would want to put the government's position on the record at some time. If the hon. member would prefer to speak first, I would agree to that.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I am sorry, I did not see the hon. member rising, therefore, I will recognize the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture on debate.

Mr. Cardiff: Mr. Speaker, I have the honour of presenting Bill C-67, the plant protection act, which proposes amendments to the Plant Quarantine Act.

It has been 80 years since the first formal pest control and eradication act was passed in Canada. Over time, a number of adjustments have been made to deal with emerging issues affecting our plant-based industries.

In 1952, for example, Canada responded to growing international concern over the spreading of pests by signing the International Plant Protection Convention.

In 1968, the Plant Quarantine Act was introduced. Over time, however, it became apparent that this legislation required amending because of changes in the world market-place.

In 1982, Agriculture Canada set out to assess the effects of market-place changes, new technology and current legislation on our programs. This has been a time consuming and demanding process and I am pleased to confirm that the results of this review have been well worth the effort. In fact, the legislation before the House today represents a major step in ensuring the continued viability and strength of Canada's plant-based industries.

We anticipate benefits from this legislation in three areas.

First, the act will serve as a demonstration of Canada's commitment to prevent the spread of plant pests that have economic importance to our global trading partners. The net result will be improved opportunities for marketing Canadian plants and plant products and other things internationally.

Second, the new legislation provides for recovery of the costs of program delivery from those who directly benefit from some activities administered under the act. For example, we will be able to recover costs for conducting inspections and issuing permits and other documents to those who import or export plants and

plant products. Fumigation, treatment and quarantine of such items will also be cost-recoverable.

A third important thrust of this legislation is to reduce the threat of introducing or spreading a plant pest within Canada. The value of our Canadian plant-based industries is simply too great to risk the significant loss and damage that can be caused by pest infestations.

Having outlined the main objectives behind the new Plant Protection Act, I would like to focus on some of the specific provisions.

A particularly important aspect of this bill is the increased authority it grants to Agriculture Canada inspectors to do their job more effectively. For example, these provisions grant authority to the department to issue permits to persons importing material; to designate where and under what conditions an imported item or an item for export will be inspected; to order the removal, treatment, quarantine, or disposition of items found to be in contravention of the act; and to stop or enter vehicles, ships, rail cars, and other conveyances for the purposes of enforcing the act.

In addition, the responsibility to prove that individuals deliberately spread plant pests will no longer rest solely with the department. In the past individuals have challenged the department to prove such deliberate intent. This has proved to be a serious hindrance to the government's efforts to keep plant pests from entering or spreading within Canada.

The new act has sufficient flexibility to allow for the control or eradication of plant pests without creating undue interference to the transportation and marketing of agricultural and forestry products.

Other amendments update and simplify legal requirements. The penalties for contravening the act have been restructured to make them more effective. New penalties include ticketing for minor offences. This provision will eliminate the need to go through lengthy and expensive courtroom proceedings to prosecute those who plead guilty to such infractions.

Yet another important area addressed in this legislation concerns compensation. Bill C-67 clarifies the conditions when the department will pay compensation and how people can appeal compensation claims.

While we have focused on finding ways to control or eradicate plant pests in Canada, we have also made provisions to keep plant pests from ever reaching our shores in the first place.

Two sections of the act touch on this problem. First, in those cases where the department has reasonable grounds to believe that goods destined for Canada may be infested, officials will be authorized to carry out inspection at the place of origin prior to shipment.

Second, we are interested in working with other companies to help them improve their plant pest control and eradication systems. This act authorizes the department to provide financial aid and technical expertise to foreign countries.

In view of safeguarding our industries, the act also allows material to be detained for longer than the current 90 days. This will be increased to 180 days or longer.

Two new sections of the act provide the Minister of Agriculture with the authority to require operators of land, air, rail and sea terminals to allocate, if required, at no cost to the Crown, space and facilities for the services provided for the proper administration of the act.

Procedures and responsibilities of the department have also been clarified. The process of declaring places to be infested and the powers of the minister and inspectors in this action have been carefully spelled out. The process and authority to prohibit or regulate the introduction or movement of plants, plant products or other things, are also more clearly explained.

We have made every effort to take into account the legitimate and practical concerns of those people who are affected by the decisions taken by inspectors.

Provincial governments, appropriate federal departments, industry, and other interested groups have all had a chance to study and respond to this proposed legislation.

I am very pleased to note that all of those whose efforts contributed to the new act agree that the amendments are necessary and support the principles of the bill.

Our plant based industries rely heavily on our plant protection programs. Their future depends on the improvements and changes found in Bill C-67. For them it will mean improved protection against the spread of plant pests, greater confidence on the part of domestic

consumers, and more opportunities for access to foreign markets.

I trust that all members of this House will consider these benefits and give strong support to this legislation.

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Mr. Speaker, I want to say only a couple of words on the third reading stage of Bill C-67.

This is a highly technical bill, one which perhaps does not catch much notice of members in the House of Commons. However it is very important to our agricultural industry because it has to do with the control of plant diseases and protection from pests. This is very important in a day and age when we have large cargo and passenger planes carrying hundreds of passengers into and out of airports in this country and ships plying the oceans.

• (1550)

This bill expands the existing legislation from about 8 pages of legalise to some 25 pages. I do not say that that it is necessarily good to increase the amount of verbiage in a bill or in an act, but in this case I believe it is.

As we might expect it provides for cost recovery. This government has a penchant for demanding more and more fees from Canadians, as the Minister of Finance has done in every budget since he has become the Minister of Finance on September 19, 1984.

We have tried to get specific details from the government at report stage and in committee, but we have not received a great deal of specifics with regard to the cost recovery. We do believe that certain types of economic activity by groups and individuals where they incur costs for their own benefit are justifiable, whereas where plant diseases inadvertently occur we believe the government has the full responsibility to pay for those costs.

This bill puts an onus on highly technically trained people and researchers to notify the government when they become aware of important diseases from other countries that would have an adverse impact on our agricultural industry. I am not sure the existing legislation puts that onus on people who have the skills to identify foreign pests which could have an adverse economic impact on our country, but this bill provides for that.

It gives more authority for inspectors to take samples and to identify them for legal activity and prosecutions. That is necessary in this realm of protection of plants in this country.

It provides more flexibility for hiring specialists on a part-time or casual basis who are fully qualified to act as agents of the Crown. That is wise, because in a day and age when we are concerned about costs to the government it is probably better to hire a highly skilled and trained person rather than have to move people all over the country for specific problems that occur.

It provides for compensation to owners of crops that are damaged by pests and infectious agents where it is in the best interests of the nation to pay compensation.

It also provides for the location of inspection stations abroad, for instance, where we are importing plants which could be harbingers or vectors for infectious agents. The example given in the committee hearings was bulbs which are brought into Canada from Holland. It is to ensure that those plant products are investigated and inspected abroad so that we do not run the danger of introducing infectious agents into the country.

There are new offences provisions in the act for higher fines and for ticketing. All of us are familiar with the experience of signing a customs declaration where we state that we have brought no plant or plant product into the country. This will provide for a ticketing system where someone illegally imports plants which may be carrying infectious diseases or pests that could endanger our livestock or our plant industries.

The fact that a ticket can be provided rather than a conviction or charges being laid may be beneficial in making people realize just how important and serious the dangers are to our industry from bringing in plants which are not properly inspected or authorized.

In summary, this is quite a technical piece of legislation. It brings the act up to date. It provides for the changing world in which we live where there is greater transportation, a greater flow of people, products and materials between countries, not only between Canada and the United States but other countries around the

world. It generally provides for the protection of the Canadian agricultural industry which is so important to the economy of the country.

We support this bill at third reading and want to see it ultimately implemented by the Government of Canada.

Mr. Vic Althouse (Mackenzie): Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak briefly on Bill C-67 to amend the Plant Quarantine Act so as to protect plant life in the agricultural and forestry sectors of the Canadian economy. This is a revision of old acts in an attempt to bring procedures up to date.

There are few questions that some observers may have about the bill. For instance, it grants the authority to operate an import permit system which is absolutely necessary if our country is to control the importation of pests with plants or with parts of plants, including diseases and fungi that might come in with seed.

Something that we will have to wait for and watch is whether this import permit system operated by Agriculture Canada will become noticeable. If and when we ever get to an import basis on American wheat under the Canada—U.S. Free Trade Agreement, External Affairs will take over the issuing of those permits for the granting of import licences.

However, we presume that Agriculture Canada will still be required to make certain that those imported seeds and grains are free of disease so that international trade does not override the need for the maintenance of a healthy lifestyle on both sides of the border of the trading countries. This will also keep available Canada's reputation as a country, which is relatively free of plant diseases and plant pests, to utilize in international trade for our own grain trade.

The changes to the act spell out some of the powers that the Department of Agriculture will have. It will be able to stop and enter conveyances whether vehicles, ships, or rail cars for purposes of enforcing the act and to make the inspections that are required to determine whether there are plant products on board and whether those plant products contain diseases or pests. It clarifies that the importer of all items governed by the act is responsible for presenting those items for inspection. It sets out that there must be rooms and space made available for those inspections to take place.

It is quite a flexible act in that it covers a wide variety of plant material. Changes down the road can be reacted to, it is spelled out in the bill, by changes in regulations at that time. This is basically permissive legislation.

• (1600)

Understanding fully how the new rules will apply is virtually impossible until we see the regulations. Because this type of act has been in place in this country for close to a century we in the opposition parties are prepared to take the department's assurances at face value that these regulations will continue to carry out the functions that the Department of Agriculture has carried out in the past, that it will continue to act responsibly in the future and that regulations will in fact protect producers, consumers and the general health of the population as far as domestic use is concerned, and for the continuation of our good reputation in trading relations.

I am prepared to let the bill have speedy passage and will close my remarks so that that can happen.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to, bill read the third time and passed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Do I have unanimous consent to proceed with Bill C-66?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

HEALTH OF ANIMALS ACT

MEASURE TO ENACT

The House proceeded to consideration of Bill C-66, an act respecting diseases and toxic substances that may affect animals or that may be transmitted by animals to persons, and respecting the protection of animals, as reported (with amendments) from a legislative committee.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): There is one motion set down on the Order Paper for the report stage of Bill C-66, an act respecting diseases and toxic substances that may affect animals or that may be trans-

mitted by animals to persons, and respecting the protection of animals. That motion is in order.

Mr. Vic Althouse (Mackenzie) moved:

Motion No. 1

That Bill C-66 be amended in Clause 64 by striking out line 3 at page 29 and substituting the following therefor:

"(i) requiring animals to be treated in such a manner as to avoid or minimize the infliction of pain, suffering or injury on or to animals".

He said: Mr. Speaker, I will be quite brief. During the course of the committee hearings on this piece of legislation we heard from quite a broad range of people who are involved in the animal industry in this country as producers, consumers, handlers and processors.

One of the suggestions that came from the Canadian Federation of Humane Societies was that while it had no particular criticism of the bill it would feel better if there were a better description of humane treatment of animals. It suggested a definition something like this which we have translated into parliamentary language which would lay the ground work and the rules for all future regulations concerning the treatment of animals.

As you read, Mr. Speaker, it simply states that it would require animals to be treated in such a manner as to avoid or minimize the infliction of pain, suffering or injury on or to animals. I think this permits Parliament to put in place the ground rules for the humane treatment of animals. I presume that we would have no great discussion on this, that it seems to be reasonable and acceptable and therefore could be passed forthwith.

Mr. Murray Cardiff (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I would just like to point out two or three items.

The present wording of the legislation covers the governing, care, handling and disposition of animals. These words have been chosen because they are used in the title of the recommended codes of practice for the care and handling of animals.

The department has provided funds for the development and publishing of the codes. The codes have been developed for poultry, swine, ranched mink and foxes, veal calves, dairy cattle, and so on.

The development of the codes is co-ordinated by the Canadian Federation of Humane Societies. Representatives from industry groups such as producers, truckers and slaughter plants all have input into those codes.

Professional organizations such as the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association, the Canadian Society of Animal Science and the American Society of Agricultural Engineers provide the expertise in the development of the codes.

The wording of the paragraph proposed by the member for Mackenzie, while interesting, would appear to limit the section to areas where pain, suffering or injury could be inflicted on animals.

I believe that the current wording gives the clause a broader mandate, without the necessity of proving the possibility of pain, suffering or injury.

In addition, the concept of minimizing pain, suffering or injury could be difficult to interpret and might limit the regulations that could be made under this enabling clause.

I would also like to point out that words such as those proposed by the member can be put in the regulations that are prepared under this act. For instance, the current regulations which are made under the Animal Disease and Protection Act use the words "likely to cause injury or undue suffering" to tell people what standards must be met in transporting animals.

These words are more appropriate because they have been tried and tested in prosecutions under the current act and are therefore understood by the industry and Agriculture Canada inspectors.

By putting such words in the regulations rather than in the act each area can be addressed using appropriate words for the specific concern.

We do not believe that the amendment would help the present legislation and could cause us some problems in some ways.

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Mr. Speaker, during the course of the debate in the legislative committee on Bill C-66 we had a number of groups, such as the dairy and hog producers, who outlined to us their code of practice for the maintenance of various livestock groups.

As I understand the plan in this regard, it is that this legislation, the health of animals bill, is to provide a legal background for those codes of practice for these various species of domestic animals. The regulations may not actually be written under this measure for some time because so far the whole code of practice seems to be working quite well. However, at some stage it may not work well enough and there may be obvious needs for strengthening those codes and for legal powers to be put in place.

As I understand the plan by the department and the various livestock groups, it is that this clause concerning the humane treatment of animals really provides a legal back-up to those code arrangements. It seems to me that there is a danger in going into the kind of specific requirement provided for in the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Mackenzie because it gets into the whole question of infliction of pain, suffering and injury to animals. Those items are well provided for in the Criminal Code.

In this legislation we are looking at providing legal back-up to the code of practice by the various livestock groups concerning arrangements for husbandry and production of poultry, eggs, veal calves, hogs and various groups.

• (1610)

Section 446 of the Criminal Code says:

> Causing unnecessary suffering—Punishment—Failure to exercise reasonable care as evidence—Presence at baiting as evidence—Order of prohibition—Breach of order.

Section 446(1) states:

> Every one commits an offence who
>
> (a) wilfully causes or, being the owner, wilfully permits to be caused unnecessary pain, suffering or injury to an animal or a bird—

There are other sections, but that is the effective one. It seems to me that the actual detail of a criminal charge is better left under the Criminal Code itself. Here we are providing regulations which may become necessary if the code of practice for the various livestock groups which already exist require legal back-up.

I think there is a reasonable case for maintaining the more general provisions which presently exist in the legislation, rather than moving toward a more specific, detailed explanation of humane treatment or humane care which is provided for under the existing Criminal Code of Canada.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I would like to advise the House that the House will adjourn at five o'clock so that members may attend the hon. Speaker at the farm.

Members have heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): In my opinion the nays have it.

Motion (Mr. Althouse) negatived.

Hon. Charles Mayer (for the Minister of Agriculture) moved that the bill be concurred in.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Mayer (for the Minister of Agriculture) moved that the bill be read the third time and passed.

Mr. Murray Cardiff (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to present to the House for third reading Bill C-66, the health of animals bill which proposes changes to the Animal Protection Act. The reputation of Canadian animal products is second to none in the world market-place.

You will probably find that Bills C-66 and C-67 are very similar, with many similar clauses. Therefore, some of my remarks might be very close to those made earlier.

The reputation of our animal products in the world market-place has been earned over the years and we are not willing to compromise it in any way.

Bill C-66 represents the corner-stone of the determination of the government and the agri-food industry to keep our standards high in animal health. Legislation covering this area was first passed in 1869 and was last

amended in 1974 as the Animal Disease and Protection Act.

In preparing this legislation Agriculture Canada has consulted more than 40 groups including representatives from all the agriculture sectors, provincial departments of agriculture, regulated areas such as semen production, embryo transfer, exporters and importers, and the animal welfare movement.

There must be consensus among all the players if the agriculture industry is to continue to compete and survive in today's complex market-place while adequately addressing the present environmental and food safety concerns.

Bill C-66 confirms the government's authority to prevent animal diseases that threaten animal and human health from getting into Canada.

The legislation will strengthen programs that work toward the prevention of food-producing animals becoming contaminated with diseases that can affect human health. Salmonella is an example of such a disease.

The bill authorizes the government to control animals and animal products that have been exposed to or contaminated by toxic materials and prevent their entry into the animal and human food chains.

The legislation would permit the Governor in Council to regulate the movement of people, animals and vehicles where an area was affected by a serious animal disease.

A national identification system for animals will enable identification of animals suspected of harbouring disease-causing agents. This is essential in controlling and eradicating diseases.

The bill will also empower the government to assist other countries in their efforts to control or eradicate animal diseases. This new authority would allow Agriculture Canada to provide financial and technical help to foreign countries to reduce the risk of those diseases spreading to Canada.

The legislation we are discussing provides for cost recovery or designation of responsibility for costs of some of the services provided by the government. The bill will allow qualified people, other than public servants, to carry out the duties and functions of inspectors on behalf of the government. This will allow for privatization of such things as laboratory services, inspection and testing for animal diseases.

The legislation enables Agriculture Canada to obtain facilities needed to administer the act. At international ports of entry such as airports, harbours, bridges, tunnels, roads and so on, the minister may require that space for inspection and enforcement be provided.

Control of genetic diseases of animals is also addressed in the health of animals bill. The new definition of "disease" includes genetic diseases, as well as diseases of humans that can be transmitted by animals. Many insects, so-called vectors, spread disease from one animal to another. The department will be able to control imports to prevent their release into the environment.

In addition, the authority for the department to collect information and statistics on animal diseases will be enhanced. This information is crucial to our success in negotiating conditions for the export of animals and animal products.

Many Canadians are concerned about the welfare of animals—how animals are reared under intensive modern farming conditions. The legislation provides new powers to regulate the way animals are kept to ensure that they are treated humanely.

In addition, the power to control what is fed to animals has been expanded to include all animals. The power to prohibit feeding of materials that might be suspected of spreading disease or toxic substances has been added.

I have outlined the major changes found in the health of animals bill. Now I would like to highlight some of the provisions that will continue to be in force under this new legislation.

Agriculture Canada's powers to control an outbreak of a severe disease or a toxic substance spill remain intact. Compensation will continue to be paid for any animal ordered destroyed under the health of animals bill or for one that is injured in the course of being tested by an inspector and must be destroyed.

The amount of compensation paid to a producer will continue to be the market value of the animal, minus the value received for its carcass. Maximum values may be set for all types of animals under the program. Producers will also have their costs covered in cases where the

government decides that affected animals should be treated rather than destroyed.

The legislation continues to allow for control of places where animals are assembled or sold. Control of artificial insemination and embryo transfer units will continue. The existing act's powers to regulate animal dead yards and rendering plants are maintained.

Provisions dealing with hatcheries and the improvement of poultry have been incorporated into this bill as well. These are not just based on the control of disease but also on the quality and genetic improvement of poultry. Penalties for contravening the provisions of this bill have been updated to reflect present economic realities. Fines for summary conviction offences can run up to $50,000. Where an indictable offence is involved, penalties can go as high as $200,000 and/or up to two years in jail.

The new provisions will permit agriculture inspectors to issue tickets in less serious cases and this will avoid the expense of long court proceedings for those who wish to plead guilty to minor infractions.

In summary, the health of animals bill represents an important tool to keep our animals healthy, productive and competitive and to safeguard the human population against the spread of disease or toxic materials from animals.

• (1620)

A number of industry representatives appeared as witnesses before the legislative committee on Bill C-66. While all were generally supportive, minor amendments were made to the bill at committee stage in response to their concerns. We believe that these changes will help to strengthen further the legislation for the agri-food industry and Canadians as a whole.

I am confident that this bill will receive their full support.

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Mr. Speaker, I just have a couple of words to say on third reading of Bill C-66. The bill received fairly extensive study in the committee.

It is an important piece of legislation that has not been amended since 1974. Of course, just as we saw with the plant products protection bill, many things have changed since that time in terms of international travel and the movement of animals around the world.

This bill provides for greater protection for animals. It is designed to control, eradicate or prevent entry into Canada of diseases of animals which is an important move both in terms of human health and economic impact for our livestock industry.

It really broadens the scope of the Department of Agriculture in regard to animal diseases. The old legislation was primarily directed toward infectious diseases such as Newcastle's disease in poultry, rabies in animals, and hoof and mouth disease in livestock, diseases of that nature, whereas this legislation moves beyond that to cover all livestock diseases, especially the contamination of livestock with toxic substances such as PCBs. These are problems which have been with us virtually forever. But over the last five or ten years we have come up with the diagnostic techniques to test for contamination by toxic substances in milk, meat, eggs or poultry products. Thus we really require this additional scope.

Diseases such as salmonella which are not necessarily that harmful to poultry can be extremely harmful to human beings and cause all kinds of illnesses. This bill extends the mandate of the Department of Agriculture to a much broader scope of diseases affecting human health as well as animal health.

This legislation gives the government a great deal more power to enforce control zones. If we had a major industrial accident, as has occurred in other parts of the world, it seems that this legislation would give the Governor in Council and the Minister of Agriculture great powers to control the movement of animals and people into an area which had become contaminated or infected. We hope that that will never occur. The outbreak of foot and mouth disease which occurred in 1951 cost the Canadian livestock industry something in the order of $1 billion. This bill gives the minister and the government greater powers to deal with that kind of a national emergency.

It puts in place a regime for a national identification system. Technology has moved to the point where, with electronic scanners, animals can be easily identified on a permanent basis. It is valuable in the long-term control of diseases to be able to identify the farm where infected animals are raised, as well as to identify where the meat product or other product was produced.

It also provides authority for the government to go into other countries where our veterinarians are needed to assist in the control of diseases which might spread to Canada. It gives them legal authority to do that. The instance was cited when, a few years ago, it would have been beneficial for Canada to be able to assist one of the Caribbean islands in the control of African swine fever. That kind of authority is provided for in this legislation even if the funding for it might come from CIDA or some other international development agency. That kind of international assistance would not only assist the host country but would be beneficial as well to the protection of the health of our livestock industry.

As with Bill C–67 there is a provision for cost recovery. Obviously the Minister of Finance had great responsibility in the writing of this bill to ensure that the government gets its pound of flesh. We think that that is counterproductive. When it involves the general health and control of disease in the country where specialized services are being provided for the industry for export purposes, we have no problem with such cost recovery arrangements.

This bill provides as well for part–time inspectors to assist the full–time employees of the Department of Agriculture in carrying out the mandate of this legislation. I think that is a step forward.

Casual veterinarians have worked for years with major diseases such as brucellosis and tuberculosis. Those diseases have largely been overcome in this country. Thus there is not the need for those people to control those particular diseases, but the arrangement of integrating full–time Government of Canada veterinarian inspectors with the private practitioner was a useful arrangement. This bill provides for that.

It also provides for a data collection system for national immunological studies, something which was strongly supported by all sectors of the livestock industry. It is supported by those of us in the opposition.

It also makes provision for the control and regulation of diagnostic laboratories and research facilities.

All in all, we in the Official Opposition find the legislation to be a definite step forward. We did make a couple of amendments to it in committee to ensure that where animals were being inspected for health or disease it would be a veterinary inspector who would carry out that inspection and not a lay person.

We made an amendment as well to the French version short title to call it an act for the health of animals rather than the prevention of disease in animals. That was suggested by the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association because it thought it would cause less conflict with the name that is used in similar legislation in the province of Quebec. I think it was a useful suggestion.

Those are many of the provisions of the bill. We think we have had a pretty good review of the provisions of it in committee. It should be useful in moving our whole livestock industry into the 21st century, with the new technologies that have become available for surveillance and development of the livestock industry. We support it and want to see it ultimately implemented.

• (1630)

Mr. Vic Althouse (Mackenzie): Mr. Speaker, we are dealing with companion bills.

This one deals with controlling the spread of infectious diseases and the control of diseases among animals. There are only a few things that I would like to say about it.

This is an important bill to the public at large. It covers not only diseases that Agriculture Canada with its Veterinary Services and its Health of Animal Branches monitors. There are those that create economic harm to farmers and the food production chain, such as hoof and mouth disease, blue tongue, Newcastle's disease in poultry or swine cholera. That is just a very short list. We could make it into an extremely long one.

Those economic diseases are extremely important to consumers in that, without their control, we would find it somewhat difficult to get the cheap food that we are used to at the meat counter. I know some consumers bristle at that phrase, but it is cheap food. Relative to the rest of the world, Canadians are buying extremely cheap food at the retail counter.

In addition, there are the diseases that are shared by animals, whether human or of another species. These are the ones with which Health of Animals and Agriculture Canada are very much involved. Rabies can be contracted by humans just as easily as our little mammal friends. Tuberculosis and brucellosis, which is sometimes called Bang's disease and which shows itself in humans

as undulant fever, are a couple of the categories of disease.

As a result, the department has been conducting vaccination inoculation programs at one time or another. That continues with rabies. It was abandoned with brucellosis because of some detection problems that the vaccination program created. We have moved to an eradication of the disease type of program for TB and brucellosis.

These programs often appear to be controversial. The public, sometimes including the farming public, does not fully understand the need for the rather radical methods that are used to achieve control and eradication of these very important diseases to the human population as well as animal population. Sometimes it stirs up controversy when a whole herd is disposed of when brucellosis and tuberculosis are found.

This act permits some procedures which have been tried and which would assist the department to contain the disease without always going to those methods. Generally speaking, eradication is still the best method. I raise this in the House now even though there is not a great deal of public attention on it. We have a herd of hybrid bison in northern Alberta close to the territorial border which is infected with these two diseases.

As far as veterinary medical science is aware, there is no other way to get rid of that disease but to use the eradication program.

Unfortunately, a lot of well-meaning environmentalists think that that is too strong a response to disease control but, as a person who raises animals domestically I realize, and I have seen it happen very close to me, that the only way to obtain that kind of control for the health of humans and for the other animals in the area, in this case it affects humans just as readily as the other livestock in the area, is eradication. It is the only route to pursue and it does work.

This bill permits the control by those methods. For the herds that are wiped out, they always consider the compensation package to be inadequate because it is a big disruption. Often production is disrupted for two full years, and that kind of compensation is never provided. Sometimes, for particular individual animals that are purebred and have particular genetic qualities, the farmer sells them, provided he gets the kind of price that he has invested. However, this is the way the system works. There has been a move in this act to try to permit larger payments, but it still will not give full compensation for some of the very valuable animals that have to be disposed of, should they become infected one way or another.

That is why we are trying to keep inspections at the borders more secure. Our inspection system has always been very good, but we are hopeful that this bill will permit even more flexibility and permit the borders to become even more secure.

That also raises some of the issues that are proposed in this legislation that some of us have a few doubts about. We permit the passages that allow the Minister of Agriculture to achieve a certain amount of cost recovery because, in some instances, it does make some sense. The service that is being provided by the department is of direct economic benefit to the user.

For instance, if I were to import breeding stock from another country, I would feel quite comfortable about paying the costs of leaving that animal in quarantine for the required amount of time. I am expecting to gain something from the importation of that animal, and this is a part of a cost of my doing business, introducing this new genetic stock to the country.

As well, laboratory testing for genetic abnormalities is an industry advantage. It is an advantage to the person submitting the genetic material for test. I do not think anyone in the industry has a great deal of problem with paying for those kinds of tests that are done by Agriculture Canada laboratories. When we get into disease testing which is for the public good, I think that those costs should continue to be borne by the public and be paid for out of departmental funds. I think most Canadian consumers would agree because it is their assurance that those tests will be done on their behalf, if they are done by officials of the Government of Canada.

