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Tuesday, April 19, 1994

Speaker: The Honourable Gilbert Parent

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, April 19, 1994

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): 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.

* * *

(1005)

[Translation]

INCOME TAX ACT

Mrs. Christiane Gagnon (Quebec) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-238, an act to amend the Income Tax Act (child support payments).

She said: Mr. Speaker, the purpose of this bill is to amend the Income Tax Act so that child support payments can no longer be deducted from the income of the individual paying child support and are no longer added to the income of the person receiving the payments. The bill ensures that child support payments are covered by the definition of earned income included in the provisions on deductions for child care expenses.

(Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed.)

* * *

[English]

PETITIONS

KILLER CARDS

Mr. John Maloney (Erie): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I present a petition on behalf of the constituents of Erie. I wish I did not have to present this petition because I wish

that the circumstances around this issue did not exist. However, they do.

A growing number of Canadians are fiercely opposed to the importation of killer cards. This petition adds 475 names to this list. These cards are contrary to moral and ethical standards. Canadians abhor crimes of violence against persons. Killer trading cards offer nothing positive for our children or adults to admire or emulate. Rather, they contribute to violence.

Not only do these cards glorify murder and the criminals who commit horrific acts of violence, but they act as a daily reminder to the victims, families and friends of the brutal violence that has struck down their loved ones as well as their security and faith in humanity.

A clear message must be sent to any printing company and/or distributor that this material is not acceptable to Canadians. A great number of Erie residents are opposed to this product and I join them in calling for an amendment to the laws of Canada prohibiting the importation, distribution, sale and manufacture of killer cards.

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QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

(Questions answered orally are indicated by an asterisk.)

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, question No. 23 will be answered today.

[Text]

Question No. 23—**Mr. Taylor:**

Will the government implement recommendation No. 3 in the fourth report of the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs, entitled: "A Time for Action" (34th Parliament, third session), which calls for the transfer of control of housing programs to aboriginal people and, if so, when and how, and, if not, why?

Hon. Ron Irwin (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): The federal government plans in the near future to consider a new housing policy that would improve housing conditions as well as strengthen aboriginal control and accountability. As stated in its Liberal plan for Canada entitled "Creating Opportunity": "The government will work with aboriginal peoples to develop an approach to housing that emphasizes community control, local resources and flexibility in design and labour requirements".

The new policy would also reduce the gap in the availability of adequate, affordable housing; increase self-reliance through greater employment and business opportunities, including those

Government Orders

identified in recommendation No. 3; encourage broader participation by private sector business and financial institutions; and promote skills development initiatives.

[English]

Mr. Boudria: I ask, Mr. Speaker, that the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): Shall the remaining questions stand?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

INCOME TAX ACT

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill C-9, an act to amend the Income Tax Act, as reported (without amendment) from the committee.

Hon. David Anderson (for the Minister of Finance) moved that the bill be concurred in.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Motion agreed to.)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): When shall the bill be read the third time? By leave, now?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(1010)

Mr. Anderson (for the Minister of Finance) moved that the bill be read the third time and passed.

Mr. David Walker (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to lead off the debate on third reading of Bill C-9. The bill proposes to implement a number of amendments to the Income Tax Act that were announced by the previous government.

Legislation to implement these measures was introduced last June but the bill died when Parliament was dissolved. For these measures to have legal effect new legislation must be passed now by this Parliament.

Let me be clear at the start by explaining why we are going ahead with this legislation. Simply put, these past tax measures were introduced some time ago and many were said to be effective immediately when announced.

Many thousands of Canadians took the government at its word and relied on these announcements when making important personal decisions. Many have, for example, used their RRSPs

to buy or build houses. Other Canadians have relied on these announcements in making significant investments or hiring new employees.

The commitments these taxpayers have made are for the most part irreversible. Consequently, if we were to reverse course many people would be put in a difficult position, an unfair situation, and the trust that Canadians have in their government, a trust that we must always strive to keep and enhance, will be dealt a powerful blow.

However, we do not approach this question as prisoners of the previous government's actions or inactions, to put it more precisely. We have carefully reviewed the measures in this legislation and believe we can support them in their own right.

With this in mind, let me review briefly the measures in this bill. First of all, there are measures that affect individual taxpayers. One is the extension of the homebuyers plan by one year through to March 1, 1994. As I mentioned before, to renege on this program would cause undue and unfair difficulties to many thousands of Canadians.

As well, the legislation provides that starting next September certain higher income Canadians will have to make quarterly instalment payments on their taxes. At the same time some 300,000 low income filers will be excused from quarterly payments and required to pay only once a year.

Another area addressed by this legislation is one of the few small attempts of the previous government to foster job creation. The December 1992 economic statement announced a one-year program of relief for unemployment insurance premiums for increased employment by small businesses.

This program has come and gone unnoticed by the far too many Canadians who are unemployed in this country. Nevertheless, a number of small business people have taken the government of the day at its word. We shall honour the bargain as a matter of public trust.

The same considerations also apply to other measures targeted at small businesses. These include the temporary small business investment tax credit for purchases of eligible machinery and equipment from December 2, 1992 to December 31, 1993; the extension of the small business financing program to the end of this year, allowing small businesses in financial difficulty to refinance up to \$500,000 of debt at low interest rates; the removal of any limits on holdings of small business shares in RRSPs and RRIFs; and the extension of the 35 per cent investment tax credit available to small Canadian controlled private corporations for eligible research and developmental expenses.

In addition, this legislation will give effect to some general improvements in the tax credit incentives offered to encourage Canadian research and development. As well, it removes the annual limits on investment tax credits. This limit introduced by the previous government in 1987 reduced the effectiveness of

Government Orders

the ITC incentives for rapidly growing firms, one of the engines of job growth in this country.

The bill also assists resource companies by allowing 100 per cent of the first \$2 million of oil and gas development expenditures to flow through directly to shareholders and be deducted by them. As well, it gives these companies greater flexibility in managing their affairs by removing the mandatory deduction of Canadian exploration expenses.

(1015)

Finally, the bill puts in place new, more flexible rules for investments in labour sponsored venture capital corporations.

We did not hold out the measures in the bill as any solution to the challenge of job creation, but we do recognize the attempt. Of equal importance we recognize the commitments made by Canadians who have relied on these proposed measures.

This bill should be viewed simply as a question of parliamentary housekeeping and therefore I urge members to support it.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Yvan Loubier (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot): Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to speak in the debate on third reading of Bill C-9. Previously, I had an opportunity to speak to this bill during the debate on second reading.

At the time, without in any way denying the benefits of certain measures contained in Bill C-9 as described by my hon. colleague, the Secretary of State for Finance, I warned the present government not to make the same mistakes as the previous government. These mistakes are, in a way, reflected in Bill C-9. Let me explain.

When we look at Bill C-9, we see that it contains measures which, although beneficial, indicate a lack of vision on the part of the previous government in dealing with a world that is becoming increasingly globalized. We often talk about globalization and opening borders, and we need measures to help our companies and workers adjust to these changes. These measures must provide a framework within which companies can be confident about developing their competitive potential.

During the debate on second reading of Bill C-9, I also warned the present Canadian government about the kind of measures it should take. The budget had not yet been tabled, and I asked the Liberal government not to make the same mistakes as the previous government, which had failed to take steps to bring public finances under control, and as you know, our public finances are a disaster.

So what has happened since the second reading of Bill C-9? First, the North American Free Trade Agreement was signed,

but the present government failed to put in place measures to promote Quebec and Canadian companies or help them adjust to this new agreement, which includes Mexico. Instead, a big show was made of signing and implementing this Free Trade Agreement. The Prime Minister and his Minister for International Trade played their part, just to say they had managed to reopen the North American Free Trade Agreement and introduce certain provisions on labour standards and protecting the environment.

Our analysis indicates there was nothing of the sort. There was no bilateral or trilateral agreement with our U.S. or Mexican neighbours, no measures that would ensure protection for our social standards, our labour standards, and so forth.

Despite all that, the Prime Minister and his Minister for International Trade bragged that they had obtained everything and that they were now quite ready, with appropriate measures, to face the challenge of the North American free trade.

Meanwhile, and I had raised the issue at the time, the world was signing the biggest international trade deal since 1947, the eighth GATT Agreement. Once again, while the Prime Minister and the Minister for International Trade were boasting, sticking out their chests and thinking they had made exceptional gains on the North American level, they were losing on all fronts on the international level. The fact that this government did not shoulder its responsibilities could be very costly to Quebecers in the next few years.

(1020)

For example, there is the farming industry, where Canada, despite all it was saying, and in the middle of a debate on Bill C-9, lost clause XI.2c(i) of the GATT, which had made flourishing milk and agricultural industries possible.

The Liberal Party, when in opposition denounced the Conservatives for not having taken all the necessary measures to protect that clause. Well, the Liberals did exactly the same thing.

They bragged that they had obtained everything, even though one of the fundamental pillars of Canadian agriculture had been discarded by the GATT settlement.

We are not against the GATT settlement; quite the contrary. We are free-traders and we have always said so.

We are for improvement of trade on the international level. We are for economic growth linked precisely with our capacity to produce, to export and to capture international markets.

But it is almost indecent for the Liberal Party of Canada to tell us, Mr. Speaker, despite the fact that we are all intelligent people, that Canada won everything, at that time, and that

Government Orders

Canada, faced with market globalization, has put in place more consistent measures than those that are in Bill C-9.

Mr. Speaker, we also asked the Liberal government, when we considered Bill C-9 at first reading, not to repeat the mistakes of the past, not to repeat the mistakes of the Conservative government and to apply such a restrictive monetary policy, that at the peak of the recession, between the end of 1990 and the beginning of 1991, there was a 5 point difference between American and Canadian interest rates.

It was an unacceptable situation.

Therefore, we suggested that the government review the whole monetary policy to ensure a fairer balance between the desire to control inflation in the long term—which is a very commendable objective—and our short-term need to create permanent jobs that about 1.5 million Canadians, including 500,000 Quebecers, are still awaiting impatiently.

But instead of that, since first reading of Bill C-9, the government of Canada, that is to say the Minister of Finance, has appointed Mr. Thiessen, the right-hand man of John Crow, the former Governor of the Bank of Canada, as his successor.

At the time of this appointment, the Governor of the Bank of Canada restated the monetary policy of his predecessor, which consisted in struggling against inflation at any rate no matter if, in the short term, we were following the same pattern the Liberals had denounced before. And yet, the need for jobs is desperate.

Mr. Speaker, from the first through the second readings, we have been asking the government not to repeat the errors made in the previous budgets, the Conservative budgets and in the present one, which shows a lack of long-term vision.

Not only did the Liberal Party of Canada repeat the same mistakes, but it has done worse and that is where the actions of the government are most reprehensible.

When I discussed Bill C-9, I would never have thought that the first Liberal budget would be so terrible, so outrageous, that it would be even more so than the most dreadful Conservative budget.

Let us recall the facts. I think it is important when considering a budget, when one is about to pass budgetary measures, to remember that this government without vision has taken similar measures, sometimes harsh ones, as a result of Bill C-9.

(1025)

First, cuts of \$5.5 billion in unemployment insurance over the next three years, by reducing the number of insurable weeks of employment and by targeting the poorest in years to come.

As you know, for years members of this government denounced, not lightly but in the strongest possible terms, any Conservative initiative that they deemed antisocial. For years, Liberals have practically portrayed themselves as leftists. They portrayed themselves as champions of the poorest in our society; yet, as soon as they came into office, they slashed unemployment insurance by \$5.5 billion. Since last week, desperate workers, unemployed people actively seeking employment and trying to regain their dignity, have come to realize that they have been fooled by this government. I understand that the budgetary measures reducing the number of insurable weeks have really been applied only since last week.

Since then, in my own riding of Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, I have met desperate people. Those people are desperate because they had put some hope in this government and in the measures announced in the red book, but mainly measures announced elsewhere because the red book is nothing but a rag when assessed on its own merits. Those people had a lot of hope and saw this government, unlike the previous one, as a government that had a long-term vision, one that would create permanent jobs and would give them back their dignity.

For instance, I think of Yan, 20 years old, who wants to finish high school but who, because of this careless government, its laxness and the fact that it tends to consider every request of Quebec regarding decentralization of labour training as a whim, because of that, Yan, 20 years old, living in the riding of Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, will not be able to finish his job training. There is also the case of Jean-Yves, 45 years old, who will not be able to get training this year because of red tape and delays. He was told perhaps next year or in two years, depending on the federal financial support that has already been cut in several areas.

Claude, 25 years old, has a university degree and is looking for a job, but he has just been penalized by the unemployment insurance reform. Claude, 55 years old, who lives in Quebec, is the victim of a plant closure, is unemployed and has been on social assistance for a week. Last week, I was really shocked by the story of Jacques, 35 years old. Unemployed, he was given training by the federal government, but by the time he entered the labour market, the training he had received was completely outdated and would not meet business needs. I met many people in that situation. Every week, the movement Action-chômage meets with many people in that situation, such as Rachel, 40 years old and a mother of two children, who is on welfare.

Instead of helping those people by introducing humane measures such as the ones we need right now to allow these people to go back to work, to get adequate training and to obtain permanent jobs, the members opposite, the Liberals, who were saying that they wanted to give back their hope and dignity by creating

Government Orders

jobs, instead made cutbacks in unemployment insurance. I consider them antisocial.

Another measure that I did not expect from a first federal budget, following the speech that I delivered about the Senate, is the lack, in that first federal budget, of concrete measures to promote job creation, except for the infrastructure program. We have nothing against the infrastructure program, but that program only meets about 3 per cent of market needs. There are 1.5 million unemployed in Canada, including 450,000 in Quebec, and all we have to offer them are 45,000 jobs. Mr. Speaker, these 1.5 million unemployed Canadians will fight for the 45,000 jobs available; there will be violence.

(1030)

I also noticed that since the first and second readings of Bill C-9, this government has taken no concrete measure whatsoever to create jobs, permanent jobs in reasonable quantity and of reasonable quality. Everything concerning the creation of jobs has been dealt with in a shameless fashion. I am talking here about the Job Development Program where the government recently made some cuts.

Another measure in the first Liberal budget which I could never have imagined coming from the Liberal Party of Canada is the abolition of the age credit. This government, those Liberals shamelessly reduce credits for seniors, they who used to denounce in the strongest possible terms any intention on the part of the Tories to take away from the seniors or any attempt to de-index their pensions or even cut them as was the case in the beginning. I thought these people were sincere and I now see that they never were. Under the guise of a social democratic approach, a humanistic approach, they have fooled the people of Quebec and Canada, and they will pay for that.

Nor was I expecting a \$2.5 billion cut over three years in Established Programs Financing, especially in the portion earmarked for post-secondary education. Members on the other side of the House—I am looking to see who is present today—keep talking about education, they keep telling us that education is of extreme importance in order to face present challenges, to face the growing competition that results from the globalization of trade. But they cut into funding for post-secondary education.

Nor did I expect that the government would renege on a commitment made at the beginning of last year by the Liberal Party of Canada, maybe even in 1992 if I remember correctly the first statements regarding social housing. When the Conservatives cut the \$600 million budgeted for the construction of new social housing units, the Liberals said that they would restore this financing, that they would start afresh with a new social housing development program. When they assumed power they

quickly forgot that promise, and ignored the 350 persons who demonstrated in Ottawa three months ago to ask for decent housing conditions, for a dignity they lost a long time ago. These 350 persons were spending anywhere from 30 to 50 per cent of their income on housing, at least. This is intolerable, and even more so when you hit a stone wall like the one that the Liberals put up.

After giving hope to low income people I consider it indecent that the Liberal government is not coming through with a program, thus dashing the hopes of these people.

Analysing Bill C-9 at third reading gives me a chance to discuss, as I did at first reading, the whole vision of the government that tabled this budget. I realize the government does not have a vision and will never have any. Why? It is the same basic question over and over again. Everywhere in the world, in any democracy, when there is no clear and democratic law providing for public financing of political parties, there is always the risk that the ruling party, upon taking control, will be unable as a government to make real decisions, good decisions such as abolishing all the fiscal inequities of our system.

(1035)

I remember very clearly that when Liberals were the Official Opposition they denounced almost daily the inequities of the federal fiscal system. They denounced tax evasions. They even denounced family trusts. They were probably trying to win over supporters of the New Democratic Party, which has almost disappeared since then. Along with members of the New Democratic Party, Liberals denounced the fiscal inequities of the Canadian fiscal system.

However, since the last budget, nothing was done to redress the situation. Family trusts still exist enable very rich families to avoid paying between \$350 million and one billion dollars a year to the federal Treasury. The same is true of numerous agreements between Canada and countries considered tax havens. They still sign the same kind of agreement; they still have regulations allowing businesses with parent companies in such tax havens to pay hardly any taxes on their profits, while the losses they incur in these tax havens can be deducted from profits made in Canada.

Knowing what the position of the Liberal Party of Canada has been in the past, I cannot understand why they are doing the very thing they were denouncing when they were the Official Opposition, and why, after deceiving us for so many years, they are now totally lacking in vision and concern for social justice.

In his recent budget, the finance minister did nothing along the lines of what we recommended during the first debate on Bill C-9. Worse yet, he managed to do even worse than all the previous Conservative budgets. Within three months, his budget, totally devoid of any sense, lost all credibility; even

Government Orders

though he cut \$7.5 billion in social programs, the financial world reacted very negatively to his budget.

This budget harms the poor and the financial world. In financial circles, people say that the government has lost control of the public finances, that it will not be able to bring the deficit down to 3 per cent of the GDP as it has been promising for so long. Finance people are not disconnected from reality, they have a very good analytical mind, just like the Bloc Québécois. They know that the tax revenue projections in this budget are as unrealistic as those contained in all of the previous government's budgets. They know full well that since 1988 or thereabouts, each time Canada's GDP increases by 1 per cent, federal revenues do not increase by 1 per cent, but only by a mere 0.4 per cent.

In other words, given the growth of the underground economy and the whole range of factors tied to the elasticity of tax revenues compared with the rate of taxation—I will spare you the technical details—economic growth in Canada results in lower tax revenues. Financial circles have their own highly skilled analysts who also know full well that this budget is not realistic and they have proven this over the past month. On reviewing all of the short-term and medium-term financial data, one can see the extreme volatility of interest rates, for example. The spread between interest rates on 90-day Canadian Treasury Bills—in my view, the most telling indicator of how the budget was received, of the economic situation and of the government's state of indebtedness—as compared to U.S. bills, was 213 points yesterday, when a mere two months ago, prior to the release of the Finance Minister's budget, the spread was only 40 points.