As well, if we are exporters or importers, the buyer has assurance that the imported product or the exported product has been properly tested and monitored for disease control. The transmission of pests and any that might act as vectors which would carry any disease would be carefully monitored. We heard in testimony that a great many importing countries look with a jaundiced eye at imports from countries where the private sector is permitted to do this type of testing and provide a stamp or signature on the export papers.

• (1640)

The United States uses a system like that. We are told that there have been too many instances of inadequate testing where the foreign buyer ended up getting a product that was not disease-free as the papers indicated. The importing countries are generally much more secure and confident of the system we have developed in this country where those tests are done by public officials.

I hope that this Minister of Agriculture and all future ministers will keep that in mind when considering the utilization of this particular section of the act which does permit the transfer of some of the costs out of the department and on to the public.

The approval of this bill is made with the understanding that this particular section should be dealt with with great care, and that in the interests of our consumers and our commercial relations with other countries we take great care in maintaining and utilizing our public inspectors who do the veterinary work now on imports and exports, and that the government continues to allow the Department of Agriculture to finance and keep control of that.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I have no more to say. We have done a fairly adequate job of hearing from most of the sectors involved in the animal industry in committee. In a very short time we managed to hear from most of the sectors. I think that this fairly modern update of the act which permits the control of diseases in animals and the monitoring of these diseases will continue for at least another decade. I think that after today Parliament will have set it up in a manner that will permit the department to continue to function as efficiently as it has in the past.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to, bill read the third time and passed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I believe there is unanimous consent to call it five o'clock. The hon. member for Kingston and the Islands.

Mr. Milliken: I just want to say that in the remaining time if the government were disposed to call Bill C-46 concerning conflict of interest, we would be pleased to proceed with the bill.

Mr. Cardiff: Mr. Speaker, I believe it would be in order to call it five o'clock. I think you would find unanimous consent rather than starting at this time of day with new legislation.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is there unanimous consent to call it five o'clock?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): It being five o'clock, pursuant to order made Thursday, May 31, 1990, and pursuant to Standing Order 24(1) this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 11 a.m.

The House adjourned at 4.45 p.m.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, June 14, 1990

The House met at 11 a.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*English*]

PETITIONS

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to 17 petitions.

[*Editor's Note: See today's Votes and Proceedings.*]

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INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS

PRESENTATION OF SIXTEENTH REPORT OF CANADIAN NATO PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION

Mr. Bob Hicks (Scarborough East): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34, I have the honour to present to the House, in both official languages, the sixteenth report of the Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association.

[*Editor's Note: See today's Votes and Proceedings.*]

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COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

BILL C-54—REPORT OF LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Mr. Rob Nicholson (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the report of the legislative committee on Bill C-54, an act to amend the Criminal Code (joinder of counts) with one amendment.

[*Editor's Note: See today's Votes and Proceedings.*]

SECOND REPORT OF LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Mr. Gabriel Desjardins (Témiscamingue): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the second report of the Standing Joint Committee on Official Languages.

[*Translation*]

In accordance with Standing Order 109, the Committee asked for a comprehensive response within 150 days.

I would ask you to grant me a few moments, Mr. Speaker, to explain the importance of the report we are tabling today. This report may be only five paragraphs long, but it is nonetheless very important.

During the past few months, the Committee on Official Languages has heard numerous witnesses ask the government to submit its regulations under the Official Languages Act, which was, after all, adopted two years ago.

Therefore, the report reflects all the requests made to us to ask the government to table its draft regulations as soon as possible so as to enhance the effectiveness of the Official Languages Act.

* * *

• (1110)

PLACE DU PORTAGE BUILDINGS DESIGNATIONS ACT

MEASURE TO ENACT

Mr. Gilles Rocheleau (Hull—Aylmer) requests leave to introduce Bill C-315, entitled: "An Act to Change the Designations of the Buildings known as Place du Portage Phase I, II, III, and IV".

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is it the pleasure of the House to allow the member to introduce the Bill?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Rocheleau: Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to introduce in both official languages the Bill to change the designations of the buildings known as Place du Portage, Phase I, II, III and IV, in Hull. This Bill asks the Parliament of Canada to honour two persons who have made an invaluable contribution to the development of

Canada, namely Mrs. Thérèse Casgrain and Mr. Jean Marchand.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the said motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to, Bill read first time and ordered to be printed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): When shall the Bill be read for the second time? At the next sitting of the House?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

[*English*]

PETITIONS

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to present a petition on behalf of numerous residents of the province of Newfoundland who, at the request of the very distinguished member for Bonavista—Trinity—Conception, have signed a petition opposing the goods and services tax introduced by the mean-spirited government opposite.

These petitioners complain about the fact that they have already been taxed to the hilt by this government. They are opposed to this tax. They feel it will create an onerous burden on small business in particular, will result in manifest unfairness to the taxpayers of Canada and to the businesses that are obliged to pay the collection costs of this iniquitous tax, and they call upon Parliament to reject the goods and services tax.

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, I too have a petition to present to the House dealing with this terrible imposition upon Canadians of the goods and services tax starting in January, 1991.

The petitioners would like to impress upon the House their strong objections to the imposition of a new tax that will increase the cost of living for all Canadians. It will be inflationary, cause unemployment, and probably higher interest rates. I understand the Tories all know that, and if they know it, they should not be doing it.

The words of these petitioners are telling these great Tory members, who know all about the dire effects of this tax, not to proceed with this tax at this time.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Mr. David Walker (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition on behalf of Mr. Yih-Sheh Leo, a Canadian citizen and taxpayer who has been put in prison in Taiwan.

Mr. Leo was arrested unlawfully and sentenced to 10 months imprisonment for exercising his right to return to his native land and is currently under indictment on sedition charges facing a minimum term of 10 years in prison.

There are over 200 petitioners from across Canada who call upon the Canadian government to take immediate and effective measures to secure Mr. Leo's release including, but not limited to, the following: issue a public statement expressing Canada's concern over a Canadian citizen's rights being violated; instruct the Canadian Embassy in Japan, or the High Commissioner's Office in Hong Kong, to send a representative to Taiwan; appoint a lawyer to handle the case; and request Canada's allies which have representatives in Taiwan to assist with this case.

This is a very serious case and the petitioners deserve to be heard by the government.

* * *

[*Translation*]

THE PROGRAM FOR OLDER WORKER ADJUSTMENT

Mr. Alfonso Gagliano (Saint-Léonard): Mr. Speaker, in accordance with Standing Order 36, it is my pleasure to introduce a petition bearing 2,657 signatures, and asking the Government to alter the regulations governing the Program for Older Worker Adjustment. As you know, in the metropolitan area, people employed by companies with less than 100 employees are not covered by this program. This is discrimination considering that in Canada, 98 percent of companies are small businesses with less than 100 employees.

Therefore, I dare believe that the Government will listen to them. This is the second petition I am introducing in this regard, but we already have more than 5,000 signatures of persons who are asking that this regulation be amended immediately, Mr. Speaker.

[*English*]

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Brian L. Gardiner (Prince George—Bulkley Valley): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour, under Standing Order 36, to present a petition on the goods and services tax.

These petitioners, primarily from communities in the province of Nova Scotia, are petitioning the House to call on the government to reject the goods and services tax. I know that they will start petitioning the Senate as well, given that the Liberals in the Senate have already given second reading to the goods and services tax.

Mr. Lyle Dean MacWilliam (Okanagan—Shuswap): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise under the provisions of Standing Order 36 to present a number of petitions against the government's regressive and Draconian goods and services tax measure.

Previously, I have submitted almost 15,000 signatures of residents in my riding opposed to the tax measure. These signatures, however, come from residents throughout Canada, virtually from Victoria to St. John's. There are about 13 petitions here with approximately 500 additional names for the government to consider in terms of Canadians who are opposed to this very regressive tax measure.

Mr. Jim Karpoff (Surrey North): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I have the honour to present a number of petitions, some in both official languages, calling upon the government to abandon its idea of the GST.

The petitioners point out that this is an unfair tax that will hurt the average Canadian and they call upon the government to abandon it.

Mr. Howard McCurdy (Windsor—St. Clair): Mr. Speaker, I also have the honour of representing the sensible views of citizens of Windsor who have affixed their names to several petitions in the total number of 300. These 300 signatures constitute only a small part of the some 25,000 or 30,000 people in the Windsor—Essex County area who have voiced their protest about the introduction of the GST.

Since they ask for Parliament to defeat the GST, it is therefore at this stage a specific request of the Liberals in the Senate to do their job and defeat the GST.

AIR-INDIA FLIGHT 182 CRASH

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, five years ago this month, 329 innocent civilians, mostly Canadians, lost their lives as the result of a terrorist bomb explosion aboard Air India flight 182 from Montreal to London.

I have the honour today of presenting a petition which has been signed by over 400 British Columbia residents, including Mrs. Perviz Madon whose husband, Sam Madon, was killed in that crash.

The petitioners point out that extensive media research, prominently broadcast on television and radio, has shown that this crime was preventable, that there were many warnings, including a test explosion, and that Canadians have been clamouring for a public enquiry to ascertain the facts related to this disaster and to come up with recommendations that would prevent similar disasters.

Therefore, they call upon Parliament to give Canadians a commitment to hold a royal commission of inquiry into all facts surrounding the Air India disaster of 1985. We must ensure that justice is done in this case.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, I have a second petition which has been signed by hundreds of residents of a number of communities of British Columbia, including my own constituency of Burnaby—Kingsway. It is also signed by residents of a number of other parts of Canada, including St. John's East and other communities, who want to voice their anger and their outrage at the imposition of the federal Conservative goods and services tax.

They call upon Parliament to reject the current proposal for a goods and services tax and to ensure that there is real tax reform. They urge Parliament to cause the government to stop this proposal which will shift the tax burden on to ordinary Canadians through a regressive consumption tax instead of through real tax reform.

Presumably, in this call to Parliament, they are calling upon the Liberals in the Senate to do their job and defeat this heinous tax.

• (1120)

Ms. Joy Langan (Mission—Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition signed by residents of my constituency of Mission—Coquitlam, and residents of Mission, Pitt Meadows, Maple Ridge, Port Coquitlam, Coquitlam, and other areas of the province who, even though the goods and services tax has passed this House, know it is not too late and are calling upon the government to see the light and withdraw this negative tax. In fact, they are petitioning that the government do that.

VETERANS AFFAIRS

Ms. Joy Langan (Mission—Coquitlam): In addition, Mr. Speaker, I have another petition from residents of Maple Ridge, Pitt Meadows, Port Coquitlam, and Mission who are seriously concerned about Canada's war veterans and their right to a secure and dignified retirement.

The petitioners are calling on the government to maintain the current level of services provided to veterans through the Veterans Independence Program and to ensure that there is no increase in charges to veterans for board and lodging in institutions for long-term care. It is my privilege to table this petition on their behalf.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Ross Harvey (Edmonton East): Well, the beat goes on, Mr. Speaker, and I have the duty and honour today to table a petition signed by 881 wise and far-sighted Edmontonians, some of whom, by the way, Mr. Speaker, reside in your riding, and all of whom are calling upon Parliament—Parliament, mind, Mr. Speaker—to reject the goods and services tax.

It is a simply message, one I commend to the government, and one I most strongly commend to the Liberal majority in the Senate which has it within its their power to kill the goods and services tax.

FOREIGN OVERFISHING

Hon. Roger C. Simmons (Burin—St. George's): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to present a petition—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The hon. member for Burin—St. George's.

Mr. Simmons: I think the excitement is because the NDP have found a reason to embrace the Senate all of a sudden.

I have much pleasure in presenting a petition on behalf of many Canadians, largely in the Toronto, Hamilton, Mississauga, Downsview, and Burlington areas of Ontario, almost all of whom were born in Newfoundland and have since moved away, as they make clear in the petition.

The prayer of that petition is that the government would get after the foreigners who are raping our fish stocks. The prayer of the petition specifically is that the petitioners call upon Parliament to stop and correct the international economic injustice that the people of Atlantic Canada are forced to endure.

I have two petitions here which reflect that prayer. I have a number of others with similar wording which say the same thing. The petitions are signed by literally thousands of people in the southern Ontario area. I call upon the government to heed the prayer of those petitions and to do something to stop the overfishing while there is still time.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Jack Whittaker (Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt): Mr. Speaker, the fight does go on.

It is my pleasure to rise, pursuant to Standing Order 36, to present a petition sent in from my riding, fresh off the press, against the goods and services tax. The petitioners have not given up hope that the government will rescind and back off from the goods and services tax and look at a tax system that is fairer to all Canadians.

I add my voice to those voices of the people in Penticton, Cawston, Keremeos, Princeton, and all throughout my riding and other points of British Columbia, who are massively and madly against this tax.

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton—Melville): Mr. Speaker, it is my honour to table a petition in the House signed by hundreds of people who are protesting the fact that reading materials will be taxed under the GST.

The petitioners humbly pray and call upon the Parliament of Canada to reaffirm the historic principles embodied in the tax-free status for the printed word by

retaining the zero rate in the GST legislation and regulations.

I think, Mr. Speaker, you would agree that it is a very important issue and, with your permission, I want to table that petition on their behalf.

CHILDREN'S BILL OF RIGHTS

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to present a petition, pursuant to Standing Order 36, from a number of people from British Columbia who are concerned about the level of child poverty in Canada.

The petitioners point out that the number of children living in poverty has actually increased over the last number of years and are calling upon the Government of Canada to introduce a comprehensive bill of rights for children as a first step to eliminating child poverty in our country.

VIA RAIL

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, on another matter, it is my pleasure to present a petition on behalf of a number of employees of CP Rail from Kamloops who are asking the government to reconsider its regressive, backward, and silly decision to curtail VIA Rail service in the country.

The petitioners are asking the government, not only to restore the service, but actually to improve the service that we knew when we had the full VIA compliment. They are asking for new investment in a first rate passenger rail service in the country, such as any country the size of Canada ought to expect.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, lastly, I have the pleasure to present a petition on another topic, the goods and services tax, on behalf of petitioners from Kamloops. This brings the number almost to 21,000 people who have spoken out against the goods and services tax. The petitioners are simply asking the government to come to its senses and listen to the 80 per cent of Canadians who oppose this tax.

If this is a democracy, the government should pull the tax, or if my friends in the Liberal party were also listening in terms of democratic procedure, they would ask their colleagues in the Senate to stop it.

Government Orders

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, I ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Shall all questions stand?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

IMMIGRATION ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

Hon. Kim Campbell (for the Minister of Employment and Immigration) moved that Bill C–77, an act to amend the Immigration Act, be now read a second time and referred to a legislative committee.

Mr. Bill Kempling (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, the amendment to the Immigration Act before the House today has a clear and definite purpose. It is designed to improve our ability to help those refugees and immigrants who require our assistance to settle here.

I would like to emphasize that refugees selected oversees are the main users of our transportation assistance and admissibility loan program.

These refugees are selected overseas in accordance with the government's annual refugee plan, or based on the sponsorship of private groups or family members in Canada. These are, understandably, the people most in need of our services.

Since it was first established in 1951, hundreds of thousands of people have used this fund to finance their medical examinations and transportation to Canada. Without this fund, many of them would never have been able to settle here and Canada would have been much poorer for losing their talents and genius.

The Transportation Loan Program has served us well in helping us meet our overall immigration objectives. It has improved our capacity to reunify families, helped us provide a safe haven for refugees, and eased the admis-

sion of people with the occupational and professional skills we need for Canada to prosper and grow.

We want to keep this program in place. We want it operating at peak efficiency. That is why we propose to amend Section 119(3) of the Immigration Act. Over the years, the maximum limit of funds allocated to finance this program has risen from an original $3 million, through $30 million, $60 million and finally in 1986 to $90 million. Few can deny that this money is well invested. Indeed, all past parliamentary reviews of this program have seen the wisdom of granting our request to continue its operation.

• (1130)

The Transportation Loan Program has never been a point of contention in the House. The beauty of this program is that, unlike many others, we get our money back. This is a loan program. The people who tap into the funds pay us back over a period of time and the repayment record is excellent. In recent days, however, so many people have turned to the program for assistance that the fund has been depleted. I would like to reiterate that the money is coming back to us, but the repayment rate, though consistent, is slow. The funds in the program are therefore not being replenished fast enough to meet the escalating demands. As of April 15, 1990 $88.9 million in loans were outstanding. This has left us with only $1.1 million before we reach our statutory limit.

The program's financial situation is such that we have had to curtail the loans being made through implementing a temporary priority approval system. Simply stated, the fact that the current limit is fixed by statute inhibits our ability to respond appropriately and rapidly to the needs of the people we serve. That is why we are asking that the limit be removed from the act and that it be set by regulation in the future. Doing so would enable the government to respond to increased demand for loans more quickly but just as openly.

I must emphasize that the Minister of Employment and Immigration will still have to report annually to the House on the number of loans made under the program and the amount of money remaining in the fund. Moreover, proposed changes to the limit would still be subject to the normal open regulatory process. In other words, while maintaining public review of proposed changes to the funding limit, the amendments would give the government the necessary flexibility to quickly address the fluctuations in demand caused by the shifting ebb and flow of refugees and immigrants. We would not have to seek a legislative amendment each time there is a work load increase because of events such as those now taking place in eastern Europe.

As opposition critics and others will be aware, there are many approaching demands on these same funds. Canada agreed at a Geneva Convention in 1989 to help ease the refugee crisis in Southeast Asia by admitting 16,000 refugees over a three year period. Furthermore, the government is committed to sponsoring 13,000 convention refugees and designated class members in 1990. We have also indicated that there will be unlimited opportunities for private sponsorship of refugees selected abroad. We continue to encourage the private sponsorship of refugees and dependants and want to ensure through this program that such sponsorships are facilitated as quickly as possible.

The Transportation Loan Program has played a major role in helping refugees pay the cost of their medical examinations and travel to Canada. Without this program it is doubtful that Canada could have earned its enviable international reputation for the care and treatment of refugees.

It is also doubtful whether without this program Canada could meet its current international refugee commitments. If we are to live up to our commitments to the resettlement of refugees and the reunification of families, we need to ensure that Canada can respond quickly and effectively to the fluctuating international demands. That is what Bill C-77 is all about.

In conclusion, I commend it to the House and hope that speedy approval will allow us to get on with serving those people who most need our help.

Mr. Sergio Marchi (York West): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be responding today to the bill tabled in the House, Bill C-77, on behalf of my colleagues of the national Liberal caucus.

First, the travel loans are a positive part of the over-all immigration program. In essence, those loans are available to landed immigrants, convention refugees and Canadian citizens who wish to help their family members

travel to Canada, and subsequently to their points of destination.

The positive element is that this legislation assists those who Canada has accepted, has allowed to come to Canada and has facilitated their reunification with family members coming from various parts of the globe. It helps those who perhaps do not have the financial means. By accepting a convention refugee, it helps the person who might be coming to this country with very little in his or her pocket.

Through the availability of these funds, a individual can obtain a loan from the Government of Canada to bring in his or her family and then repay the loan to the government's treasury. You have a win and win situation. There is the new landed immigrant having the ability to live his or her life with the family and therefore probably become and be a more successfully producing Canadian citizen. That is where the country wins. As well, the loans are ensured.

In 1986—some facts for Canadians watching this debate—after passage of the Immigration Act regarding the transportation loans, the funding was set and capped at $90 million. It has remained at that figure ever since. By September 1989, some 56,000 outstanding loans amounted to some $78 million. For the fiscal year 1988-89, 12,000 loans were made totalling $23 million.

In this bill—I concur with the general parameters of the bill—the loans would move from $90 million as stated in section 119(3) to $150 million, which is obviously a recognition of increased immigration and the demand for these kinds of loans.

The other aspect of this bill is that the minister would have greater flexibility to increase the levels, depending on the demand and without seeking amendments through Parliament. It would have the force of giving the ability to act to be set in regulations, rather than in amendments to the legislation.

I have another point I would like to make. I am hoping, because of greater flexibility through regulations and having a desire to increase the loans, the government will improve those programs. I am hoping that this kind of mindset will be applied to other programs and activities within the immigration program. We have seen cut-backs in the budget recently affecting many aspects of government life.

One hopes and one takes as positive that, if the government is willing to increase these loans, it might prove to be a signal that other services and programs within immigration, such as immigration settlement and integration programs will also see some additions in financial resources. Other services that could benefit are the adoption services, language training and skills training.

One matter which concerns me that I wish to discuss in the House today is that there is no stated minimum, that is, there is no minimum below which these loans will go. I suppose it may be difficult to put a low cap on them, but since the minister has the power to go through the regulations, maybe we would see the current level of funding maintained, if not increased, as opposed to going below a certain threshold. That would put difficulty on them.

• (1140)

The reason I raise this concern is because there was an article on May 11 in *The Toronto Star* where a spokesperson for the immigration department, speaking on behalf of the government I would assume, suggested that the government might have to restrict interest free transportation loans to refugees. He also stated that the government had decided to cut off loans to refugees sponsored by private organizations when in fact those government sponsors would not be affected. The spokesperson was a gentleman by the name of Mr. Gerry Maffree.

I am hoping that the concerns of May 11, 1990 gave rise to increasing the loans but that they would not indicate a desire that once the regulations are in the hands of the minister and her officials, that the loans are going to be refused and therefore make it more difficult for those individuals to be reunited with their families.

The second element that concerns me, and I think the parliamentary secretary alluded to it in part, is the fact that we are removing from Parliament or the legislation stream or from amendments of our legislation, and putting into the hands of the minister through regulations, the fact that she can determine what those loans will be. I believe there should be some accountability to Parliament, even though we are putting it into the regulations. There should be some pipeline for debate and discussion between the minister, her officials and members of Parliament.

Therefore, I have given notice to both the parliamentary secretary and the opposition critic for the New Democratic Party and the Clerk, that I will be moving an amendment at Committee of the Whole, that the minister and her officials will have to keep the Standing Committee on Labour, Employment and Immigration advised so that the committee would be able to review the situation.

I suggest that we need this amendment. I know the parliamentary secretary suggested that the minister must make an annual report anyway, and I agree with that fact, but the annual report, with all respect, is a booklet that documents the activities of the last year and is tabled in the House of Commons. What I would be looking for, since we are now moving the program into regulations, is the ability to go beyond what happened in the last year to an update of what is happening and more importantly, what are the needs of the coming year, in terms of the demands on the system.

I would also be looking for the direction of the thinking of the bureaucrats and the minister, so that the standing committee, made up of members of Parliament from all sides of the House, could offer some regular advice. That will not be happening because of what an annual report does. We want to know what may be occurring in the next 12 months. I think that is a very important distinction between ensuring that this comes to the standing committee, as opposed to simply the traditional annual report, which is contained in a very nice booklet and tabled in the House of Commons.

I will be moving that amendment and I would seek the approval of my colleagues on the other side and my colleagues in the New Democratic Party. I also indicated to the minister yesterday that I would be moving that amendment. At first blush she suggested she would able to consider that, hopefully with success, and I look forward to hearing from the parliamentary secretary.

The final point that I would like to address in this debate is the situation as it pertains to potential refugees and family-class members and applicants. We are talking about transportation loans that, at the end of the day, are there to allow families to re-unify. That is the *raison d'être* of the transportation loans. What I would like to draw to the attention of the government is that while we may be increasing the transportation loans, we should also be looking at the other side of the problem, namely, that decisions being made on refugee applicants or landed immigrants or family-class immigrants, are not being made quickly enough. We have a refugee backlog of some 125,000 people. We have a new determination system for refugees that is also experiencing a new backlog of some 20,000 to 30,000 people.

As well, what we are suggesting is this. It is fine and welcomed that we are increasing the loans to meet the demand, but there are people who have been waiting four, five and six years who have yet to be determined on their cases, let alone request a loan to have their families join them. That is the real essence of the problem. We have a refugee backlog that has to be cleaned up.

We, as Liberals, on this side of the House suggested an administrative review that would give the benefit of the doubt to those individuals who have met certain immigration criteria, such as having family in Canada, having a job in Canada, having one of the two official languages, having children born in this country who are indeed Canadians by birth, and showing that they have integrated into Canadian society.

Barring any security or health risks, we have advocated for years that the government accept those people into this country as a way of trying to give the new system an opportunity to survive. This way the system would not be crushed by the weight of this huge refugee backlog, which is the real core of the problem.

In terms of family reunification, these individuals are not getting a decision. They are not getting a determination, and therefore their families are abroad. Not only are they not united, but when we talk about refugee cases, the families abroad are in danger. Why? If you are a legitimate refugee in Canada and have been making statements on the record against a regime or against a particular group in another part of the world, obviously that is a source of embarrassment for that regime or for that government.

If it is a source of embarrassment, that government can, has and will put pressure, torture or use some other means that are not palatable, at least to our society, on those family members. Therefore, it is not only a case of not being reunited. It is a case that those families may be in real danger.

Today, while we are thinking about and moving in the positive direction of increasing our transportation loans, let us also stop to think that we should be increasing the speed and velocity of the decisions that have been in purgatory for four, five or six years in some cases.

Therefore, if we can take the spirit of these transportation loans which is in essence family reunification, if there are no security or health problems with these individuals and if they are clearly not flagrantly abusing our laws, what is the problem in accepting them and having them begin a life of normalcy, the same that you and I, Mr. Speaker, and my colleagues enjoy seven days a week, 52 weeks of the year in this beautiful country?

Because it is also available to those who wish to join families, not as refugees but as family class members, there is a great deal of frustration. We see it in our constituency offices where members cannot either successfully or quickly enough sponsor relatives from abroad.

There is a situation in India, for instance. We have a one consular operation in New Delhi. How long does it take for a constituent who is a Canadian to have an uncle, a nephew, or a niece from that part of the world come to join him or her? A year? Two years? Maybe three years or longer? We have had those cases.

As well, what I am suggesting is that on the family class basis, there is a frustration because, over-all, the percentage of family class immigration has gone down in recent years compared to being roughly 50 per cent of immigration. Therefore, if it is in the low thirties, that 20 per cent buffer is causing that frustration. Compounded on that is the time that is required for those individuals, particularly where we have not shifted resources quickly enough. One knows that there is a great deal of anguish and pain.

The message should also be very evident to the government of the day. We need to speed up those decisions; we need to give Canadians greater satisfaction, but not automatic satisfaction. I am not saying you simply have an absolute open door where there are no checks and balances. That is not what Canadians are asking for. That is not what any country should do.

• (1150)

We must have integrity in the system. We must protect our borders and our flanks. There is a legitimate need for continued immigration in this country. We have a dwindling birth rate and aging population. There are 70,000 people who leave our country every single year and do not return. Our economy in certain sectors still needs individuals that our schools are not producing. We still go to England to get our tool and die makers because we are not producing them in Canada. If you look at the relatively small population base for the size of our country, by the year 2000, unless we step things up or unless the birth rate goes up, we are going to be going backward in terms of population. That will have detrimental effects on the life and society as we know it.

Therefore, if those are facts of nation-building consequences—and they are—and if we know them today, then let us not deny our future by being complacent in the present. Let us be honest about our future challenges. Let us discuss with Canadians the needs of a positive immigration program. Let us begin to destroy the myths that embrace immigration. We know what those myths are. Let us be up front. If we do, there will be Canadians who will have greater understanding and awareness of our needs. There will be greater understanding and tolerance of new Canadians, and greater strength will be given to Canadians who have family with them in this great country.

At the time we are discussing these loans I suggest that the essence of it is to have families reunited. If we are supporting the unification of families, whether they be refugees or family class members, then we almost support a speedier determination for our refugee applicants, a speedier, more successful, more fair system for determination in sponsoring our applicants from abroad.