It is also clear that foreign investors have lost confidence in the Canadian dollar. A similar loss of confidence was experienced while the Conservatives were in office, but the situation has taken a turn for the worse under the Liberals.

(1040)

On the one hand, then, the budget contains some extremely unpopular measures which target the least fortunate, persons who should not have to suffer any more than they already do, while on the other hand, it caters to financial circles. The Canadian government will have to pay an additional \$3 to \$5 billion at the end of next year in extra interest charges. The government is responsible for the increase in interest rates. It has turned its back on those who have recently renewed, or who will be renewing their mortgage shortly, by allowing interest rates to creep upward. All of this stems from the lack of credibility of the latest Liberal budget. This budget is as lacking in credibility as any of the previous Conservative budgets.

The situation is very sad indeed, Mr. Speaker, and others share our opinion. The fact that the Dominion Bond Rating Service Ltd recognized that with this budget, Canada had failed to gain control over its public finances and that consequently, it lowered Canada's rating from AAA to AA+ is significant indeed.

Considering that Scotiabank, Burns Fry Limited, the *Association des manufacturiers du Québec*, the Bank of Montreal, the *Conseil du patronat du Québec*, hardly a proponent of sovereignty, *Globe and Mail* analysts and the *Financial Post* all agree that the latest Liberal budget is as damaging as the previous Conservative budgets and totally lacking in credibility, then there has to be some truth in what we are hearing, Mr. Speaker.

When you are down to saying, as the Prime Minister did in this House on April 13, that the budget can be set aside, that what will determine what cuts and what measures to control spending need to be done and how public funds are to be managed is not that budget, but non-budgetary measures, even if the Prime Minister is somewhat disparaging about the latest Liberal budget, there is a semblance of truth somewhere in there.

This means that the most recent Liberal budget is not only as bad as the Conservative budgets were, but actually worse, because never had a previous Prime Minister of Canada run down the budget tabled by his Minister of Finance as much as this Prime Minister has.

So, and I will close on this, third reading on Bill C-9 has allowed me to see the progress made in the implementation of the measures, to see what actions this government has taken, after the alarm I tried to raise in my speech when Bill C-9 was read for the second time. I realize in the light of the actions taken, and the last budget in particular, that not one of the sensible, rational, well-thought-out recommendations made by the Official Opposition, recommendations that were mindful of social justice, human dignity, seniors, as well as young people actively looking for work and the unemployed, were taken into account for the action plan developed following the debate at second reading of Bill C-9.

I was following the goings-on in the federal political arena long before becoming a member of Parliament and before having the privilege of debating with you and I used to think that the Conservatives were the most right-wing politicians in Canada's political history. I considered their actions to be inhumane, senseless measures that did nothing to address the problems resulting from overliberal budgeting or the Canadian government financial difficulties. I felt that the social price of these measures, especially the price to the less fortunate segment of society, was too high.

Now I realize, Mr. Speaker, that the Liberal Party of Canada is even worse. Their ways are more underhanded. They cleverly wrap up right-wing, inhumane measures that hurt the most disadvantaged people in a progressive discourse, apparently intended to be open, humane, conciliatory, a discourse with a

Government Orders

distinctly economic flavour to it I would say, but based on economics of the modern kind, where economic analysis is combined with a profoundly humane sociological approach. It takes an anti-poverty stand. It takes a very economic approach, but a new kind of economy, which combines dollars and cents with a very humane sociological approach.

(1045)

So it covers its inhumane acts with its very humane-sounding rhetoric in order to deceive the people. From the election campaign until today, we have seen that this government has no shame about fooling the people as it has done.

I will quote you a passage from an article by Laurent Laplante published in *Le Droit* on April 12. Speaking of the ineffective measures being taken by the Liberal Party of Canada to support economic growth, he says: "The Conservatives, by concentrating their whole attention on the inflationary threat, finally dragged Canada into the first fully made-in-Canada recession. Mr. Martin has decided to do better; he wants to make this recession go on forever." I find that this passage says a lot about the difference between the Conservatives and the Liberals and I hope that we will soon be out of this regime with our heads held high, with dignity and a real plan for society, a plan to create jobs, a plan for full employment in a sovereign Quebec that is open to the world and takes a responsible attitude to the challenge facing us in an era of global markets.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker for giving me this opportunity to talk about what this government has done since the first reading of Bill C-9.

[*English*]

Mr. Ray Speaker (Lethbridge): Mr. Speaker, certainly it is a privilege to be able to make a few remarks on third reading of Bill C-9, an act to amend the Income Tax Act.

I must confess that I have certain mixed feelings about addressing the bill. It introduces measures that were introduced by a previous government, and here we are today putting the measures into law. In a sense it is kind of a reverse process.

When a government enacts or wishes to carry on some type of policy or objective it should move the legislation into the House, pass it and then implement the programs. We are kind of following a reverse procedure that certainly gives me mixed feelings in my legislative responsibilities. However it has happened and we are here today examining the bill as such.

On the one hand it would seem only prudent that we support the bill. It is generally referred to as a housekeeping bill. As I have said, much of the policy in it has been enacted during the past year and we are just getting around to proclaiming the law today.

In my presentation I will not pretend for a minute that it would be anything but irresponsible of us to oppose these measures merely on principle because of the circumstances. On the other hand I wish to make clear there are some principles to which I am strongly opposed, as is the Reform Party.

The Income Tax Act, as we all know, has become a very unwieldy monster symbolizing what many Canadians see as the problem with government in general and that in general there is just too much government for all of us.

The last attempt by a government to amend the text and change it led to other kinds of reforms. It led to an income tax surtax, an alternate minimum tax, tax deductions, tax credits and the complicated GST that is before the finance committee at the present time. All these have rather confused the matter.

(1050)

We as Reformers believe it is time to review the Income Tax Act and the variety of methods and means by which we collect funds to operate government. We think it is most important at this point in time. Even the forms need revision.

Today I was given an article from a newspaper about the fact that Revenue Canada workers have been issued a memo inviting them to consult with some of their colleagues in filling out their tax returns. The memo says: "The time for filing your income tax return is approaching. Should you require any information or assistance in the preparation of your return, you may contact one of the employees whose name and location appear below".

Not all citizens of Canada have that privilege, but the point we want to make is made by the writer of the article and others who have commented on it: if tax department employees cannot figure out how to fill out their own returns, imagine how the rest of Canadians feel. That is a very apt comment under the circumstances.

An hon. member: Make all MPs do it here. That will help.

Mr. Speaker (Lethbridge): Right. That is what should happen here, to see if we need consultation or not.

That is an impression. It is certainly a comment on the complications of the Income Tax Act. I want to speak about that in my remarks today and where we feel the process should go in reviewing the tax collection system of Canada.

I would like to make clear there are some good aspects to the bill. We would like to see the government continue with some of these programs and certainly improve on them as we proceed in the legislative session.

We know young people today cannot afford to buy homes because they are paying too much tax. We should look at some of the details. While total incomes per capita have increased 170 per cent in the last 10 years total direct personal taxes have risen

Government Orders

some 235 per cent. How are we doing with respect to other countries?

Canadian government revenues as a percentage of gross domestic product have increased from 24 per cent in 1950 to almost 43 per cent in 1990. Also six years ago the tax burden in Canada was approximately 20 per cent higher than that of the United States. By 1992 it had risen to 25 per cent and was projected to increase to 30 per cent by 1997. My recent reading of statistics indicates that we are at that point today. It is not just young people who are feeling the tax burden; it is all Canadians.

The homebuyers plan that allows those saving for homes to withdraw from their RRSPs to make down payments is and was a good idea. It not only puts the dream of home ownership within the grasp of more people. It provides economic spinoffs all the way down the line.

A poll released in September 1993 by the Canadian Real Estate Association confirmed that the homebuyers plan was a big success. The Angus Reid poll was conducted in five major Canadian cities. First of all it found that four out of five buyers who used the plan said it was an important factor in their decision. It was especially important for 86 per cent of first time buyers.

Second, nearly half or 49 per cent said it would have been unlikely they would have been able to buy their homes without the plan.

Third, the plan helped a significant number of home buyers surveyed: 22 per cent of all first time home buyers and 17 per cent of buyers generally.

Fourth, repaying their RRSPs is a high priority. Eighty-one per cent of respondents said it was important to repay. Fully 88 per cent said they would repay at least at the rate required by the plan. Only 4 per cent said they would not repay and would declare their withdrawals as income.

Fifth, home ownership was seen by 84 per cent of those surveyed as being at least somewhat important to retirement planning. Fifty-four per cent said it was very important. Owning a home was rated by far the most important source of income for retirement.

Sixth, the Department of Finance has already reported that the numbers have been very impressive with nearly 200,000 participants to the end of July 1993. These are indeed impressive numbers. As we well know the number of housing starts is a reliable indicator of the overall health of the economy.

(1055)

The housing industry directly employs, to name a few, general contractors, carpenters, electricians, plumbers, drywallers, painters, landscapers, building product suppliers, real estate agents and lawyers. We are encouraged by such measures as the homebuyers plan and the results it has had. I am sure the limited

extension of that program will be of benefit to many other Canadians.

In more general terms it is our hope the new government makes meaningful, effective reforms of the Income Tax Act, as I have already mentioned, with an aim to simplifying the process and certainly making it less complicated and fairer.

We in the Reform Party support a taxation policy that has as its principle the objective of raising funds to pay directly for government programs. We support a balanced budget concept. If we look at the history of the act it was originally intended to collect taxes to ideally pay for the services provided by government. Somewhere along the line we have lost the original intent of the tax system and have allowed it to become a tool to influence the behaviour of people. As well we have used it as a social reform instrument rather than a means by which to collect funds to pay for services. That is inappropriate and has moved us away from a rational responsible budget process.

I say in a general sense now, and certainly some of my colleagues will talk about it in detail as the weeks proceed. We should be working toward a more simple, visible, proportional system of taxation: the flat tax that many people talk about or the single tax. We believe it could be fair, more applicable, more easily administered and more easily understood by the people who have to take responsibility for sending revenue to government each year.

As we sit here today to assent to the amendments before us that were proposed by the last government, I cannot help but be a little cautious in my optimism. All of us in the House should not need reminding of the resounding message sent to the last government on October 25. We must be responsible in our deliberations and make sure we are responding to the needs of Canadians, not to our needs as either a government, an opposition party or individual MPs. We cannot allow ourselves to slip into those ways even in the slightest.

I call upon government members to assure us they will give reform of the Income Tax Act the priority it deserves. In the hearings of the finance committee on a variety of proposals to change the GST, to fix the GST or on other options, one point made by a major number of presenters was that we needed to look at all taxing instruments of government and come up with a plan that is fair, more co-ordinated and more responsive to the needs of Canadians. At the present time they feel they are not co-ordinated. Often because of that some people in our economic system are taxed to a greater extent than others.

If the government makes a commitment to make the reforming of the Income Tax Act a high priority, it shows us as the opposition party that it is making good on its promise of a new way of doing business. It also sends a strong message to the provinces that they should follow the lead of the federal government. Most important, it shows Canadians that there is hope for a new way of government. We cannot let fear of media or any

other kind of pressure inhibit our effort at reform. We have to try.

In closing I take a moment to remind my colleagues in the House that there is a big, fast moving and exciting world beyond these walls. In my brief experience in this House I am often amazed at how this simple fact gets lost in the daily shuffle of papers this institution is confronted with. We often get distracted from some of our major causes or our major concerns. However we have to recognize there is another world out there where they are throwing around words and we are doing it in this House as well. They are words like information superhighway. We as legislators must strive to keep up and be ready for change.

(1100)

I leave this portion of the debate with this final thought. Failure is not fatal, but in these times failure to change might be.

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

Some hon. members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): 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 third time and passed.)

* * *

ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES READJUSTMENT PROCESS

Hon. Allan Rock (for the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons) moved:

That the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs be instructed to prepare and bring in a bill, in accordance with Standing Order 68(5), respecting the system of readjusting the boundaries of electoral districts for the House of Commons by Electoral Boundaries Commissions, and, in preparing the said bill, the committee be instructed to consider, among other related matters, the general operation over the past thirty years of the Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act, including:

(a) an assessment of whether there should be a continual increase in the number of Members of the House of Commons after each census, as now provided in section 51 of the Constitution Act;

(b) a review of the adequacy of the present method of selection of members of Electoral Boundaries Commissions;

(c) a review of the rules governing and the powers and methods of proceedings of Electoral Boundaries Commissions, including whether these Commissions

Government Orders

ought to commence their work from the basis of making necessary alterations to the boundaries of existing electoral districts wherever possible;

(d) a review of the time and nature of the involvement of the public and of the House of Commons in the work of Electoral Boundaries Commissions;

That the committee have the power to travel within Canada and to hear witnesses by teleconference; and

That the committee report no later than December 16, 1994.

Mr. David Walker (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to rise and speak in favour of the motion to refer the issue of the electoral boundaries readjustment process to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

The current process of adjusting constituency boundaries by independent commissions has been in existence since 1964 when the Liberal government of Lester Pearson passed the Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act. Before then the House of Commons itself was responsible for electoral boundaries readjustment.

The current process has been in place since 1964. After 30 years the time has come for a fundamental review of all aspects of this process by the House of Commons which passed the 1964 law in the first place.

(1105)

On April 13, 1994 this House adopted Bill C-18. It provides for a suspension of the current electoral boundaries readjustment process for a period of 24 months in order to allow for a fundamental review of all aspects of the process. All aspects of this matter should be reviewed by the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs in a thorough and thoughtful manner.

Some dissatisfaction has been expressed with regard to the current process. I would like to take a few minutes to elaborate on this.

For example, the commissions published their initial proposals without having a chance to obtain input from interested parties. When published therefore, these proposals often come as a complete surprise.

From my former days as a political science professor at the University of Winnipeg when I followed the electoral boundaries review process in a more dispassionate way, I can tell you those in the academic community who were watching the process were indeed surprised by the results at times. They were more surprised at how difficult it was to learn in detail exactly how the new boundaries were set.

Although some commissions explain the reasons for the proposals, they are not required to do so. It is therefore very difficult for a person who intends to make representations, to intervene with a commission, to know the reasons behind the

Government Orders

proposal and to make objections or present alternatives in an effective manner. In that respect the public participation process is not what it should have been.

The criteria the commissions must use to set the boundaries may have to be rethought. The criteria are quite general and, depending on the approach taken by each commission, the rationale for drawing electoral boundaries can differ considerably from one province to another. That has created a lot of controversy in this process for setting boundaries since 1964.

The continual increase in the number of members in the House of Commons after each census is another issue of some concern. Since Confederation the number of seats in the House of Commons has increased steadily from 181 in 1867 to the current level of 295. All of us have heard the electors express frustration with the constant growth of government, the size of the House of Commons and the cost associated with Parliament. This issue should not be passed over lightly.

The above examples are but a few of the areas that should be thoroughly reviewed by the standing committee. The government has therefore decided to ask the House of Commons to refer the electoral boundaries readjustment process to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs for review and to develop improvements to the current procedure.

The standing committee's terms of reference provide that it can bring in a bill respecting the system of readjusting the boundaries of electoral districts.

The committee shall consider the general operation over the past 30 years of the Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act, including the following major issues: whether there should be a continual increase in the number of members in the House of Commons after each census as now provided in section 51 of the Constitution Act; a review of the method of selection of members of the electoral boundaries commissions; a review of the proceedings of the commissions, including whether they ought to make alterations to the boundaries of existing electoral districts wherever possible; and a review of the involvement of the public and of the House of Commons in the work of the commissions.

I may add to that if we make improvements, as this House does in so many other areas in the way we deal with the country, in the way we involve people, then many of the problems we meet in a process such as we have in the last month in this particular domain will be solved. It is incumbent upon all parliamentarians to think of ways to improve public participation, in the ways in which the general public influence such major decisions such as the nature, shape and composition of their constituencies.

(1110)

This committee is to report no later than December 16, 1994.

Using one of the new procedures adopted by the House when it approved the government's parliamentary reform package at the outset of this Parliament, the committee will be authorized to frame legislation implementing its proposals.

Again there are benchmarks in the new House where we try to convince Canadians and try to show by example that we are serious about the role of individual members, serious about the role of people outside of the ministries doing work as fundamental as preparing legislation. As I said, this will turn out to be a benchmark in the way we redevelop this House and its approach to problems.

This will be the first opportunity for a parliamentary committee to initiate legislation in response to requests submitted by the government. We are following through on our commitment to strengthen the role of members of Parliament in developing legislation.

The redistribution of electoral boundaries is an important matter for the whole country. We are requesting the standing committee to not only study the issue but to develop and recommend legislative measures it feels may be required to solve this problem.

In conclusion, the readjustment of electoral boundaries touches important questions of democratic representation in the House of Commons. Now is the ideal time to have a thorough review of the process undertaken by the House of Commons itself and to hear Canadians from coast to coast to coast through the standing committee. The committee hearings will be public and outside witnesses will be heard.

[Translation]

Mrs. Monique Guay (Laurentides): Mr. Speaker, previous speeches made in this House pointed out the essentially democratic nature of the Bloc Québécois and, in this regard, its willingness to respect the integrity and autonomy of the people it represents in every county of Quebec.

One of our party's basic objectives, particularly in anticipation of Quebec's independence, is to exercise the democratic process as widely as possible.

Today we take this opportunity to support government motion M-10 proposing that the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs be instructed to prepare and bring in a bill respecting the system of readjusting the boundaries of electoral districts.

Our goal in supporting motion M-10 is, as you know, to respect the regional integrity of these communities without hampering the regional decentralization process currently taking place in Quebec.

However, the Bloc Québécois will only support this government motion on certain conditions.

First, we must denounce, once again, the arbitrary and inconsistent new boundaries drawn up in recent years and, in this regard, we must also mention the importance of administrative divisions in Quebec.

Not only are these administrative zones strategically important for Quebec but they are based on fundamental geographical, economic, industrial and cultural elements.

As long as Quebec remains, in spite of itself, a member of the Canadian Confederation, the federal commissions responsible for readjusting electoral boundaries will have to consider regional municipalities, counties and administrative regions.

As we said in a previous speech, our second reservation about motion M-10 is that the decentralization of decision-making powers should, in our opinion, be an essential element of regional policy in the year 2000.

The Canadian policy advocated by a Liberal government big on centralization lacks a socio-economic development perspective.

We see the decentralization of political and economic decision-making as essential to creating jobs in RCMs.

In line with Minister Picotte's reform and the consolidation of regional development councils, the Bloc Québécois has made a commitment to direct political and economic decision-making to the regions.

(1115)

The Bloc Québécois proposes that the State of Quebec no longer act alone in planning coherent economic development. In our view, the general framework for this development must be redefined, starting with the regions. Decentralization of the bureaucratic monster which the central State has become requires Quebec's political sovereignty.

The Bloc Québécois wants to go beyond changes to the political structure. We recommend regional self-management based on fundamental democracy. We advocate the creation of highly decentralized and antibureaucratic organizations. In short, we reject the authoritarian social and economic management policies which are pursued by the unified political power representing central States and which are ruining the public finances of Canada and Quebec.

A two-year moratorium, during which decentralization of the decision-making process will be stepped up under the Parti Québécois in Quebec, will allow riding residents to concentrate more on ensuring regional development rather than on building a Canada that can never be.

Government Orders

For all these reasons, the Bloc Québécois recommends that the entire federal Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act be reformulated, and that the process be undertaken as soon as possible within the framework of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

We must take advantage of the two-year moratorium on the redistribution of electoral boundaries to weigh carefully all the implications of adjustments of this nature to ridings.

[*English*]

Mr. Jim Abbott (Kootenay East): Mr. Speaker, I stand here today as a very proud member of the House of Commons representing the province of British Columbia. The reason I say it that way is because with all due respect to my Liberal counterparts from our province, they have remained silent on this issue. It is an issue of great concern to the people of British Columbia.

We received by fax a copy of a letter that our premier sent to the Prime Minister. I will read part of it:

I am appalled that your government, with the support of six B.C. Liberal MPs, has betrayed the best interests of British Columbia in introducing this measure with closure. Your actions will deny B.C. its fair representation in the House of Commons.

He goes on to point out:

As you know, with the defeat of the Charlottetown accord, B.C. lost gains it made in that agreement which would have given this province five more seats before the 2001 census. That was to build on scheduled redistribution for 1996 when B.C.'s representation in the House of Commons was to increase by two seats. This was a clear recognition of B.C.'s severe under-representation in the House of Commons.

At the risk of being branded one of those crazy BCers, here we go all over again, let me also state that I am a proud Canadian citizen. I stand for a united Canada as I believe the vast majority of people in B.C. do.

However, why is it that every time we turn around in British Columbia measures are taken in this place, even when we have representatives on the government side, that we do not consider to be rational and fair representation? We feel we are almost being abandoned.

The leader of the opposition, Mr. Gordon Campbell, also wrote to the Prime Minister. He states:

Mr. Minister, the bill makes no sense.

He is referring to Bill C-18.

Parliament does not strengthen the country by disenfranchising its fastest growing region nor does Parliament strengthen its bond to the people it serves by further weakening the principle of one person, one vote.

One of the interesting things I have found since coming to Ottawa is that the amount of news that flows in this direction into the awareness of people in central Canada about the concerns of the people of British Columbia seems to be minuscule. If I did not have my constituency office in Cranbrook constantly feeding me information from the western press I

Government Orders

would think that it did not even exist. For the interest of the House I might mention that Mr. Mel Smith, former constitutional adviser to the province of British Columbia, in the lead paragraph in an article he has just written says: "British Columbians of every political stripe should be up in arms over the current scheme by the government to subvert the most fundamental principle of democratic society, representation by population and in the process deprive British Columbia of seats it is entitled to in the next House of Commons".

(1120)

What can we do to get proper representation for the province of British Columbia? We recognize that we do have one particular anomaly with respect to representation by population and that is Prince Edward Island where the average population per seat ranges between 30,000 and 34,000. So be it. It is a fact of history. It is an anomaly.

What about the province of Ontario? Under distribution as we currently have it, seats range in population from 63,000 to 209,000. I would suspect that the constituents that are represented by the member for Mississauga West must be wondering why the Liberal government in absolute union stood up en masse and said that was fine. For Mississauga West we can have 209,000 population versus 63,000 population. It is all right.

It is fair and good to say we are going to redistribute the seats in Parliament. We are going to do things differently. We are going to go into the process. However someone has suggested that many of the processes in Ottawa resemble glacial time. An ice age will come and go. We are going to be fighting the next election based on 1981 census figures.

What has happened in metropolitan Toronto? What has happened in Alberta? What has happened in Vancouver? In these areas we have had an absolute explosion of population and now these people are under-represented.

Let me also state that another problem is one of geography. Coming from an area that is bounded by mountains I recognize the difficulty in representing the number of people that I represent versus the number of people that are represented in constituencies in greater Vancouver. Again we have anomalies or variances. It is something we will have to discuss when we are talking about geography because of travel and distances. As a consequence substantial dollars are spent. If I, as a member of Parliament, am going to be representing more people we are going to be into more costs.

The Reform Party stands for representation by population in the lower House. We suggest that this motion is a tactic, it is a fait accompli because the Liberal government used closure to inflict on us these anomalies. Perhaps we even have to take a closer look at the other place. We are currently represented by people appointed there.

Canadians should be aware of the fact that Premier Filmon, as I understand it, is presently taking a look at the possibility of putting a ballot forward at the next provincial election in Manitoba in the same way that the province of Alberta did concerning the election of a senator.

I would suggest to all Canadians watching this broadcast that they give serious consideration to writing the premier and supporting him in the hope of getting proper representation within Canada. In the lower House we would have representation by population, if indeed we ever get around to it, and in the upper House we would have at least one more of the *Es* which would be an elected member in that Chamber.

I listened with interest to the Secretary of State when he mentioned that the results of redistribution were published without input. Perhaps some people would find it amusing that he is bringing up the point just at a time when we will be having public input. At the time when ordinary Canadians were going to have the opportunity to have input to this most fundamental part of our democratic process, the Liberals shut down the process. That is rather interesting.

(1125)

However, to make something good of something bad, we recognize there is a strong desire on the part of all Canadians to see a cap on the number of members of Parliament. The secretary stated that earlier in the debate. He said that Canadians are tired of the continual increase. Canadians want to see a change.

Therefore, I would like to move an amendment to the motion. I move:

That the motion be amended by deleting paragraph (a) and substituting the following:

"(a) a formula to cap or reduce the number of seats in the House of Commons:"

Ms. Margaret Bridgman (Surrey North): Mr. Speaker, in my address I shall focus on the aspect of the motion of whether the number of MPs should continually increase. In the course of this I shall include some thoughts on the geographical and electoral boundary concerns.

In keeping with the concept of representation by population or each MP representing approximately an equal number of Canadians citizens, two factors influence this. One is the constant increase in the number of Canadians and the other would be the movement of the population within our borders.

Two options present themselves as methods of achieving this representation by population, the first one being that we could establish the number of MPs we would have in the House and divide that number into the total number of Canadians to obtain the number of citizens that each MP would represent. This representation number becomes the variable that would change each time we address this process.

Government Orders

The second option would be the reverse of the first. That would be to establish the number of Canadians that an MP would represent and divide that number into the total number of Canadians. This would make the number of MPs the variable that would change each time we reviewed and updated this process.

Two points to note are that regardless of which option is employed the electoral boundaries of constituencies will change. In both options the existing boundaries within our country do not influence the designating of federal electoral boundaries. It is strictly on head count.

(1130)

Before moving on to the geographic concerns I wish to comment further on these two options. I favour the establishing of a given number of MPs, say 295, and increasing the number each represents as required.

If we were to do the opposite and increase the number of MPs each time we would be creating problems that would repeat themselves each time we updated our electoral representation or legislation and we would look for solutions each time.

The first problem that comes to mind is accommodation of the added MPs. A possible solution to this requires an expansion of this building or the room and that in turn would generate or create the problem of finding the dollars to pay for it. The expansion of this building or the room would not apply if we had a cap on the numbers of MPs and increased the numbers they represented each time.

A second possible solution to increasing the number of MPs is to utilize the communication highway where we could all stay at home and chat with each other from there. The ramifications of this present a debate in itself and is best left for some other day. I cannot help but wonder that if this ever came to pass considering the size of our country the first obstacle that we would probably debate would be the start and finish times of MP duty times.

A third possible solution to increasing the number of MPs, and this would be taken over using this approach over a long period of time, is that we could possibly end up with so many MPs that the solutions to address that issue at that time may be such things as shift work or breaking up into small groups of MPs and rotating one or two of us through the House Monday through Friday.

To get back to the reality of now, we have 295 members and the House is full. There is probably not even enough room here now to suggest a renovation activity to provide the same amount of leg room for the MPs in the top three rows as in the bottom two rows. We are that full.

If each member spoke for 20 minutes and then responded to 10 minutes questions or comments we would need 147.5 hours of

agenda time. Along with this we are in Ottawa approximately 26 weeks of 52, or half a year, and if each of these weeks were allowed 25 hours of agenda time, we would have a total 650 hours. If we divided that by the number of MPs and each participated, each one of us would be able to speak 2.2 times a year.

By increasing the number of MPs we would decrease the number of opportunities that each of us would have to participate in the debates in this House and other business. There is not time.

Keeping the number of MPs in the House constant and varying the number that each represents can create some problems or concerns. The most notable would be the inequity in the number of square miles of each constituency. To achieve the numbers involved in the two options the densely populated areas would be geographically small and the less dense would be large to horrendously large.

A possible solution to this and in keeping with representation by population is to address the process aspect of this procedure and adjust the MPs' constituency budgets to accommodate this. For example, in small geographic areas one constituency office is close enough to each constituent to allow them to visit their MP when he or she is in the area. In large geographic areas two or more offices may be necessary to achieve this same effect. Along with the budget adjustments to accommodate the extra offices we would probably have to look at travel expenses. This implies a cost consideration. A cost consideration would also be applicable if we increased the number of MPs. There may be other possible solutions within the process area to address this issue.

(1135)

Another possible concern in relation to keeping the number of MPs constant would be the ability of the MP to adequately represent the ever increasing numbers of citizens. I believe the solution to this concern lies within the realms of communicating and the availability of the communication vehicles to do so.

To comment on the electoral boundaries for a moment, we seem to have restricted our approach to establishing federal electoral boundaries by attempting to work within some of the existing internal boundaries. We have three levels of government and all are elected by the people and each have a specific number of elected representatives. City and municipal governments do not divide their areas into boundaries. Their geographic areas are small enough not to.

Provincial governments have larger areas and do divide them, not necessarily according to the city or municipal boundaries but according to population numbers.

A possible approach to this on the federal scene is to consider the boundaries on the federal scene as those of the country and again the whole area would be divided according to population.

Government Orders

In closing, capping the number of MPs in the House of Commons and achieving the concept of representation by population through the adjustment of the number of citizens each MP would represent and establishing electoral boundaries accordingly is the solution I favour.

Mrs. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary North): Mr. Speaker, I have a few thoughts to add to this motion to refer the matter of redistribution to a committee of this House and on the amendment of the member for Kootenay East to look at capping the number of members of the House of Commons. I have seven short points to make on that, the perfect number for those in the House who would like to have something to count.

First, we need to look at the cost considerations of increasing numbers of members in the House of Commons. The Canadian public is becoming increasingly critical of the cost of its government, the inefficiencies it perceives in the allocation of moneys that go to support government; the budgets, the support systems, the salary costs, the pension costs. All of the liabilities that we incur as a country because of increased representation should be a factor because they concern the taxpaying public.

Second, and this has been mentioned, the physical limitations of the House of Commons are a consideration for us and another reason to support the amendment that has been brought forward to this motion.

We have now a very full complement of seats in this House. Many members, especially those members considerably larger than I, have complained about the cramped space for the work of debates and participation in the House. It is very clear that adding more bodies and more physical demands on the space in the House is going to be very difficult to accommodate.

Third, particularly in the system we have had to date there is a very limited role for many of our members of Parliament, particularly backbench members of the government. The decisions generally are made and taken by cabinet and those who advise cabinet. The purpose of the backbenchers in the House seems to be to support those decisions. Simply having more people standing up and voting for decisions that are taken by a small group does not seem to be a very needed addition to the way our system works at this time.

(1140)

Fourth, it is fair to say that most Canadians would not see an increase in the number of members of Parliament as being equal to better representation for them. I believe from talking to Canadians and from comments that many of us have heard across the country that most Canadians would argue that they are not as well represented today as they were 10 years ago, even though the number of seats has increased. It is not the number, the quantity of representation, it is the quality of representation that is important to Canadians. It is clear that it is the quality of

representation that Canadians want to see addressed, not the quantity.

Fifth, these points have been made and I think bear repeating. Canada is over represented as a population compared with other democracies. For example, in the United States members of Congress number about a hundred more than in Canada with 10 times the population. They have only about 30 per cent more representation with 10 times the population.

It is very clear that other democracies manage to give quality representation with far fewer representatives per component of the population. We need to look at that as well.

Sixth, it should be emphasized that Canadians want fewer politicians. We do hear this over and over and this is not disputed. All members of the House when we discussed these issues agreed that the feedback they get from their constituents and from other people in Canada is that they do not want to see more politicians, they do not want to see more representatives, they do not want to see more MPs. They want to see the ones who are here be more effective, they want the system to be changed so that decisions are more representative of the judgment of Canadians. There is no cry for increased numbers of representatives.

We should not forget who we are supposed to serve. Our decisions should be taken in a way that meets with the approval, that carries the judgment of the people who are paying the bill, the people who are asking for the service that we provide. It is very clear that Canadians do want fewer representatives rather than more.

Seventh, when we talk about capping the number of MPs, how do we address the problem of regional representation? In my view it would be unwise to make regional representation too strong a feature in how we structure the way our representatives are chosen and the proportions from particular provinces or areas. It is clear that we do have some anomalies like Prince Edward Island, which has been mentioned, which perhaps need special consideration.

In our view the principle of representation by population should be adhered to as closely as possible in the way we structure the choosing of our members of Parliament. Regional representation and the need for that element in our political system, in our law making bodies, should be addressed through changes to the Senate rather than through changes to the House of Commons to ensure that certain proportions are made and do not change for different regions or provinces.

We have put forward as the Reform Party specific proposals for the reform of the other place in order to achieve those objectives.

The bottom line today when we consider whether to support the amendments that have been proposed is whether we are responsive as members of Parliament to the clear wishes of our constituents and the citizens of this country, to the economic

Government Orders

resources which they are able to provide for the operations of government, and to considerations of fairness and practicality.

Canadians would welcome a commitment on the part of this House to limit the number of representatives they must support and instead work more on increasing the quality of representation rather than the quantity of representation.

(1145)

I urge members of the House to support the amendment that has been put forward and to instruct the committee of the House working on these issues on our behalf to factor into the proposals it brings back to us at the end of its deliberations a specific proposal to cap the number of members of Parliament and, if possible, to reduce it.

Hon. David Anderson (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, the remarks of the hon. member who just spoke were very sensible and well thought out. Her predecessor in the debate suggested that it might be worthwhile to say a word or two in support of the concept of reducing the number of politicians in the Canadian political system.

We have 295 members of Parliament in the House. Some years ago we had a total of 181. When I was last a member there were 265. With due respect to everybody in the House, I do not believe the efficiency of a political body increases with increases in numbers of members.

The member quite correctly, and with some precision, pointed out that we were overpoliticized compared to some other jurisdictions and that we had more politicians per capita than many others. As I heard her words I made a quick calculation on the back of an envelope and would like to suggest that the United States senate would need 1,500 members to have the same representation proportionate to population that we have in Canada with the House of Commons. I suggest the hon. lady is quite correct in saying that an attempt to increase the size of the House depending on a formula in relation to numbers of voters and representatives would ultimately destroy the efficiency and effectiveness of the political body.

I suggest the United States senate with its 100 members is a body that works quite effectively. To have 1,500 members would create a body which would not work effectively. Therefore within those two parameters we can all determine where the appropriate level should be. The comments made are well worthy of careful thought.

Canadians have legislatures with large numbers of people. Over 15 years the legislature of British Columbia increased from 55 seats to 75 seats. If we continue that rate of increase in the legislatures of the provinces, if we continue the rate of increase in the Parliament of Canada, the House of Commons of

Canada, we will wind up with quite ineffective chambers in terms of rational, logical debate. That is one point.

These chambers are designed for one person speaking at one time. The more people we squeeze into them, the more limits we need on what they can say and the more rules about time limits or their opportunity to represent their constituents. Those points must be taken into account as well.

For example, with no disrespect, we are not many here today. It was possible with an uncrowded House for us to listen to each of the speakers. That happens when we are in smaller groups. We listen to one another. We tend to go through the logic and say: "Gee, that makes sense" or "Boy, that is dead wrong". We tend to listen. How many people in the House today have not risen, made a speech and sat down afterward just a little irritated that everybody was doing something else, that it was simply a speech for *Hansard*, or that it was not part of the vital process of democracy?

We must remember that as we constantly increase the size of the House the effectiveness of the body is less and less, and more and more we are simply speaking for the record, speaking for the newspapers or speaking for some other purpose than a true debate among members of the House.

Again with no disrespect to this body I believe, looking at my experience in politics at both levels of government, that with 55 members in the British Columbia legislature we spent a lot more time in debate thinking about what the other person was saying, listening to what the other person was saying, and adjusting our ideas in accordance with what the other person was saying. Without suggesting that the House of Commons should have 55 seats, I simply say that smaller bodies tend to be more effective political organizations from that point of view. I was most struck by the words of the hon. member and the previous speaker from another party. I am quite willing to say that I am in complete agreement with much of what she said. The House is too big. My personal belief is that it would be more effective in the range between 220 and 260 seats rather than over 300. It will be over 300 if we do not adopt the process of cutting it back.

(1150)

I supported the process of putting the whole business of the number of seats to a committee because I believed that the 300-member point was a tripwire. If we cannot keep the House below 300 members we can kiss goodbye any real effort to cut the costs of government in Canada at the political level. If we cannot do something to cut back on the cost of government and at the same time to increase efficiency, why bother asking other elements of government such as the civil service to try it? We as politicians should think very closely about the importance of cutbacks on numbers.