I take that signal from the government. I am indicating today that we will be supporting Bill C-77. We are hopeful that the government will support the amendment I will move at Committee of the Whole. We look forward to passage of this bill in this sitting on this day so that the minister can have an increased travel loans budget and have the flexibility to augment family reunification where it is required.

Mr. Dan Heap (Trinity—Spadina): Mr. Speaker, I rise to support this bill in principle and to indicate that our party will be voting for the adoption of the bill and also to support the amendment that has been moved by the hon. member for York West.

While the bill is essentially what is needed and there is some urgency about it, there are certain unsatisfactory aspects to it, some of which have been pointed out by the hon. member for York West.

This is a bill to amend the Immigration Act from 1978 which has been amended several times already on this point in the section that provides for loans to immigrants, to help immigrants pay their transportation or to help them pay for their medical examination. It has been especially important for refugees. The normal case with most immigrants is that they are able to pay their way, and they prefer to, as most of us would, rather than to borrow. But many other people who are refugees and living in refugee camps do not have the means. Therefore, this provision has become very important during the past decade for making Canada's refugee acceptance policies workable. It does this by amending the present law in two ways.

First, it removes from Parliament the power to set a limit on the loan. Second, it delegates that power to the minister and the cabinet. It does this by amending Section 114, subsection (1) so it would now read:

> "(u.1) prescribing the maximum amount of outstanding advances to the Minister under subsection 119(1);"

In other words, instead of setting the limit as it previously did in the act, it refers this to the minister. It further amends Section 119(3) to read:

> "(3) The total amount of outstanding advances to the Minister under subsection (1) shall not at any time exceed the amount prescribed under paragraph 114(1)(u.1)".

The effect of that is to leave the matter with the cabinet. As has been pointed out by my colleague from York West, while we understand the rationale put forward by the government—and there is an element of truth in it—there is also more than the truth in that rationale. Therefore, we are somewhat dissatisfied with it.

The bill is very necessary, particularly for refugees who often do not have the means to pay their way. These are not the refugees who have found their way to Canada and claim, after they arrived in Canada, that they are refugees, and are handled by our new refugee determination system under the refugee board chaired by Mr. Fairweather. These are the ones who are selected overseas by our immigration officers. When they are selected they are then, if necessary, and most of them do need it, offered the chance to borrow the money from this fund to pay for the medical examination and travel. After they come to Canada they are expected to repay the loan.

In the case of refugees, and any other immigrants to whom the loans have been made, the record has been startlingly good. There has been 98 per cent repayment of the loans at whatever interest the minister may have required with authorization of the cabinet. It is a very necessary humanitarian provision, otherwise many of these refugees after they have been selected simply could not come here. What is unsatisfactory about the manner in which this has been handled is that it was prompted by a crisis which the government allowed to run for half a year or more.

The government was aware that these loans were being taken up more quickly than before, as the member for Burlington said, because of events in eastern Europe. These events were not secret. They were published almost daily in *The Globe and Mail*. The minister and her staff were surely aware of them, and that the take up of the loans would for a while be faster than the rate of repayment, even though there is no dissatisfaction with the efforts of the refugees, or immigrants already here, in repaying their loans.

It seems it was a matter of some indifference to the minister and the cabinet during the first of these months, even though a year ago last June the government promised to take $5 million from this loan, according to what the member for Burlington has told us, to help in the special emergency in Southeast Asia, which was a good thing to do. But the government knew what it had done; at least I hope that the left hand knows what the right hand is doing. It knew that the loan fund was running low, but it waited until April of this year before taking any effective action.

• (1200)

In April of this year it notified all the sponsoring organizations of private sponsorships in Canada that as of the date of notification there would be no more loans until further notice.

Many national churches in Canada have master agreements by which many of their parishioners or congregations have sponsored refugees. The national organization has worked out the basic arrangements with the minister and the department so that a congregation which may not lack much experience in immigration and refugee procedures can undertake to sponsor one person or one family. This has happened in hundreds or thousands of cases across the country.

The agreement in these master agreements was that the government would provide the loan to bring the refugee or refugee family here. The sponsoring organization, the churches, and others would undertake full responsibility for the person's financial and other welfare for the first year after the refugee or the family arrived.

The churches and the other sponsoring organizations have kept their part of the arrangement, relying on the government to provide the funding for bringing the refugees here. The churches have committed their budgets to ensuring that the work will be done in Canada by local congregations. Members of congregation have committed their budgets to the same purpose, to the maintenance of the refugees after their arrival in Canada. Suddenly they are told that there are no more loans to bring in the refugees.

I am advised by the Interchurch Committee for Refugees that the agreement included under a clause of notice that either party may give notice of the discontinuation of this arrangement. Knowing at least since June of last year when it gave $5 million for the emergency in Southeast Asia, knowing that the people from eastern Europe were coming in faster and taking up the loans faster at the end of last year, and knowing that they were coming in still faster at the beginning of this year, the government gave no notice to the private sponsoring organizations, the churches, and others.

The government violated its obligation to give one-month's notice. If the churches had violated their obligation, we would be hearing loud complaints from certain people in the government. Certainly we would be hearing loud complaints from the member for Surrey—White Rock who, during the debate on Bill C-55, took every opportunity he could find to taunt the churches with not bringing in as many refugees as the government brought in. If the churches are so interested in refugees, he asked in committee and in this House, why do they not sponsor more of them?

When the churches had a chance to answer him—and usually he said it where they did not have a chance to answer—they pointed out that a church group might undertake to sponsor 500 refugees in one year but through government red tape only got perhaps 250. It was not the churches' fault that the other 250 did not come; it was government red tape.

The government red tape is such that when the churches agree to sponsor a refugee, say from Africa, who has been declared by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees to be a genuine refugee, the churches say: "Yes, bring that man" or "bring that family". The government does not trust the United Nations High Commission for Refugees enough to take its word.

The Canadian government funds the UNHCR, and I must say that it funds it generously compared to some other countries. In that respect the Government of Canada is doing a good job. It is providing the money that is absolutely essential for maintaining the life and the future of 15 million refugees in the world, mostly countries located in Africa and Asia. For some strange reason, after funding the UNHCR and after having a member appointed by this government sitting regularly on the executive of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, the government will not take its word that Mr. So-and-So or Mrs. So-and-So and their children are refugees. The government will delay, sometimes for months or even for years, a decision as to whether the sponsoring group in Canada should be permitted to bring that designated refugee to Canada.

We do not know very much of what goes on in the refugee camps when the Canadian consular officers visit the camps to select refugees. There are strong indications that in fact refugees from those camps are selected first for their supposed economic benefit to Canada. Are they tool and die makers? Are they nuclear physicists? Do they have some specialties that we think Canada might want?

Only secondly are they selected for their need, either because they are in danger of damage to their health by a long stay there or because there is some other danger. In some of the camps there is danger from marauding armies. Either the country they live in or the country next door have occasionally invaded those camps and

kidnapped refugees. So the delay is a danger to the refugee or the refugee family.

While our overseas officers are going through the camp to find out who would be the most useful people as immigrants to Canada and only secondarily looking at their refugee qualifications, the ones whom the United Nations High Commission has designated as the refugees most in need of being resettled are often told to wait and wait and wait and wait.

There is an extremely rigid medical standard used. The Mennonite Central Committee wrote to me several years ago concerning a very tragic case of a refugee family in the camp in Thailand. The family, after a wait, was finally selected and approved to come to Canada. The day they were to board the airplane the officials said: "No, this adult son cannot go with the rest because a recent x-ray shows he has a spot on his lung," apparently a touch of tuberculosis. The whole family stayed back. They would not go without him. The next year, when their turn came up again, this young man killed himself by hanging rather than run the risk of again presenting a barrier for the rest of his family coming as refugees.

If that had been an American refugee program, so I am advised by the Mennonite Central Committee, they would not have hesitated to bring him. They would have brought him to the United States and in a few months treated him for whatever tuberculosis infection he had. He and his family would then have been settled into the United States, but Canada has a much more fussy medical standard which has caused grief to many genuine and needy refugees.

There seems to be that attitude of neglect. We pride ourselves on being very favourable to refugees, but there are certain ways in which we are not. It is within that attitude of neglect that the government neglected for months and months to do anything about raising the loan limit to meet what the government knew well last year was the rising number of people coming from eastern Europe and using the loan arrangement. In order to meet the crisis at the end it said: "All the private sponsored refugees are cut off from loan possibilities".

I had a telex concerning two families in the Sudan being sponsored. There were three brothers: one was in Toronto, a Canadian citizen, and the other two were in the Sudan with their families. Eighteen people arrived at the airport ready to go to Canada. They were told: "Come to the airport and board the plane". They got to the airport and were told: "No, your tickets have not been paid for". What a way to treat people.

• (1210)

If the government had given the one-month notice, those people would not have been brought to the airport and then told just to stay there. What would they do for a month? Camp at the airport? Go back to the refugee camp? They had made all their arrangements to come. That is the kind of thing that this government did in a fully unfeeling way so far as I can see.

Although it was the government that had created the crisis by failing to take action before today for increasing the loan limit, the government put the burden of the crisis on the families who were sponsored by the private organizations. After urging private organizations beginning with former Minister MacDonald at the time of the boat people when Canada invented—I think the first country in the world—private sponsorship of refugees, the government urged people to organize more sponsors. Throughout the 1980s the churches had been promoting sponsorships. There are staff people hired in Toronto by the United and Anglican churches with the sole obligation of helping congregations and other sponsoring groups to sponsor refugees under these government programs.

When the former Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment and Immigration, the member for Surrey—White Rock, taunted the churches with not bringing in enough refugees, the churches kept on not only sponsoring but increasing their efforts. The reward for that to the churches is to be told now: "Your refugees cannot have the loan because the government has goofed".

It is a very, very unfeeling and insensitive program. The government likes to be proud of its achievement, but it does not like to see what its administrative actions are doing to the people concerned.

This brings me to another matter which is going to collide with this program if it is not attended to. We know that there are 15 million refugees in the world, mostly in what we call the Third World countries. They are third because they are less important than the first world, which is western Europe and North America, and less important than the second world, which is eastern

Europe and the Soviet Union. For this purpose Australia and New Zealand are grouped with of course western Europe and North America. All the rest, all the non-white people, are considered to be Third World. This is where most of the refugees are now because of, primarily, civil wars and international wars fuelled by guns from the northern countries, not from those southern countries.

These people are congregated by the millions into the refugee camps of Latin America, Africa and Asia. This is where our officials go to select the refugees. They select the cream of the crop.

After the long delays that I have described and the added delay caused by the government's mishandling of the limit on the loan fund, refugees get to Canada and, in the public perception, are lumped together with those who came to make their claim in Canada.

I want to go back to the matter of the crisis of the loan fund. It is that crisis that the government has used to put the pressure on to say: "Look, we have only got a couple of more days or so of Parliament. We want to make sure that this crisis does not happen again, so leave it all to the minister". As my colleague from York West pointed out, this means that the minister can raise the loan limit, as well as reduce the loan limit. She could reduce it to zero if she so desired. I hope she will not.

There is very little way to become aware of this, unless a person becomes a hobby reader of *The Canada Gazette* and watches like a hawk everything that is published in it. I hope the minister would in fact report a major decision like this to the committee which deals with the matter, the Standing Committee on Labour, Employment and Immigration.

Therefore I support the member's amendment which is:

> That Bill C-77 be amended in Clause 2 by adding immediately after line 18 at page 1 the following:
>
> "(3.1) The operation of subsections (1), (2) and (3) and any report made pursuant to subsection (4) shall be reviewed on a permanent basis by the Standing Committee on Labour, Employment and Immigration of the House of Commons".

That will not necessarily cure all the problems, but it will somewhat widen the area of responsibility.

Finally, I want to acknowledge that the minister was kind enough to send a draft of the regulation which she intends, and I understand Cabinet has agreed, to enact once this bill which is passed today gives her the authority.

I have here the copy of an amendment which is that Section 45 of the immigration regulations, 1978, be amended by adding thereto immediately after subsection (3) thereof the following subsection: "(4). For the purpose of Section 119 of the Act the total amount of outstanding advances out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund to the minister shall not at any time exceed $150 million".

That is a very substantial increase on $90 million. I believe it is warranted in the circumstances. I am very glad that the minister has given us a copy of that regulation as some assurance that the action put into effect will be taken immediately with the authority given by this bill.

However, I want to deal, as I said, with the problem that is colliding with the matter of the refugees we bring from overseas. That is to say the government's persistent delay in dealing with those who have come to Canada to claim refugee status.

It is not because the government is letting anybody and everybody come easily into Canada and claim refugee status. The government has been very firm about placing visa requirements on any country from which many people have come claiming refugee status.

It has been very firm about laying the burden on the airlines, that the airline officials and ticket agents must examine a person's papers and determine whether the person has valid papers and a valid visa for coming to Canada. Otherwise, the airline is subject to a financial penalty.

The officials of the department remarked with great satisfaction last year after the program started that there was a reduction in the number of people coming to Canada claiming refugee status. These methods that the government has used, some of them enacted three years ago in Bill C-55, have had some effect.

It is not easy for a genuine refugee to get to Canada to claim refugee status. If he has to pay $5,000, $10,000 or $15,000 for a false visa—and apparently there is quite a trade in that—he has to find $5,000, $10,000 or $15,000 which is not easy.

If he is found to be a true refugee, then under international law his use of a false visa is not to be held against him. That is part of the United Nations convention on the status of refugees. The United Nations convention does not find him the $5,000, $10,000 or $15,000 to buy the false visa.

We have delays built into both the new system for refugee determination and the old system for dealing with the backlog. Most of the groups in Canada who sponsor refugees and who are concerned about the status of refugees in Canada belong to an umbrella group known as the Canadian Council for Refugees.

• (1220)

The Canadian Council for Refugees passed a resolution at its semi-annual conference which ended on June 2 of this year. I want to acquaint members of the House with this resolution. It is a resolution regarding the backlog clearance process. It states:

> Whereas:
>
> (1) In December 1989, the Standing Committee of the House of Commons on Labour, Employment and Immigration issued a Report on the Backlog Clearance Process which found the process to be seriously flawed and predicted that, without major changes, it would take four to six years to clear the Backlog;
>
> (2) In May 1990, the Minister of Employment and Immigration delivered the Government's response to the Standing Committee's Report, a response which side-stepped all major issues raised in the report;

There are certainly some of us on the committee who agree heartily with the Canadian Council for Refugees that the minister's response did side-step the major issues we raised. She did not really convince us that her program will be finished in two years, as she has always insisted, even though she changed the date of starting.

The resolution further states:

> (3) By mid-April 1990, only 26,711 of over 85,000 Backlog cases were in process, and less than half of those had received a final answer on their eligibility to remain in Canada;
>
> (4) The artificially imposed temporary status of persons in the Backlog results in tremendous and undeserved anxiety and suffering due to lack of certainty about the future and prolonged separation from family, and is cruel and unusual treatment and a gross violation of fundamental human rights;

There are families being broken, marriages broken because the husband is here and the wife and, perhaps, children are over there. After a year, two, three or maybe four years they begin to lose faith that the husband is really trying to bring them here. He writes and tells them: "I am trying. I am waiting and waiting to get my landed status. I cannot do anything until I get my landed status". Sometimes they do not believe him. They think he has found a better arrangement here. So a family is broken up and children are perhaps left without their father because of the delays in this program.

To continue with the resolution. It states:

> (5) The Minister of Employment and Immigration's resolve to undertake this deliberate and calculated action against asylum seekers has exposed all asylum seekers in the Backlog to grievous harm; and
>
> (6) Allowing the unresolved situation of those in the Backlog to continue constitutes an abuse of human rights and is just cause for due concern regarding equitable treatment of asylum seekers under the laws of Canada;

I would add "under the laws of the United Nations".

The resolution is this. It is not a new idea, but one that is gaining support in Canada.

> Be it resolved that the Executive of the Canadian Council for Refugees and its member agencies:
>
> (1) Express to the Minister of Employment and Immigration our disappointment in her flagrant disregard of the serious concerns raised in the Report of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Labour, Employment and Immigration which, if addressed, could have made a significant, positive impact on the processing of the Backlog.

Again, the minister took the full five months to respond to our report. I can understand why she did it, because I think she did not have a very good answer to give us. She gave us, perhaps, the best she thought she could, but certainly not the sort of answer we were looking for, let alone the answer the public is looking for.

> (2) Remind the Minister of Employment and Immigration of the Canadian Council for Refugees' previous calls for special measures to deal with the Backlog which would allow those in the Backlog to proceed immediately to landing, subject to admissibility criteria, and once again urgently request her to do the same in accordance with her discretionary powers and in accordance with Canada's domestic and international obligations with regard to human rights; and
>
> (3) Include in the aforementioned those asylum seekers who were in the country before May, 1986, but were not granted permission to stay in Canada under the Administrative Review Program, (ADR).

We can understand the sentiment the minister expresses. She has objected that it would not be right and it would not be wise to admit as landed immigrants to Canada people such as there are some in the backlog who had falsely claimed refugee status, perhaps even knowing it was false.

Therefore there is this long, dragged out process for sorting out which one stays, which one goes, this one stays, that one goes and so on. It is causing this hardship to the refugee claimants in the backlog. The CCR is mainly concerned in its resolution about sorting out who had a justifiable case and who did not. It is taking too long by the system the minister enacted a year and a half ago in her regulations.

There is a further problem. It is that the staff which is used to do that sorting out is badly needed somewhere else. There are 50 members of the Immigration and Refugee Board trained to examine the cases of refugee claimants who are being used not to examine the new refugee claimants who have come since January 1, 1989, but to examine cases in the old backlog. They do not do it alone; they do it in company with an adjudicator. An adjudicator is one of the most highly trained and most highly paid members of the immigration staff. There are other staff members used, such as case presenting officers, refugee officers, translators, clerks and so on.

It costs a lot to cause that much delay. The worst cost is that those adjudicators and those refugee board members are not available to work on the new system.

Of the 21,000 people who came to Canada last year, 1989, to claim refugee status and who were to be processed under the new system, less than half—about one-third—have had a decision. As of January, 1990, there were about 13,000 people who had come to Canada the year before to claim refugee status and who had not yet been told yes or no.

That was supposed to be the fast system. When the present minister and her predecessors argued for Bill C-55, the number one argument for it was that we must act quickly. There were two reasons given. They were two good reasons for acting quickly. One was that a genuine refugee claimant deserves justice quickly, deserves to be landed quickly, as the law would provide. The other is that Canada deserves to get rid of the phoneys quickly, as the law provides.

If, as the minister of the day predicted, those decisions were made within two or three months of a person's arrival in Canada, then there would be no refugee scams. There would be none of the racketeers telling people in Portugal, Brazil, Trinidad, India or anywhere else: "Give me $5,000 and I will get you into Canada. All you have to to do is say the word refugee. Even if they finally kick you out it will be in about three, four or five years and you will have earned a lot of money to take back home, after you have paid me". That is the kind of scam that developed once there was a long waiting period in the mid-1980s to get refugee status determined. Yet the government said that the most important thing we have to do with the new law is to make it fast.

The government has failed to do what it said was most important in the new law. Some 13,000 people who came to Canada in 1989 did not at year end have a decision. Some may have come the day before, some may have come many months before. The government itself predicted in the Estimates that by the end of 1990 the delay time would be about nine months. Presumably that was a cautious prediction. Presumably it could be more than nine months. But the government itself knows that the new system is not working the way the government intended it to work.

There is one reason above all others that accounts for it not working. The government is doing its work twice. The government has a system of double examination. First it examines the refugee claimant for what it calls a credible basis. Does he have any evidence upon which a refugee claim might be determined? If so, he goes to the full hearing of the refugee board; if not, he goes out. Ninety-six per cent of those who have come in and have got as far as that first hearing—some have not got there yet, after months—were judged to have that credible basis and were sent on to the refugee board.

• (1230)

The refugee board then has to do the same work all over again, with even more high priced staff, two refugee board members, each getting about $100,000 a year. The work is done twice. There is all the in-between work of scheduling, notifying the claimant, making sure that an interpreter, the presenting officer, and the board members are there, and so on. They also have to make sure that there is a room that they can use.

All that scheduling is part of the slowdown. It could be cleared with one stroke if the government would abolish that first step, the inquiry, at which sometimes several days are spent debating whether the person has any shred of evidence on which the board might find him a refugee.

They are supposed to find only that there is that possibility, but very often they go into detailed arguments. They try to find out the date the refugee left his home. If he said half a year ago and the date was two days earlier, they say he may not be telling the truth. They play judge and jury examining the details without remembering that their job is primarily to find if there seems to be a case that might be found valid. They try to do the board's work at the earliest stage.

The Canadian Council for Refugees has asked the government to close out that first stage, to use that staff and that money to speed up the process at the second stage, and also to meet Canada's international obligation for justice by having a review of the negative cases after the board hearing to make sure that the board may not have made, in some cases, a fatal mistake. They would not be reviewing 96 per cent of the cases because the board finds 75 per cent of the cases to be refugees. Of the remaining 25 per cent, some might have to be reviewed, but that would cost much less than doing 96 per cent of them twice.

Therefore, I am hoping that the minister will carefully consider what the Canadian Council for Refugees has said. Otherwise, the breakdown of the present refugee program will make this loan fund inoperative. It simply is not going to work if the whole refugee system gets bogged down by the government's insistence on trying to make an unworkable determination system work.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is the House ready for the question?

Mr. Kempling: Mr. Speaker, I think you will find that there is unanimous consent that we refer the bill to a Committee of the Whole at this time.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and, by unanimous consent, the House went into committee thereon, Mr. Paproski in the Chair.

The Deputy Chairman: Order. House in Committee of the Whole on Bill C-77, an act to amend the Immigration Act.

Shall Clause 1 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Clause 1 agreed to.

The Deputy Chairman: Shall Clause 2 carry?

On Clause 2—Limitation

Mr. Marchi: Mr. Chairman, on Clause 2 I would like to move, on behalf of the Liberal caucus, an amendment of which I gave notice to you and my colleagues earlier.

The purpose of the amendment that I will be moving is to try to have accountability through the Standing Committee of Labour, Employment and Immigration. Since we are moving the authority from legislation to regulations, I believe it is important for members, at least through the officials of the department or the minister, to have the ability to have discourse, be updated, review, and question.

The government may suggest that this amendment would be redundant because it would be covered in the Standing Orders. I suggest that this would give the principle of accountability maximum protection. Our Standing Orders can be changed or altered by a simple motion in the House, whereas if we attach this to the bill, any changes will have to be made through the normal legislative process of any bill.

It endorses the idea of some accountability and discussion with members of Parliament, rather than removing it completely. It protects it from any changes to the Standing Orders of the House through a simple motion. I think it is an honourable price to pay for the political green light and assurance that the opposition parties have given to the government today on this bill.

Therefore, I move:

That Bill C-77 be amended in Clause 2 by adding immediately after line 18 at page 1 the following:

"(a) The Standing Committee on Labour, Employment and Immigration of the House of Commons shall be empowered to examine the use of advances made pursuant to this Act."

The Deputy Chairman: On debate, the hon. member for Trinity—Spadina.

Mr. Heap: Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the New Democratic Party I would support and, if it is appropriate, second the motion of Mr. Marchi.

I believe that during the eighties, and particularly during the tenure of this government since 1984, there has been progress toward recognizing the need for a wider exercise of responsibility in the standing and special committees of Parliament. This has been reflected in the McGrath reforms. Because of this, for example, the present Standing Committee on Labour, Employment and Immigration did a study of the backlog program to help focus attention on and get some clear definition of some of the problems that existed then, most of which still exist.

• (1240)

It would be very useful if the act made quite clear that the committee is also empowered to review and examine the use made of these moneys advanced and to ask from time to time that the minister and the officials report to the committee on those matters. It is not enough to wait until the Estimates at the end of each year. Too much water can go under the bridge, as has already been shown by the government in this very matter. We should have had a report last fall, or at least at the beginning of this year. Placing this into the act would remind the minister, the officials, and the committee that we have a duty to make sure that this loan fund is working the way the minister, the officials, and Parliament as a whole intended that it should.

Therefore, I would hope that no difficulty would be found with it by the government side.

Mr. Kempling: Mr. Chairman, we do not find too much fault with the thrust of the amendment that the hon. member has put forward.

The reality is that this is, first, covered by our Standing Orders and, second, covered by section 119(4) of the act. It would appear to be redundant. We do not find it an offensive amendment. It is a matter of having the same thing three times—in the act, the Standing Orders, and through an amendment. I just question whether it is wise to proceed in this manner when it is already taken care of in the statute.

Would the hon. member like to comment on that?

Mr. Marchi: Mr. Chairman, I was listening to the parliamentary secretary and I was also trying to listen to the parliamentary secretary to the government House Leader. They are suggesting that perhaps there is some redundancy here. A very quick reading the portion of the act that was indicated to me I thought suggested a review of the previous moneys expended.

The purpose of my amendment was to have a somewhat more elaborate process so that, either through an annual report or a report to the committee of the previous month's expenditures, we have a somewhat more elaborate assurance that the committee may, in fact, engage the minister and/or her officials in a discussion as to where things sit for the coming months and the coming fiscal year so that we can see where the demands are coming from. In that way, we will not simply have a review mirroring the reading of the situation because we are removing it from the legislative stream of things.

Therefore, the purpose of my amendment was to ensure that in the future the committee and its members have some degree of knowledge and say with the minister as to how these moneys will be changed or spent. Before, when there was need for an amendment, at least one had in advance the reasons for the amendment. One would know that they would want to increase from 150 to 200 because that is the number of people who had requested it. These are the numbers of applicants. There was a rationale behind it.

I believe that the existing portions of the act which I read very quickly would provide for more of an updating as to what has happened as opposed to what will happen or could happen in a given situation. At this stage I would still like to pursue the relevancy of the amendment I offered.

Mr. Cooper: Mr. Chairman, I am looking at the section of the act as well as the amendment that has been proposed by the hon. member. I think I have a sense of what he is trying to accomplish. I am just not sure that his amendment would not, in fact, undermine a little bit of what he is trying to accomplish.

I want to read the specific section of the act. Section 119(4) reads:

> The Minister shall, within six months following the commencement of each fiscal year or, if Parliament is not then sitting, within the first fifteen days next thereafter that either House of Parliament is sitting, cause to be laid before Parliament a report

setting out the total number and amount of loans made under subsection (1) during the preceding fiscal year.

Subsection 1, of course, describes exactly what we are after here.

There are a couple of key phrases in the subsection. The first is that this automatically happens on an annual basis. Every year this particular report is tabled in the House. As our Standing Orders provide, any report that is tabled in the House is then automatically referred to the specific standing committee.

That deals with several things. First, every year it is done. Second, it is automatically referred to the committee. Third, it has some specifics in terms of the details, which I believe are what the hon. member wants.

The hon. member's amendment reads as follows:

The Standing Committee on Labour, Employment and Immigration of the House of Commons—

He specifies the specific committee but, of course, that is provided for by our Standing Orders.

—shall be empowered to examine—

They are automatically empowered to examine right now without any changes to the act.

—advances made pursuant to this act.

That is only more general wording which accomplishes exactly what I believe is taken care of by the act itself. The beauty of the wording in the act is that it is a little more specific and, therefore, if we were to end up with some kind of a court challenge or court intervention, of which we as legislators know we have to be so careful, the more specific wording would, I believe, have a better chance of surviving. This general wording may well leave us in a situation that is very much open to interpretation and problems.

Therefore, the principle of the hon. member's amendment is well understood, but I think he is in fact putting some redundancy into the act, and I think we should be very careful of doing that.

Mr. Heap: Mr. Chairman, I thank the hon. member for drawing to my attention, and perhaps to the hon. member for York West's attention, the section of the act to which he has been speaking.

There are two matters not provided for there. First, the report must be made within six months following the commencement of each fiscal year or, if Parliament is not then sitting, within the first 15 days next thereafter. In other words, in 1990 that report will not be made until after the summer, six months after the beginning of the fiscal year. That does not do us any good for the present crisis.

Second, the report, as defined here, is only intended to deal with what is passed. Here are the number of loans, the number of dollars, the number of people and so on, without any projection toward the future. What we are concerned with and what I thought might be included in the general wording of the motion of the member for York West, is that the minister would report at whatever time of the year either the minister thought appropriate or the committee requested and would include, especially if requested, a projection.

For example, she might have reported in December of 1989 that there is a rise in the take-up of the loans and that it is going to approach the limit, or perhaps in February or March she might have reported that. That would have been very helpful in encouraging whatever action is needed by Parliament or the cabinet. It would at least support their action. It would also give notice to those in the public who have been materially concerned, those who are providing for refugees when they get here, those who are working at the selection of refugees overseas and who rely on the loan system as part of the support arrangements. Although the report, as provided for in the act, should be of some value, it does not catch an emergency like the one which occasioned Bill C-77.

• (1250)

I do not know whether it is possible to make any changes in the wording of the amendment now. I am not sure if there is any procedure by which we could do that. It seems to me that we and the minister's representatives are very close on this matter. We agree in principle. The problem, if any, would be in the actual wording. Certainly I do not want to cause a lawsuit. However, the present section does not provide for either recognizing an emergency that has begun or forecasting an emergency that there is good reason to foresee.

Some arrangement for flagging that would be very useful to prevent this kind of problem from happening again. I was told by the minister's office that it took six months to get this amendment through cabinet and it would only take three months to get a regulation through cabinet. That may be, but even three months can run us into an emergency the way things are

happening in eastern Europe and in other parts of the world.

I would hope that the act could be amended to provide a closer liaison between the minister and the standing committee.

Mr. Cooper: Mr. Speaker, I do not want to prolong this debate unnecessarily. I have just two quick comments.

First, the section of the act which exists at the moment does not restrict the minister from filing a report at any time. It does specify that at a minimum she would have to respond within six months following the commencement of each fiscal year. That is the minimum. If we were to specify that any other way, as I think the member is trying to do, we would probably end up limiting possibilities rather than increasing them.

Second, under the present Standing Orders, a committee has a right to examine any number of issues when the ministers are before it on the Estimates or whatever other issue. Therefore, I sincerely believe that this section of the act is the best way to accomplish what the hon. members are after. It does meet all of those goals.

As much as I would like to accommodate them by accepting this amendment, I think that we would be building redundancy into the act by putting in another clause that says the same thing. I believe that the existing wording is probably the better wording for all of our concerns.

Mr. Marchi: Mr. Chairman, I do not have any wish to prolong this either. Perhaps these will be my final comments.

With respect to the Standing Orders giving powers to committee, I repeat that those Standing Orders can be wiped out by a motion, whereas this has greater legislative protection.

Second, with respect to section 119(4) of the Immigration Act, the key operative words, in my humble opinion, are that the report will only be on the preceding fiscal year. The operative words in my amendment would provide for the examination of the use of advances made pursuant to this act, which has a present, a past and a future application.

That is what we wish to strengthen. I do not simply wish to have a report from Parliament or a committee telling me what has happened. I am more concerned in having a debate in the committee with the minister about what is going to happen given the demands, the fiscal arrangements and the program.

I believe there is a difference between what I am proposing in the amendment and what is in the act. I believe, Mr. Chairman, that at the end of the day we will still want to advance this amendment.

The Deputy Chairman: Members have heard the terms of the amendment. Is it the pleasure of the committee to adopt the amendment?

Some hon. members: On division.

Mr. Cooper: Negatived on division.

Amendment (Mr. Marchi) negatived.

Clause 2 agreed to.

Title agreed to.

Bill reported.

Hon. Gilles Loiselle (for the Minister of Employment and Immigration) moved that the bill be concurred in.

Motion agreed to.

The Deputy Chairman: When shall the bill be read the third time? By leave, now?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Loiselle (for the Minister of Employment and Immigration) moved that the bill be read the third time and passed.

Motion agreed to, bill read the third time and passed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): It being one o'clock, I do now leave the chair until two o'clock this day.

At 1 p.m. the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

S. O. 31

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S. O. 31

[*Translation*]

NATIONAL ACCESS AWARENESS WEEK

Ms. Nicole Roy-Arcelin (Ahuntsic): Mr. Speaker, since this is National Access Awareness Week, I would like to invite hon. members to urge all Canadians who are responsible for organizing special activities in their ridings to use a progress report.

A progress report helps communities to monitor change. By using the report, organizers will remember the purpose of National Access Awareness Week which is to enhance the economic and social integration of the disabled.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure this special week will be very successful in bringing the government closer to its goal of building a better and more just society for all Canadians.

* * *

[*English*]

WESTERN DIVERSIFICATION

Mr. Geoff Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek—Assiniboia): Mr. Speaker, yesterday Impact Packaging broke sod for its $25 million wastepaper molding plant in Swift Current. The plant will use recycled paper to produce grocery trays which are biodegradable and fully recyclable.

Western Economic Diversification has made a $5,055,000 million repayable contribution to this project which will initially provide 85 new jobs. These are permanent jobs based on the leading edge of environmentally sound technology. Most important of all, these jobs are totally unrelated to agriculture and represent genuine diversification in an area so dependent on export wheat.

I join all residents of Swift Current and southwestern Saskatchewan in congratulating Impact Packaging and the three levels of government on this important initiative. New product, new market, new technology, new jobs in rural western Canada; that's what western diversification is all about.

NATIONAL LIBERAL TASK FORCE ON MUNICIPAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. Mac Harb (Ottawa Centre): Mr. Speaker, after several months of touring towns and cities across Canada, the member for Nepean and myself, as co-chair of the National Liberal Task Force on Municipal Infrastructure, released a report yesterday, on behalf of the Liberal Party of Canada.

The facts are astonishing. Right now, 90 per cent of the raw sewage east of Ontario is being released into our rivers and waterways without proper treatment. In Newfoundland, over 80 per cent of the population do not have properly treated drinking water. We now learn that 10.3 per cent of carbon dioxide emissions come from automobile travel. We also know that travelling on roads which are in poor condition uses even more fuel and does more damage to our environment.

We call on the government to re-assume its responsibility for these environmental dangers and work with the municipalities and provinces to establish national criteria for infrastructure. Setting national criteria guidelines will ensure environmental protection and will provide uniform levels of service for all Canadians. This is a vital first step if we are going to halt further damage to our environment.

* * *

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Howard McCurdy (Windsor—St. Clair): Mr. Speaker, yesterday we learned that 334 more Canadian workers have lost their jobs because of this government's bungling of the economy.

Fruehauf Canada is closing its Brantford trailer plant in the face of intense competition from U.S. trucking firms; competition that Fruehauf's president says is rigged against us by our high dollar policy, our high interest policy, our high tax policy and other policies too despicably low to mention here.

Meanwhile, Canadian truckers, the natural market for Canadian-made trucks, are reeling from the deadly one-two punch of free trade and deregulation, unable to get even their most basic grievances addressed unless they blockade a bridge in the process.

To what extremes will these and other Canadian workers have to resort to next before this government acts to save their jobs and their futures.

* * *

BALTIC STATES

Mr. Jesse Flis (Parkdale—High Park): Mr. Speaker, today, June 14, 1990, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are commemorating the forty-ninth anniversary of the deportation of their peoples to Siberia and the fiftieth anniversary of the illegal Soviet annexation of the Baltic States by flying their national flags at half mast.

On a more positive note, however, the three Baltic States met with Mr. Gorbachev yesterday in a promising move which clearly indicates a new dedication on behalf of all parties to reach a satisfactory settlement on the question of Baltic independence.

At the same time, the announcement that Moscow has agreed to partially lift the economic sanctions against Lithuania is to be applauded.

However, the Soviets have yet to act on the promise and it is our hope that their intentions lead to a complete lifting of the blockade. Even so, Soviet border authorities continue to prevent the delivery of medical supplies that are so urgently needed.

With this in mind, I call on the Secretary of State for External Affairs to appeal to the Soviet authorities to allow the shipments of medical goods and to offer support for the negotiations for full independence of the Baltic States.

* * *

MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Ms. Barbara Greene (Don Valley North): Mr. Speaker, as a member for Metropolitan Toronto, I want to say that I cannot think of anything I voted for in this Parliament that has been popular in Toronto.

Toronto residents feel grossly overtaxed, unappreciated, and increasingly abandoned by senior governments as they face massive social and environmental problems.

But I support programs, to help other people and to help the regions, that are not popular in Toronto, because I believe they are in the national interest. Under the British parliamentary system, we are elected not simply to represent our constituents but rather to deliberate and participate in formulating decisions that are in the long-term national interest.

I therefore urge all members of the provincial legislatures in New Brunswick, Newfoundland, and Manitoba to show confidence in Quebec and Canada by approving the Meech Lake Accord in the national interest.

Say "welcome" to Quebec and "yes" to Canada. Then let us all sit down and deal with other constitutional issues such as additional rights for aboriginal people, women, and minorities and of course Senate reform.

* * *

BALTIC STATES

Mr. David Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast): Mr. Speaker, today marks the fiftieth anniversary of the terror brought down by Stalin upon Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. On this day the Soviet Union invaded, seized, and illegally incorporated all three Baltic States.

Hundreds of thousands of men, women, and children were deported to the desolate regions of the U.S.S.R. Many died on the way to the Gulag. Once there, they were subjected to inhumane living conditions, suffering under forced labour and daily hunger. In the end, as a result of these policies, fully one-third of the Baltic population perished.

The Baltic States and the restoration of their independence is one of the last crimes of World War II yet to be resolved. On this day I urge all members not only to remember this tragedy, but to actively participate in finding ways to correct this injustice.

With recent developments in Moscow there seems to be a glimmer of hope that a solution is on the way. I would join today with the Baltic peoples in Canada and across the world in their day of great sorrow and would also hope that we can proclaim it the Baltic Freedom Day.

* * *

VETERANS AFFAIRS

Mr. Pat Sobeski (Cambridge): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Veterans Affairs had good news for veterans and

their dependants when he spoke to the Dominion Convention of the Royal Canadian Legion on Monday.

Veterans were told of the improvements to government plans once the appropriate legislation and regulations are in place. Here is a sample of the improvements they can look forward to: regulations will be changed so that spouses of deceased veterans will be provided with certain services under the Veterans Independence Program for a period of up to a year following the veteran's death.

Also, regulations will be changed to increase as of April 1, 1991, income protection for spouses of veterans who are under long-term care.

Legislation will also be introduced to pay interest on veterans' trust funds administered by Veterans Affairs.

Legislation will be introduced to set up a special trust fund for the benefit of needy veterans and their dependants using money left unclaimed on the death of a veteran.

The necessary regulations will be pre-gazetted in the next two weeks and I am sure members of all parties will co-operate as usual in seeing that the upcoming legislation favouring veterans gets speedy and sympathetic consideration.

* * *

NATIONAL ACCESS AWARENESS WEEK

Mr. Rey Pagtakhan (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, today is the fifth day of Canada's third annual National Access Awareness Week.

It is a week of opportunity to celebrate the accomplishments of disabled Canadians, to assess the availability of services and facilities for them, and to plan improvements for the future.

It is also a week of opportunity for us to reaffirm our belief that they should have equal access to transportation, housing, employment, recreation, and education. It is a time for the private and public sectors to rededicate themselves to the continuing integration in society of all people with disabilities.

• (1410)

My wife and I were therefore extremely delighted when, earlier this week, we again visited the Shalom Residence for disabled people in my constituency to witness firsthand how the residents live integrated with the rest of the community.

Disabled people have aspirations as noble as those of the able bodied. Equal access to basic needs for the disabled is both an aspiration and a basic right.

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[*Translation*]

CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

Mrs. Suzanne Duplessis (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of State (Science)): Mr. Speaker, last week, when the country was on the verge of breaking apart, we could watch what was happening live, on CBC Newsworld, the English news channel.

The difference between Francophones and Anglophones was more obvious than ever before, since the CBC French network only showed us tapes and only during scheduled news programs.

On behalf of all French Canadians in this country, I ask the CBC and the CRTC to be fair and to set up a French news network, and I ask the Minister of Communications to ensure this is done.

It is a matter of equity: there should not be two classes of Canadians.

Mr. Young (Gloucester): Right on!

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

* * *

MOUVEMENT LES RETROUVAILLES

Mr. Mark Assad (Gatineau—La Lièvre): Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to offer special congratulations to the *Mouvement les retrouvailles* in Quebec.

This agency acts with warmth and compassion to help those who are looking for their parents. For the very first time I attended a ceremony in Gatineau yesterday evening, where a son was reunited with his mother, one of several cases that had a happy ending.

I would like to draw your attention to the work being done by Mr. and Mrs. de Repentigny and their committee who approach this important task with love and compassion. I want them to know that their work is appreciated and deserves our recognition.

Mr. Speaker, these are some of the unsung heroes of our society.

* * *

[*English*]

ABORTION

Ms. Dawn Black (New Westminster—Burnaby): Mr. Speaker, this week a 20-year old Toronto woman bled to death from a self-induced abortion, using a coat hanger. Apparently, this was the first death from abortion in 20 years.

Also, a 16-year old girl in the Kitchener—Waterloo area recently had a back street abortion. Access to safe, medical abortions has already been diminished since Bill C-43 was passed in this House.

Some doctors have stopped performing abortions because of this government's bill. Women are afraid they will not be able to obtain safe, medical abortions. I did not ask a question on this issue today because it is not a matter of gaining political Brownie points and saying to this government: "I told you so."

This issue is serious and it is preventable. I call on the Prime Minister and his cabinet to have the sense and compassion not to proclaim the bill. Please, we cannot afford another tragedy like this one. It is not too late to save other women from this horrible and unnecessary death.

* * *

[*Translation*]

NATIONAL ACCESS AWARENESS WEEK

Mr. Jean-Guy Guilbault (Drummond): Mr. Speaker, the week of June 10 to 16 has been declared National Access Awareness Week.

This is a special opportunity for individuals, voluteer organizations, businesses large and small and governments to promote the integration of Canada's 3.5 million disabled people.

Integration is much more than eliminating physical obstacles; it means changing attitudes and ways of doing things to enable everyone who has a handicap, whether visible or not, to participate in the life of their community.

Mr. Speaker, I am very aware of this issue because for many years, my mother has had to move about in a wheelchair.

I take this opportunity to point out the dedication of many volunteers and organizations in my riding such as the *Office des personnes handicapées du Québec*, headquartered in Drummondville, the Drummondville Disabled Persons' Association and the Regional Handicapped Recreation Association of Central Quebec which will hold sports and games for disabled people in Drummondville October 5 to 8. Eight hundred participants from the province of Quebec are expected at this event, including champions Douglas Lyons and André Viger.

Mr. Speaker, let us help Canadians have access to equality.

* * *

[*English*]

BROCKVILLE

Mr. Jim Jordan (Leeds—Grenville): Mr. Speaker, for the past several months the city of Brockville has been depicted as the place in Canada where the nightly pastime is to burn Quebec flags. This was alluded to again in this House as recently as yesterday.

For those interested in the truth, the incident which gained national attention was a one-time, isolated, very regrettable one, carried out in Brockville only because the city was hosting the Ontario government caucus last September and therefore providing a natural forum for a few people unknown to most Brockville residents, a forum for these strangers to assemble briefly and express themselves in a very unacceptable way.

In the hope that we could finally put the event to rest once and for all, let me tell all hon. members that Brockville is a city of immense goodwill. If they need further convincing, they should come to our annual goodwill festival known as Riverfest which runs from June 22 to July 1. They can come and draw their own conclusions as to the goodwill and sincerity of the people of Brockville and area.

* * *

CANADIAN AIR

Ms. Joy Langan (Mission—Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, 340 workers from Canadian Air in Richmond work in the Canadian reservations office. That office handles all

calls from B.C. and also handles calls from the continental U.S.A. Those U.S. originating calls constitute 30 per cent of the workload in the reservations office, which amounts to about 90,000 calls a month.

On May 8, 1990, Canadian Air announced its intention to open an office in Tampa, Florida and to hire 130 people to do the job in Tampa. The employer claims no one will be laid off. The workers do not believe it.

Is this movement of Canadian jobs to Tampa by Canadian Air the result of deregulation? Is it the result of free trade? Or, is it the result of a Canadian company chasing a buck at the expense of its workers?

Whatever the reason, the workers at Canadian Air believe those jobs should stay in Canada. They have mounted a campaign which my colleagues and I support that says to Canadian Air: "Don't Tampa with my job".

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[*English*]

TRADE

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Deputy Prime Minister.

It has been reported today that the Minister for International Trade had a meeting in Montreal last Tuesday with the Mexican Minister of Trade. I ask the Deputy Prime Minister: Why did the Minister for International Trade have this meeting behind closed doors and exactly what was the purpose of this meeting?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition himself was for a long time a minister of the Crown. He knows it is not extraordinary for ministers to hold meetings behind closed doors—

An hon. member: Just a normal secret meeting.

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): Not for any government, if I may say so to the member for Vancouver Quadra.

There is a suggestion that this was a secret meeting. It was not secret at all. It was a normal meeting, suggested by the Mexicans who wanted to bring Canada up to date about their views on discussions they are having with the United States in regard to the possibility of a trade agreement between the United States and Mexico.

We were pleased that during the discussion the Mexicans undertook to keep Canada fully advised and fully briefed on developments in those discussions between Mexico and the U.S. which may be of interest to Canada.

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, the Secretary of State for External Affairs said that the meeting in question, which he admits was a secret meeting, was for the purpose of the Mexican Minister for International Trade informing our Minister for International Trade about the progress of talks between the United States and Mexico. I am sure the President of Mexico would be intrigued by this answer because yesterday in Mexico City he said that these talks were "to create the conditions for greater dialogue with the objective of establishing a free trade agreement with Canada".

• (1420)

I ask the Secretary of State for External Affairs or the Deputy Prime Minister: Is the government now involved in discussions with the objective of establishing a free trade agreement between Canada and Mexico? If so, why is the government doing this without first having wide consultations with Canadians on whether this should be done at all?

Should the government not first have open public hearings through the external affairs and trade committee of this House, bearing in mind the serious possible adverse impact of such an agreement on jobs and industry in this country?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the answer to the question is a categoric no. There are no discussions under way between Canada and Mexico with an eye to concluding a free trade agreement between Canada and Mexico, none.

What is happening is that there has been an agreement by the President of Mexico and the President of the United States to have their senior officials consider whether it is sensible for those two countries to enter into a trade agreement. Naturally an agreement of that kind may affect Canada's interests. Naturally Canada wants to know whether our interests are affected. When we have that kind of information we will come to a

decision in Canada as to what we want to do with those developments.

The Leader of the Opposition asks me if there will be consultation with Parliament, the provinces, and industry. Yes, there will be. As I have said in the House on several occasions—

Mr. Peterson: When?

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): I am asked by a Liberal member when. I think he was here the other day when I said that my colleague the Minister for International Trade would be appearing before the standing committee before the end of this month. He looks forward to the opportunity to discuss this matter with the committee.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, could the Secretary of State for External Affairs clear up the contradiction between his explanation of the purpose of thse dicussions between the Minister for International Trade and his Mexican counterpart and the statement of the Mexican President who said the discussions are aimed at defining the conditions of a free trade agreement between Canada and Mexico. Why this contradiction?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Of course, Mr. Speaker, I cannot speak for the President of Mexico, but I can certainly speak for Canada and for my colleague the Minister for International Trade. Canada is not discussing with either the Americans or the Mexicans concerning a free trade agreement involving the three countries, nor have we begun bilateral talks on a Canada–Mexico free trade deal. We are simply gathering information about the objectives of both Americans and Mexicans with respect to their own views on a potential treaty between the two countries.

Should such a treaty become reality it might have implications for Canada. Canada wants to be kept informed as to what these implications might be for this country. Then, in light of that information, Canada will make its own decisions after public consultations with Parliament, the provinces, and whatever Canadian industry might be involved.

[*English*]

ROUTE CANADA

Mr. Russell MacLellan (Cape Breton—The Sydneys): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport.

In the agreement of purchase and sale when the government gave away Route Canada, the government insisted that CN include a clause that would require the new owners to use their best efforts to carry on business for at least three years. That is because the government did not want the company to come tumbling down before the 1988 election, and the government considered a large number of lay–offs to be politically embarrassing.

Why does the government not admit that it was never concerned about the workers of Route Canada? It only considered these workers who were losing their jobs and political futures as nothing more than an embarrassment.

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I and everyone who understands anything about business reject completely out of hand the premise of my hon. friend's question.

I want to read from the letter from Canadian National to *The Toronto Star*. The only accurate way to get this on the record is to read it: "Our alternative"—this is CN—"to the sale was to close down CN Route and lay off all staff in 1985."

That is the alternative. It was losing $40 million to $50 million a year. That is the Liberal way of doing things. It could have continued to lose $40 million to $50 million. It could not get a Maislin–type loan, which was the Liberal–type way of doing things. The alternative was to sell it to Route Canada and give it an opportunity to try to make a go of it.

We acted in the best interests of the employees in all cases, in all the things we did subsequent to the agreement of purchase and sale being sold. I would think that in view of today's economy in the Atlantic provinces my hon. friend might have other things to ask about rather than something that is this old.

Mr. Russell MacLellan (Cape Breton—The Sydneys): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Transport is saying that the best deal the government could get was to sell the

company to three people who did not use any of their own money. They used the money from a mortgage on valuable properties which the government gave them. One of the three could not even get a credit card.

The hon. member is trying to tell us that no one in Canada could come up with a better deal than giving away that company to those three people. The government's treatment of the workers of Route Canada is intolerable.

When is the government going to compensate these workers and their families for the financial hardship which the government caused as a result of its negligence and callous disregard?

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, neither repetition nor shouting at the top of one's lungs gives any strength to allegations that do not have any foundation. My hon. friend knows that.

I will read from the letter again: "In the process, we negotiated special arrangements to help ease the impact on employees not required to operate the new company profitably. We have met every one of our commitments to employees, pensioners, customers and communities, including the payment of $23 million for separation and related costs of former CN Route employees".

I submit that no matter how many times my hon. friend repeats the allegations and no matter how loud he does it, he knows that CN did the best it could for the employees and for the people of Canada.

* * *

TRADE

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday afternoon of this past week the Minister for International Trade said that no decision had been taken on further involvement in the U.S.—Mexico free trade talks. However, by Tuesday evening we discovered that the minister met with Mexico's trade minister.

The President of Mexico says that this was because he was seeking a free trade deal with Canada too. I have to ask the government why it was pretending that it had not decided on closer involvement with these talks when the Prime Minister discussed them with President Salinas earlier this year, when President Bush phoned the Prime Minister this week, and now when the trade minister of Mexico came to this country.

Why do we have this incredible game of hide-and-go-seek that is trying to cover this up for the Canadian people?

• (1430)

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I am absolutely certain it is not the intention of the hon. member, but there is no doubt that statements like his mislead the people of Canada. I know that that is not his intention, but there is no doubt at all that statements like this would mislead people to think that Canada is discussing with the United States or with Mexico the entry by Canada into a free trade agreement with those two countries. We are not.

The statements that were made by the Minister for International Trade, by myself, and by the Prime Minister, have been consistent on this question. I repeat them again to the hon. member and I call upon him to exercise his judgement as a member of Parliament not to try to create false fears in the country.

There has been a decision taken by the presidents of two other countries, Mexico and the United States, to determine whether it is in their interest to proceed with negotiation of a trade agreement. If they decide to do that, there may well be some implication on the interests of Canada. We, naturally, are keeping in touch with the Mexicans, we are keeping in touch with the Americans to see what it is they are discussing, whether it might have some implication for Canada, and if it does, we will then take decisions as to what Canada should do.

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Mr. Speaker, I simply note the facts as they have come out. If the facts suggest that the government is wrong, that is not my fault; that is the government's fault.

On Tuesday, yet another manufacturer, Fruehauf, said it was shutting its Brantford plant, cutting 334 jobs. As the company said, "Very simply, the playing field is not level".

Does the government not realize that Mexico's low wages, poor social benefits, slack environmental laws would tilt that playing field even more firmly against

Canada's interest? Will this government today commit itself against any free trade deal with Mexico?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, there are two things I want to say. The first is that we are not discussing a free trade arrangement with Mexico or a tripartite free trade arrangement in North America. We are not doing that. We are trying to gather information about discussions that might be going on and we will then come to a judgement.

As I have said in the House on several occasions, there will be an opportunity to discuss that in standing committee. There will be consultations with the provinces, with industry, and with labour unions, if the member thinks that would be productive, about any decisions that we might take.

The other point, Sir, that is very important to make is that the New Democratic Party prides itself on being a party that takes a broad world view of events. It encourages us to be active in developing the Third World. Yet the hon. member now is pandering to anti-Mexico feelings here in the House of Commons. I think that is shameful.

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Deputy Prime Minister regarding the free trade agreement. He will remember that during the discussions there was much concern about the intention of selling massive amounts of Canadian water to the United States.

Just a few shorts months ago, the Minister for International Trade said in Montreal that all the free trade agreement provides, for the record, is the elimination of tariffs on the export of bottled water, and he went on for quite some time to talk about Perrier and sparkling water, and so on.

The Deputy Prime Minister will know from reading the press today that three Canadian firms are offering to sell massive amounts of Canadian water to Santa Barbara, California.

Is the Deputy Prime Minister concerned, in the absence of a national water policy for which we have been waiting for many months, that this will not set a precedent? Does the Government of Canada support the selling of massive amounts of Canadian water to the United States?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I am a little surprised at the hon. member's currency because it is not that this story was in the papers today. The story was in the papers three or four days ago. He is remarkably late, given his usual source of the newspapers as his basis for comment in the House.

But on the substance of the matter, the hon. member knows that any proposal to export water must be consistent with the clear federal water policy that was established in 1987. That policy clearly states the government's opposition to large scale water exports by interbasin transfer.

* * *

[*Translation*]

FINANCE

Mr. Douglas Young (Gloucester): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Finance.

The bank rate in Canada went up again today. Last week, the Minister of Finance told Canadians that if the Meech Lake impasse was not resolved, interest rates would remain very high. This week, the Governor of the Bank of Canada tells us that even if Meech Lake is ratified, there will be no drop in interest rates.

I would like to ask the Minister of Finance this: Can we take the minister at his word, since he testified before the Standing Committee on Finance that if Meech Lake is passed, Canadians will finally see interest rates go down in this country?

Hon. Gilles Loiselle (Minister of State (Finance)): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for Gloucester for his question. This is a very important issue. Our monetary policy is aimed at creating the best possible environment for allowing interest rates to go down and stay down.

Obviously, in a market where capital can move freely, any element of instability makes investors stop and think, although we should not exaggerate the importance of certain factors either. However, at the present time, the main reason why interest rates remain high is because inflationary pressures continue to exist.

I can inform the hon. member for Gloucester, however, that we have some indication that inflation is starting to slow down. The pressure is starting to ease, and I am confident—indeed I hope for the sake of all Canadians—that we will soon be able to announce that our policy has

been successful and will see interest rates go down on a more permanent basis.

[*English*]

Mr. Douglas Young (Gloucester): Mr. Speaker, since the Minister of State for Finance wants to make some announcements, perhaps the minister would be kind enough to explain to the House, in light of questions put now by the Chamber of Commerce, by the Trust Companies Association of Canada, by the Canadian Bankers Association, by the insurance industry, if the long-awaited financial institution reform legislation will be brought before this House in the very near future? Can he give us a date on that today?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Gilles Loiselle (Minister of State (Finance)): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is to be commended for his interest in a sector that is indeed very important.