Government Orders

As we know this process is to send the whole issue of redistribution to a committee. That was proposed by the minister. That was spoken to very eloquently by the hon. parliamentary secretary and spoken to, I might add, in general terms very eloquently by members of the opposition.

I am not a believer in curbing the committee with caps, restraints or limitations. I believe we should let the committee decide what is appropriate after it has heard from people on the issues involved. I trust the hon. member who has just spoken will be a member of the committee. Her views on the issue are very attractive to me. It may be that considerations will come forward that will modify her views or mine as the case may be. I do not believe we should be setting limits on the committee and attempting to determine the outcome of its deliberations before it actually meets to consider the issue of redistribution.

I do not wish to take any more time, except to say that the concept of cutting back on the number of seats in the House of Commons or the concept of cutting back on the number of elected representatives in the provincial legislatures is extremely attractive. Only if we start making these bodies more effective can we make individual members more effective parliamentarians and representatives of their constituencies.

Therefore I applaud the thrust of the argument of the previous two speakers. I am attracted to it. I am quite willing to say that while they may be on the other side of the House they have met a very responsive chord on the government benches, as indeed they know full well frequently happens. We wish to incorporate their views on the issue of redistribution and on the issue of how many seats there should be.

My final point, again in agreement with the hon. member, is that when she stated there should be proper representation across the country based upon population she was dead right. We can make the odd exception. We have always made an exception for P.E.I., but that is the exception that should prove the rule. The rule is rep by pop. The general rule, given the limitations of large areas of the country with very few people and making allowances here and there for special circumstances, is rep by pop.

Therefore I do not see the approach of turning over the boundary commission proposals to a committee of the House to be anything in the nature of taking something away from a province. For instance, my hon. colleague from Ontario is listening to me at the moment. I do not think our proposal is to take four seats away from Ontario which would otherwise occur. I do not think our proposal is to take two seats away from British Columbia. It is a question of saying that we have reached the point where the House will have over 300 seats and it is now time to do something about it.

Mr. Pearson was probably right in the sixties, some 30 years ago, to set up this type of system. However it has ground on remorselessly giving the House more and more members and it is now time for us to call a halt to automatic mechanisms that simply churn out more expense for the public and perhaps reduce the efficiency of the House. That is why I am happy to support the government's approach in this regard and to commend hon. members on their speeches.

(1155)

Mr. Jim Silye (Calgary Centre): Mr. Speaker, I follow on the heels of the Minister of National Revenue who pointed out that there were some advantages in the proposals made by members of our party. I appreciate his candour, his openness and his willingness to enter into a spirit of non-partisanship on something as important as this matter.

There is no question the cost of government is ever increasing. The only way we can put a halt to it is through attrition. We should not increase the size of the House. The committee should be given direction. All we are asking in our amendment is for the committee to be given enough direction or encouragement to consider the possible downsizing of the House of Commons and to consider the possible freezing or setting of the cap at 295 for the House of Commons, as we are presently designed now.

All we are asking in our amendment is that these points be made to the committee for its consideration. If after due deliberation the committee comes back and says in the spirit and principle of rep by pop or in the spirit and principle of the act of Confederation that it must continue its present course, so be it.

We happen to believe the committee should be given the opportunity, the authority and the right to come back to the House with a report reflecting and including representation by population and the fact, as the member for Calgary North pointed out, that increasing the size of the House does not necessarily mean it will perform any better.

We have a government, a cabinet and what we call backbenchers. Backbenchers are usually assigned to various committees. They select the various chairmen of committees. Sometimes cabinet gives good leadership and cabinet ministers give those corresponding committees direction, responsibility and duties. However that is in the minority.

In the majority of cases cabinet ministers give no direction to their subcommittees or their committees, give no follow up to those committees and give token appearances to the committees. Sooner or later during the course of the Parliament they lose interest and know they are there to vote on a partisan basis.

In return for the support of the Minister of National Revenue on this issue I would commend about four or five cabinet ministers of the government who have given their various committees direction, who have given them some authority to report back and get the feel and the will of the people. I believe

Government Orders

the chairmen of these committees and the members of government on those committees feel like they are making a contribution.

If that continues we can do some good for Canada and Canadians. However, if they do not do it, that is where I say increasing the size is just a waste of time and money. We have to reduce the cost of doing business in Parliament. We have to reduce the cost of doing business for government. We have to set the example.

When the Minister of National Revenue proposed Bill C-2 he indicated that he wanted to amalgamate two deputy ministers into one. It was an effort to streamline and lower the cost of doing business yet increase the efficiency and the effectiveness of government. We will be watching to see if the new super deputy minister of national revenue, taxation, customs and excise lowers the cost of the department, improves the efficiency and effectiveness of the services within the department and achieves the aims and objectives of the bill. We will be watching. Hopefully that will come about.

I would like to get back to representation by population. There are two ways to continue the principle of equal representation. We are not really on representation by population. We know that on the principle of what was guaranteed to Prince Edward Island in joining Confederation. It was guaranteed a minimum of four seats no matter what its population became.

(1200)

Therefore what we are trying to do is come as close to representation by population as possible and emulate that principle in theory. Right now there are two options available to us.

The first option is to continue on the present course. Every eight years when there is a redistribution calculation we would look at the population shift and then increase the number of seats. That is representation by population and we would be giving everybody what they want. Consequently that is what increases the cost and size of government and we wish to diminish and reduce that.

The second option is to stray away from that philosophy, that principle and that theory which is flawed. Let us try to improve and accept a new theory that would look at redistribution and the formula for both urban and rural areas.

Whether the size of the House of Commons is the current 295 or it goes back to 260 or in the range the Minister of National Revenue recommended of between 220 and 260, whatever that number becomes, the size would be capped. Then future redistributions and future principles of following equal representation or representation by population could be accommodated in both rural and urban areas by simply reallocating the ministers in those areas and changing the boundaries to reflect the shift in population rather than adding the number of people.

Let me repeat for the purposes of the committee and for the purposes of my contribution to this debate. I am suggesting if the size of the House of Commons were set at a fixed number we could still be a democratic institution and still respect redistribution on the basis of shifting the boundaries but not increasing the number of people. That is something I hope the committee looks at.

The other point is the problem with the Senate which has to be addressed. We have to some day very soon look at this institution which can be elected, equal and effective. We can work together rather than always degrading that other House.

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

Some hon. members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): The question is on the amendment.

Mrs. Ablonczy: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I had understood the amendment to read "including the possibility of a formula or cap to reduce". Are those words not in the amendment? That is what I had understood.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): I thank the hon. member for Calgary North for her intervention. If she will give me a moment, I will consult with the table officers and do a verification of the amendment.

The amendment was correct in its first form. The question is on the amendment. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the amendment?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

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

Some hon. members: Yea.

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

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): In my opinion the nays have it.

And more than five members having risen:

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

(1205)

And the bells having rung:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): Order. Pursuant to Standing Order 45(5)(a), I have been requested by the chief government whip to defer the division until a later time. Accordingly,

Government Orders

pursuant to Standing Order 45(5)(a) the division on the question now before the House stands deferred until later this day at 5.30 p.m. at which time the bells to call in the members will be sounded for not more than 15 minutes.

* * *

[Translation]

CONTROLLED DRUGS AND SUBSTANCES ACT

The House resumed, from February 18, consideration of the motion that Bill C-7, an Act respecting the control of certain drugs, their precursors and other substances and to amend certain other Acts and repeal the Narcotic Control Act in consequence thereof, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mrs. Pierrette Venne (Saint-Hubert): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Health tabled Bill C-7, an Act respecting the control of certain drugs, their precursors and other substances, but this legislation has nothing to do with public health.

The government is not being honest in tabling a bill under such misleading pretence. This bill concerns criminal law and nothing else. In its present form, it should bear the signature of the Minister of Justice or the Solicitor General.

Whichever way you look at it, it is hard to find in this muddled document anything but a new criminal law to control drugs. Therefore, for the purposes of this debate, I will assume that this legislation is nothing else than what it appears to be. Obviously, the government would want us to believe that this is a health bill, and for one reason only: Criminal laws have to be precise, clear and conclusive. They are passed by Parliament and leave very little leeway to cabinet regarding the definition of their scope. By making Bill C-7 look like an administrative measure, all the provisions allowing Cabinet to establish regulations become justified. This is perhaps the most comprehensive example of legislation by delegation.

(1210)

There is no other reason why the government would claim that Bill C-7 is a public health measure. The pretence is simply too obvious. The Liberal government is trying to get full decision powers on the most important aspects of the legislation. It has neither the courage nor the honesty to tell Canadians that Bill C-7 is merely an attempt to fight drug trafficking. Why not be honest? Why is the government hiding its true motive? The government should admit that it is so suspicious of this House, that it tries to hide its real intentions. And those intentions are contained in the wording of the legislation.

Police forces are currently enforcing two complementary acts: the Narcotic Control Act which will be repealed by the bill

before the House and the Food and Drugs Act, which will be repealed in part. The government maintains that the new act will give more flexibility to police services, because provocation and undercover activities will be authorized under the new regulations.

However, the explanatory notes of the bill are silent on the government's concerns regarding public health. The purpose of this legislation is obviously to control the movement of drugs and suppress trafficking. Why not clearly say so?

This is nothing but a new Narcotic Control Act, framework legislation, unique in itself, criminal legislation which gives cabinet exceptional discretionary powers as to its scope and its implementation, not unlike the former War Measures Act. This is the context in which we have to consider Bill C-7.

Having said so, I agree with the majority of Canadians that we have to provide police and judicial authorities with the tools they need to efficiently suppress drug trafficking. Therefore, I support the purpose of Bill C-7, to the extent that it tries to put a stop to the movement of drugs. From massive importing to individual possession, the legislative drafters covered all social problems associated with illegal drugs.

On this particular topic, I want to say that I am very pleased with the way the various stages of trafficking are dealt with. The bill considers separately such issues as drug production, and importing and exporting, offenses which carry a maximum sentence of life imprisonment. The exemplary nature of such sentences and deterrence must continue to apply. Harsh sentences such as those will not shock honest citizens.

Zero tolerance for illegal drugs means suppression by police and judicial authorities at all levels of distribution. So, I am pleased with the new classification provided in this bill. Offenses, like simple possession, trafficking, possession for purpose of trafficking, importing and exporting, production of substance, possession of property obtained by trafficking and laundering are now very well identified. Each category is treated according to the seriousness of the offence and carries proportionate sentences.

I do have some reservations about the way possession of cannabis is handled, but that issue can be reviewed by the parliamentary committee, and I look forward to the testimony of experts in this field.

This bill could meet with our approval if it were to lead to some true legislation, but unfortunately it is not the case. Bill C-7 is essentially the same as Bill C-85 which was brought in by the late Conservative government. The government party cannot claim to have created this initiative.

It would be a mistake to try to make people believe that this is a new measure, inspired and motivated by recent circumstances

Government Orders

and designed to give the police effective emergency powers of investigation on trans-border Indian reserves.

(1215)

This is misinformation. This piece of legislation has been on the back-burner since Bill C-85 died on the Order Paper in the last Parliament. It was revived by the Liberals who have just missed an opportunity to produce a bill that would be easy to read and to understand and that would respect the jurisdiction of the Confederated States, which are still called provinces.

I am disappointed, because if the legislation is passed as it is, it may well miss the point, above all because it will be torn to shreds by the courts on the account of its lack of clarity and of its possible unconstitutionality.

I am disappointed also because we are again faced with a botched and improvised measure. Indeed, if Bill C-7 were to be passed exactly as it is, it would not be understandable for most Canadians, who have no legal training and who would need whole legal essays to distinguish all its subtleties and references to other laws.

Allow me to read two quotes taken from an outstanding study conducted by professors Usprich and Salomon, of the School of Law of the University of Western Ontario on the old Bill C-85, which I myself apply to the current bill. I think these comments are as valid for C-7 as they were for the old C-85, and I quote:

It would not be exaggerated to say that the bill reads generally as if it had been drafted by people who are not familiar with criminal law and who have acquired their experience writing legal texts on income tax—

In general, the legislation is badly written and even if we disregard several blatant mistakes, it is uselessly complex and generally difficult to understand. We consider this bill to be a step backward.

And yet, if it were only for the inaccuracy of the text, it would still be possible to send the minister back to the drawing board, but there is more. The federal legislator uses a style that is confusing, complex and twisted to describe and define very simple cases of trafficking, production and possession of illegal substances.

The bill often refers to other legislation for its interpretation and this makes for an obscure text with countless legal nuances and exceptions, a text so incomplete as to need Cabinet regulations before its final scope can be known.

We all want the bill to achieve its underlying objectives but we denounce the insufficient means it proposes to fight drug traffickers, who will successfully challenge it in court at the first opportunity. This is an amateurish piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker, mere window-dressing.

This bill should be sent back to the minister, not the Minister of Health, but the Minister of Justice, to be completely rewritten and brought back to the House as soon as possible. We will give our unconditional support to a complete, simple and effective

bill in the same spirit, but not this one which was drafted by people who are completely out of touch with reality.

We are told that this would be an improvement compared to the present legislation, and that the bill is needed to control illegal activities on the Mohawk reserves. Nothing is farther from the truth. I challenge anyone to find something in this bill that gives the police more effective power than the present legislation does.

Finally, this bill is unacceptable because it is outright interference in provincial jurisdiction over civil law procedure and the administration of justice. In the disguise of a bill on public health, the government is actually trying to impose a real code of legal and administrative procedure. The administration of justice inside a province is its exclusive jurisdiction, as is public health, by the way.

(1220)

Whether you approach the constitutional study of this bill from either of these aspects, namely public health or the administration of justice, the conclusion is the same: it is an unacceptable encroachment upon areas under exclusive provincial jurisdiction.

In order to ensure compliance with the forthcoming regulations, the bill allows the Minister of Health to designate inspectors who have considerable powers. As long as these inspectors do nothing else but examine stocks of designated substances held by licence holders, there will not be any problems. I think that the minister responsible for enforcing the legislation must have the administrative means to fulfil his or her mandate. But the bill authorises these same federal inspectors to contravene any provincial legislation regarding the confidentiality of medical records.

Quebec's privacy legislation, particularly with regard to access to medical records, serves as model. Through its Charter of Rights and Freedoms, its new Civil Code and its privacy legislation, Quebec has become a world leader in this area. In particular, medical records in Quebec are better protected than a fortress. Now, the Minister of Health introduces a bill that would authorize any federal inspector, whose qualifications could be inversely proportional to his or her partisan activities, to enter the place of business of a physician or a pharmacist, to demand access to records and computer data, to make copies of this information and to distribute it to all kinds of people within the federal government. We do not accept that.

Nor do we accept that, in a much more insidious way, the legislation authorizes the cabinet to make compliance regulations that will manifestly go beyond the scope of the bill and that will constitute new attacks on provincial jurisdiction. The minister has done her homework poorly, and, moreover, she leaves it to Cabinet to finish the job. Clause 54 empowers Cabinet to make regulations on what the legislation does not cover. Not only does the legislation say nothing about important

Government Orders

aspects of its implementation but we do not even know which minister will be responsible for it. This will be up to Cabinet to decide.

Even the professional corporations that should be the first to be concerned by this new legislation do not know whether their members will be affected by the bill. Again, it will be up to Cabinet to decide whether pharmacists, veterinarians, doctors and dentists will have to get a licence to sell and distribute designated drugs. If this were not legislation in the field of criminal law, we might be willing to leave it to Cabinet to make regulations. As in the case of several other pieces of legislation, we would only have to define parameters in framework legislation and give Cabinet extensive regulatory powers. In administrative matters, there is no great risk in proceeding that way. To the extent that Cabinet does not go beyond the powers with which it has been entrusted by Parliament, the regulations are generally valid.

It is quite another thing in criminal matters, for the citizen ought not to be forced to read every order in council to understand the content and the import of the bill. Yet with this legislation we are asked to give the cabinet the power to impose its will. Who can believe that we will accept, for instance, that Cabinet could use its regulatory powers to legislate on the conduct of members of the professions governed by the Quebec Professional Code? The activities of doctors, pharmacists, veterinarians and dentists in Quebec are exclusively regulated by legislation that controls the practice of their professions.

In addition to being submitted to their organization's monitoring, professionals in Quebec are governed by the Professional Code. When the government proposes that the cabinet be given the authority to determine the conditions of practice of certain professions, it is asking us to make a clean sweep of provincial jurisdiction in that matter, to disregard the exclusive privileges of professional corporations and to grant itself supreme authority over the main fields of activity of pharmacists.

(1225)

We cannot tolerate that this government would take advantage of a piece of criminal legislation to give Cabinet regulatory powers that so blatantly intrude into provincial jurisdiction on professional practice.

Here are two examples.

When the bill, in the preamble to clause 54, entrusts to Cabinet the regulation of the medical use of drugs, it deals with medical practice and not drug control.

When the bill gives to Cabinet all powers over the sale, supply and administration of drugs, it deals with the provision of pharmaceutical, dental or veterinary services.

When the bill gives to Cabinet the power to deliver licences for the sale of controlled substances, it affects the provision of all pharmaceutical services.

When the bill hands over to Cabinet the authority over the sale and storage of those substances, over professional qualifications of people authorized to sell them, over records those persons should keep, over the dealings of a professional corporation with its members, it is really a code of ethics and a whole set of regulations that the government is trying to impose to pharmacists.

We could go on for hours about this bill, which ignores the fact that the Constitution of this country is based on a division of powers.

Two recent initiatives confirm our misgivings.

The bill has still not been passed and debate at second reading has yet to be completed and two ministers, with contempt for basic decency, announce enforcement regulations which show how much power Cabinet seeks.

I said that this bill was incomplete. I now add that it is only a general and confusing preamble to a series of regulations that Cabinet will be empowered to adopt at its whim and for any reason.

The Solicitor General announced, in a tendentious press release that the police would have a clear and definite legislative basis for engaging in clandestine activities.

What the minister does not say is that this clear and definite legislative basis for new police powers will be in the regulations and not in the law.

This technique could be called legislative trickery.

It is a blatant lack of respect for Parliament. As if we could not legislate intelligently in this House as the cabinet can behind closed doors.

And the Minister of Health announced through the media that growing cannabis could be allowed for commercial purposes.

This government is trying to acquire full powers. It is presenting a bill only for the sake of appearances.

It is not surprising that the Minister of Health, who is apparently sponsoring the bill, announces without batting an eyelash that she is already trying to amend the law without going through the House.