As a member of the Standing Committee on Finance, he is of course aware that my department, the Department of Finance, has tabled a rather impressive number of budget bills, so that we have taken up a considerable amount of the time of the House.

These bills involve changes that are extremely important and, in some cases, will update legislation that has been left untouched for 70 years. We are determined to table these bills as soon as possible, as soon as we can get them on the agenda of the House.

* * *

[*English*]

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Eugène Bellemare (Carleton—Gloucester): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs in regard to the appointment of Mr. Nickolas Murray, the present head of the Consumers Association of Canada, as chairman of the new GST monitoring agency.

Members and former presidents of the Consumers Association have denounced this appointment. How can Mr. Murray serve two masters? On the one hand, he serves as head of an independent consumer advocacy group, and on the other hand, he will preside over the GST information office, a powerless gimmick which will make him a lap-dog rather than a watch-dog.

What is the government trying to do, pacify the public, muzzle the Consumers Association, or both?

Hon. Otto Jelinek (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, that question is as nonsensical today as it was yesterday. The hon. member knows that the new consumer information office is an independent body, arm's length to the minister and to the government.

The hon. member should know, and this is what I do not understand, that Mr. Murray has served and continues to serve the interests of all consumers, as the head of the Consumers Association of Canada. He will now continue to serve the consumers of Canada as the head of the new consumer information office.

I cannot, for the life of me, see any indication of a conflict of interest when a highly qualified individual, in the person of Nickolas Murray, who has the best interest of the consumers at heart, is asked to head an agency of this nature for the benefit of all consumers in Canada.

• (1440)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Eugène Bellemare (Carleton—Gloucester): Mr. Speaker, the minister's reply is typical of the minister and his colleagues. My second question is directed to the same minister. Does he not believe that the only decent way out is to demand taht Mr. Murray resign, either from the consumers' association or from his position as head of the GST consumer information office, which in any case is just a public relations office for the governement?

[*English*]

Hon. Otto Jelinek (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, if there was some potential benefit to Mr. Murray, or if there was some sort of a conflict of interest against the benefits of consumers in this country, then of course the appointment would not have taken place.

The fact is that the interests that Mr. Murray has in his heart, his soul, and in his mind are for the benefit of all consumers, whether in his capacity as head of the

Consumers Association of Canada, or in his new capacity as the head of the consumer information office.

I do not understand where the hon. member is coming from when he should be rejoicing, as the consumers are, that the government had the will, the right and the decency to appoint somebody with such an interest in consumers as Mr. Nickolas Murray.

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BRITISH COLUMBIA FLOODING—EMERGENCY RELIEF

Mr. Lyle Dean MacWilliam (Okanagan—Shuswap): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the minister responsible for Emergency Preparedness.

The interior of British Columbia, including areas from Prince George to Oliver, has received extensive flood damage as a result of sustained heavy rains. Nine people are now confirmed or believed dead from flood waters and mud slides. Helicopter evacuation of stranded residents has been initiated and flash flood alerts have been issued.

The Okanagan Lake system is now 20 centimetres above full pool and is expected to rise another 16 to possibly 30 centimetres, depending on the weather.

My question to the minister is whether the minister has responded to a B.C. government request for emergency relief that was issued today under the federal government's Disaster Assistance Program?

Second, will the minister agree to provide immediate assistance on this very urgent matter?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jean-Guy Hudon (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, first of all, I think the House sympathizes with the people of British Columbia who are experiencing a disastrous situation at the present time. The minister responsible for disaster assistance is the Minister of National Defence. He has received a request for financial assistance from British Columbia, and I can confirm today that he will provide the financial assistance requested—in line with a policy that was developed a few years ago—in order to help British Columbia cope with these disastrous conditions.

[*English*]

Mr. Lyle Dean MacWilliam (Okanagan—Shuswap): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the answer to the question.

I would like to add that the mountain snow packs in the interior of British Columbia are presently exceeding normal levels. In fact, we are now returning to the possibility of warm seasonal weather which has set the stage for even further wide-spread damage.

Can the minister assure the residents of British Columbia that the full resources of the federal Government of Canada, including the possible use of National Defence personnel, will be made available should the melting snow packs or continued heavy rains create an even greater potential for damage?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jean-Guy Hudon (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, the situation is being monitored very carefully through our National Defence information centre. I think that considering our present policy, the minister is always prepared to respond to any request to help people in need. Our response will depend on the findings of our information centre and, what is requested by the Government of British Columbia which will determine with residents the amount of assistance needed.

* * *

[*English*]

FISHERIES

Hon. William Rompkey (Labrador): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Acting Minister of Fisheries. The minister will know that the commercial salmon quota on the southern coast of Labrador has been reduced by 43 per cent this year. This comes at a time when there is a crisis in the groundfish industry and an ice blockade on the coast of Labrador.

My question is very simple. Why is it that the minister has reduced the salmon quota to Labrador fishermen, many of whom are members of the Labrador Métis Association, at this critical time? Will he now rescind this Draconian measure by his department and give back to Labrador fishermen their only means of earning a livelihood?

Mr. Ross Reid (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, the simple answer to the question is that in the interest of conservation, the Minister of Fisheries, in consultation with user groups and the provincial government, each year puts in a management plan for a variety of fisheries. This year a quota was put in place for area 2, that my hon. friend talks about. I remind him that last year the allowance was 300 and the catch was 225. The quota for this year, respecting the need for conservation based both on catch results and scientific information, is 200. The difference between the catch and the quota is a little over 10 per cent.

Nobody would want to deny any fishermen fish if it were not in the long-term interest of those fishermen and particularly the people of Labrador.

Hon. William Rompkey (Labrador): Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary secretary will know that the user groups specifically asked for Labrador to be excluded from the conservation program. Indeed the government has made an allocation available to northern Labrador and not southern Labrador. The user groups are all for having an allocation for Labrador.

I want to ask the parliamentary secretary a supplementary question. If the government is not prepared to rescind this Draconian measure, will he now say that the government is prepared to make available to those fishermen an income support program during the ice blockade, as there is adequate precedent for by past governments? Is he prepared to say that the government is prepared to move on that question and at least allow the fishermen of Labrador some income support?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Marcel Danis (Minister of State (Youth), Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, I would like to say to the hon. member who mentioned the ice blockade in Labrador that this is not a unique occurrence. I may remind him that in 1988, fishermen on the Labrador coast were unable to start fishing until the end of June. So this is not exactly unique, but we are monitoring the situation.

[*English*]

MEAT EXPORTS

Hon. Ralph Ferguson (Lambton—Middlesex): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Agriculture.

According to industry sources, U.S. border inspection stations recently rejected 76 per cent of the meat from the province of Alberta slated that weekend for entering the United States, in spite of Canadian government quality approval.

The pork industry in Alberta claims that inspection harassment has increased significantly since the minister announced a pilot program with the U.S. on February 26 which he promised would eliminate this harassment.

When the minister met with the U.S. agriculture secretary on Monday, was he able to force the U.S. to back down on this import harassment which clearly contravenes both the free trade agreement and his own agreement with the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, what is important is to remove the impediments and the harassment that has been going on. As a matter of fact, as a result of the arrangement that was made between the Secretary of Agriculture and the Government of Canada, that process is taking place.

Obviously, there is a requirement for a notification process to change the regulations required and that is occurring now. I was given the assurance that the U.S. administration is firm in removing those impediments to trade. My understanding is that the formal notice will be coming forth very shortly, after which time the formalized regulations will be able to come into place.

Hon. Ralph Ferguson (Lambton—Middlesex): Mr. Speaker, on February 10, the minister informed a Toronto audience that he warned the U.S. Ambassador that, should the United States not stop harassing meat imports into the United States, Canada would be forced to take corresponding action.

In view of the fact that the U.S. has failed to comply with its earlier assurances, what is the minister going to do to retaliate?

• (1450)

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I find that question rather strange when the Secretary of Agriculture has agreed to rectify the process, but the problem is that—

An hon. member: It has gotten worse.

Mr. Mazankowski: It has not gotten worse. The Leader of the Opposition does not understand that.

What is taking place is that the regulatory process is being put in place. There has to be formal notice publicized in what is their equivalent of *The Canada Gazette*. That is being done. When that process is completed, we will be able to remove those impediments and certainly that will facilitate trade both ways. I am sure that is what the hon. member wants.

* * *

THE MIDDLE EAST

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Right Hon. Secretary of State for External Affairs and it concerns recent developments in the Middle East: the formation of a new hard-line government in Israel; Tuesday's tear gas attack by Israeli troops on a Swedish maternity clinic; and yesterday's statement by the new government in Israel that it would not negotiate with the PLO, thus making any real peace prospects almost impossible.

I wonder if the Secretary of State for External Affairs shares the view that what we have in the situation in the Middle East is a rapidly deteriorating situation, in a region of the world where nuclear and chemical warfare confrontations are not out of the question.

In that light, what action does the Government of Canada intend to take, either through its seat on the Security Council at the United Nations, or in other ways, to send the appropriate messages to Israel—and, for that matter, the United States—that there has to be movement instead of intransigence on the part of the Israeli government?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his question, and I am sure all members of the House share his concern not simply about developments in the Middle East, but the evidence that there is no apparent break in the cycle of violence and all the implications that holds for the difficulty of moderates maintaining their position in that region.

There is a new government now formed in Israel. I will be in touch with their foreign minister directly. There had been a plan for a meeting between myself and his predecessor that was to have occurred this month. I hope that there can be a direct meeting between the new minister and myself as soon as possible.

With regard to the United States, I signed a letter yesterday to the U.S. Secretary of State urging him to persevere in discussions, including the maintenance of consultations between the Government of the United States and the PLO.

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona): Mr. Speaker, one of the more immediate concerns that certainly the Palestinian community has is that ways be found to protect the Palestinians from the increasing level of violence being visited upon them by Israeli troops.

Has the minister considered, as I mentioned in my first question, using our position on the Security Council to influence the development of a UN peacekeeping force that would finally be acceptable to Israel to operate in the occupied territories to protect Palestinians? At the same time, would the Canadian government not consider enhancing its relations with the Palestine Liberation Organization as a way of indicating to the Israeli government that we feel these are the people who will finally have to be dealt with, whether the Israelis like it or not?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, there are two or three questions there. The hon. member was careful in suggesting that any action by the United Nations would have to be something that was acceptable to Israel. We would certainly be prepared, as we have in the past, to try to apply our influence to achieve that kind of result.

My understanding is that there has been, in fact, a willingness on the part of Israel to accept the visit of representatives of the Secretary General. We think that is an important step forward.

With regard to the question of the PLO and Canada's relations, the hon. member will know that the government has acted to increase the level of contact between Canada and the leadership of the PLO. We are trying to use that contact to encourage continued moderation by leadership of the PLO.

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TRADE

Mr. Greg Thompson (Carleton—Charlotte): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister for International Trade, but in his absence, I will put it to the Minister of External Affairs.

In my riding, the U.S. government has shut down the Port of Bridgewater, a port that we export a great deal through and that is creating a great deal of hardship on exporters in New Brunswick. It appears to be in violation of Annex 406-D of the free trade agreement.

What measures has the government taken and will it take to ensure the long-term viability of our exporters in New Brunswick, considering the hardship that the U.S. government has unilaterally placed on our exporters in the province? Does the minister have an answer and a suggestion for us?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member, not only for that question, but also for raising the issue a while ago with my colleague, the Minister for International Trade.

We are concerned about the pattern that appears to be developing. We have been in touch with U.S. Customs. It is our understanding that any action that might be taken would not be taken before very early in July. We are seeking formal meetings to discuss details of this practice. We are also seeking help from businesses and associations involved as to details that may help us make effective representations to the United States that would protect Canadian interests.

[*Translation*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mrs. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister.

Today in Montreal, the Green Coalition is boycotting government hearings on the so-called Green Plan. The coalition says that with time and money on their side, polluters and pals of the government control every discussion, and the government is trying to cover up its failure to act on environmental issues with high sounding words behind closed doors.

Could the Deputy Prime Minister tell the House whether the part-time Acting Minister of the Environment is prepared to open these hearings to the general public and let Canadians know what is going on?

[*English*]

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, the Acting Minister of the Environment is in Montreal today participating in the consultations. The hon. member should appreciate that fact and should welcome it.

These consultations allow for a very broad public participation in the whole development of environmental legislation and policy in Canada. The degree of participation that has taken place across the country, with literally thousands of Canadians showing an interest to play a role in protecting their environment, is very heartening and something which encourages the Minister of the Environment. He certainly will be reporting to Canadians with regard to this.

Mrs. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is also addressed to the Deputy Prime Minister, rather than to the acting acting part-time Minister of the Environment.

Environmentalists told the government a year ago what was needed in the green print for Canada. The government has had its own Green Plan for months but it has been hiding it from Canadians. No wonder the coalition refuses to be part of thwarting the will of Canadians for action on the environment.

Will the Deputy Prime Minister tell us now what deals and trade-offs are being made behind closed doors?

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, what we are seeing taking place is a process of consultation with Canadians. Between the time the Minister of Finance announced that consultations would take place and the present, we have had over 5,400 Canadians involved in consultations with the government with regard to the environment.

I take it from the hon. member that the Liberal Party of Canada opposes this sort of consultation with the people of Canada. For the government's part, it believes that Canadians have a right to be involved in determining policies relating to the very survival of this planet.

* * *

IMMIGRATION

Mr. Sergio Marchi (York West): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the two ministers of immigration, I direct my question to the Deputy Prime Minister.

Recent reports indicate that the government is very hesitant about initiating deportation hearings against some business immigrants who have not honoured their end of the economic commitment which was the basis for their admission into Canada. I would ask the Deputy Prime Minister how the government can refuse to investigate such individuals when thousands of refugee family class or independent class applicants are scrutinized religiously and refused for the smallest of flaws? Why, in other words, the double standard, one for the rich and one for the not so rich.

• (1500)

[*Translation*]

Hon. Marcel Danis (Minister of State (Youth), Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Employment and Immigration I will take notice of the hon. member's question, to which a reply will be forthcoming.

[*English*]

Mr. Sergio Marchi (York West): Mr. Speaker, I thank the sports minister for answering on behalf of the immigration dossier.

I return again to the Deputy Prime Minister. Two years ago in the House in response to my question, the Minister of Immigration said, and I quote: "We apply the standards of the act to everyone and we will be especially enhancing the monitoring of the business immigrant program".

Thirty-two thousand business immigrants later, could the Deputy Prime Minister tell me if the government knows where these business immigrants are in Canada? Have they lived up to their economic commitment, and, precisely how many jobs have they created for our Canadian economy?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Marcel Danis (Minister of State (Youth), Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for his question. I can assure him that the Minister of Employment and Immigration will give him—

[*English*]

—and I am sure the member will be happy with her answer.

* * *

GUN CONTROL

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice.

The minister knows that hundreds of thousands of Canadians have signed petitions calling for more effective gun control in Canada, particularly with respect to military and paramilitary combat weapons, and that the Federation of Canadian Municipalities this month unanimously urged a ban on these weapons in civilian hands.

In view of the fact that the minister promised on May 10 of this year before the justice committee to table gun control legislation before the summer adjournment, why is she now backing off on this promise? Why is she now caving in to the vocal minority in this country who do not believe in any effective gun control legislation at all?

Hon. Kim Campbell (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, as I advised the hon. member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce yesterday, I am not backing off from the commitment and I am not giving in to any vocal minority. I certainly hope to be able to honour my commitment in this House.

* * *

PRIVILEGE

STANDING COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER AND CORPORATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Mr. John R. Rodriguez (Nickel Belt): Mr. Speaker, I rise today on a point of privilege for which I have given you proper notice at the first possible moment.

As you are well aware, my point of privilege deals with the actions of the chair of the Standing Committee on Consumer and Corporate Affairs, the hon. member for Halton—Peel.

I would like to inform the House that the basis of my question arises from a letter that the chair of the Standing Committee wrote to Mr. Terrence Larock, the Chief of Committee Reporting Services.

The letter states that the chair has informed the console operators before each committee that the microphones of only those members who are recognized are to be turned on.

In addition, the letter states and I quote: "In the case where the words of a member, not recognized by the chair, are picked up by another microphone, these words are not to be included in the evidence and there should not be any editorial note explaining that the member was not recognized or that the microphone was ordered shut".

It should also be pointed out that the chair states quite clearly that these are his instructions and not those of the committee.

I am aware that the Speaker does not have the power to intervene in the affairs of committees, nor is it proper for the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections to interfere with another committee. However, I would submit, Mr. Speaker, that my point of privilege arises not from any particular proceeding within the committee but rather arises from a decision taken by the member for Halton—Peel.

I would direct you, Mr. Speaker, to a decision taken by Speaker Lamoureux on December 10, 1968. The member for St. John's East at the time rose on a question of privilege charging that the second report of the Standing Committee on Transport and Communications omitted a resolution that had been approved by the committee. The speaker ruled that the omission did constitute a prima facie case of privilege. Speaker Lamoureux felt there may have been difficulty in looking into the affairs of a committee. But he concluded, "But that question is not what we are seized with at this time."

Mr. Speaker, I would put to you that today we are not seized with the question of what went on with the affairs of the standing committee but with the fact that the chair of the committee has interfered with the privileges of the members of the committee.

My question of privilege arises from the fact that the speaker or chair of the committee does not have any editorial licence on what may or may not have been said in committee or in the House.

Mr. Speaker, if I can direct you to a ruling by Speaker Jerome on July 19, 1977 with respect to a complaint of something said by a member who did not have the floor and which was recorded in *Hansard*. Speaker Jerome said at that time:

> We do not permit hon. members to rise in their places the following day to say that the impression created by their words—is really not the impression they intended to create. We do not enjoy that right. The reporters must attempt to catch what they hear and report it in the way they see fit, and if an hon. member says that that somehow creates a mistaken impression, he is always given the courtesy, as the minister was, of being allowed to make an amplified explanation for the record. However, to attempt now to go back and rearrange the language as it was recorded is simply out of the question, whether it be attempted by way of order, a question of privilege, or anything else.

May I also direct you to a ruling by Speaker Francis on February 2, 1984 with respect to an exchange between the Leader of the Opposition and the Minister of National Health ands Welfare. Speaker Francis concluded that:

> The chair certainly does not want to rule on what Hon. Members mean when they use certain words or phrases in the course of debate. All Hon. Members will agree with me that the Chair has no editing function.

Mr. Speaker, I would argue that the chair of a standing committee does not have the power to decide what may or may not be included in the official record of the committee's proceedings. As in the case of the House, the committees' reporters must try to pick up and record

whatever they can and that no one has the power to change what is on the record.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, if I were to put it in its basest terms, if for example the member for Halton—Peel had the floor and in the course of his debate I shouted: "The hon. member is a liar." I would never do that, but let us say I did. Mr. Speaker, the member cannot ask me to stand up and take it back because, in fact, it is not a part of the record. It is not recorded. I cannot take back what is not part of the record.

I am very concerned, Mr. Speaker, about actions of chairmen of committees. In this particular instance and in a previous instance with the chairman of the finance committee it seems to me that the chairmen of standing committees are going beyond what are even the powers of the Speakers of this House.

I cannot imagine that you, Mr. Speaker, would instruct the recording officers of this Chamber not to record those comments that come from members of this House when others have the floor.

Apart from the fact that *Hansard* will be so sanitized, it will be unexciting. Imagine *Hansard* bereft of "fuddle-duddle", or any of the more colourful asides that are included as part of the debates of the House.

Mr. Speaker, I think that the attempt by the member for Halton—Peel to direct the committees' reporters to censor the members of the committees constitutes a serious *prima facie* breach of privilege and I believe it should be referred to the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections.

Mr. Garth Turner (Halton—Peel): Mr. Speaker, I have heard my friend's words. I understand his arguments, and I must rise to say that I think it is important that you, Sir, understand how this particular situation arose.

The member for Nickel Belt, a member of the Standing Committee on Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Government Operations is prone to some outbursts in committee. From to time the hon. member will make comments while another member has the floor.

The hon. member will sometimes question a witness during the time allotted to another member of the committee. Sometimes, in error, the console operator has opened the microphone of a member of the committee who does not have the floor and has not been recognized. Console operators, in general, do not do this but, from time to time, it does occur. We believe, in the committee, that the member who has the floor should be accorded the courtesy of retaining the floor and being the sole speaker.

• (1510)

It is similar to you maintaining order in this House. You have to do it through a certain set of rules. You recognize a member to have the floor and, while that member has the floor, you do not allow other members to have the floor at the same time. This is the same rule we apply in committee. As in the House, we do that by means of electronic control, that is, recording the member who has the floor and not opening the microphones for members who do not have the floor.

That is simply what this letter sought to clarify. The hon. member says that his privileges, as a member, have been infringed upon. I submit that he does not have the privilege of disrupting committee meetings, he does not have the privilege to question witnesses when he does not have the floor. He does not have the privilege to demand that his words be put on the record, when he has not been recognized. All members are recognized in turn and in order and he does not have that privilege. Therefore, I maintain, that because that privilege is not his, it has not been abrogated.

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, I want to make a few brief comments concerning the letter. I received a copy of it late this morning. The words that I find to be of particular interest to the Chair are the following: "It is to be considered as speaking off the record and the words are not to be recorded in the evidence".

As to whether or not someone's microphone should be turned on or off, I do have some sympathy perhaps with the proposition that those who are not recognized do not usually have a microphone available to them in order to get the electronic registering. That is, of course, a precedent established in this House.

However, I do not believe that Mr. Speaker has ever ruled that something that was said and duly recorded by the interjectionists or those other people who are charged here on the floor of the House to register those interjections, has ever not been recorded in the evidence, if it were deemed to be a part of what was stated in the House. From time to time, members will interject across the floor, and the interjection is not germane to

the debate. In other words, they are not necessarily interjections pertinent to the remarks of the member who is speaking. In those instances, I believe that the staff does not always record them. Their judgment is utilized in order to record the interjections, when they are germane to the debate.

It has been stated earlier by my colleague, the hon. member for Nickel Belt, that the chair has no authority to editorialize or otherwise remove words that are said. Similarly, of course, the chair does not have any authority to make a decision that words, sentences or complete speeches of a member whose mike is not turned on cannot be recorded. That has to be decided again by the persons who are operating the console, recording the interjections, and so on, depending on where we are. I just want to draw your attention to Beauchesne's, Fifth Edition, citation 41, which reads:

> The control of the House over its publications is absolute. For a number of years after Confederation the House made a formal claim each session "that the *Votes and Proceedings* of this House be printed, being first perused by Mr. Speaker—

The important point here, Mr. Speaker, is that if control over the publications of the House rests with the House itself, surely control over committee publications rests with the committee itself and not with the chairman of the committee.

Citation 43 of Beauchesne, in reference to the *Debates* of the House, reads:

> Alterations in the *Debates* are traditionally limited to minor corrections of syntax and will often be made by the Member involved before printing.

That, of course, is generally what is done at the step which is referred to as the "blues". Citation 155 of Beauchesne's says:

> The debates of the House of Commons are reported verbatim, recording correctly what was said by each Member of the House. Slight verbal alterations are allowed to be made by a Member in order to make his meaning more precise and accurate; however, he may not, by the insertion of words or phrases, effect material changes in the meaning of what he actually said in the House.

That was decided by Mr. Speaker, on April 7, 1933, at page 3855 of *Hansard*.

Mr. Speaker, Citation 155 of Beauchesne's further says:

> (2) Corrections may be made to Hansard. If the correction is of a very important nature the Member shall rise in the House when Motions are called to explain his correction.

The implication is, again, that it is only the member himself or herself who can ask the House to make that correction. In other words, the Chair has no such authority himself or herself in the House. Given that, Citation 569 of Beauchesne's says:

> (1) Committees are regarded as creatures of the House and are governed for the most part in their proceedings by the same rules which prevail in the House—

Mr. Speaker, I then contend that if the Speaker of the House has no authority to make that kind of judgment, therefore, the chairman of the committee similarly has no such authority either.

One final point under Standing Order 108(2). Committees, of course, are masters of their own business and that is generally true. Of course, there is one point that should be remembered and I invite the Speaker to ponder on the following: even though committees do have that authority, the committee itself, in this case, never took such a decision. Therefore, if the committee never took that decision to except itself from the rules of the House, therefore the rules of the House prevail. The rules of the House, as I mentioned earlier, would not be such that it would allow a Speaker to make that kind of determination.

In closing, I do not think that the chairman of the committee had the authority to make that decision. At the very least, the letter should be withdrawn at the earliest opportunity and failing that, I would be inclined to support my colleague for Nickel Belt and his suggestion that the issue be referred to the Standing Committee on Procedure, Privilege and Private Members' Business.

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, very briefly, I would like to make two points. One, it is quite clear that we are not dealing with a question of privilege and that the privileges of the member have not been infringed upon in any way.

What we are dealing with is a concern and a legitimate point of order about the procedure being employed in a committee. The hon. member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell pointed out quite accurately that, just as

Your Honour here in the Chamber has effective control over the console in which mikes are recognized and so on, and is an absolutely essential feature to maintenance of order, so, too, must the chairman and the committee, and it is impossible to do without. Otherwise, without such authority in the Chair, there would be privileges of members abused on a continuous basis.

Clearly, a member who shouts and refuses to recognize or allow the person who is recognized by the Chair to proceed with their interrogation or statement is clearly, by that interjection, interfering with the privileges of that member to pursue with the committee that which he or she is trying to pursue. It is indeed essential for the protection of the privileges of members at committee that the chairman have that kind of authority.

In terms of what is appropriate to the record of a committee and in terms of the *Hansard* equivalent and so on, I think that is a legitimate question of order. I think that is a legitimate question that should be asked. As the hon. member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell said, the committees are masters of their own rules and, indeed, it would be an appropriate item for discussion at that particular committee as to what a committee might decide is appropriate. If a committee decided that heckles, gestures, yells, screams and other distractions are somehow contributing to a more accurate written record of the proceedings of the committee, then so be it. But if they, in their wisdom, decide that those sorts of things do not contribute to a proper reflection of proceedings at committee, then that too should be the decision of the committee.

Finally, I will end where I started. It is quite clear that we are not dealing with a question of privilege, under any definition of privilege that I have been able to find, but rather an argument over procedures used in committee.

• (1520)

Mr. Speaker: I am going to interrupt the interventions because I have listened to this with some concern and have read the letter.

At this point I am going to ask the hon. member for Nickel Belt and others who are concerned about this to take it back to committee. Depending on what happens there, I may hear the matter further.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

WEEKLY STATEMENT

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, this being Thursday, I would like to ask the government House leader if he has any idea what business we would be looking at in the next few days, starting with tomorrow?

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, at this time on the parliamentary calendar it is frequently difficult to know what we will be doing half an hour from now, let alone for the next few days.

We will continue this afternoon with Bill C-58, dealing with young offenders.

It is my expectation that tomorrow we will have business arising out of a decision by the Senate. Apparently they have not taken the decision they were expected to take so we may have to come back on June 21 or June 22 to deal with that. We will discuss that later with members of the opposition.

If that should not come to pass for some reason which I cannot at this time contemplate, we might deal tomorrow with Bill C-72, the act to establish the Canadian Polar Commission and Bill C-68, the Yukon Quartz Mining Act.

On Monday, Mr. Nelson Mandela has been invited to address the House at 11 a.m. It would be my expectation to call for the commencement of debate on the main motion arising out of the constitutional discussions of last week. That will be subject to discussions we will have through the usual channels.