That shows what little consideration this government has for the elected members of this House.

We will vote against this piece of legislation which is badly written and thrown together and cannot hide the ambitions of the government to regulate professions that fall under exclusive provincial jurisdiction and gives Cabinet unacceptable and excessive regulatory authority.

*Government Orders**[English]*

Mr. Ron MacDonald (Dartmouth): Mr. Speaker, I listened to some of the speech of the hon. member opposite. Perhaps my reading of the bill is different than hers but my understanding of the bill is that it is basically a codification of regulations that currently exist under two other acts.

I know that in the last Parliament when the Liberal Party was in opposition we fought very hard against government by regulation on many bills that were put before this place. We believe that when measures impact on the people of the country by way of regulation, wherever possible they should be codified. If flexibility is needed that is fine, but the place to debate major changes is certainly on the floor of the House of Commons. It is my understanding that we are not going in the direction of further regulation but we are going in the direction of codification of existing regulations under some acts.

(1230)

She spoke for a bit about the pharmaceutical industry. I can certainly tell her that when Bill C-91 hit the floor there was great debate on all sides about the impact of that bill on both sides of industry plus consumers in the health care sector of Canada. One of the major things that this side fought for, and we had a particular point of view on it, was that the regulations inherent in that piece of legislation had to at least go before a parliamentary committee to be debated.

I do not know what the position of the members on her side was. I think they did support the bill but we did not. That was one of the reasons. We believe strongly that when we are dealing with things such as C-91 and indeed when we are dealing with enforcement under the Narcotics Control Act or the Food and Drug Act the place these regulatory changes should be debated is here on the floor of the House.

I would like to get her comments because she did mention the pharmaceutical industry. I would like for her to sort of broaden that out because I did not quite buy her argument insofar as it related to the pharmaceutical industry in Canada.

[Translation]

Mrs. Venne: Mr. Speaker, first of all, we are talking about the regulations which cabinet makes from time to time, as I said in my speech. In fact, cabinet may propose regulations in the case of administrative laws but not in the case of criminal legislation. However, the present wording of the bill gives the government or cabinet the right to make criminal laws.

We had a similar case in the debate on gun control legislation, and at the time it was said that the regulations would have to be tabled in the House 30 days before adoption and publication, during which time they could be discussed in the House. That is

what we decided, and that is what will happen in the case of our gun control legislation.

As for the second part of the hon. member's question in which he referred to the lack of response on the part of pharmacists and the general public, who do not see these things the way I do, I simply want to say there is no response at the present time because they do not feel concerned by this legislation. They are not mentioned in the bill. Why should they respond? The same applies to dentists and physicians. At the present time, no one is responding and no one is concerned by the bill. Why? Because for the time being, the individuals and professions that will be in this bill have not been identified.

So this is one way to get legislation through Parliament without people realizing what is going on, until the regulations are tabled and people are told these apply to veterinarians, physicians and dentists, and then they will react, but it will be too late.

That is why, as a member of the opposition, I see it as my duty to condemn these practices the government is trying to get through the House.

[English]

Ms. Margaret Bridgman (Surrey North): Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform the House that the Reform Party members will be dividing their time.

This bill deals with substances as listed in schedules I through IV and involves those substances that: "when introduced into our bodies produce a stimulant, depressant and/or hallucinogenic effect".

I have some concerns regarding the clarity and the continuity of the intent in some areas of this bill. It is a large bill and to illustrate my point I will select a few sections to indicate this lack of clarity or continuity.

Commencing with section 23 and a few thereafter, this section involves the disposing of controlled substances. The bill states, and I paraphrase, that any person may apply to the justice in writing and within 60 days of the seizure date of the substances for their return. If the justice is satisfied a person applying is the lawful owner or legally entitled to possession of the substance, and if the minister does not have reasonable grounds regarding the safety of the substance and the justice agrees that the substance need not be disposed of, then the substance will be returned to the legally recognized owner.

(1235)

The minister can do this also in another situation and in that case the legal owner gets paid for the amount of the drugs. Considering this disposal when a legal owner is recognized, if the substance here is not required as evidence, the bill provides for the owner, if he or she wishes, to give consent to have the minister dispose of the substance.

Government Orders

On the other hand the bill does not appear to provide this option to the owner if the substance is required for evidence. He or she gets it back. This could be an oversight or it could be an intent.

Other areas lacking clarity are sections 28 and 25. In section 28: "The minister may cause to be destroyed, on notification of the Attorney General, any illegally produced plant from which a substance under schedule I, II or III may be extracted". The decision is made by the minister and the plant can be disposed of by informing the Attorney General before any controlled substance is produced from it.

It is assumed that in this scenario the plant has been seen by the minister as a potential public health or a safety hazard. In section 25, if the minister has reasonable grounds to believe that the controlled substance constitutes a potential security or health and safety hazard, notice is given to the Attorney General again but at this point a justice is required to be satisfied with the minister's belief before the substance will be ordered forfeited to the crown for the minister to dispose of. In this case it appears that a justice is making the decision to have the drug disposed of.

Here it appears that the minister has the authority to dispose of the plants before the components become controlled substances. Once they become controlled substances the agreement from a justice must also be obtained. This may be the intent and if so I recommend a little more clarity or rationale to eliminate the questioning of this concept.

To leave the disposal section of the bill, I would like to look at the first few sections, specifically sections 2 and 3. These seem to allow for some substances not listed in the schedules to fall within the jurisdiction of the proposed act based on either their chemical composition or their effect on the human body or both.

This could be the beginning of potential problems in that the medical practitioner or the pharmacist or some other medical person is left with the decision as to whether the particular substance not listed in the schedules could or would not be considered a controlled substance.

Making this decision based on the chemical composition of the substance may be straightforward. Making the decision based on the effects on the human body is not. An example that comes to mind would be a substance that may on occasions in some people produce side effects that could be seen to fall within the parameters of the bill as stated now and may on the other hand not produce those side effects in other people.

I assume the intent of these sections of the bill is to provide a control mechanism for those substances created between the updating of the schedules, that those substances that may indeed end up as being classified as controlled substances when the schedules are updated. In this regard, I recommend that mechanisms be built into the bill that allow for frequent updating of the

schedules without having to review or address the entire bill or act each time.

One possible solution may be the removal of the schedules which list the substances by name, which are from the actual content of the bill and appended to the bill and yet have a detailed description of the types of substances that would be listed on the schedules. Have that within the bill.

There are a couple of other aspects that I would like to address quickly. I am running short of time. One is the monitoring of prescription records and this is presently being done by Canada's bureau of dangerous drugs. I believe the data are submitted once every 60 days. The bill tends to suggest they would be submitted every 30 days.

(1240)

I would question or wonder about the feasibility of this as an increased workload for both those submitting the data and those receiving the data, and if indeed receiving the data more frequently would enhance the effectiveness of the monitoring of, and thus more control over, these adverse situations.

The second clarification needed is in relation to criminal charges. Apparently the bill provides for criminal charges to be laid if a person is in possession of drugs that are in schedules I and II. If they are in possession of drugs that are in schedule III the intent for trafficking would have to be proven.

In closing, I would have to oppose this bill based on lack of clarity in a number of areas.

Also at this time I would like to propose an amendment to the motion. I move:

That the motion be amended by deleting the words after the word "that" and substituting the following therefor:

"Bill C-7, an act respecting the control of certain drugs, their precursors and other substances and to amend certain other acts and repeal the Narcotic Control Act in consequence thereof, be not now read a second time but that the order be discharged, the bill withdrawn and the subject matter be referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs."

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): The amendment is in order.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby.

Mr. Paul E. Forseth (New Westminster—Burnaby): Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to respond to Bill C-7 presented by the Minister of Health.

This bill is a near duplicate of Bill C-85 from the 34th Parliament. From my counting it is 71 pages, a considerable piece of legislation. I understand that this bill, like all bills, is not the beginning of something. It is more correctly seen as the end product, the result of much deliberation, consultation and thousands of hours of work by many.

Government Orders

This bill is a major realignment of drug control legislation, specifically an act respecting the control of certain drugs, their precursors and other substances, and to amend certain other acts and repeal the Narcotic Control Act. The first flag of concern is that this bill is presented by the Minister of Health. It amends the contents of the Criminal Code of which the Narcotic Control Act and federal drug act have traditionally been part. It is now seen as health legislation rather than behavioural control legislation that is commonly known as the criminal law.

(1245)

I am directly suggesting that there is joint responsibility between the Standing Committee on Health and the Standing Committee on Justice. When this bill gets to committee the significant and traditional Criminal Code and justice nature of the bill must not be forgotten.

This begs the question: What is the government saying about the drug problem in Canada? What philosophical flavour made this bill be presented as health legislation? Certainly that should be a concern to the community.

The assignment category for legislation into health sends a message to the country. I am not so sure I like that message. Is there a misguided softening on law and order with this government? Has the government given up on the aggressive police enforcement side of dealing with the drug problem? I hope not. Certainly I do not think it has the political mandate for that either.

May this legislation receive the significance and priority that it deserves. For all its hoped for improvements let us hope that changes in the criminal law will not be weakened by Bill C-7's regulation to be seen merely as a health issue.

The role of the federal government in combating drug abuse is long established. Within Canada the Narcotic Control Act, the Food and Drugs Act and the Criminal Code provide the basic legislative structure for the control of psychoactive substances, narcotic stimulants, depressants and hallucinogens.

Enforcement of these federal statutes is the responsibility of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police who work closely with customs authorities, provincial and municipal police forces to combat illicit drug activity.

Health and Welfare Canada's bureau of dangerous drugs has a dual role in the implementation of the statutes. It provides administrative support to law enforcement agencies such as disposal of seized goods and assets, training assistance and scientific expertise. The bureau also administers the regulations covering the legitimate use of psychoactive substances for medical and scientific research purposes.

These provide for distribution procedures, security measures, record keeping and prescribing practice among others. There must be a balance between control over drugs and their availability to meet legitimate medical and scientific needs.

The health care community must also be accountable for its shared role in achieving this balance. Since practitioners, physicians, veterinarians, dentists and pharmacists are licensed by the provincial government where they practise, those governments are also responsible for ensuring that standards are met by health professionals under their jurisdiction.

Close and ongoing liaison among federal and provincial authorities is the key to an effective drug control program. However it must be sustained by bold, clear law that actually works in the courtroom and does not become a retirement plan for lawyers.

Drug control law must also send the right signals for general deterrence. It must work technically but it also must teach. It is symbolism and advance warning of what the community will tolerate.

My reading of the community mood is that it is looking for political leadership and courage concerning our drug laws. The attitudes of zero tolerance are increasing as the community comes to comprehend the long term debilitating effects that illicit drug use has on society, especially among the young.

Bill C-7 replaces a large part of the Criminal Code book which I have on my reference shelf, for the Narcotic Control Act and the Food and Drugs Act have traditionally been known as criminal legislation. Law enforcement agencies are involved. The courts regularly impose sentences on those duly charged under it, fined and given jail terms. This is the character and seriousness of the legislation.

Drugs are also related to organized crime. Yet this bill to amend the Criminal Code is introduced by the Minister of Health. Health is an issue for sure but Bill C-7 is clearly criminal law in tradition and substance. Therefore when we push this bill on to the next stage, I ask the government to send it to the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs, not the Standing Committee on Health.

I want to talk for a moment about marijuana. A survey a few years ago revealed at that time that 4.5 million Canadians 15 years old and over had tried some form of cannabis. The same survey showed that 1 in 15 Canadians used cannabis in the year of that survey and the numbers were rather astonishing. Approximately 700,000 Canadians have tried some form of cocaine. More than 800,000 have tried LSD, speed or heroin.

(1250)

Since the drug problem seems to accelerate each year, there is no question that there needs to be a coherent, workable and

Government Orders

strong response by Parliament. We must give our front line people, who struggle valiantly to protect the community, the tools and legal terms to do their job.

I notice that in the first version of this bill, the Conservative one from the 34th Parliament, the amount of cannabis that is to be considered the demarcation line between schedules—serious consequences or not so serious consequences—in Bill C-85, schedule VI, it was one kilo of cannabis. That was the amount. Now in the same section of Bill C-7, that demarcation amount is raised to three kilos. What is the message here?

Maybe there are some arguments, such as fewer cases leading to jail terms, a cost saving measure. Perhaps pressure has come from certain social groups who believe in using pot as their religion. Whatever the reckoning, it is quite a message to send to the community.

What are the effects of the proposed legislation with reference to schedule VI? Those dealing in drugs could do so in shipments under three kilos. Should they get caught it would mean not as heavy a penalty as it would if they were caught with a quantity exceeding three kilos. This change might embolden what is happening on the street, especially in our high schools, and result in an increase in the drug trade. Traffickers will think that the law is getting soft.

How much is three kilos? It is three bricks, three bundles, about 6.6 pounds. It is about the size and weight of my newborn son, 6.6 pounds. What will 6.6 pounds buy or bring the children of our nation? Three kilos or 6.6 pounds would make an awful lot of joints.

As a criminal justice professional I have seen firsthand clients who have lost business careers because of closet marijuana habits. Years ago I saw a cabinet minister of the provincial government light up. How sad. I have dealt with sexual offenders on probation. Some of their excuses for molesting the children in their household was that they were high on cannabis.

The car accidents, the industrial accidents, the misjudged business deals leading to bankruptcy and many needlessly unemployed, the loss of general social judgment, the loss of the desire to work, the loss of the desire for academic excellence, these I have observed firsthand as a probation officer, officer of the court and family court counsellor, the direct result of the relatively tolerant attitude toward marijuana use. There we have some of the underlying principles of Bill C-7. These are the flags of direction that the bill takes.

In summary, first I say clearly that Bill C-7 is criminal law. Let us not slip it by as merely health legislation. Second, what a signal is sent by the threshold of three kilos for cannabis. This bill on that specific seems to go in the wrong direction.

The government may try to send a signal that we now are a mature, sophisticated society and that we can handle drug use in a tolerant and enlightened way under the guise of health but the

community knows otherwise. The school authorities in my riding are not looking for a loosening of drug enforcement. The local crown counsel is looking for clear, tough, workable legislation that holds up in the courtroom.

My community wants legislation that gives clear authority to the duty constable when he pulls over a driver. It should give appropriate powers of search and seizure for drugs. I say it is not technically hard to do but it requires political will to send a clear signal which way we are going with this legislation. Let the community absorb what is being proposed. Let witnesses come forward. Let the people speak, not just the experts.

I challenge the government to not only proceed with its top down attitude telling the community what is good for them but let the implications of this bill simmer in the community and then have the courage to adjust its efforts into what the community expects from its leaders.

In closing, Bill C-7 is significant legislation. It is 71 pages worth. It remains to be seen what is the essential thrust, where it is going. I look forward to seeing it referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and give it the character and the intent that it deserves.

Mr. Morris Bodnar (Saskatoon—Dundurn): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member made reference to marijuana and a particular threshold of three kilos without making reference to that as being simply a procedural matter in the act and having nothing to do with substance.

The new legislation in dealing with cannabis, which is marijuana, puts the substance into the same schedule, schedule I, that opium, codeine, morphine, cocaine are in, some of the worst drugs that we have. Marijuana and its derivatives are in the same schedule where reference is made that marijuana, its preparations, derivatives and similar synthetic preparations are all included in schedule I.

(1255)

How can the hon. member indicate that this legislation is not legislation that adequately deals with marijuana when that substance is put into the same schedule as other drugs such as cocaine, codeine and opium?

Mr. Forseth: I understand the point. There is a demarcation on schedule VI concerning the three kilo mark, over three kilos or under.

I know the pressure of the court system in the province of British Columbia and elsewhere. If the charge is simple possession of marijuana or a small amount for trafficking, and if there is an option to proceed summarily they are going to choose that option. Raising the amount to three kilos is, I think, sending the wrong signal. The criminal law must act and be functional and stand up in the courtroom, but it also is an educated and symbolic role. I think the bill sends the wrong signal to the community.

Government Orders

Mr. Ron MacDonald (Dartmouth): Mr. Speaker, I think we may have had a problem with translation. I apologize for my lack of proficiency in the other official language but when the Bloc Quebecois member of the Official Opposition was speaking, the translation I believe was coming across that she was concerned about consultation and that pharmacists and other people in the industry should have more time for consultation.

I was reading it through translation as pharmaceuticals and I could not quite figure it out. That is why I asked the question I did. If the hon. member is listening, we probably had a little problem either with translation or my understanding of what the translator said.

I have listened with some interest to what has gone on this morning. We have had the two official parties in opposition, the Bloc Quebecois and the Reform Party, both speak on this legislation.

I thought that seven or eight months into the mandate members opposite would have remembered what they said in the first few days of this House. I know that the Bloc Quebecois has a mandate, or so it sees it, in the people who elected them. I think the Bloc members will find out that the mandate is not quite what they thought it was, if ever there is a referendum in Quebec. However, they believe that they have a mandate, first and foremost, to see the separation of the province of Quebec. I may disagree with that but they were democratically elected and I am sure that when they debate issues such as this, they are trying their best to represent the interests of the people of Quebec.

When we first came into this place there was a lot of talk that people were not going to become wildly partisan just for the sake of being wildly partisan, and that when good legislation came forward, members opposite, particularly in the Bloc Quebecois and the Reform Party, would do their best to support it.

This place works on confrontation. It works on opposition. When legislation comes forward the role of the Official Opposition and other opposition parties is to oppose. But I thought that we had gone beyond that and that no longer was it opposition for the sake of opposition.

This is one of the bills where the members opposite in the Reform Party and the Bloc could have shown that they really did want to make this a different Parliament, and that they really did want to co-operate to bring forward non-contentious legislation.

I do not know where some of the members from the Bloc are coming from, but the people in my community spoke loud and clear prior to the last election. They said they wanted a government whose number one concern was the health and safety of the communities.

The people in my community said it very loudly two years ago when I had to go to Portland Estates because we had a gang problem and people no longer felt safe in their communities. They did not want their politicians to get up here and dance on the head of a pin. They wanted real debate about reforming laws and striking the proper balances so that our criminal justice system reflected the reality and the needs of our communities.

(1300)

There was a lot of talk about the Young Offenders Act. We heard how it had to be strengthened but at the same time we could not just punish; we had to try to reform. The emphasis had to be on rehabilitation not strictly punishment.