Mr. Gauthier: Mr. Speaker, I will be seeking some further information this afternoon from the House leader. I think we should meet and discuss some of the issues before us. I know the Senate has S-17 dealing with the variable entrance requirements which the House may have to address tomorrow or Monday.

Bill C-28, which the minister alluded to, I am sure the Senate would see fit to report today if some of us asked, and we are asking right now for them to do so. We can get that for the House and settle the issue.

Mr. Iain Angus (Thunder Bay—Atikokan): Mr. Speaker, I have two questions for the government.

The government House leader indicated that we would continue with Bill C-58 this afternoon. In the event that that work is completed, could we have an indication from the government House leader as to whether we will proceed to other items of business or whether we will suspend?

Second, given the uncertainty of next week, do we now have an indication that it is possible the House will not adjourn in time for members of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition to travel to their convention as per a prior agreement?

Mr. Andre: Mr. Speaker, I am sorry, I forgot to mention that after Bill C-58, it would be my intention to call Bill C-39, the offshore laws act, for which there is some urgency.

In terms of sittings next week, the last thing in the world that I would attempt to do is to deny members of the Loyal Opposition to go to that fine city of Calgary. It is the first time in my political experience in the House that I have seen Liberals willingly ready to spend money in my city, and I am not going to stand in the way of that happening.

However, we do have certain parliamentary responsibilities that we will be discussing in our usual manner. If satisfactory accommodations can be met, we can all enjoy whatever we choose to enjoy during that period.

Mr. Gauthier: Mr. Speaker, for clarification, the minister just said that he was going to call Bill C-39, which is an act to apply federal laws and provincial laws to off-shore areas commensurate with acts in consequence thereof. That act is at report stage with an amendment right now.

Did I hear the minister correctly that he intends to call this bill this afternoon after the Young Offenders Act?

Mr. Andre: Mr. Speaker, there appears to be some disagreement over my parliamentary secretary to whom I affectionately refer to as Henry Kissinger, the shuttle diplomat.

As one can understand as we go into the summer expiration season and so on, it would be useful that this act, in terms of enforcing Canadian environmental laws, be in place for proper regulation enforcement of commercial law in those sensitive areas.

Further to discussions we can have in a few moments, I am hopeful that we can get some agreement. That would facilitate us achieving the adjournment time that was alluded to by the hon. member for Thunder Bay—Atikokan.

Mr. Pat Nowlan (Annapolis Valley—Hants): Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I just want to clarify.

I think I heard the House leader correctly. Is there some certainty—to use a word that was used here quite a bit last week—that there is going to be a debate in this House on the companion resolution and/or the constitutional questions that were discussed in this city with such heat, fervour and importance for seven days last week before we get out of here? In this discussion, there will be House leaders.

After all, this was a pretty fundamental thing last week. I find it peculiar strains that the House of Commons is at the moment still mute as far as having a Commons debate on something that is so fundamental to the nation.

Mr. Andre: As I indicated, Mr. Speaker, it is my intention to call the main resolution next Monday.

The question as to when the various steps that were agreed to during the constitutional discussions are completed is subject to further discussion. Clearly, it is our expectation that every resolution that was agreed to last week will be fully debated and and adjudicated on or divided on in this House at the proper time.

There is no attempt to deny normal parliamentary rules of debate and discussion with regard to these issues.

* * *

POINT OF ORDER

COMMENTS DURING QUESTION PERIOD

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order arising out of Question Period, which I had hoped to raise earlier when the minister was still here.

In response to my questions with respect to Canada's involvement in trade talks with Mexico, the Secretary of State for External Affairs suggested that I was pandering to anti-Mexican feeling. As I look at some of the prohibitions that are indicated with respect to debate in

Beauchesne, among other things, it suggests that one is not to impute motives different from those acknowledged to a member.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask if you could rule on whether the suggestion that I was pandering to anti-Mexican feeling—I must say that I take this personally as quite a strong insult, given my background and past involvement with Mexico—and on whether that is not imputing bad motives to another member.

• (1530)

Mr. Speaker: I am sure that the hon. member's intervention will be brought to the attention of the minister. I am not going to make any more comment until I know that the minister has heard the hon. member's intervention.

* * *

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I have the honour to inform the House that a message has been received from the Senate informing this House that the Senate has passed Bill S-17, an act to amend the Unemployment Insurance Act, to which the concurrence of this House is desired.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

YOUNG OFFENDERS ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

The House resumed from Wednesday, May 30, consideration of the motion of Ms. Campbell (Vancouver Centre) that Bill C-58, an act to amend the Young Offenders Act and the Criminal Code, be read the second time and referred to a legislative committee.

Mr. Jim Karpoff (Surrey North): Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on this measure to amend the Young Offenders Act. Prior to dealing with some of the proposals in detail, I want to go back and take a look at some of the history of young offenders legislation in Canada.

When I first started out working in the social service field, my first experiences were working in juvenile court and juvenile detention centres. At that time we were dealing with the Juvenile Delinquency Act.

I went back to university and I wrote my masters thesis on the juvenile court, which at that time was comparable to a star chamber kangaroo court in the way that it dealt with young people. It failed to protect their legal rights. It failed to protect their social rights. It had tremendous powers to disrupt family lives, to sentence youth for petty, inane and nuisance crimes to long periods of incarceration.

The history in Canada of our treatment of juvenile offenders is not one of which we can be proud. The Young Offenders Act was in legal form a vast improvement. My concern is that some of the potential that should have been realized through the Young Offenders Act has not been realized simply because of the behaviour of this government in reneging on its promises to provide services.

Because of this, the resources for programs and services to juveniles that the government has been providing have been lacking. The government is now reverting to an age-old practice which says that rather than provide the resources and services we need we will try to increase the penalties.

Before we agree that this should be done in a mandatory manner, we should take a look at who are the youth in this country who are still subject to the Young Offenders Act.

Recently in the city of Edmonton school principals and teachers who dealt with young offenders documented that 60 per cent to 80 per cent of all kids coming before the juvenile authorities under the Young Offenders Act had severe learning disabilities. These youth were in need of special assistance because of their learning problems.

Many youth come from families that borderline on poverty or are impoverished. Grade 1 teachers could tell us of most of the youth who come before juvenile court that these are children who were going to get into difficulty because of learning disabilities, anti-social behaviour, and family disruption.

Yet we are unwilling to provide the resources to ensure that these children have the opportunity to grow up and be productive and useful members of our society.

We do not provide the remedial resources for learning disabilities in the school. Without that the youth grow up being unable to read and write. In our society being functionally illiterate means being condemned to poverty.

We do not provide counselling resources to help families. We do not provide resources to deal with the anti-social behaviour of children who have been identified as anti-social earlier in school. We do not provide resources to boys and girls clubs, to recreational organizations, or to preventive child welfare programs that are necessary.

In fact this government has taken two actions to reduce the availability of dollars for resources to solve problems that juveniles face. One was taken a year ago when the government began to limit the amount of dollars that it would make available under the Young Offenders Act to assist provinces in providing post-adjudication services. I will come back to that later.

This year the government again limited expenditures in Ontario, Alberta, and B.C. under the Canada Assistance Plan. Those are moneys that are used for preventive services. Those are the moneys that are used to fund family service organizations which provide counselling to families. Those are resources that are used to bring people up from below the poverty line, to try to provide them with an adequate standard of living.

Yet this government said: "We are going to curtail the expenditures. We are not going to invest in prevention. We are not going to invest in remedial measures or rehabilitation. We are simply going to go back and take a punitive approach to corrections, particularly juvenile corrections".

Another major group in this country that comes under the Young Offenders Act is that of aboriginal peoples. It is no coincidence that today a native person is holding up the progress, if it can be called progress, that has been made in resolving the constitutional crisis.

I have a great deal of sympathy for the Manitoba aboriginal person who is refusing to allow the constitutional resolution to go forward because, again, it neglects to address adequately the concerns of native people.

In the juvenile correctional system native people have been treated atrociously. I can remember, when in the early 1980s I took over as a senior administrator in the downtown core of Vancouver, that some 80 per cent of all children under the care of the Superintendent of Child Welfare were native children. If we look at some of the submissions made by the National Association of Friendship Centres about its concerns with the Young Offenders Act, we see that it points out that in Manitoba 47 per cent of young men held on remand are native and 55 per cent of those held in secure custody are native men. It is even more shocking when we look at the treatment of native women—92 per cent of young women held on remand are native. In secure custody the figure is 87.5 per cent.

• (1540)

We have a system that discriminates against those who are socially disadvantaged, who are poor, who have learning disabilities, who are in need of services and not incarceration. They are in need of rehabilitation programs, not punishment.

If we look at the backgrounds of many people appearing before the young offenders court, we find that they are people society has betrayed the most. They are people who have been sexually abused. They are people who have been neglected. They are people who have been left in poverty by this very wealthy society. They are people who have been subject to all sorts of pressures and who have ended up becoming involved in drug abuse.

I hoped that when the government saw fit to amend the Young Offenders Act it would do so by saying: "We are really going to deal with the causes of juvenile delinquency, the causes of youth getting in trouble with the law; we are going to do it in a manner that is going to protect society in the best way we know how, not by incarcerating someone for three or five years because they are going to get out whether it is three years or five years".

We have got to bring in resources that prevent that child from becoming involved in illegal activity or to ensure that they are not going to. We have got to be able to provide them with services that deal with their learning disability and their lack of education and provides them with sufficient training so that they can go out and get a good paying job; not a $4 an hour job but a steady job that earns them a decent standard of living.

I have worked on the streets with juveniles. We are always shocked and amazed that particularly young girls are out prostituting themselves. I have sat down and talked to many of them. Many of them say: "I would like very much to be able to leave the street life. I would like to be able to leave the street life, but what skills do I have? I have a functional grade 2 education. I cannot read and write. I came from a home that was abusive, and I cannot go back there. I have tried to approach the child welfare authorities and they put me in a foster home that was not one bit better than the home I came from. The only way that I can earn any kind of a standard of living is in prostitution".

The problem is always of course that the pimps get involved, the hangers-on, and the girl does not even get the benefit of the money she earns.

We in Canada have to take a look at our growing problems around juveniles. Simply by saying that what we are going to do is make it easier for a judge to raise a youth from youth court to adult court is not going to solve the problem. It is not going to provide the preventive or rehabilitation services that are necessary.

The present legislation allows, where appropriate, for the youth to be raised to adult court. There is no need to make it easier. If it becomes easier, whenever a juvenile has committed a crime that becomes abhorrent in the eye of the public, as sure as anything there will be a push for that youth to be dealt with in adult court.

What we need instead is an increased range of resources within the juvenile court system. We need much better probation services. We need adequate counselling services for those youth who have been deemed to have committed an offence.

Kids who need psychiatric care are often held in secure custody simply because there is not adequate psychiatric care. Everyone thinks that by increasing the sentence the problem is solved. My experience with a fair number of penal institutions has been that for every year you put a person in a penal institution you are buying four or five more years of crime. The history of penal institutions in this country and every other country shows that that is the best way to make sure that you have a seasoned, hardened, life-long criminal.

Mr. Beatty: The question is how you got out.

Mr. Karpoff: You may think that is funny.

The whole system of corrections in Canada is designed to make hardened criminals. We start with the young offenders. It may be that the problems are not easy to solve, but I can assure this House that simply by making it easier to place the child before the adult court and incarcerate him for longer periods of time will solve the problem.

One of the things that surprises me most is how the federal government has unilaterally started to say: "We are no longer going to share financially in programs that provide services to people". It has done it by simply saying that it is not going to provide the services for young offenders once the person's case has been adjudicated. It is not going to provide the services under the Canada Assistance Plan. The government is hoping that the provinces will step in and provide these resources.

The provinces are saying that they do not have the ability. So who suffers? We all suffer because what is happening in this country is that services are not provided. When those services are not provided, instead of a troubled child we end up with an adult criminal.

I cannot support this type of approach. We need a rational approach, one that will protect society and the youth.

Mr. Vic Althouse (Mackenzie): Mr. Speaker, I will not take a great deal of time. I only have a few words to add to what my friend from Surrey North has already put on the record.

I think that there is some concern in rural communities, at least, and some misunderstanding, perhaps, of the intent of the Young Offenders Act.

• (1550)

Some of my constituents may greet as a step forward the move in this bill to extend the maximum penalty to five years less a day. They do so from two points of view.

Some simply think that there have to be harsher penalties. Others have some concern that if there is not such a mediating set of time, there will be more public pressure to try young offenders in the age group between 14 and 17 in the adult court for some of the more heinous crimes. This permits judges to have a little less

public pressure put on them, hopefully, to keep it within the youth court.

The government, however, is not resolving anything except a public relations problem with the amendments in this particular bill. It has not addressed the real problem, which is a problem of financing between federal and provincial jurisdictions, of the rehabilitation of young offenders. There is no mention or addressing of that very real problem. There are no amendments or changes in procedure which would permit a real evaluation of what the young offenders court is doing to our young people and why it is that the young offenders court seems to be so very much aimed at hitting young offenders who are native or Indian in ancestry.

A very high proportion of young offenders are of Indian ancestry. My friend from Surrey North has put the statistics on the record, particularly those concerning Manitoba, where 92.8 per cent of the young women held on remand are native—92.8 per cent. Forty-seven per cent of the young men are Indian.

When you get to the open custody unit, the units where they are supposed to be able to receive some assistance, we find that 87.5 per cent of the people in open custody are native girls and 55.5 per cent are native boys. When you get into the closed facilities you find that 100 per cent of the girls are native.

There is no excuse for that. As a population they make up less than 10 per cent of the population of Manitoba. I expect that if you did the same kind of study in Saskatchewan, my home province, you would find very similar results. Again, a population that makes up less than 10 per cent of the population populates the young offenders facilities on a far higher rate than can be explained away as normal.

I was quite disappointed that the government did not propose real amendments to the Young Offenders Act that would permit these kind of changes so that rehabilitation would be possible and so that young native offenders might have a better chance of being represented at their hearings.

It seems to me that the tendency is that more native youth are charged. They have a higher proportion of charges, but they also seem less likely to try to defend themselves in court. It is a system they do not understand. They do not have court workers, nor do they hire counsel to give them advice. They generally are not only native but poor as well. Our legal system discriminates against those two classifications. To be poor, you have a better chance of ending up in the system. If you are native and poor you have an extremely high chance of being in the system, as these statistics point out.

There are a number of background problems that the government is choosing to ignore. It is hoping that this legislation will gloss them over simply by changing some of the more-discussed-in-the-press aspects of the Young Offenders Act and by stretching the three-year maximum that has existed for young offenders between 12 and 17 to five years less a day. It will perhaps make it a little easier to shift young offenders into adult court, a situation which exists now but which this bill seems to make easier.

Having raised concerns about the way the government has attacked this particular problem, I will end my remarks. I regret that the government chose to respond to some public outcries on a couple of very public cases where young offenders did in fact conduct fairly heinous murders and received a three year sentence which is the maximum. I regret that that created a flurry of pressure to have the government introduce these kind of amendments.

I wish it had spent more time to provide amendments which would have had a better long-term effect on the rehabilitation of young offenders who are very special cases in our system. They are not juvenile or adult. The court has a certain amount of discretion to check out the maturity of these individuals. I am not sure that these amendments make that any better.

I regret that the government did not spend more time in introducing more comprehensive reforms, particularly the type of reforms which would have permitted the kind of rehabilitation programs that are desperately needed at the provincial level where the Young Offenders Act applies.

Mr. Joe Comuzzi (Thunder Bay—Nipigon): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to be able to say a few words this afternoon on the bill to change certain clauses of the Young Offenders Act.

The reason I am interested in this particular bill is, before I became a member of Parliament, I was an acting Crown attorney for the district of Thunder Bay. In that

position I had many occasions to attend in court and act for the Crown with respect to young offenders court.

That was coupled with the fact that the community was getting terribly alarmed, as is the case in most communities when young offenders who have committed crimes that went against the feelings of the community were found guilty of the offence—after a long and arduous trial before a court of competent jurisdiction—and then received a penalty that the public and the community felt was not commensurate with the degree and the severity of the crime.

As we say, justice should always not only be done but should always appear to be done. In some instances in the application of the Young Offenders Act it always appeared in the mind of the public that the courts after due process were too lenient in the way they handled them.

I should say in defence of those Crown attorneys and judges who made those decisions that because of the legislation of the day, which this bill would change, their hands were bound by statute. Although they may personally have felt different, they were bound by the statute and had to comply with it. As a result they followed the statute and bore the brunt of the wrath of the community, with the community not knowing that they were bound in essence by statute.

From that perspective I would like to make a few comments on the Young Offenders Act and the changes proposed to it. I would be remiss in my duties as a member of Parliament if I did not bring these feelings forward.

• (1600)

Under the leadership of the then senior judge of the District of Thunder Bay, Judge Roy Mitchell, every three or four months we would perform all the court services in the remote areas of the northern part of the province of Ontario. We would charter an aircraft and fly up with the social worker, the judge, and the court reporter. Winter and summer, we would land at these reserves and conduct court in whatever facilities were available to us at the time, whether it was 40 degrees below zero or 40 above. The people always welcomed us when we visited.

The unfortunate part of these visits is that they were not done with enough consistency. It was no one's fault and just the system itself, but I always felt that in bringing justice to the north, although we were trying to do what was procedurally correct, that we were not really fulfilling the substantive issues of the law that were so important. During these court sessions in the remote sections of the province, which is true grass roots justice, I got the feeling that we were not doing a proper job in the administration of justice, not only in the province I represented but in all the provinces. Did the people to whom we were administering these rules truly understand what was happening?

As an example, we would fly into a native settlement and walk a block or two, or a mile, to the courthouse. There were no vehicles to take us to the courthouses. We would proceed to go through the dockets of the day. We would first go through first Provincial Court Criminal Division and dispose of the docket, having availed those who were accused of crime of duty counsel who were with us that day. Through the great guidance of senior Judge Roy Mitchell, we gave the accused in remote areas every benefit available to them in law.

We would then adjourn the court and reconvene with the docket of Provincial Court Family Division and handle family matters with the same court set-up, but under a different jurisdiction. After we handled all the family matters, we would adjourn and most likely go into young offenders court and dispose of all of the offences that were before the court under the Young Offenders Act.

In one of my other roles in the community, I would be an acting judge of the Civil Division. We would travel to the remote areas of the province and handle all of the civil matters that came before us in the provincial jurisdictions. Although we were doing all this procedurally, I am still to this day not sure we were doing it substantively.

The legislation that is before us today is a step toward alleviating some of the concerns that the community has about the Young Offenders Act. I talked particularly about the presumption in the law that a judge in the Provincial Court Criminal Division could not send a case up to the ordinary court of the land unless there was some valid reason. I am not sure where this presumption arose, but the bench seemed to feel that they could not dispose of that case in that manner. If it was a charge under the Young Offenders Act and the person was under the proper age and so on, it had to be tried in that court.

This act sets the guidelines for a judge to make a determination based on certain criteria. The act goes some distance in setting out those criteria to allow the judge to make a determination as to whether a particular alleged crime can be heard in the young offenders court or, if it is of a serious enough nature, that it can transferred, under the criteria as set out in the statute, and tried in an adult court. On that basis, I think the legislation should be adopted.

Second, if the judge should decide that the alleged offence is one that should remain in the young offenders court, the penalty for that crime should be increased from three to five years. Only time will tell whether that is a satisfactory penalty, consistent with the degree or severity of the crime, that the community will accept.

I thought it was important, with my background, that I address those problems.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

An hon. member: On division.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and referred to a legislative committee.

* * *

CANADIAN LAWS OFFSHORE APPLICATION ACT

MEASURE TO ENACT

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill C-39, an act to apply federal laws and provincial laws to offshore areas and to amend certain acts in consequence thereof, as reported (with amendment) from a legislative committee.

Mr. Angus: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I could obtain the unanimous consent of the House to allow me to put a very few amendments. Normally we would have had ample warning that the bill was coming forward today. We found out only when the business question was asked and we are still scrambling. In fact, I do not even have copies of the motions here to provide to the parliamentary secretary and the Liberal Party. Would there be unanimous consent to allow me to move the motions? I trust the House will make the appropriate decisions with regard to their value.

Mr. Kaplan: Mr. Speaker, I have not seen the motions either, but because of the rushed procedure by which we have reached this bill at this time, we ought to give unanimous consent to allow the motions to be put. However, that is not to be taken as approval of the motions by the opposition. We would like to see them. Unless we give our consent, we are not going to get the opportunity even to read them.

Mr. Nicholson: Mr. Speaker, I have had discussions with the hon. member for Thunder Bay—Atikokan and it is acceptable to the government side that he put his motions.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Am I to understand that the hon. member will now put his motions? Does you have them?

Mr. Angus: Mr. Speaker, I have a single copy. The Pages have taken out the originals to have copies made and we are just waiting for them. I should indicate as well that there is an understanding between the parliamentary secretary and myself—we have not had discussions with the Official Opposition—that we will more than likely wrap up report stage and third reading before five o'clock today. Could we just suspend for a minute or two until we get the copies so that members can have them in front of them, as well as there being copies at the table?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): While we are waiting for the motions, 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 Burin—St. Georges—Fisheries; the hon. member for Trinity—Spadina—Immigration; and the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands—New Horizon Program.

SITTING SUSPENDED

Mr. Nicholson: Mr. Speaker, I suggest that we suspend the House until 4.15 p.m.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is it agreed that the House stand suspended until 4.15 p.m.?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The sitting of the House was suspended at 4.10 p.m.

SITTING RESUMED

The House resumed at 4:24 p.m.

Mr. Iain Angus (Thunder Bay—Atikokan): Mr. Speaker, let me start by thanking my colleagues in the House, the Clerks at the table and yourself for assisting me in moving to put these amendments to the House for consideration.

I move:

Motion No. 1

That Bill C-39 be amended in Clause 2 by adding immediately after line 19 at page 3, the following:

"(3) The Governor in Council shall, in making regulations pursuant to paragraphs 2(c) and (d), take into account:

(a) the need to facilitate the creation of comprehensive and coherent management regimes for environment, wildlife and resource use in offshore areas;

(b) any land, environment, wildlife or resource management regimes provided for in a land claims agreement which may pertain to a particular offshore area, or any adjacent offshore or land area; and

(c) any use and occupancy of offshore areas by aboriginal peoples and any areas of overlapping use by several aboriginal peoples."

To provide a very brief explanation, this amendment and the third one which I will move if the second one passes, requires the federal government to take environmental and aboriginal interests and concerns into account before making regulations under their respective sections.

These are not great laws but they have important symbolic value. There is a principle of sustainability that policy at all levels in all areas must be considered in light of environmental needs.

We had excellent representations from the aboriginal peoples of northern Canada, the Grand Council of the Crees of Quebec and the Makivik Corporation, to name two, who are concerned that this law would inadvertently take away from them something that is of great concern and they ask for this kind of protection in the legislation.

Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): Mr. Speaker, as we indicated earlier in discussion, this bill is being considered on very short, although legal, notice. The member of the Official Opposition, the member for Moncton, who has participated and has taken a great interest in this bill, happens not to be in Ottawa today and I am speaking on his behalf.

This is an amendment that we think should be supported. It is an amendment that emphasizes policy considerations relating to the environment and the doctrine of sustainable development.

On behalf of the opposition I agree with this amendment.

Mr. Rob Nicholson (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I am not going to repeat all the arguments I made at committee concerning this issue, but one of the points I made was that the term "take into account" is very vague. I am not quite sure what it is this motion would ask the Governor in Council to do.

I understand that it is important to recognize the environmental dimension whenever we are talking about our offshore, but I will indicate to the House what I indicated in committee. The Canadian Environmental Protection Act which was passed by this government is far more effective, has more teeth and I think would be more effective to accomplish what the hon. member wants to accomplish.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the said motion?

Some hon. members: On division.

Motion No. 1 (Mr. Angus) negatived.

Mr. Iain Angus (Thunder Bay—Atikokan): Mr. Speaker, I move:

Motion No. 2

That Bill C-39 be amended in Clause 5 by adding immediately after line 44 at page 4, the following:

"(4) For greater certainty, the provisions of this section shall not be interpreted as limiting the application of the Canada Labour Code."

Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): Mr. Speaker, I would like to indicate, on behalf of the Official Opposition, that this is a clarification which we consider to be in the right direction and we are in favour of it.

Mr. Angus: Mr. Speaker, it is customary that the member moving the motion explain briefly what the purpose of the motion is. I think we got a bit ahead of ourselves there.

There is some concern that under the provisions of this act the federal cabinet would be able to make an agreement with a provincial government to have the provincial labour laws apply to an offshore oil rig or any other item covered under this act. We are concerned that that may be done in order to avoid the more onerous provisions of the Canada Labour Code that may in fact be in place at the provincial level.

We want to make certain that the federal code shall apply and that there is no way that the cabinet could transfer jurisdiction to the provinces in order to provide a lesser requirement to employers in these situations.

• (1630)

Mr. Rob Nicholson (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I do not think this amendment is necessary. There is nothing in the bill now that would limit the application of the Canada Labour Code or any other federal legislation for that matter. As a result it is not necessary to have it in the bill.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): In my opinion the nays have it.

An hon. member: On division.

Motion No. 2 (Mr. Angus) negatived.

Mr. Iain Angus (Thunder Bay—Atikokan) moved:

Motion No. 3

That Bill C-39 be amended in Clause 12 by striking out line 16 at page 8 and substituting the following therefor:

"least one hundred and twenty days before the proposed effective"

He said: Mr. Speaker, this amendment is very simple. It doubles the notice and consultation period provided for under section 12 of the bill. Because of our belief in the potential for dramatic changes in the application of laws at the whim of cabinet, it is important to maximize the opportunity for people to find out and comment on regulations made under this act, particularly if the decision is to choose the lesser of onerous applications of either environmental laws or labour laws.

Mr. Rob Nicholson (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I do not share the fears of the hon. member. These regulations are not created, suggested, and implemented in a vacuum. Once they are proposed, we have a 60-day notice period in *The Canada Gazette*, which is the usual period of time. That would give anyone who may have an interest and was not informed up to that period of time adequate time to take into consideration the new regulations.

Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): Mr. Speaker, not many Canadians read *The Canada Gazette*. It is of assistance to have these issues of policy and direction made part of the legislation, particularly legislation of such important symbolic value.

I urge government members to accept this amendment.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: On division.

Motion No. 3 (Mr. Angus) negatived.

Hon. Perrin Beatty (for the Minister of Justice) moved that the bill be concurred in.

Motion agreed to.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): When shall the bill be read a third time? By leave, now?

Some hon. members: Now.

Mr. Beatty (for the Minister of Justice) moved that the bill be read the third time and passed.

Mr. Rob Nicholson (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I will just make a few comments on this matter.

First I would like to thank members from all sides of the House who served on this committee. I would particularly like to point out the contributions of the hon. member for Red Deer.

The hon. member, as you will know, Mr. Speaker, coming from your home province, is not a lawyer but he has consistently taken an interest in bills in the justice area. He has made a very positive contribution because of his belief that we can change federal laws and make a positive contribution to people's lives in this country.

This is an example. I am very thankful to him, as I am to the hon. member for St. Catharines, the hon. member for Montmorency—Orleans, and all other hon. members.

There was some discussion at the committee level as to what effect this might have on aboriginal rights, treaties, and obligations of the federal and provincial governments. For the record, I would like to point out that clause 20 of the bill reads:

> Nothing in this act shall be construed so as to abrogate or derogate from any existing aboriginal or treaty rights of the aboriginal peoples of Canada under section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*.

The responsibilities and rights of our aboriginal peoples are made very clear in the Constitution Act. I want to put that on the record to assure them that there is nothing in this bill which threatens their rights.