There is no question a level of consultation is needed. But I would say to my colleagues opposite when dealing with this that this is an uncontentious bill. There may be a few items here and there they may wish to change or I may wish to change but surely we can get some agreement that this type of legislation is progressive.

The legislation codifies some of the regulatory regimes dealing with the two acts in question. It makes it a little easier for our law enforcement officials and other people in the judicial system to actually enforce what it is we want. That is safer streets and harsher penalties for those who deal in death with narcotics. They do deal in death and narcotics destroy our communities.

I thought we would have gotten a little agreement but perhaps they slide too easily into old patterns. This was quite interesting.

The Reform Party more than the Bloc has indicated that only the Reform Party can talk about family values. I can say that I would get somewhat nauseous listening to some Reform members leading up to the election.

Members of the Reform Party would condemn past and present members of this place as simply not being able to understand what the people in their communities wanted. They literally contributed a great deal to the feeling that this place and the people who practised the profession of politics somehow lived on the underbelly of life and that we simply looked after self interests and not the interests of the community.

Reformers would always say that they were the law and order party: "We are the only ones who can bring law and order back". I remember debating with my Reform opponent in the election campaign. I can say that party would have locked everybody up and thrown away the key. That is what the Reform Party thought would save communities.

I would have thought that when they got into this place they would have also listened to the other little piece of rhetoric they spiel out occasionally. That is that they are truly different and as Reformers they are the only ones who can reform the way Parliament works.

Government Orders

Over the last few weeks we have seen their types of reforms. They give back cars but take 75 cents on the dollar from taxpayers to pay for their leader's car, haircuts, shoe shines, all the things they condemned us for. However I want to put that aside.

The Reform Party has fallen into the old patterns they so easily condemned. I have not seen them come in and support a government motion, except for maybe on one or two occasions, but not many.

This is a major piece of legislation. Surely to goodness there is some consensus that the government must move forward. It must simplify for law enforcement agencies and for the public the laws dealing with health and safety in our community. In this case it is Bill C-7 dealing with controlled substances.

This bill was before the last Parliament but did not get through for whatever reasons. Our government is holding true to our promises in the red book of coming in with progressive legislation and the changes necessary to respond to what Canadians want. They want healthier, safer communities.

Therefore we have come forward in the first few months of our mandate with a bill that was worked on in the previous Parliament. We did not think the bill was all bad so we have changed some of the things. We have modernized it again. We have tried to put some order into how we deal with some sections that without this bill are currently under the Food and Drug Act and the Narcotic Control Act.

I cannot think of anything that should bring more easy support from the Reform Party and the Bloc Quebecois. If anybody out there is watching, the Reform Party is the one that said everybody had to vote their conscience in this place.

I am not prone to attacking the opposition. I am getting a little fed up with their positions on things like this though. Every day they come into this place and they vote like robots when the government says it is coming in with a piece of legislation. They automatically all have. I cannot believe the Reform Party whip tells them how to vote because they told us during the campaign that was corrupt and bad. They must all be struck by some stardust in that each and every one of them every time a bill comes in finds it bad and they all vote the same way.

I wonder how their constituents who are really concerned about law and order feel about the hoist motion. For those out there watching we debate legislation in this place. We try to make the regulatory and statutory environment society works in a little better. We constantly have to try to modernize our legislation because our own morality as a society changes with time. It is interesting.

(1305)

The hoist motion just proposed by the Reform Party in the amendment by the hon. member for Surrey North effectively says it does not want the House of Commons to deal with this issue. That is what a hoist motion does. The Reform Party came in with an amendment which, if passed, would hoist the whole issue of drugs, safe streets, crime as it relates to illegal and illicit drugs in our communities. We would not deal with it. That is what the effect of her amendment would be.

If there are any Reform supporters left after the last few weeks of revelations about internal party conduct of that party, I think the hair on the back of their necks should be bristling. They sent their members here to show this place could work differently and that members should support good legislation when it came before the House. More important, they did not want us to get into these games that they used to criticize. Members of the Reform Party criticized the games of Parliament well, such as hoist motions.

Now let us get real here with the Bloc Quebecois and also the Reform Party. Their mandate is to try to get some ink. They do not want the government portrayed in a favourable light because it is probably going to have some impact on their sagging popularity. I understand that. Opposition parties have to take that into account. I am a realist. We were in opposition and I know how the game is played. However, when we deal with these fundamental issues of safety and modernizing our legislation there should be some degree of consensus that we work together.

There is a red herring out there. There might be a cod with it because we cannot seem to find any of them on the east coast. A red herring has been thrown out a couple of times and I am not about to let it go by.

They are saying we cannot let this debate go on about the merits of the legislation, we have to talk about procedure. The real problem is that this stuff comes under the Criminal Code and should have been introduced by the Minister of Justice.

When it comes to cleaning up the streets in Dartmouth, I do not care if it is the janitor who introduces the legislation as long as it gets thoroughly debated and the impact on my community is that it is safer. If the people in Backwater Gulch somewhere are having a problem with drugs in their community, I do not think they particularly care who puts the legislation forward. So let us clear that one off the agenda.

If that is the biggest complaint they have maybe everybody in here will jump up and say they support the legislation. By the way, the Minister of Justice supports the legislation. Just because he did not move it does not mean he is opposed to it. Maybe that is what it was with Reform members and why they

Government Orders

could not support it. Maybe I have clarified it. Maybe they will support the legislation this afternoon.

On committee referral, I know most members of the Reform Party with the exception of their House leader are new here. Most members of the Bloc Québécois are new here. However, the reality is that committees basically are masters of their own destiny in this place. We do not have the legislative committees the Tories did. We want to make sure we are building up expertise in certain areas on committees by all members of the House.

There is some agreement in this place that we have tried to do what we said we would during the campaign about making Parliament work better. We said we wanted the role of individual members to be heightened. We wanted to make sure they could provide input into the system.

I am the committee chair on fisheries and oceans. The way I run my committee is with the co-operation of members opposite and my own side. That is different from what the Tories did. We actually try to drop our partisanship at the door and come up with better legislation, if that is what we are dealing with. When we did the cod adjustment package, the Atlantic groundfish adjustment, everybody on my side was happy with the report. We showed that this government is putting its money where its mouth is in allowing committees to have as broad a latitude as they think they need from maximum input by members.

The second Reform Party red herring is that we have to get this over to the justice and legal affairs committee. Nonsense. If the Reform Party members in that committee are interested in trying to bring forward better legislation then they can ask the chair. When this legislation goes before that committee it can be put to a vote to have officials from the Department of Justice if that is who they want, or the janitor, appear before the committee. They can do whatever they want.

(1310)

I want to strip away some of the nonsense that is being put here and to appeal particularly to the Reform Party. Start reading your own campaign material. You ran on law and order. You ran on trying to make sure this place ran better. You ran on trying to strip partisanship and gamesmanship from the House.

On an issue that deals with law and order which cleaned up the streets in my area, you are doing everything that you criticized past members and parties of this place of doing. Wake up. Read the polling numbers. I want to tell you, some of the problems you guys have over there, Mr. Speaker, those individuals—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): I guess I rose a little too quickly. I see the member recognized the Chair. I just did not want to be forgotten in this debate. If we get too personal with the “you this” or “you that” we could allow our debate and discussions in this Chamber to degenerate. Of course we are all

committed to the most vibrant, animated and forthright discussions possible but please do not forget the Speaker.

Mr. MacDonald: Mr. Speaker, thank you for reminding me. I slipped. What I meant was “they”.

Let me put it this way, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps what those individuals on the other side should do is go back and read their campaign literature. They have slipped a few times. They have come to this place having raised themselves on a high holy pedestal. They have found it is a long fall when knocked off.

Indeed their leader found that out a few days ago. I hope they recover. I hope they do find a way to contribute, and I mean this sincerely, to the debates in this House.

They may laugh. I happen to have a great deal of respect for every member of this House no matter what their political affiliation, even if they are separatists. They have a right to have a say in this place. I am trying my best in this new Parliament to show we can work differently. I have dulled my tongue of its partisanship. However on an issue like this I am not prepared to because the public has to know what goes on here.

I have a problem in my community up on Hester Street in the north end of Dartmouth. The prostitution problem is driving this neighbourhood into decline. It is an old residential neighbourhood. It is not downtown in an industrial or commercial area.

The reality is the problem for the residents up in the north end on Hester Street and Albro Lake Road is not just prostitution but is drug related. In and around that area there were a number of known crack houses. These prostitutes are victims of the most despicable types of individuals when dealing with the pimps. Many or most of these young girls in the situation of prostitution have a drug problem. The pimps get them addicted to drugs.

Drugs are far too easily available in every community, every junior and senior high school, even elementary schools, in this country. The reason we have the problem on Hester Street in the north end is because there were two crack houses nearby. The prostitutes who were addicted to crack were plying their trade primarily because they could make some money and get a hit of crack. The police have found the laws would not allow them to take the type of action necessary to clean up the streets. That is a problem.

I will support any initiative this government or the opposition puts forward that would move in that direction. I know Bill C-7, which should not be a controversial bill, does all of those things. It moves in the right direction.

It will not be the last time this government comes forward with amendments to the Criminal Code, to health and welfare legislation, the Food and Drug Act, or other acts. We will respond as necessary. We will take the steps we believe will lead to safer communities and will allow law enforcement officials and the judicial system to deal effectively with those seeking to

Government Orders

destroy our communities and rob many of our youth of their lives and if not their lives, their usefulness in life.

This bill should be soundly debated in the House on the facts. The time to raise the concerns the Bloc Québécois have had, and they are legitimate concerns I might say, about too much regulation without notification of this Parliament is when it gets to committee. We did that in opposition.

Pharmacists and people who legitimately have to use controlled substances in their legal work should be heard from, but the place to do that is at committee.

I ask members on all sides to see this piece of legislation for what it is. It is not a big piece of legislation. I think there should be unanimous consent on the intent of the legislation. Let us work if there is a problem through the committee structure to make it a better piece of legislation so that our streets are a little safer after it is passed.

(1315)

Mr. Grant Hill (Macleod): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that the member has dulled his partisan tongue. If he had not dulled it I expect we might need an ambulance over here.

I would like to ask the member, since he spoke so eloquently about non-partisan comments on this specific bill, would he reflect back to the 34th Parliament upon the comments made by the Liberal members of the committee when they were reviewing this bill. I am sure he will know about that.

Mr. MacDonald: Mr. Speaker, I certainly do know about it. I want to say that the member is very fortunate, as are you, Mr. Speaker, to have lived through the last Parliament.

In the last Parliament things did work differently here. I think one of the reasons that the Reform Party has been so successful across this country is that it was a negative response to the way things were done here. One of the reasons the Liberals so successful in the last campaign is that we recognized that the Canadian public no longer would allow Parliament to work basically by fiat, by a small number of individuals and mandarins to make all the decisions, that consultation was not real, that it was phoney, and that bad legislation and special interest legislation got passed.

I think the member opposite and even you and I, Mr. Speaker, have benefited by the past government's excessive partisanship and lack of consultation when it came to legislative process. Some of us did try to make this a better place. I can say that in the last Parliament one of the few committees that did work effectively was the government ops committee led by Mr.

Holtmann, who is no longer a member here, and John Rodriguez, a New Democrat who was the NDP critic. We worked together with the groups there to try to come up with better legislation. I think we were a bit of a model in the way we were trying to do things.

The hon. member is right, there may have been some members in the past. We participated in the venue that was drawn for us by the government. We have drawn a different venue. We have put different rules forward. We allow members of this place to have their say.

I would urge the member not to live in the past, to look at the future, to look at reality. He will see that there is plenty of opportunity without falling into old patterns to allow members of all sides to have their say when it comes to formulating legislation.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Michel Bellehumeur (Berthier—Montcalm): Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to see the member who just spoke try to do a psychological analysis of the opposition's intentions, in particular regarding Bill C-7. However, I would like to remind him that when the Liberals were in opposition, they did exactly what we are doing.

As long as we think that a bill fails to reach its goal or is poorly written and is unclear and ambiguous, we will oppose it regardless of what the government says. I believe it is our responsibility, as the official opposition, to do so not only for Quebecers but for all Canadians. This bill is unclear and we oppose it in many respects. I will have later on the opportunity to dwell on a particular point.

But I am concerned by some statements made by the government members opposite regarding this bill. On February 15, the Solicitor General of Canada stated to the press that it was important to amend the Narcotic Control Act as well as some parts of the Food and Drugs Act in order to be in a better position to fight the cocaine traffic organized by the Warriors on the aboriginal reserves.

I would like to know if the member agrees with this statement and, if so, if it means that the present Narcotic Control Act does not provide any means to control that traffic? Does the member agree with this statement and, if so, could he explain why?

[*English*]

Mr. MacDonald: Mr. Speaker, it is the first time I have had an opportunity to respond to a question which is so specific that it deals with not just one region of Canada but actually with a very special people in Canada, the native community.

Government Orders

(1320)

The member does his side and his cause a great disservice, constantly focusing on problems that the native community or a native community or any minority community in Canada may have. If the member wishes to ask some questions dealing with the impact of this legislation across Canada, I would be pleased to answer. I am not prepared in any way, shape or form to allow the member opposite to put questions forward like we heard over and over again in question periods over the last two months in this place that deal specifically with the native community or any other community.

This bill is not meant to just strike out at people who violate the law, the norms of society, when it comes to trafficking controlled substances. I do not really care if they are Gaelic, if they are Cape Bretoners, if they are from the province of Quebec, from the Gaspé or if they happen to be natives. The way this government operates is that it legislates for all Canadians without noting which region they live in or which ethnic group they come from.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Bellehumeur: Mr. Speaker, the explanatory notes in Bill C-7 specify that the proposed enactment consolidates Canada's drug control policy to fulfill Canada's obligations under international conventions.

That consolidation, which is no doubt necessary, brings about major consequences, the most important of which is the repeal of the Narcotic Control Act, as well as of Parts III and IV of the Food and Drugs Act.

In the guise of that consolidation, the legal and statutory approach to a major problem is dramatically changed and this, without prior consultation. Yes, without consultation, and in a strange heavy context which raises concerns on this side of the House.

As you did, Mr. Speaker, I heard the comments that were made to the media by the Solicitor General of Canada on February 15, as I mentioned earlier. If it is true that there is an emergency, as if the present Narcotic Control Act could not allow the RCMP to stop the lucrative traffic of cocaine and other hard drugs, there is a problem with the system.

A country can have all the useful and necessary laws in some activity sector, but if the political will to enforce these laws in some areas of that country does not exist, they will be useless. So, we believe that it is necessary for Canada and for Quebec to have efficient and stringent legislation that responds to the present and imminent need to stop this plague. But, most of all,

the police forces must feel that they have the support of those who will vote for that legislation.

From this House, we must give a clear message to anyone engaged in that black market that the legislator is serious in his or her willingness to counter narcotics and all other drugs. In order to do so, we should step up our effort and enforce the present laws while waiting for the updating wished for by Bill C-7.

In that regard, it might be useful to remind the Solicitor General of Canada of certain provisions of the existing Narcotic Control Act compared to provisions found in Bill C-7 dealing virtually with the same issue. If you read the bill, you will see that the legislator's intent was to criminalize the trafficking in designated substances as well as their import and export. However, the legislator does not criminalize trafficking since trafficking, and importing and exporting of narcotics are already considered a criminal activity under the existing Narcotic Control Act.

I could mention a whole list of provisions contained in Bill C-7 that are identical or similar to those contained in the existing Narcotic Control Act, but since I do not have the time, I will simply mention to this House that there is already an act that can efficiently counter cocaine trafficking or trafficking in any other narcotic, provided it is enforced everywhere in Canada.

As regards the statement of the Solicitor General of Canada who said that Bill C-7 would allow police forces to make sales under surveillance, which means that double agents could infiltrate smuggling networks and catch criminals by proposing deals, one can also question that novelty.

When the Solicitor General made that statement, he was referring to clause 54(2) of Bill C-7.

That provision reads as follows:

(2) The Governor in Council, on the recommendation of the Solicitor General of Canada, may make regulations that pertain to investigations and other law enforcement activities conducted under this Act by a member of a police force and other persons acting under the direction and control of a member and, without restricting the generality of the foregoing, may make regulations: (b) exempting, on such terms and conditions as may be specified in the regulations, a member of a police force that has been designated pursuant to paragraph (a) and other persons acting under the direction and control of the member from the applications of this Act or the regulations;

(1325)

There is absolutely nothing new in this bill. Something similar exists in the current Narcotic Control Act. The investigative power of police officers already allows them to infiltrate a group that they are watching and further, section 18 of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act already provides for that procedure.

Government Orders

Then, why does the Solicitor General of Canada need the powers under clause 54(2) of Bill C-7 when the investigative power of police officers already provides for such measures?

Furthermore, infiltration is aimed at gathering information on dealers or on trafficking.

However, in the case quoted by the Solicitor General, the RCMP and the Sûreté du Québec—and I must emphasize that it is the Solicitor General of Canada who referred to the groups that I talked about earlier—mentioned that they were aware of the cocaine trafficking done by the Warriors.

So, this bill does not set forth anything new, nor does it provide any additional powers. We have to admit that the Solicitor General could act immediately to put an end to trafficking everywhere in Canada. That statement makes us believe that the Solicitor General is behind the anticipated passage of Bill C-7 in order to gain time and delay any intervention in those territories.

If the bill were so essential to the fight against drug trafficking in Canada, does it mean Canada never offered any resistance to drug dealers before the passage of the bill we are now studying? I hope this is only an extrapolation and that Bill C-7 is presented to this House with a view to modernizing a police procedure already in place and consolidating the Canadian drug control policy, as mentioned in the explanatory notes to the bill. However, one fact still remains: the government is not reaching its objective with this bill, it is presenting a faulty bill, one that is badly written, confused and difficult to enforce.

That being said, Mr. Speaker, to convince you, I think it would be appropriate to stress one of the points raised on Friday, February 18, by the hon. member of the Bloc Québécois for Portneuf when he discussed Bill C-7. You will remember he was explaining to the House the deficiencies of Bill C-7.

After studying the bill, the Bloc Québécois classified its deficiencies under four categories. I will review them briefly. First, the legitimate activities of doctors, pharmacists and veterinarians; were these people adequately protected by this bill? Second, the enormous powers given to inspectors designated by the minister; are they not of such nature as to allow, if not induce, mistakes which will unduly penalize health professionals and their patients?