At second reading I was very pleased to set out and talk about many of the details of this bill. This is a positive step forward. It is consistent with international law, with the agreements that we as a nation have taken. It will clear up some of the ambiguities that exist in the offshore area of Canada and fill in some of the gaps. As a result, for all individuals who take an interest in and use Canada's offshore area, this piece of legislation will certainly be welcomed.

Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): Mr. Speaker, I am glad to be here for third reading on behalf of my colleagues who participated in the work of the legislative committee, the hon. member for Moncton and the hon. member from a vast part of the Northwest Territories whose constituents probably more directly than any other Canadians are affected by the provisions of this bill.

It appears to be a very technical piece of legislation. It is full of technicalities. The bottom line is clear. It is a gesture made toward the increasingly important part of our country, the part that lies to the north, the part that is offshore, the part that is becoming significant because of scientific and technological possibilities and because of the economic resources which are now close to being available to exploitation for the benefit of the people in the region and for the benefit of all Canada.

I could not help but stop, as I looked quickly through the bill, at clause 4 which provides:

> For greater certainty, it is hereby declared that
>
> (a) the internal waters and territorial sea (as defined in the act) form part of Canada;

It is a clear reminder to the international community that this territory and these waters are Canadian. They have been since the establishment of our country. We are prepared to exercise our responsibility and to assert a legislative regime as is being done in this legislation over that important part of our country.

I know that the bill has been brought forward before as Bill C-109 which because of prorogation never became law. I want to commend the Minister of Justice and the parliamentary secretary to the minister for the way in which the bill has been handled and for the fact that we are in the House today to give third reading to a very important piece of legislation.

Mr. Iain Angus (Thunder Bay—Atikokan): Mr. Speaker, I too want to start my comments by thanking my colleagues who assisted me in working on this bill in the legislative committee.

Because of conflicting committee work and because of conflicting riding responsibilities, I was not able to participate as fully as I had intended and would have liked. I thank my colleagues for supporting me in this regard. Once again I thank the parliamentary secretary, the justice critic for the Liberal Party, and the House for their facilitation in allowing me to move my amendments albeit unsuccessfully.

This is an important bill. There is no question. We will be supporting it on third reading because we believe it is important to do the things that we are doing in this legislation finally. We had hoped to see some additional improvements because as is our job we look for the holes, the gaps, and the questionable bits of wording that while not intended to allow certain things to occur could facilitate them. I hope I am wrong. I hope our fears about using this as a tool to transfer jurisdiction to a province or to undermine federal labour or environmental law do not come about. You can be assured that if it does we will be back in this House saying we told you so

and calling for the kind of amendments I put forward today.

• (1640)

The same thing applies in terms of the aboriginal peoples. At committee those witnesses who came before us had the section of the act pointed out to them that the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice read into the record today. They did not feel that it went far enough. They felt it was still a question of whether or not they would be listened to in the event that there was a situation involving this act and lands to which they do not necessarily hold title, They do not necessarily have a specific land claim to which to point, but they are in the process of putting into legal framework their beliefs of traditional land use patterns, hunting patterns, and fishing patterns, et cetera.

I regret that the government did not choose to strengthen the bill. I do not think that we were trying to do anything that was not the government's intention, but we felt that it needed to be done in a slightly different way in order to provide that full protection for aboriginal peoples, the environment, and labour law.

Having said that, I will relinquish my place and proceed to taking the vote. As I say, we are voting in favour so there probably is no reason to do anything other than that.

Motion agreed to, bill read the third time and passed.

* * *

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I have the honour to inform the House that a message has been received from the Senate informing this House that the Senate has passed Bill C-75, an act for granting Her Majesty certain sums of money for the Public Service of Canada for the financial year ending March 31, 1991.

SITTING SUSPENDED

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, I believe what we will have to do is suspend until five o'clock, Private Members' Hour, because at this point the players in that show are not here. Perhaps we could suspend until five o'clock and reconvene then.

Mr. Iain Angus (Thunder Bay—Atikokan): Mr. Speaker, just to make clear what happens for the rest of the day once Private Members' Business is over, I would assume we would then move to the adjournment debate and upon completion of the adjournment debate the sitting would be suspended as we have done in the past.

Mr. Cooper: Mr. Speaker, that is agreed. In fact for those purposes I guess technically we would call it ten o'clock as soon as possible after the late show is finished.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I shall suspend the sitting until five o'clock.

The sitting of the House was suspended at 4.43 p.m.

[*Translation*]

SITTING RESUMED

The House resumed at 5 p.m.

Madam Deputy Speaker: It being five o'clock, the House will now proceed to consideration of Private Members' Business, as indicated on today's Order Paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS—MOTIONS

[*English*]

CHINESE IMMIGRATION ACT

REIMBURSEMENT OF HEAD TAX

Mr. Derek Lee (Scarborough—Rouge River) moved:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should:

1) reimburse to all claimants who establish their entitlement as of November 21, 1988 the amount of the head tax imposed under the Chinese Immigration Act, 1885 (48-49 Victoria), as amended, together with an indemnity equal to six times the amount of the head tax paid;

2) where a person entitled to reimbursement and the indemnity is deceased, pay these amounts to the heirs and successors of that person who establish the entitlement of the deceased; and

3) acknowledge that the said statute was discriminatory against immigrants of Chinese origin and contrary to the principles now adopted and reflected in our Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

He said: Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to have an opportunity today to rise in the House to address a motion asking this government to redress the wrongs associated with a statute that has been called the Chinese Immigration Act, sometimes called the Chinese Head Tax, and sometimes called the Chinese Exclusion Act.

I am asking the government to redress these wrongs on behalf of all Canadians, not just some of them, on behalf of those who paid the tax as well, and all of those just happen to be of Chinese origin.

Specifically, my motion calls upon the government to reimburse all of the payers of the tax and to acknowledge that the requirement to pay the tax was wrong and that it was discriminatory.

In particular, my motion calls for reimbursement of those individual payers who were alive on election day, November, 1988. That is the day that I was elected to the House of Commons. It was the day that others who spoke publicly or who wrote publicly on that issue were elected to the House. It was an issue that was dealt with and treated during the election campaign.

However, I have to point out that the specifics of reimbursement framed in my resolution are not of chief importance. What is important is that the government consult, that it negotiate and that it respond.

Who are the politicians who spoke to the issue? Who were those in our community who wrote about it, spoke about it and in fact made commitments? Most of the politicians are actually on record. Two of them that I have noted are the Prime Minister, and the former Leader of the Opposition. But there are others, many others, who include individuals and groups from a broad cross-section of Canadian society.

They include the Canadian Council of Churches, Mr. Georges Erasmus of the Assembly of First Nations, the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, the National President of Rail Canada Traffic Controllers, the President of the Canadian Auto Workers, United Steel Workers Local 6, and the President of the Quebec Human Rights Association.

What exactly was the law that levied the tax? The first Chinese came to Canada in about 1858. About 20 years later in 1880 thousands of Chinese came to Canada to build the railroad. We have plenty of pictures, books, documentaries. All of that is on record. These railroad builders were pioneers; they were our pioneers. Their national dream was our national dream; ours was theirs.

At one time their goals were characterized by the phrase the "Golden Mountain". I understand that is what they thought of Canada as being in those years before they got here, before they saw what Canada was really like. That is why they came. They came along with all of the other immigrants to Canada, my forefathers, to build the railroad and to build our country.

In about 1885 our railroad was completed and suddenly we did not need any more Chinese. We just did not need the Chinese labour, but we needed Europeans and Americans. I guess it was decided to levy a tax specifically on Chinese immigrants. Eventually, the amount of that tax reached $500 per person.

No other group or race was similarly taxed. In fact, history shows that we gave bonuses to immigrants from Europe and settlers from other places. The tax imposed on immigration was patently discriminatory and based on race.

In 1923 it appeared that the $500 per head tax just was not good enough. So the government, in its wisdom, decided to exclude all Chinese. In those days, the government did not seem to be able to distinguish between Chinese origin, Chinese language, Chinese race; it simply used the name "Chinese". The Chinese were excluded so much so that between 1923 and 1947 fewer than 50 "Chinese" were given papers for admission to Canada.

What was the impact of this law on the Chinese Canadian community, as it was then? In a nutshell, it was devastating in the end result.

In the initial instance, it took from the pocket of an immigrant an amount that would have been the equivalent of one or two year's wages, and I guess that was before there was income tax. That was a lot of money for an immigrant. It prevented an immigrant from purchasing land, setting up a business, building a home, creating a stake in his new country. Chinese Canadians of that era were basically prevented from settling into the economy because when they got here they had huge debts amounting to one or two year's wages. That is on the assumption that they did not have the $500 when they came.

• (1710)

It also occasioned a significant delay in reuniting a family, where that was possible.

But we know that in many, or even most cases, the family was never reunited. Individuals who came to Canada, virtually all male, if they wanted to visit their spouses over a 10 or 20 year period, had to leave and go back to China where they would stay for a short period and then come back to Canada. Many of those died alone in Canada.

It also prevented marriage of these Chinese immigrants. In those days, intermarriage was frowned upon and there simply were not enough females to permit the Chinese population here to marry in a circumstance that the society existing here would have permitted.

The result then is that hundreds, perhaps thousands of new Canadians were basically forced to spend the rest of their years alone in Canada. They lost contact with family, spouse, children. Those men came and built our country and when they had finished that we left them standing at the side of the road. I say thank God some of them lived long enough to collect the old age pension, but that is really not much of a consolation prize.

Why did we do it? I suppose I do not really know. I can only guess. I was not there. Maybe some of us are afraid to ask. I think we should ask, because that is how we can learn from history. But no matter what the reason, it was wrong, and we know it was wrong.

Some say that we should not waste time and the resources of the present to go back and redress the wrongs of the past. If we really believe that, I ask the House why we are still prosecuting war crimes that took place between 1939 and 1945? Those acts did not even involve Canadians, for the most part, they did not take place on Canadian soil, and please keep in mind that the Chinese Exclusion Act was not repealed until 1947. Why also are we still redressing treaty and non-treaty rights of aboriginal Canadians? There are grievances involving acts that we did and did not do, omission and commission, 100 and 150 years ago in relation to native Canadians. We admit our responsibility for all of that. We are still dealing with it, maybe not quickly enough, but we are dealing with it.

I can accept that we do not have to go back and redress grievances that emanated from the Franco-Prussian War, or from the quasi-genocides that occurred when the Europeans first arrived in the New World 300, 400 years ago. But I do not think that is what we are dealing with here now. I do not accept that a living Canadian who has been wronged does not have the right to seek redress, or that his country does not have an obligation to respond to him or her.

Today, in the House, we have one of those thousands who paid the head tax, Mr. James Ng from Montreal. I heard him speak eloquently about the impact of that tax on his family and him. His father paid the tax, $500, and spent years repaying it. Some years before his father had gone back to China, fathered Mr. Ng, and came back to Canada. Ten years later, Mr. Ng set out, at 10 years of age, and came to Canada alone. He spent two weeks in a rather cold detention centre where his family was forced to pay another fifty bucks to get him released. He calls that "under the table" money.

Yet, Mr. Ng expresses a pride in his country. He feels badly about the misfortunes of the Chinese immigrants of the time, and Lord knows there have been many immigrants from many countries who had terrible times and suffering. But Mr. Ng is proud of Canada. He believes, nonetheless, that Canada must respond to the wrong that that tax represented.

I want to add a note of caution. I do not believe that the government should let this issue drag on. I do not believe it should give time and opportunity to those who live with intolerance and manifest it, to manifest their intolerance again. I believe the government should act quickly to address the grievance and provide a redress. If it is the right thing to do, then we must do it now.

I urge all members in the House to support this motion.

Mrs. Pauline Browes (Parliamentary Secretary to Secretary of State of Canada and Minister of State (Multiculturalism and Citizenship)): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to have an opportunity to participate in this very important debate today. I want to express to the hon. member for Scarborough—Rouge River, whose riding and my own are side by side, that we share many of the sentiments that have been expressed in terms of this motion today.

This motion refers to the head tax levied on immigrants from China at the turn of the century. This is indeed a very serious issue because it touches a number of important social questions that are of growing concern.

The member who introduced the motion and myself live in a community that is blessed with a strong and vibrant Chinese community. The city of Scarborough is quickly becoming a major social, commercial, and cultural centre for Chinese Canadians, and we are proud of it.

Canada has been blessed in many ways by the hard work of Chinese Canadians who literally built much of the country.

The historical treatment of Chinese immigrants is deplorable. That is why the Minister of State for Multiculturalism and Citizenship has met with representatives of the Chinese Canadian community to listen to their concerns. Their proposal for redress is being given careful and thorough consideration. I can assure the member and all members of the House that the minister is very conscious of the issue and that he has a personal commitment to issues that concern injustice and racial intolerance.

In just a few weeks we will join together in a celebration of Canada Day. July 1 is a time for all of us to celebrate our country and our shared national heritage. Canada is an international nation. We have built a strong and prosperous country on the foundation of freedom and independence.

The government is continuing to strengthen that foundation. Our record since 1984 is a testament to that commitment.

The Canadian Multiculturalism Act outlines in legislation a vision of Canada where justice, cultural diversity, equality, and national unity are interwoven into a social fabric. Multiculturalism will continue to thrive because the concept is enshrined in our Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

• (1720)

The employment equity legislation establishes strict objectives to enhance the participation of all communities, in the Public Service and companies that deal with the federal government.

We have dealt effectively with the redress issue for Japanese Canadians. I might add that the party of my colleague opposite who introduced this motion ignored that issue while it was in office. Out of that redress issue, we are in the process of establishing a Race Relations Foundation and the Canadian Heritage Languages Institute. We are creating a new department of multiculturalism and citizenship which I know my friend also supports. We created the first parliamentary Standing Committee on Multiculturalism.

These policies embrace all Canadians, whether of Chinese or any other heritage. Of course, shameful acts of the past, such as the Chinese head tax, were the result of ignorance and fear. Human nature is fearful of what is different. The way to combat ignorance is through education. The government's policies and programs are doing just that.

Through associations of educators, an understanding of multiculturalism and race relations is being integrated into school programs. As well, the government is working to improve the relations between police forces and the communities that they serve. There is cross-cultural awareness training for personnel and efforts to increase recruits from cultural minorities.

Eliminating racial discrimination requires sound research to develop effective responses. We must understand the causes of racism in order to eradicate it. To that end, as hon. members know, the government has tabled Bill C-63, the Race Relations Foundation Act, which will be established in metropolitan Toronto.

The foundation will serve as a major national resource to facilitate throughout Canada the development, the sharing, the application of knowledge, and the expertise that will help to eliminate racial discrimination. I want to report that today in committee we heard witnesses from the Japanese Canadians are this very issue.

As well, our Canadian Multiculturalism Act commits federal institutions to ensuring that government policies and programs respond to the needs of all Canadians. Federal institutions are building bridges to communities and delivering services in a manner that makes them accessible to everyone.

Along the same lines, the federal government is working with the provincial, territorial and municipal governments in a partnership to eliminate the blight of injustice and racial discrimination. Joint initiatives and

cost-sharing activities are addressing racism and promoting institutional change.

It is clear that the government is making every effort to address the human rights issue and to correct wrongs that have been done. We are anxious to have past injustices rectified. We need to recognize that this is a complex issue that happened several decades ago. The matter must be examined very carefully so that a fair and just resolution is arrived at.

The government is doing just that, not only with regard to the head tax levied on the Chinese immigrants, but with respect to the treatment of all groups as well. I am pleased to have had the opportunity to speak to this, Madam Speaker, and I thank you for that.

Mr. Dan Heap (Trinity—Spadina): Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to have an opportunity to comment again on the matter of the Chinese head tax, a question that my party has raised a number of times over the last six years. The question is very lively in the riding of Trinity—Spadina where some of the head taxpayers and many of their descendants lived.

First, I wish to commend the member for Scarborough—Rouge River for his action in placing this motion before us. The motion has a good thrust and his defence of the motion was excellent and well spoken.

My party and I do not agree entirely with some of the details of the motion. We would rather the motion was more in line with the request of the Chinese Canadian National Council. It requested:

> —that the government should acknowledge that the 1885 Act to restrict and regulate Chinese immigration into Canada which imposed a Chinese Head Tax and the 1923 Chinese Immigration Act which excluded Chinese immigration were discriminatory against immigrants of Chinese origin and contrary to the principles now adopted and reflected in our Charter of Rights and Freedoms and that the government meet with Chinese Canadian National Council to negotiate appropriate individual and community compensation.

If I may at the end of my remarks, Madam Speaker, I would offer that motion in amendment in substitution for all the words following the first line where it states "The government should".

The member for Scarborough—Rouge River asked: "Why did we do it?" He says he was not there when it happened. Even I was not there when it happened, although I have whiter hair than he has. We can get some idea why it was done if we look at some of the records. We find that there was open racism reflecting greed of employers and fear and competitive envy of workers.

For example, the following was said in the House of Commons—the House that was here before this one was built—on May 12, 1882, as reported in *Hansard*, Volume 12, page 1477, and I quote:

> In fact, there is such a want of white labour in British Columbia, that if you wish to have the railway finished within any reasonable time, there must be no step against Chinese labour—At present it is simply a question of alternatives—either you must have this labour or you cannot have the railway.

That was said by Sir John A. Macdonald, our first Prime Minister.

In the same speech he explained his view more generally, and I quote from the same page:

> I share very much the feeling of the people of the United States, and the Australian colonies, against a Mongolian or Chinese population in our country as permanent settlers. I believe they would not be a wholesome element for this country. I believe that it is an alien race in every sense, that would not and could not be expected to assimilate with our Arian population—

Obviously, this was written long before Hitler gave the word Arian a very ominous meaning in our lifetime. I continue:

> —and, therefore, if the temporary necessity had been overcome, and the railway constructed across the continent, with the means of sending the European settlers and labourers into British Columbia, then it would be quite right to join to a reasonable extent in preventing the permanent settlement in this country of Mongolian, Chinese or Japanese immigrants.

Then he makes the statement which I have already read:

> At present it is simply a question of alternatives—either you must have this labour or you cannot have the railway.

There are other things that should be said about what happened in those days. One final remark from *Hansard* in 1885, Volume 2, page 1582. Although I do not have the attribution of the Speaker, perhaps he can be generally identified by his words: "The Conservative party stands

for a white Canada, the protection of white labour and the absolute exclusion of Asiatics".

• (1730)

As the previous speaker, the mover of the motion said, the condition of these workers was dreadful. They worked under very harsh conditions. They sometimes had to be suspended by a rope to drill holes in the rock face, and it was very difficult to find a European immigrant to do this job. Workers were given less than the rate of pay of Europeans. The company profited by about $5 million, which was a lot of money then, by using the Chinese workers rather than the British, American, German or French workers, whom they could not get.

I quote from a book called *It is Only Fair! Redress for the Head Tax and Chinese Exclusion Act*.

> Accidents were frequent. Many died of exhaustion from hard work, harsh weather, and extremely poor living conditions. Others perished in rock explosions, were buried in collapsed tunnels, drowned in rivers after falling from unfinished bridges or died from scurvy with little medical attention.
>
> —it is estimated that at least 600 Chinese died during this railroad construction. In 1891, the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association of Victoria arranged for the collection of more than three hundred unidentified corpses from the Fraser and Thompson canyons and these were returned to China for burial.

That was the origin of both the head tax of the 1880s and also the Chinese Immigration Act, sometimes called the Chinese exclusion act of 1923.

Some of the people who have paid that tax are still with us. One of them, Mr. Mak Kue Lep, who was first to ask for reimbursement, came to his member of Parliament, the member for Vancouver East, and asked her to raise the question. That was six years ago. He died last year, so he will not ever collect the money that he paid, which he said—I think and we think—was unjustly required of him for entering Canada. He did not ask for interest. He asked only for the money back.

Times have changed. On August 16, 1984 the Progressive Conservative Party said that it supported the introduction of an all-party parliamentary resolution which would recognize the injustice and discrimination of the head tax and the Chinese immigration exclusion act.

The Leader of the Liberal Party said the same on October 20, as did the Leader of the New Democratic Party on October 31 of that year. This year, when speaking on March 19 in Toronto, the Minister of State (Housing) said that it is long overdue that the Chinese recognize redress for the Chinese head tax:

> "I want to pledge to you tonight—that this government will go forward with a redress policy for all Canadians and that redress for the head tax will be part of the policy."

As the member for Scarborough—Rouge River has told us, we have the endorsement of not dozens, but hundreds of Canadians for this very just action.

The question is, what is this government waiting for? Is the government waiting to do this on the eve of the next election? It is an urgent matter. The President of the Chinese Canadian National Council told me today that his grandfather died last fall. His grandfather was another one who paid the head tax.

The people who paid the head tax are dying off. There may be only 1,000 of them left, and if this government does not act promptly, they will all be dead. That will be a second disgrace, equal almost to the first one, because now we cannot say that we do not know any better. Therefore, I move:

> That the motion be amended by deleting all the words after "should" and substituting therefor the following:
>
> —acknowledge that the 1885 Act to Restrict and Regulate Chinese Immigration into Canada which imposed a Chinese Head Tax and the 1923 Chinese Immigration Act which excluded Chinese immigration were discriminatory against immigrants of Chinese origin and contrary to the principles now adopted and reflected in our Charter of Rights and Freedoms and that the government meet with the Chinese Canadian National Council to negotiate appropriate individual and community compensation.

I have the motion here, Madam Speaker.

Madam Deputy Speaker: As soon as the motion put by the hon. member and seconded by Mr. McCurdy reaches me, I will study it and come back to the House. It will take a minute. We will reserve on the admissibility of the amendment for the time being.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Lise Bourgault (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Health and Welfare): Madam Speaker, I also welcome the opportunity to take part in the debate on the motion of the hon. member for Scarborough—Rouge River.

To illustrate the context of this debate, I would like to provide a short summary of the history of Canadians of Chinese origin, including the discriminatory measures that caused so much suffering. I would like to give my colleagues a better understanding of the head tax and the Chinese Immigration Act, and of the impact they had on the Chinese community.

Madam Speaker, this particular part of our history is not something I am proud to bring to the attention of my colleagues and Canadians. Nevertheless, we must look at the facts, otherwise we would be remiss in our duty to Chinese Canadians, their ancestors and all Canadians.

Chinese immigrants first arrived in Canada from San Francisco in 1858, to take part in the Fraser River gold rush. The first Chinese community was founded in Barkerville, British Columbia. The Canadian Pacific Railway could not have been built without Chinese immigrants, who laboured under appalling conditions.

As soon as they arrived in Canada, the Chinese were subject to measures that had the effect of restricting their rights. For instance, in 1875 they lost the right to vote in British Columbia. Widespread anti-Chinese agitation led to the head tax, adopted by the Government of Canada in 1885.

The initial tax was $50 but anti-Chinese pressure became so great that the tax was raised twice, rising to $500 in 1903, the equivalent of about two years' wages for the average Chinese worker.

Madam Speaker, quite frankly, the purpose of the tax was to stop Chinese immigration. The result was that in 1923, Chinese immigration had ceased, for all practical purposes, except for a few rare exceptions. July 1, 1923, became known as "Humiliation Day".

The impact of these measures on the lives and prosperity of the Chinese-Canadians was disastrous. This was a society bereft of women and children, a society of solitude and social and economic misery as a result of the problems experienced by Chinese workers when they tried to bring their wives and children to this country. According to the Canadian Encyclopaedia, in 1931, out of a total Chinese population of 46,519, only 3,648 were women.

Canadians of Chinese origin paid more than $23 million in head taxes between 1885 and 1923. Perhaps I may give some idea of what this meant. According to Peter S. Li, who studied the history of Chinese-Canadians between 1905 and 1914, in 1911 the government collected $13,800,000 in head taxes, the equivalent of 14 per cent of the defence budget at the time. An impressive amount indeed!

Madam Speaker, today, despite the difficulties in the past, there are nearly 400,000 Chinese Canadians in this country. Through their participation in various trades, their voluntary and community associations, their businesses, their famous Chinese restaurants—Madam Speaker, I have a few in my riding as you do, and we go there every week—their neighbourhoods and their immense culture, Chinese Canadians contribute to the rich mosaic of the Canadian family.

• (1740)

To be a Canadian means to belong to a multicultural family, and we have made this diversity a matter of pride and a matter of sharing. To ensure that racism does not take root as a result of these differences, this diversity is recognized as a fundamental characteristic of our society and a major consideration in the decision-making process of the federal government and its intitutions.

As a government, our position is clear. The very existence of racism and racial discrimination is the antithesis of our laws and our ideals. Furthermore, such attitudes are incompatible with the kind of country Canadians want to build for themselves, and must be rooted out for good.

Madam Speaker, the government is giving special consideration to representations made by groups of Chinese Canadians. The situation was not generally known to Canadians until recent years. Nevertheless, we should not be rushed into hasty decisions that might have unforeseen consequences. We must put the situation of Chinese Canadians into the general context of our cultural groups in Canada, a number of which have suffered the cruel ravages of racism.

Madam Speaker, today Canada has become a model as far as human rights are concerned. Unfortunately, some of our ancestors did not have the same social conscience that is now common among Canadian men and women. Some of our ancestors had exaggerated fears about immigrants, and we recognize the fact that these fears produced some very unhealthy situations for Chinese Canadians.

It is up to today's generation to determine how to recognize the wrongs done to victims of past racism, in a spirit of sympathy and consultation.

Despite all our good will, we cannot rewrite history. However, the government will continue to examine this question, determine the facts and pursue its consultations with Chinese Canadians.

The government will never again allow policies of the kind that made Chinese Canadians suffer be adopted in this country.

That is this government's firm commitment to Canadians, a commitment that forms the basis for our considerations on this very important question.

[*English*]

Madam Deputy Speaker: Before recognizing the next speaker, I would like to rule on the amendment that was presented by the hon. member for Trinity—Spadina.

Unfortunately, I will have to rule it out of order. The hon. member may want to look at citation 437 of Beauchesne's fifth edition. I can understand the good intentions of the proposition, but it does raise a new question. It could be considered a distinct motion after proper notice. It is not acceptable as an amendment to the motion now before the House.

Mr. Mac Harb (Ottawa Centre): Madam Speaker, first I would like to congratulate the hon. member for Scarborough—Rouge River on the leadership role he has taken on this issue in the House.

I raised the issue some time ago, right after the 1988 election with the minister of multiculturalism and citizenship. At that time, he told me that discussions would start taking place with the representatives of the Chinese community. It is approximately two years since he said that, and discussions still have not taken place as they should.

There is communication back and forth between the office of the minister and representatives of the Chinese community, but we have yet to see some sort of action plan put in place.

I am very discouraged by what I heard this afternoon from a member of the Canadian-Chinese community who happens to be one of the people who arrived in Canada in 1923. Among other things he indicated that besides paying $500 to enter Canada, he had to pay $50 in order to get quicker entry, even though after paying the $50 he was held for approximately two weeks eating plain bread with sugar at noon, having two actual meals throughout the day, and sleeping on beds without proper mattresses. It is quite discouraging.

When a reporter asked him about his feeling for Canada, he was almost in tears and was saying: "I love Canada, I love Canada. All I want before I die is to see some sort of recognition of the fact that what had happened in the 1900s and thereafter was wrong. The government should admit that".

I have in my hand copies of articles which are quite encouraging. There is a statement made on behalf of the Prime Minister or by the Prime Minister himself wherein he said that his government was considering extending the principle of compensating victims of government heavy-handedness during World War II—Italian, Ukrainian Canadians, and others—as it compensated Japanese Canadians who were held in internment camps. That is very encouraging. I congratulate government members because they are talking about dealing with the issue.

Around the same time the Minister of State for Housing clearly indicated in Toronto to members of the Chinese community that he too would like to see the federal government move fairly quickly on the issue.