Third, how will the confidential nature of medical records be respected when the law allows just about anybody designated as an inspector by the minister to copy the files held by health care institutions and to seize all their computer files? The last question is why does this bill call criminal and throw in jail individuals who, in fact, are drug addicts in need of treatment?

As the Official Opposition critic for the Solicitor General, I will deal mainly with the third question regarding the confidential nature of medical records.

I do think that, should this bill be passed without amendment, it will jeopardize the confidential nature of medical records. Under the provisions of the bill, the lawmaker will make it harder for policemen to search the home of a known drug dealer than for an inspector appointed by the minister to carry out what would amount to a seizure in a hospital or at the corner drugstore.

One has only to refer to Part IV of Bill C-7 to realize how far-reaching are the powers of an inspector designated by the minister to enforce the act.

(1330)

Under clause 29 of the bill:

29.(1) The Minister may designate any person as an inspector for the purposes of this Act and the regulations.

The expression “any person” send shivers down my spine because this person is given a lot of power.

Under clause 30. (1) of the bill:

30. (1) Subject to subsection (2), an inspector may, to ensure compliance with the regulations, at any reasonable time enter any place used for the purpose of conducting the business or professional practice of any person licensed or otherwise authorized under the regulations to deal in a controlled substance or a precursor and may for that purpose

We are dealing here with professionals, not smugglers or pushers, but real professionals who are licensed for this very purpose.

This small paragraph therefore entitles anyone designated by the minister pursuant to clause 29 to enter at just about any time—clause 30 even specifies at any time of the day—a doctor's office, a pharmacy, a hospital, an LCSC, or the office of any other health professional who has obtained the required licence.

What are the powers of an inspector doing an inspection? I will tell you. Among other things, he can:

(a) open and examine any receptacle or package—

examine anything found in a place that:

(b) —is used or may be capable of being used for the production, preservation, packaging or storage of a controlled substance—

(c) examine any labels or advertising material or records, books, electronic data or other documents found in that place with respect to any controlled substance—

And the list goes on and on.

The inspector can even:

(e) reproduce any document from any electronic data referred to in paragraph (c) or cause it to be reproduced, in the form of a printout or other output;

(h) examine any substance found in that place and take, for the purpose of analysis, such samples thereof as are reasonably required;

As we can see, Bill C-7 gives the inspector powers that even a peace officer does not have to fight the most serious threat of all, cocaine trafficking. Obviously, we are off the track!

Even more disturbing, should Bill C-7 be passed as it is, the inspector can gather evidence which could be used against a pharmacist, a physician, a nurse or anyone else in criminal court, whereas normally any action likely to lead to a trial in criminal court cannot be undertaken without a warrant, except under very special circumstances provided for in the legislation.

I was saying a moment ago that the law is a lot more demanding for police officers than for these inspectors, and to prove it, I will read to you clause 12, subclauses (1) and (7) of the bill.

Under the title *Search, Seizure and Detention*, clause 12 says:

12. (1) A justice who, on *ex parte* application, is satisfied by information on oath that there are reasonable grounds to believe that

(a) a controlled substance—,

(b) any thing in which a controlled substance [—]is contained or concealed,

(c) offence-related property, or

(d) any thing that will afford evidence in respect of an offence under this Act in a place may, at any time, issue a warrant authorizing a peace officer, at any time, to search the place for any such controlled substance, precursor, property or thing and to seize it.

Subclause (7) provides that:

(7) A peace officer may exercise any of the powers described in subsection (1) —without a warrant if the conditions for obtaining a warrant exist but by reason of exigent circumstances it would be impracticable to obtain one.

These two subclauses of clause 12 clearly show that a police officer cannot act without a warrant, except under special circumstances.

As for clause 30 of the bill, it provides that an inspector can act, visit, seize, etc., as indicated, at all times and without a warrant. Thus there is a clear difference between the two.

The only time an inspector needs a warrant is when he wants to visit a dwelling, a private residence. It is normal to require a warrant in such a case. For the rest, there is a clear difference between a government inspector and a police officer doing his job, fighting against smugglers.

I find the wording of clause 30 quite strange, especially when referring to superior court judgements on the importance of search warrants under the Canadian Charter of Rights.

Government Orders

We must not forget that certain previous provisions of the Narcotic Control Act and the Food and Drugs Act authorized searches without a warrant anywhere but in a dwelling, when a peace officer had reasonable reasons to believe that narcotics were to be found there.

(1335)

There were no such open-ended authorizations in the defunct Bill C-85, a bill similar to the one before us today, because they had been ruled inoperative and contrary to section 8 of the Charter.

Yet, subclause 12(7) would authorize, under exceptional circumstances, a peace officer to conduct a search without a warrant when the conditions for obtaining a warrant exist but it would be impracticable to obtain one. It could be that the time required to obtain a warrant would jeopardize the life or safety of a person or the very existence of capital evidence. Under the circumstances, a search without a warrant would be justified and could not be challenged under the Charter.

To wrap up, I sincerely think that the legislator would be giving far too much power to the inspectors if clause 30 were to be passed as is, as it has no foundation in law.

As the past gives us some indication of things to come, we know that it is not good to give this kind of discretionary powers to a person or group of persons without providing a restrictive framework, legally speaking. The War Measures Act is a good example of this. Never again must we relive such excesses.

In no time, these superinspectors would be living in a glass bubble that would promote excesses.

Furthermore, the powers of the inspector run counter to the provinces' jurisdiction. For example, Quebec has granted inspection powers to the Professional Corporation of Physicians of Quebec, as well as to the Quebec college of pharmacists and dentists. The corporation's or organization's inspector can show up, provided proper notice was given, at the office or place of business of doctors, dentists, pharmacists and others to ensure compliance with the principles of medical practice.

The Government of Quebec also allows the corporation's trustee to examine the practice of any physician, dentist or other professional with respect to a complaint to the effect that he or she has prescribed a hazardous substance to a patient.

It seems obvious to me that this part of the act once again enables the federal government to interfere in provincial areas of responsibility, which the Official Opposition considers both costly and unacceptable.

In closing, I suggest the government go back to the drawing board and come up with a bill that would be much more in line with the realities of modern-day life, one on which everybody

Government Orders

would have been consulted. I suggest that it holds consultations on this subject, as part of the multiple consultations it is carrying out these days. I think that consultation in that area would definitely be in order, considering the implications for future generations.

Mr. Maurice Dumas (Argenteuil—Papineau): Mr. Speaker, in his speech the hon. member for Berthier—Montcalm said that Bill C-7 and the Narcotic Control Act currently in effect contained many similar provisions. Could he please give us a few examples?

Mr. Bellehumeur: Mr. Speaker, yes, I could give a few examples. First I must point out, as I said in my speech earlier, that criminalization of drugs is nothing new as it was done in the Narcotic Control Act, but I will give you three examples.

Clause 6(1) of Bill C-7 reads as follows:

No person shall traffic in a substance included in Schedule I, II or III or in any substance represented or held out by that person to be such a substance.

Clause 4(1) of the current Narcotic Control Act says this:

No person shall traffic in a narcotic or any substance represented or held out by the person to be a narcotic.

Another example, clause 7(1) of the bill before us provides that:

Except as authorized under the regulations, no person shall import into Canada or export from Canada a substance included in Schedule I, II, III, IV or V.

The current Narcotic Control Act says this: "Except as authorized by this Act or the regulations, no person shall import into Canada or export from Canada any narcotic."

I could give you other examples. Clause 9(1) of Bill C-7 is the same as clause 9(1) of the Narcotic Control Act with regard to the commission in Canada of an offence.

As I said earlier, I think the idea is to update the legislation; however, we want, through this House, to send the message that the law we will adopt on food and drugs will be enforced in every part of Canada. And I am saying that, at this time, the Narcotic Control Act is not being enforced everywhere in Canada.

[*English*]

Ms. Hedy Fry (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to speak to this bill.

The problem of the use of illicit substances and addiction and those who profit from it troubles the nation, troubles my constituents and, speaking as one who is elected to represent those same constituents, troubles me.

(1340)

The use of illicit drugs has eaten away at the fabric of our society like a leprous plague. The illicit drug trade and those who live off its avails exact a heavy toll. They prey on that segment of our population that is most vulnerable, our youth, a prime target for those who deal in these drugs.

Drugs destroy families, they destroy careers, they destroy futures. They also destroy young lives. Perhaps most reprehensibly of all, while doing so they put cash into the hands of criminals.

In my practice as a physician I have personally witnessed many young people in families trapped in the cycle of drug dependency. I have worked with many of those families and young people to help them reclaim control of their lives. It is a difficult, frustrating and heart-rending struggle. I am therefore extremely sensitive to the consequences of drug dependence. It is not only a criminal issue, it is a health and social issue.

Realizing the need for action and recognizing that a widespread problem such as this requires a broadly based solution, the federal government launched Canada's drug strategy in 1987.

Canada's drug strategy is a comprehensive set of programs implemented with the collaboration of a multitude of partners and stakeholders. It was the first comprehensive step toward reducing the devastating and costly effects of drug and alcohol abuse to individuals, to families and to communities.

Canada's drug strategy was designed to address drug abuse in a balanced and co-ordinated manner. Emphasis was not only put on treatment and rehabilitation but it also addressed education and prevention.

Part of the strategy contains legislative components in the form of legislation intended to strip traffickers of their ill-gotten assets, legislation that recognizes the obligation of Canada as a signatory under three international conventions, and legislation that consolidates parts 3 and 4 of the Food and Drug Act and the Narcotic Control Act.

All components of phase 1 of the drug strategy are now in place with the exception of the legislation implementing the convention. This controlled drugs and substances bill is the final component of our drug strategy.

Canada's drug strategy is based on the recognition that we must maintain a balanced approach when dealing with substance abuse. Two hundred and seventy million dollars over five years have been dedicated to the reduction of use and to the reduction of supply.

The strategy allocates 70 per cent of its funds to reduction among users. This covers treatment initiatives, rehabilitation, education and prevention. The other 30 per cent is dedicated to enforcement activity.

Government Orders

Bill C-7 provides the necessary legislation to support the resources dedicated to enforcement. Bill C-7 is the third and final significant piece of legislation to ensure that the strategy succeeds. It must therefore be seen as part of the whole strategy and not in isolation.

Within my department alone programs have shifted to focus on new target goals. The federal component of the strategy falls under the responsibility of many departments, health, justice, Solicitor General, finance, external affairs, and national defence.

Canada's drug strategy secretariat is co-ordinating the promotion and evaluation of programs among these departments.

The community support program allows community groups to develop solutions specific to their substance abuse problems and we also have programs to address the unique problems of our native peoples, especially solvent and inhalant abuse, and the department has also introduced the national native role model program.

While the controlled drugs and substances bill constitutes a necessary tool to prevent diversion of drugs it also contains provisions to ensure that drugs intended for medical, industrial or research purposes are made available to those who need them.

This bill would be beneficial to all Canadians in that it would provide them with additional protection against the serious consequences of drug diversion.

Without such legislation drugs would be more subject to thefts and robberies. Drugs would be more easily accessible in the streets. People would be more vulnerable to the consequences of illicit drug supply.

Contrary to some assumptions, this bill is not indifferent to treatment programs, especially for those who are drug dependent. As a physician I support the availability of help and appropriate tools for those who seek to get back to a normal life.

(1345)

My government is sensitive to the medical and social consequences of drug addiction. The department of health will continue to grant methadone authorization for the treatment of drug dependence. Methadone is a controlled drug and its use well recognized in the medical community.

The methadone program has the full support of the government. This is an initiative directed at use reduction. It assists many opiate abusers to re-establish a constructive life by promoting rehabilitation, reducing health risks and costs to the community.

The department of health will continue to encourage and make available methadone treatment for appropriate patients. Bill C-7 was criticized for not providing drug dependent persons who have committed criminal offences with access to treatment. My government is very supportive of rehabilitation.

Although the bill does not provide for mandatory rehabilitation treatment, the courts have always taken into consideration as part of a sentence the rehabilitation aspect of persons convicted of drug crimes.

The bill does not go against such a practice. It is commonly accepted as a criminal law notion. Rehabilitation has been identified by jurisprudence of the last decade as being an integral part of any sentence rendered in Canada.

We must also take into consideration the necessity for patients first to be referred to qualified health care professionals so that sound assessment and appropriate treatment programs are available to meet their needs.

Drug dependence is a complex health issue. It requires professional diagnostic treatment and rehabilitative interventions. Motivation on the part of the patient is a crucial element in the success of treatment. The bill itself cannot determine who is a good candidate for treatment and who is not. The courts have the opportunity and responsibility to exert discretion and to refer candidates for treatment to qualified health care professionals.

However my government is supportive of all programs aimed at decreasing the dependency and disastrous consequences of illicit drug use.

The department of health is responsible for the national AIDS program. A great deal of thought has therefore been given to the spread of AIDS through intravenous drug use. We are convinced that the strategies used to curb the spread of HIV among drug users will enhance our efforts to reduce drug use in Canada by linking drug users with health professionals and treatment programs.

Needle exchange programs were used successfully by many communities to reduce the spread of HIV. Sections of the Criminal Code dealing with drug paraphernalia have specifically been excluded, such as medical devices such as needles, from the statutory definition of instrument for illicit drug use, thereby allowing for the distribution of sterile needles by health professionals to known drug users who are at risk of AIDS.

It therefore follows that the critical path for a drug free future lies in prevention and rehabilitation, but we also have an escalating problem today that must be recognized and dealt with promptly. We must give law enforcement professionals the tools they need to deal effectively with those who continue to prey on the addicted and on the young would-be addicts.

If we are serious about advancing the broader social goal of maintaining safe and peaceful communities, we must promote law enforcement now. The youth of Canada are of primary importance in my government's platform. They are the key to our country's future.

My practice as a physician has put me in constant contact with our youth. I am also the mother of three sons. I understand the daily difficulties our young people face, their hopelessness and their vulnerability. This makes them prime targets for those in

Government Orders

the drug trade who prey on that vulnerability. It is in order to protect our youth that I support the bill.

The controlled drugs and substances bill addresses the problem broadly. It broadens the scope of controlled substances with certain other provisions and consequently will make it more difficult to reach children. Drug dealing in and around schools, sales to minors and use of the services of a minor during a transaction will constitute an aggravated factor at the time of sentencing. This means that judges will have to justify their decisions for not imposing a jail sentence on a dealer.

Right now as we debate the bill designer drugs have the identical basic properties of the more familiar substances such as stimulants, tranquillizers and pain killers. Only their chemical properties have been slightly altered. The result is that these substances are not covered by the existing legislation and can be sold with impunity. They cannot be subject for prosecution until they are included in the schedule of drugs. Under the bill law enforcement officials will no longer have to wait for these drugs to appear on a statutory schedule in order to stop criminals from selling them.

(1350)

Then of course there is the problem of so-called precursors which are legal substances used in the manufacture of illicit substances. They can be obtained right now in large enough quantities through various legal means. My government is concerned about the current lack of legislation governing precursor chemicals. We are concerned that Canada may be a conduit for precursor chemicals. We have become a weak link in the chain of drug control among the signatories of the international conventions because many of these precursor substances are not yet controlled in our country.

Lack of effective control over benzodiazepines is another issue of concern. There is more pressure than ever from our co-signature countries for Canada to bring on more effective legislation. The Controlled Drugs and Substances Act is the much needed legislation to respond to these issues.

I would like to respond to the other criticisms raised by members of the opposition during recent debate of the bill with regard to its perceived impact on certain health care professionals.

The absence of regulations for these groups was identified as a fundamental impediment to obtaining the full impact of the legislation. The activities of pharmacists, physicians, dentists and veterinarians are currently subject to regulations under the Narcotic Control Act and under parts III and IV of the Food and Drug Act. The regulations under the new legislation will not

differ substantively from those that currently apply to prescribing activities under the existing legislation.

One of the purposes of the regulation making power in the bill is to enable the government to respond quickly and appropriately to changing professional practices. Any substantive changes in regulations will only be made following full consultation with all affected professional parties, using a regulatory consultation process that has been used for years by the department of health.

Both the Official Opposition and the Reform Party members suggested that there would be inconsistencies between various provisions of the bill and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, particularly with regard to the powers of inspectors. We do not believe this is so. Inspections referred to in the bill are inspections conducted to determine whether regulated persons are complying with the requirements under which they must carry on their business or their professional duties.

There are many acts, both federal and provincial, which confer broad powers of entry on inspectors in the interests of ensuring public health and safety. These are not criminal law provisions; they are really administrative provisions.

For example, an inspector performing an administrative seizure under section 30 of the act would not be able to use the seized substances as evidence before the courts. Similar provisions have been in force in Canada under federal drug control legislation for over 80 years. They effectively establish a federal regulatory scheme that governs the distribution and use of schedule drugs in Canada in a manner that limits their diversion to the illicit market and consistent with Canada's international obligations under the United Nations drug control convention.

I would also like to respond to the concerns raised by both opposition members of Parliament about the powers given to the minister. All hon. members should be aware that one of the ultimate goals of the department of health is to ensure the safety and to protect the health of all Canadians, and to reassure them that they are protected by giving Parliament the means to do so. To that effect the legislation must contain the appropriate prevention measures.

For example, as a member of the opposition mentioned, the minister may make an interim order cancelling or suspending an authorization when the minister is of the opinion that as a result of a contravention of a designated regulation there is a substantial risk of immediate danger to the health or safety of any person. This has been going on for years. The legislation protects not only the population; it also protects the health professionals.

Contravention of designated regulations gives rise to a hearing before an adjudicator. This is indicated in part IV of the bill. It may result in a ministerial order which should effectively prevent a recurrence. A person who is believed to have made a

contravention is given the opportunity to set out a date of hearing and to make representation. This adjudication mechanism would protect the rights of individuals, show respect and allow transparency.

(1355)

A breach of these designated regulations would not result in a criminal type penalty of fine or imprisonment. Administrative sanctions would be handed down by the minister and not by a criminal court.

Another area of criticism relates to the impact of the bill on physician-patient and pharmacist-patient relationships and confidentiality. Both opposition members identified access to the confidential files of patients as an unacceptable interference in the private lives of honest Canadians, and I agree. However there is very little new in the bill that gives rights to the minister that have not been there before.

For over 30 years under the narcotic control regulations the Minister of Health has had the legislative authority to require a practitioner to provide information concerning a patient treated with narcotics to the Bureau of Dangerous Drugs. This information could include the diagnosis, history or prescribing information relevant to the patient. This has been going on for years.