Here we have two members of the government saying that we have to move fairly quickly. I think personally that it is time we acted on it. Members of the Conservative Party, the Liberal Party and the NDP have already called on the government for action. It is time for the government to set up an all-party committee in order to address the issue, not only the issue of the Chinese community but also the issue of the Italian community, the Ukrainian community, and all those who feel that they were subjected to some mishap during World War II, thereafter or before.

It is fairly urgent when it comes to the Chinese Canadian community because many of its people who were hit personally by the head tax are dying. We cannot wait any longer for some kind of action.

Again I congratulate the hon. member.

Mr. David Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast): Madam Speaker, I also congratulate the member for Scarborough—Rouge River on this motion and would like to speak in favour of it.

I realize that time is important and is passing. Perhaps I may do what an author is not supposed to do and quote from my own book on the subject. I would like to quote from *Western Canadians in Confederation*. In part it indicates that Western Canada in 1986 had approximately 170,000 persons of solely Chinese origin and about 22,000 more of partly Chinese descent. Seven in ten single origin Chinese western Canadians live in British Columbia, and fully 100,000 of these reside in the Vancouver area. A little less than half of all Canadians of single Chinese origin live in the four western provinces, Yukon, and Northwest Territories. The book continues:

> Chinese Canadians born outside Canada have come from many countries. The 1981 census shows that in this group 24 per cent were born in Taiwan; 23 per cent in China; 9 per cent in Vietnam; 4 per cent in Malaysia or Singapore; and 34 per cent elsewhere, primarily Hong Kong. Eighty-seven per cent of those born outside Canada entered Canada during the 1965-81 period and in recent years approximately 13,000 have entered Canada, many from Hong Kong, as entrepreneurs. The unemployment rate for both Chinese men and women was at the time of the 1981 census less than that for Canadian men and women as a whole. Considerably more Chinese Canadians (28 per cent) than all Canadians (16 per cent) have some university education.
>
> Western Canadians of Chinese origin are part of the huge Diaspora of more than eight million "overseas Chinese" who have prospered from South Asia to the Caribbean. As late as the sixteenth century, China had the highest standard of living on earth. During the eighteenth century, its population more than doubled, reaching 430 million by 1850. When Europeans forcibly opened China's markets in the 19th century, its cottage cloth industry was all but destroyed by machine-made foreign cloth. A migration of young men became necessary to help feed their closely-knit families who were left at home.
>
> The first of these men from China came to British Columbia in 1858, lured by the Fraser River gold rush, and by 1860 approximately 4,000 of them lived in the lower mainland of the colony. Some mined, others sold vegetables or wood, or operated restaurants and laundries.
>
> The legal equality in the workplace of those who stayed after the gold rush was removed by the B.C. provincial legislature in 1878 when it unanimously resolved that persons of origin in China could no longer be hired on provincial public works—a rule which astonishingly remained in effect until after World War II. The franchise was denied them in 1872.
>
> Nonetheless, as many as 17,000 Chinese came to B.C. between 1881 and 1884 to assume a Herculean part in the completion of the Canadian Pacific rail line between the Fraser Canyon and Vancouver. As the project neared completion, the B.C. provincial government encouraged them to leave the region through such measures as a $10 head tax on all Chinese, banning the removal of dead bodies back to China, denying Chinese the right to buy provincial Crown land, and prohibiting further immigration from China. Prime Minister Macdonald's government in Ottawa played its part by imposing $50 head tax on all Chinese entering Canada after 1886.

• (1750)

That was to its shame. The book continues:

> In 1900, Prime Minister Laurier raised the head tax to $100, and in 1904 to $500. In 1923, the government of Mackenzie King barred all Chinese immigration, and it did not begin again until the legislation was finally repealed in 1947.
>
> The combination of legislated and other discrimination against the Chinese in British Columbia and better opportunities to establish small businesses elsewhere in Canada, by 1921 had caused an estimated 40 per cent of the 40,000 Chinese then resident in Canada to move eastward, some as far as Newfoundland. Virtually every prairie town soon had a Chinese restaurant and laundry.

Sadly, Madam Speaker, the books continues:

> The three prairie legislatures proved not immune to anti-Chinese propaganda seeping over the mountains. The Saskatchewan assembly disenfranchised Chinese as early as 1908, which meant in practice that they could not vote in federal elections either or join professions whose associations required members to be registered voters. The prairie fever—

I could call it a plague:

> —here reached a sufficiently high temperature that the Saskatchewan and Manitoba governments, even before British Columbia's, barred Chinese restaurants from hiring white women out of a preposterous fear that they would be introduced to opium and sold into white slavery.
>
> Between 1924 and 1946, only eight Chinese immigrants entered Canada because of Mackenzie King's Chinese exclusion law of 1923. Many of the Chinese men already resident in Canada thus aged without families in Canada.

A minute ago we heard Mr. Yee's family story, the president of CCNC. There are all kinds of tragic stories of this type. It continues:

> Ironically, events of World War II helped the Canadian Chinese cause because white Canadian sympathy for China grew markedly as a result of the Japanese aggression there. As the historians Jin Tan and Patricia Roy point out, "(During the war,) racial prejudice became unfashionable." The Vancouver Parks Board, for example, repealed its rule that Chinese persons could swim at a public pool only during a specified two-hour period once weekly. The legislature of Saskatchewan restored the franchise in 1944 and in 1945 British Columbia enfranchised everyone who had served in either World War, including the Chinese but not the Japanese. The public on the coast generally welcomed the repeal of Ottawa's Chinese Immigration Act in 1947.

I could go on, but I think I should point out in support of this matter that a large number of western Canadians of Chinese origin are entrepreneurs and professionals. A majority of them work in sales, services, and other white collar work. Most of them think of themselves as Canadians first and Chinese second. But—and this is important—alone among all cultural groups in Canada they know that their families were forced to pay an entry fee and were effectively barred from immigration from 1923 to 1947. It goes on:

> Attitudes have finally changed throughout Canada and institutionalized racism is gone. No longer do whites expect them or anyone to be "assimilated." They can now preserve and celebrate their cultural identity and remain both Canadian and Chinese in whatever proportion they choose.

I hope it follows from what I have just said that this is a motion that deserves to be passed, not to be talked out today by government members.

I would point out to the parliamentary secretary who spoke a few minutes ago that the recent budget, I understand, gives either $12 million or $14 million to Canadian businessmen to learn Pacific Rim languages. The same budget cuts, I think it is $4 million, from heritage language programs across Canada, every penny of those programs.

In other words there is money for things that it wants, but there does not seem to be money from this government until the next election for causes which are just and have been a canker on the Canadian soul for many years.

I would hope that the government members will not get up one after another now and attempt to talk this excellent motion out.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Bob Porter (Medicine Hat): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House to respond to my hon. colleague's motion with respect to the head tax levied on immigrants from China from the period 1885 to 1923.

The head tax of 1885 and the subsequent Chinese Immigration Act of 1923 were, in their times, culminations of the prevalent fear of Chinese immigrants. The range of racist and discriminatory measures to which the Chinese historically were subjected in this country is astonishing to this generation.

We live in another era. My hon. colleagues have underscored the fact that the government measures encouraged the growth and development of a spirit of respect and equality. Canada was an original signator on the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, of the United Nations international convention on the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination, as well as the enactment of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and its equality provisions.

Canadians of all cultural backgrounds benefit from a positive framework to combat racial discrimination. For example, we have the Canadian Multiculturalism Act and the employment equity legislation, including measures with respect to the representation of visible minorities in the Public Service.

My hon. colleagues have spoken of other programs and educational efforts that the government has undertaken to remove the stain of racism from all sectors of Canadian society; in education, the media, the workplace, business, health and social services, and public administration at all levels of government. The government's tabling of Bill C–63 which establishes the Canadian Race Relations Foundation demonstrates its commitment to the elimination of racism.

All these measures ensure a characteristic of our society that is so evident and of which we are so proud. Canada is a multicultural country and Canadians of Chinese origin or ancestry are an important part of this multicultural identity.

In 1947, the Chinese Immigration Act was finally repealed. By 1967, remaining vestiges of immigration discrimination against the Chinese were finally and completely removed. These landmarks did not occur by accident. They resulted from the struggle and determination of generations of Chinese Canadians and, eventually, from the majority of Canadians who could no longer condone such discrimination.

This struggle began almost from the very beginning of the Chinese community in Canada when Chinese Canadians, as was mentioned earlier, helped to build the national railway, under the most appalling conditions. Chinese Canadians were building the country during the early years of Confederation. They remain at the task today, joined with other Canadians in the process of building Canada.

My hon. colleagues have referred to the various forms of discrimination to which Chinese Canadians were subjected. Yet, these Canadians fought back. They fought for their rights and for the welcome they deserved in their new land. Their struggle was carried out with patience, dignity, and persistence.

In 1922, in British Columbia, the Chinese Benevolent Association, led a year-long school boycott to protest against the policies of white supremacists in the Victoria school board. It ended when the board finally re-admitted Chinese pupils into the public schools. This incident was similar to many other measures that Chinese Canadians undertook to defend themselves. For example, in 1881, Chinese railway workers protested when a labour contractor tried to take a higher commission from their wages.

In 1916, the Chinese Labour Association was formed in British Columbia. The organization was tested in 1919 when local shingle mill owners attempted to roll back wages. The workers formed the Shingle Workers Association, struck for 40 days, and preserved their wage levels. Even in this instance, organized labour in Canada, 70 years ago, was discriminatory. The Trades and Labour Congress of Canada regularly passed anti-Chinese resolutions up until the 1920s, but Chinese Canadian workers eventually improved their conditions.

A significant role was played in protecting Chinese Canadians from racism by the Chinese Benevolent Association, formed in 1884, after the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway.

• (1800)

Madam Deputy Speaker: Unfortunately I will have to interrupt the hon. member. The time provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired.

Pursuant to Standing Order 96(1) the order is dropped from the Order Paper.

I understand there were discussions earlier and there was unanimous consent to call it ten o'clock at this time. Is that still agreeable?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[*English*]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

FISHERIES

Hon. Roger C. Simmons (Burin—St. George's): Madam Speaker, my general subject today will come as no surprise to you—it is fish, just as you thought. My particular subject has to do with the people in many parts of rural Newfoundland who are being pulverized because of the current situation in the fishery.

I gave notice some time ago that I was dissatisfied with an answer given to me by my friend from St. John's West, the Minister for International Trade, who was on that day speaking for the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans who was away from the House on government business.

As you will know, Madam Speaker, under our procedures if we are not satisfied with an answer we can rise at this particular time. I rise because I am very dissatisfied with the answer the minister from St. John's West gave me that day.

First, let us note what day it was he gave that answer. It was February 13, four months and one day ago. I was asking before that and I have asked since that, but with respect to today's proceeding, four full months ago in this Chamber I asked my fellow Newfoundlander from St. John's West if he would come to the aid of those people in those small communities who are trying to protect a way of life, to hold on, to cling onto a lifestyle. They are trying, in the more immediate, to find enough money to put groceries on the table. Their fisherfolk, both men and women, are going out in the boats from places on the Port au Port Peninsula along the southwest coast in Fortune Bay and Placentia Bay, from communities like Garnish, François, Harbour le Cou, Petites, McCallum and many others along that coast.

These people, over the years, have gone out fishing and come back with a full boatload, a bumper load, as we say. These same people have been going out these past few months and not catching enough fish to pay for the cost of preparing to go out—the cost of the bait, of operating the motor, of the gasoline; let alone finding enough profit in that undertaking to buy the groceries,

let alone getting enough return on that day's work to pay for the loan on that boat from the Fisheries Loan Board or the local bank.

That is my subject, Madam Speaker. As you know, that has been my subject for some time in this House and I am sure it will come as no surprise to you that it will continue to be my subject until we get the attention of this government.

It is true, and I would be the first one to acknowledge this—indeed I thank the minister publicly—that after many months of preaching to the minister and his colleagues, the government did respond with a program which will somewhat help the people in the so-called offshore communities, the fishermen, the plant workers and the industrial base in communities such as Gaultois and Grand Bank.

At the time I asked that question four months ago and up until now the minister has not responded to the desperate plea of those people in those communities. That is a subject that I addressed earlier today in this House. I asked the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans a question on this subject only yesterday.

• (1805)

The question is simple, and the solution is very simple, too. The question is: What are you going to do to help those people who through no fault of their own have no income? Others have depleted the stocks. The foreign overfishing has depleted the stocks. The French fishing in 3PS have depleted the stocks.

Those people cannot catch the fish twice. They cannot catch the fish that has already been caught by someone else.

They are caught in that period. Should they abandon their communities, their way of life, their loved ones, their neighbours, their homes, their property and pack their suitcases and go to Fort McMurray or Cambridge, Ontario, or Toronto? No, that is not the solution.

The solution is right under our noses. The solution is to help these people bridge the gap financially from prosperous times, which they have known until a year or so ago, to more prosperous times. The government does tell us it is going to have the stocks rebuilt in three, four or five years' time. So let us keep those people there in a community where they can do what they know best, where their skills are related to the fishery.

In order to do that what we need, and what we do not yet have from this government, is a fisheries aid package to help the people in Piccadilly, Lourdes and the other places on the Port au Port Peninsula, on the southwest coast, in Fortune Bay, in Placentia Bay. These are people who are hurting today, whose pain and suffering could be eased if the minister with a stroke of a pen would exercise a bit of humanity instead of giving me those cheap partisan answers that he has been giving in the last day or two in particular. That is beneath him.

He would be equal to the task if tomorrow he rose in this House and said: "I recognize the plight of those people and I am prepared on behalf of the Government of Canada to do something about it". Let him be a man. Let him come to the aid of those people now while there is still time.

Mr. Bill Kempling (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Employment and Immigration): Madam Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to expand upon the reply given the hon. member by the Minister for International Trade on behalf of the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans.

The government is fully aware of conditions throughout the Atlantic fishery. The 1989-90 winter fishery in NAFO division 3PS off the south coast of Newfoundland has experienced a catch failure. Landings data reveal that catches are only 50 per cent of the 1985-87 average for the area. Officials of the Departments of Fisheries and Oceans and Employment and Immigration are currently developing appropriate measures to assist the area plant workers in fisheries affected by the catch failures.

The federal government is deeply committed to the people of Atlantic Canada. The government is concerned both about the short term and long term conditions affecting the fishing industry. In most Atlantic fisheries, far more people depend on fishing activity than can earn a reasonable living from it. We recognize that there is a need to diversify local economies beyond the fishing industry and have evaluated other adjustment measures that will help produce excess capacity and

improve fishery economic viability in existing communities.

Since January, the government has announced a $584 million assistance program to Atlantic fisheries. This is comprised of a short term adjustment package with a commitment to spend up to $130 million to assist employees in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland who are laid off because of a decline in the northern cod stocks, an additional $28 million to improve surveillance and a $426 million Fisheries Adjustment Program for Atlantic Canada that will implement a long term strategy for the fishing industry. That is the one that was announced on May 7.

These special programs will be in addition to the ongoing federal programs to assist in workforce adjustment, attracting other enterprises to Atlantic Canada in the pursuit of alternative employment opportunities.

In particular I would like to draw the member's attention to the Industrial Adjustment Service. This includes many programs to assist workforce adjustment in Atlantic fishing communities. Other measures include income support through unemployment insurance, training services, assistance in relocation, funding for community initiatives and assistance for workers 55 years of age or older.

The government has repeatedly demonstrated its concern with the fish stocks, industry conditions and the situation of individual fishermen and plant workers in Atlantic Canada.

• (1810)

Every year since 1985 the government has implemented special response measures specifically targeted to assist fishermen and plant workers affected by catch failures. The government has shown and continues to show compassion to individuals adversely affected by the conditions in the industry.

I might say, Madam Speaker, that if the hon. member could speak to his friends in the other place and have them pass Bill C-21 and put it into law that many of the complaints that he is making would be taken care of.

IMMIGRATION

Mr. Dan Heap (Trinity—Spadina): Madam Speaker, on March 7, 1990, I asked the Minister of Employment and Immigration to take action to stop the backlog of refugee claimants from destroying the refugee determination system, that is, by eliminating the old backlog.

My question was as follows:

> I would ask the minister whether, in view of the hardship visited on people for some years now, including the members of her own immigration staff, and in view of this added delay for which she is responsible through that guideline, she will direct her staff to prepare a speedy system for landing all persons in that backlog according to the basic criteria of health and security.

The minister of course declined but without addressing the problem of delay which I had raised.

I want now to point out that we face a new sort of impasse. There is the old backlog which was 85,000 people. There is a new backlog in the new system. The old and new backlogs together total more than the original.

Of the old backlog by April, which is the latest figures available to me, there were still about 70,000 cases to be heard. Of the new backlog, in only 15 months since January 1, 1989, there were 18,000 cases waiting to be heard. In other words, the total new backlog is 88,000 cases—3,000 more than it was a year and a half ago.

One source of this trouble is the system of double hearings in the new refugee determination system. There is the hearing for a credible basis. That is to say when it is decided whether the claimant has some evidence upon which the board at a later hearing might find a legitimate claim. Then there is the full board hearing.

The very effective screening outside the country, of which the department staff are very proud, is preventing most would-be claimants from even getting to Canada to claim refugee status. We find that over 95 per cent of those who enter this credible basis test are found positively to have one and are sent on to the next stage.

At the next stage, 75 per cent are found to be refugees. So the great majority of the claimants who are dealt with are examined twice. I think that this was not the original intent of this law, but it is the effect of this law.

The delays are growing very seriously. In the estimates for this department, it was projected that the delay between the making of a claim and having a final decision by the end will be of this year nine months. This

was the system which was put forward by the government primarily on the claim that it would be fast. It said it would be fast and fair. There are some arguments about the fairness, and I will come back to that, but there can be no argument that it is not fast, as the government first said it would be.

The fact is that most of those who have had decisions so far have been accepted. With that of course I do not quarrel, since in the cases that I have heard of they deserved it. But the delay that is caused by this double system is causing great harm to refugee claimants. Justice delayed is justice denied. It is causing the breakdown of families. The wife and children are often separated and do not know why they are not being brought to join the husband and father. It is also destroying the new system. The backlog is greater than it was a year and a half ago, even if it is now divided into two categories.

• (1815)

Therefore the Canadian Council for Refugees, at its meeting on June 2, proposed that the minister amend the law in order to deal with this problem. It proposed that the minister amend the Immigration Act to delete the requirement for an initial prescreening hearing for refugee claimants, that she amend the Immigration Act to incorporate a full appeal as a right, and that the resources for the initial prescreening hearing stage be immediately reallocated to the appeal and the full hearing stage.

In other words, instead of spending the money on some very high-priced help, as well as some middle-priced help, to do the job twice—once at the preliminary hearing where 95 per cent are sent forward and once at the full hearing where 75 per cent are found to be refugees—do it once. Cut out that first prescreening, that first inquiry and use the funds and the staff from that.

The board member could be used to speed up the work at the second stage. Since only one-quarter at the second stage are being refused, there would still be money left over to give a decent appeal in accordance with international legal practice and in accordance with general Canadian practice.

These refugee claimants are being discriminated against by being denied the right of an appeal in a life-threatening case which would be available even to a convicted murderer under Canadian legal practice.

Therefore, I urge the minister to consider seriously the proposal of the Canadian Council for Refugees.

Mr. Bill Kempling (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Employment and Immigration): Madam Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to expand upon the reply given by the Minister of Employment and Immigration to the hon. member for Trinity—Spadina on March 7, 1990.

The suggestion made by the hon. member to land all persons in the backlog according to the basic criteria of health and security is in fact a general amnesty. The hon. Minister of Employment and Immigration has said that "an amnesty—would be an especially inappropriate response to a court decision which addresses itself to the application of rule of law and the requirement of fairness. Declaring an amnesty would subvert the very notion of the rule of law, and be patently unfair to the thousands of refugees who legitimately need Canada's protection". Such action would also send a clear message to bogus refugee claimants that they can come to Canada illegally and sooner or later they will be granted permanent residence.

As the hon. member is aware, in its report on the backlog clearance which was tabled on December 19, 1989, the Standing Committee on Labour, Employment and Immigration stated:

> The committee recognizes the purposes of the various aspects of the program announced by the minister. Case-by-case processing means that all individuals are treated in the same manner and dealt with fairly. Adopting the credible basis test sends a message that Canada will be generous to those who need our protection, yet firm with those who do not qualify. Humanitarian and compassionate criteria protect those who might otherwise be placed in danger. The committee accepts and supports these general goals.

The Minister of Employment and Immigration acted quickly and responded to Mr. Justice Jerome's decision by providing new guidelines for administering the humanitarian and compassionate reviews of refugee claimants. Procedures were developed to ensure that everyone in the backlog, including those who were refused prior to this court decision, has the opportunity

for a full assessment of humanitarian and compassionate considerations.

Therefore, the problem has been resolved. The backlog clearance system is continuing to operate.

* * *

NEW HORIZONS PROGRAM

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Madam Speaker, I am rising concerning the question of the New Horizons program, a program for seniors in Canada which has obtained a very significant recognition by seniors' groups as a worth-while and innovative program whereby funds are made available to seniors and seniors' organizations to fund newsletters, publications, facilities that are being constructed, and so on.

• (1820)

The comments I have received about this program for many years always have been positive. Certainly, since I became a member of Parliament and became even more aware of their existence, seniors' organizations in my riding and elsewhere in Canada have praised this as a very worth-while effort.

The budget for the program is modest. I believe the figure for this year is only $15 million. The Minister of State for Seniors is very fond of pointing out in her answers to questions on the subject that that program has been maintained. In fact, if you bear inflation in mind, it has been whittled down, but I will leave that aside. I congratulate the government for not having reduced the expenditure. It cut almost everything else, but it has not cut this one. I am delighted that that is so.

What it has done is in a way worse. Four million dollars out of the $15 million has been frozen at the present time while the government undertakes a review of the effectiveness of the program. Every seniors group says the program is great, but the government still feels that after a few years in service it has to be reviewed in case it is not effective. So it is holding back $4 million. I do not know whether the $4 million is to pay for the firm that is going to do the review for the government, whether the government is doing an internal review or what. I do not have any details on that. I do not understand why the $4 million has to be frozen.

So I asked about this on June 1. I put a question in the House during Question Period. The Minister of State for Housing was not here, neither was the Minister of National Health and Welfare or the President of the Treasury Board so, in the circumstances, I directed the question to the Acting Minister of Finance. However, he did not answer. I got an answer from the Minister of State (Youth), Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons.

This very distinguished and capable minister appeared not to have grasped the facts in relation to the seniors program. Given his youth, his enthusiasm for fitness and amateur sports and his heavy duties as deputy leader of the government in the House, I was not entirely surprised. He suggested that there had been no change and that the money was flowing the way it normally did.

Some of us knew otherwise. Certainly seniors groups have experienced other answers than that. I was a bit surprised at the answer so I returned to the issue on Wednesday, June 6. By that time the Minister of State for Seniors had reappeared. However, I got exceedingly vague answers from her on this. She would not admit that there was a freeze although in fact she had done so in committee. I quoted from the committee proceedings of a few weeks before. It was all pretty vague.

It appears that, in spite of my questions, I was not getting any answers as to what was being done with this $4 million. I asked on June 1 and I asked again today. I hope that the parliamentary secretary, who I know is sitting here anxiously with a prepared answer which is probably full of facts, figures and everything else, is going to tell me everything I want to know.

But the question I asked then was:

> Will the minister tell us when the review will be completed? When will the frozen funds be released? When will the review's findings be made public, or will they be made public?

They are all quite simple questions, but not one of them was answered by the minister on either June 1, when I first asked the question, or on June 6, when the Minister of State for Seniors as here.

On June 1, I got an answer that was incorrect. On June 6, I got an evasive, fumbling answer that simply said what a great program it was. I agree. I do not see a need for review. I do not know why the funds need to be frozen. The funds are frozen in different amounts in different provinces. In some provinces there is no freeze on their allocation. In other provinces there is a freeze on 25 per

cent of the allocation and in others it is less than 25 per cent. There is no rhyme or reason to this. The money should be available to the groups which have applied for it and need it.

It is a sensible program. It has worked very well. I submit there is no need for review. I would like to know from the parliamentary secretary, since this is an opportunity for more detailed answers on his part, who is undertaking the review and, if it is done by a private consortium or company, at what cost to the taxpayer. How much of the $4 million is actually going to be expended in reviewing the program?

In addition, would the parliamentary secretary let us know when the review will be completed, when the report will be made public, if it is to be made public, and when the freeze will be lifted on the funds that are currently being held by the government in order to facilitate this review.

I again urge the minister, through the parliamentary secretary, of course, Madam Speaker, to move with despatch on this matter, provide us with answers and get this money out because it is such a worth-while program. The money is very well spent and it will be of considerable benefit and advantage to the groups which have applied for the funding.

• (1825)

Mr. Benno Friesen (Parliamentary Secretary to Solicitor General of Canada)): Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his question. The only point in his remarks that disappointed me was when he stated that there was no need for a review.

Putting his fine legal mind to it, I am sure he can understand that after a program has been in existence for about 18 years and has never had a review, under normal circumstances a review would be in order, even though we might think everything is going well. I hate to disappoint the hon. member because I think he wants me to announce some kind of iniquitous and inequitable disparity in the programs, but I am not going to do that.

I would hope that what he wants are at least two criteria fulfilled: one, that these programs give us value for money; and two, that there be an equitable distribution. I think that is the point of the question that he raised. As I said, the program has not been reviewed for 18 years and it is time that that took place.

I want to assure him, as he has already indicated, that the $15 million allocated to the program is intact for the 1991 year. It is intact. It is the same as last year. We can quibble about the cost-of-living increase and so forth but that is there. The important thing is that thousands of senior citizens across Canada are benefiting from this program and we applaud it.

The fact is also that the applications for the program are filled out unevenly. They do not draw on the programs evenly across Canada. Let me give an example. There are two seniors programs, one is the New Horizons program and the other one is the Seniors Independence Program that was brought into effect in 1988 by this government.

In Quebec, the people under-utilize the Seniors Independence program but they subscribe and could easily over-subscribe to the New Horizons Program. Both of these programs are a benefit to the seniors in the province and I think the member would accept that. However, the fact is that the New Horizons Program has some attraction to their community needs and they like it.

The Quebec population is about 24.4 per cent of the population of Canada and of the two programs they will receive between 20 and 25 per cent of the total funds available. I think that the member might at least admit that this is equitable distribution of funds, and I see he nods his head that that is true. At the same time, if we can tailor the programs to meet their needs, that is fair, and I think he would accept that.

British Columbia, my province, has 11 to 12 per cent of the total population of Canada and 13 per cent of the seniors population. British Columbia will receive 13 per cent of the total funds available. It so happens that in my own community, the city of White Rock, the population is 35 per cent over age 65. I can tell the member that as popular as the New Horizons Program is, and as good as it is, and as many needs as it meets across Canada, there are a number of seniors in that community who disagree with the program and who feel that the tax dollars could be better spent in some other way.

I want to assure the member that there is no subtle scheme to whittle away at this program. As I said before, and he has agreed, the funds are intact. The government spends three times as much in the way of programs for seniors now than before the seniors initiative was announced.

The seniors initiative, announced in February, 1988 set in motion the Seniors Independence Program, an increase to the New Horizons program, and a number of other activities.

The member asked when will the review be done. I do not think that a date can be set on when the study will be done. However, I can tell the member that the seniors of this country are going to get full value for their dollar. The program is not going to be eroded and it will be equitably distributed across Canada.

[*Translation*]

Madam Deputy Speaker: The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at ten o'clock a.m, pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

The House adjourned at 6.30 p.m.