We have now given inspectors the appropriate tools they need to ensure that health professionals comply with the regulations and to ensure that the public is protected from the hazardous consequences of drugs. The inspectors are also health professionals bound by rules of confidentiality. They are important resources for the department of health and for the Canadian population. They also ensure that the facilities used in the distribution of drugs are secure.

Legitimate program activities required under the current and proposed legislation to protect public health and safety will ensure that patient confidentiality is fully maintained. Any information obtained is subject to the Privacy Act. This prohibits its use or disclosure by any official, except in accordance with that act. The Privacy Act ensures that all information collected by the federal government for program purposes is treated confidentially.

Concerning so-called doctor shopping or double doctoring offences official opposition members cited evidence given by the Canadian Medical Association to the legislative committee which examined Bill C-85. They argued that Bill C-7 would be unsatisfactory to doctors. This criticism from the Canadian Medical Association was accepted by the committee and the provision in the bill was changed, in essence to revert to the existing section found in the Narcotic Control Act. As a result the revision now refers only to persons who receive prescrip-

tions from doctors. The act of providing the prescription in this circumstance is not considered a trafficking offence.

We understand the use of illicit substances is a complex problem and requires a multifaceted approach of prevention, treatment, rehabilitation, legislation and punishment. The complete Canada drug strategy addresses all these issues. Bill C-7 deals with the legislative components.

We all understand the regulation of controlled substances is a complex matter which requires a carefully constructed legal basis in order to be effective, judicious and fair. I believe the bill is the most appropriate instrument for administering the laws and regulations we need. We are dealing with an aspect of societal problems which demands proper protection of the innocent, the inexperienced, the young and the vulnerable. It also demands forceful prosecution of the exploitative, the criminal and the ruthless.

I believe the bill strikes just the right balance between these two requirements. While we continue to minimize harm through education and prevention and while we continue to show compassion for victims through treatment and rehabilitation, we must also strike at the criminal heart of the problem. In passing the bill we as parliamentarians would be making our contribution to the battle against drug abuse now and well into the future.

The Speaker: The hon. member will have a few moments after question period for questions and comments.

[*Translation*]

It being two o'clock, pursuant to Standing Order 30(5), the House will now proceed to Statements by Members, pursuant to Standing Order 31.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*Translation*]

BICYCLE PATHS

Mr. Raymond Lavigne (Verdun—Saint-Paul): Mr. Speaker, along with all cycling enthusiasts, I am extremely pleased that the bicycle path between Nuns' Island and Verdun will be built very shortly.

Cyclists have been waiting 15 years for this path to be completed.

I want to thank the Minister, Mr. Doug Young, and his department for the consideration they have given to this project.

The proposed bicycle path will link the paths on the South Shore and on Nuns' Island to the path in Verdun.

S. O. 31

The City of Verdun has agreed to build a segment connecting these paths to those along the Lachine Canal. Therefore, all of the major bikeways on Montreal Island will be linked.

Over 20,000 cyclists will thus be able to enjoy some wonderful outings thanks to this initiative on the part of the Government of Canada and the municipality of Verdun.

[English]

Co-operation always accomplishes more than confrontation.

* * *

[Translation]

HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie): Since the Tiananmen Square massacre, human rights in China have been repeatedly violated.

Yesterday, representatives of agencies defending Chinese refugees in Montreal expressed their outrage at the government's decision to review the status of 4,500 Chinese nationals living in Canada under the threat of deportation to their native country.

It has been announced that the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration will make a final resolution on these cases this summer.

According to information gathered by the newspaper *Voir*, of the 827 cases reviewed by the Immigration and Refugee Board since the Tiananmen Square massacre, 663 applications, or a full 80 per cent, have been rejected.

Under the circumstances, the minister's stalling tactics are unacceptable.

Once again, the government is making a mockery of human rights and giving in to this simplistic approach whereby if one wants to do business, one turns a blind eye to fundamental rights.

* * *

[English]

ONTARIO

Mr. Ed Harper (Simcoe Centre): Mr. Speaker, who is speaking for Ontario? This new Parliament is six months old and no one is showing concern for the biggest engine that drives Canada's economy.

While we are all interested in what is good for Canada, the role of Ontario is being overlooked. What is good for Canada is a healthy and growing Ontario economy.

The red ink book made a major issue of infrastructure and jobs, yet Ontario's largest and most important piece of infra-

structure is being allowed to deteriorate. No much needed jobs and the delay are jeopardizing a number of job creating projects.

Ontario was forced to reduce tobacco taxes due to pressure from one province. Because of this Ontario taxpayers face an additional tax loss of \$500 million.

Toronto loses out as the obvious choice for the NAFTA environmental office for purely political considerations.

The silence is deafening. What did Ontario do to deserve such rejection?

* * *

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Mrs. Karen Kraft Sloan (York—Simcoe): Mr. Speaker, I stand in the House today to say that the Ontario members of the Liberal caucus are working very hard on behalf of Ontario.

Globally and nationally there is much talk about sustainable development, but a shared understanding of what it means does not exist. To some it is a phrase that suggests development can be sustained at any cost.

In my opinion sustainable development will not work as a vision goal or a process unless it includes equity. Equity is served when people from different lands, the north, the south, and people from different classes in the same land are treated with respect.

Equity is served when the natural environment is respected. Equity is served when our intergenerational responsibilities are acknowledged and when our global roles and commitments are honoured.

* * *

KILLER CARDS

Mr. Pat O'Brien (London—Middlesex): Mr. Speaker, the recent increase in violent crimes has raised the concerns of people all across Ontario and all of Canada.

As part of its efforts to reduce violence in Canadian communities, the government should without a doubt ban the importation of serial killer cards. These cards are a perverted twist on children's hockey cards. They feature psychopathic killers with a detailed description of the crimes they committed.

The lives of the victims of violent crimes should be remembered, not the killers and their actions.

This government is committed to measures to get at the root causes of violence and this should include the banning of these offensive cards that glorify murder and reduce victims to anonymous statistics.

On behalf of the constituents of London—Middlesex in Ontario, I call on Parliament to amend the customs and tariffs legislation to ban the importation of serial killer cards, ensuring that they will not continue to be sold in Canada.

S. O. 31

(1405)

CURLING CHAMPIONSHIPS

Mrs. Georgette Sheridan (Saskatoon—Humboldt): Mr. Speaker, members will remember that on March 8, International Women's Day, I rose in this House to pay tribute to the accomplishments of the four Saskatchewan women making up the Sandra Peterson rink on winning the Scott Tournament of Hearts which all good Canadians, at least from the cold parts, will know as the national women's curling championship.

I am pleased to report to this House that once again the Peterson rink has distinguished itself by winning the Women's World Curling Championship in Obersdorf.

Lest members conclude that only the women of Saskatchewan can curl, I would add that the Canadian men's rink also became world champions this weekend, skipped to victory by former Saskatoonian Mr. Rick Folk.

* * *

[Translation]

EMPLOYMENT FORUM

Mr. Jean Landry (Lotbinière): Mr. Speaker, the findings of a study conducted by the employment forum and made public yesterday show that the very high rate of unemployment cost the Quebec economy \$30 billion and the Canadian economy \$109 billion last year.

This situation cannot go on any longer. The members of this forum unanimously reaffirmed the consensus in Quebec: one solution for the problem of unemployment is to give Quebec full and complete responsibility for labour force training. This solution is a necessity, not a whim.

In the daily *Le Devoir*, Jean-Robert Sansfaçon wrote: "If Jean Chrétien's Liberals stubbornly ignore this, it means that they have learned nothing about the dynamics of Quebec society. Sooner or later this error will turn against them."

* * *

[English]

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island): Mr. Speaker, during the election the party now in government made much of promises to have more open government and freer votes. Today the government and all members of this House have an opportunity to vote for a good idea and to leave party discipline behind.

Later today we will be voting on a Reform amendment to put a cap on the total number of MPs elected. I believe that essentially every Canadian supports the idea that we do not need more than 295 MPs. Many believe we need fewer. I urge all MPs to vote in favour of this amendment, to vote in such a way that undoubtedly represents the majority view in each constituency.

I am expecting that this evening we will see a clear indication of the Liberal Party's commitment to deliver on its promise of freer votes.

* * *

[Translation]

MANPOWER TRAINING

Mr. Gilles Bernier (Beauce): Mr. Speaker, I think that the Reform Party's recent statements about Quebec are disrespectful. They add to them by saying that Quebec is imposing its will on Ottawa on the issues of lower cigarette taxes, the establishment of the environmental secretariat in Montreal and the postponement of the federal-provincial conference on labour. Such allusions are out of place.

I ask the government to act diligently to solve the manpower issue with Quebec and the provinces concerned. It is time to reduce overlap. Perhaps this obstinacy is due only to some over-centralizing officials. The government would show flexibility by understanding Quebec's traditional demands and adopting an updated federalism that is more acceptable to all provinces.

Under the Constitution, we certainly agree that labour force training is an educational issue and education is within provincial jurisdiction: it is their responsibility and they would provide training more economically. That is what the people of Beauce think.

* * *

[English]

GUN CONTROL

Mrs. Eleni Bakopanos (Saint-Denis): Mr. Speaker, the senseless acts of violence in the past weeks have caused communities all across the country to cry out for stricter legislation regarding gun control.

Yesterday I met with 120 students from all across Canada as part of the Encounter with Canada program. During our exchange these young Canadians expressed their concerns over the recent developments regarding the Young Offenders Act and stricter gun control laws.

A concerted effort between government and community youth organizations along with the introduction of stricter gun enforcement laws are required to effectively deal with this problem.

[Translation]

I strongly support a total ban on handguns in Canadian cities to ensure that incidents like those which occurred recently in Ottawa and Toronto do not recur.

On behalf of the people of Saint-Denis, I ask our government to seriously reconsider the Firearms Control Act in order to end acts of violence in our cities.

S. O. 31

[English]

KILLER CARDS

Mr. John O'Reilly (Victoria—Haliburton): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my concern about the importation of serial killer cards into Canada.

(1410)

I, like many colleagues, am opposed to these shameful cards entering our country. I have hundreds, maybe even thousands of constituents from Victoria—Haliburton in Ontario who have signed a petition stating that the killer cards not be allowed in Canada.

We live in a violent enough society, evidenced by senseless shootings in the last few weeks, and we do not need to send another violent negative message to our youth by allowing these cards to circulate in our schools.

I echo the petitions which are circulating throughout this country and urge this House to amend the laws of Canada to prohibit the importation, distribution, sale and manufacture of killer cards in law and to advise producers of killer cards that their product, if destined for Canada, will be seized and destroyed.

* * *

BLOC QUEBECOIS

Mr. Paul DeVillers (Simcoe North): Mr. Speaker, yesterday I was accused by the member for Richelieu of being hypocritical in presenting a petition to the House while opposing its content.

I would like to say to that member that I shall on occasion oppose certain views some of my constituents may hold but I will not oppose their right to express them or to have their voice heard in this place.

[Translation]

I want to tell those who claim that I do not respect the bilingual status of our country that I am the first member of Parliament for Simcoe North to provide services and to send out householders in both official languages.

[English]

The Bloc Quebecois has often said it was given the democratic right to sit in this place despite its fundamental goal to break up our country.

[Translation]

I find it despicable on the part of Bloc Quebecois members to claim that they want to protect the principles of democracy and freedom of expression when, in fact, they are trying to deprive others of those rights.

[English]

We believe in democracy whether it suits our political agenda or not.

* * *

[Translation]

TRANSPORT CANADA

Mr. Philippe Paré (Louis—Hébert): Mr. Speaker, we have obtained from a reliable source a working paper on a government strategy designed to massively privatize Transport Canada's services.

This strategy, which was developed in secret, will not only have a disastrous impact on employment in that department by eliminating 15,000 positions: it will also have serious consequences on the economy as a whole, through an increase in transportation costs.

This withdrawal by the government from its responsibilities in the field of transport illustrates the confusion of a federal system which is about to crumble.

Moreover, the government's policy in the transport sector clearly shows that it is not serious about job creation. This hurried reform could result in a setback for Quebec and Canada, since the transport industry has always been an essential component of their economies.

* * *

[English]

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

Miss Deborah Grey (Beaver River): Mr. Speaker, Canadians thought when this government was elected that they might hear and witness something new.

Much to the disappointment of millions of Canadians all they got was the same old thing.

We have a government that announces with greatest fanfare a rehash of the Company of Young Canadians, basically Katimavik II; a great concept but are our youth willing to pay the bill on this borrowed money?

Ministers go to Atlantic Canada to tell Canadians there are no bold new ideas, just the usual tired old programs through which borrowed money substitutes for innovative job creation initiatives.

The experiments in judicial reform that have proved unsuccessful since their introduction in the 1960s and 1970s are another sign that creative solutions are not being found.

I would remind the government that yesterday's answers will not work when applied to today's questions; old songs by new singers are still old songs.

We need a new song for the new Canada. Reformers together with Canadians are working on the lyrics and the tune for "O Canada, New Canada".

EAST COAST FISHERIES

Mrs. Jean Payne (St. John's West): Mr. Speaker, today the ministers of fisheries and human resources announced a new five-year \$1.9 billion package to assist east coast fisherpeople and plant workers.

This government has taken a long term approach to ensure the future prosperity of the people of Newfoundland, including St. John's West. The money will be an investment in their future, the future of the fishery and the future of the people.

Training programs and green projects will allow people to improve themselves and their working environment. The people of St. John's West can take comfort in the fact that this government has listened to their concerns.

I want to commend the ministers and this government for the manner in which they have so humanely dealt with this difficult problem.

* * *

(1415)

[Translation]

ECONOMIC GROWTH

Mr. Martin Cauchon (Outremont): Mr. Speaker, today, I would like to take advantage of my allotted time to talk about economic growth.

This morning, Statistics Canada announced that, after growing by 0.9 per cent in February, the composite index had continued to progress in March with an increase of 0.7 per cent. Seven economic components out of ten showed a marked improvement. It is a very positive sign for our country.

I would like to add that Canadian production remains very strong. Today, Statistics Canada reported that our exports to the United States, our main trading partner, reached record levels. This proves that our government's economic recovery plan is working and that the finance minister's budget was right on target.

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[English]

WORLD CURLING CHAMPIONS

Mr. John Solomon (Regina—Lumsden): Mr. Speaker, it is with a great deal of pleasure that I offer congratulations to the Canadian men's and women's world curling champions in winning the 1994 global titles.

Residents of Saskatchewan, and all Canadians, are especially proud of the Sandra Peterson rink of Saskatchewan which gave Canada its second consecutive world curling championship. Sandra Peterson, Jan Betker, Joan McCusker, coach Anita Ford

Oral Questions

and lead Marcia Gudereit, who lives in my riding of Regina—Lumsden, are top athletes that deserve our praise and admiration for their accomplishments, the only Canadian women's team to win consecutive world championships.

These women have worked hard and their dedication to curling has paid off. They have developed a controlled defensive style that has brought them the victories they deserve. This team is named the Rat Pack because their mascot is a rubber rat.

I know all members of the House will join with me in applauding the efforts of our world class Rat Pack in winning the world championship.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[Translation]

ACTION PLAN FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister.

Although several provinces were opposed, the federal government decided to go ahead and announce its youth strategy last Friday. The Quebec Minister of Education, who also chairs the Conference of Education Ministers, called this an example of unacceptable intrusion by Ottawa in the education sector and even considered challenging the government's decision before the Supreme Court.

Does the Prime Minister realize that his strategy is not only an intrusion in an area under provincial jurisdiction but also that Quebec and several other provinces have agreed to oppose the government, since the strategy will create further costly and unnecessary administrative duplication and overlap, which means less value for money?

Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister responsible for Public Service Renewal): Mr. Speaker, no one questions the jurisdiction of Quebec and other provinces over education. Of the three programs announced last Friday, the first is a program to help students. Quebec opted out of this program in 1964.

The second program, which targets young people, is not really about education but about promoting youth employment. The federal government had and still has a number of different programs in this area, like Katimavik, for instance, and we have made every effort to ensure that the federal program is complementary to the provincial program.

The third component, the national apprenticeship program, helps young people make the transition from school to work, a problem that is both federal and provincial. Both governments

Oral Questions

are active in this area and should continue their programs, in order to help young people find jobs.

Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, the problem is that the Quebec government does not share the federal government's views and intends to bring a formal challenge before the Supreme Court to protest this new intrusion by the federal government in areas under provincial jurisdiction.

I want to ask the Prime Minister, and I hope he will answer himself this time around, since he made a commitment to effective management and reducing overlap, why he has reversed his policy by launching a federal offensive on education and manpower training which increases the overlap and duplication he wanted to get rid of?

(1420)

Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister responsible for Public Service Renewal): Mr. Speaker, as I pointed out, this is not another intrusion in an area under provincial jurisdiction. Our programs are not like that. The two programs I mentioned, the youth program and the apprenticeship program, are about promoting youth employment and not about education, strictly speaking. Furthermore, they complement provincial programs.

Constitutionally speaking, when a problem is national in scope, like the problem of funding jobs for youth, the federal government shares and will continue to share jurisdiction with the provinces in dealing with this kind of problem.

Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, we have just witnessed a blatant example of bureaucratic obtuseness.

The fact is that the federal government will duplicate what is already being done and spend money unnecessarily, so that we can hardly expect a good return on this investment. I want to ask the Prime Minister whether he has now made it his policy to provoke court challenges on all fronts?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, as the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs said earlier, we have a national responsibility in the area of job creation, and it is one of this government's priorities to find ways to help youth find jobs.

If the Leader of the Opposition spent any time reading the Liberal Party's platform in the red book, he would see that it is all there, and the people voted for this platform, and that is why we are governing the country today.

TRANSFER PAYMENTS

Mr. Yvan Loubier (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Minister of Finance clearly stated his intention to make massive cuts in transfer payments to the provinces in his next budget. Failing agreement with the provinces, the Minister of Finance plans to impose his solution regarding the cuts to be made. The freeze in transfer payments is already saving Ottawa \$1.5 billion over two years.

Are we to understand that the Minister of Finance has given up on trimming federal operating expenditures and has chosen to reduce his deficit on the backs of the provinces, without any compensation, through a massive reduction in transfer payments for health and education?

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development—Quebec): Mr. Speaker, what I said is that the Minister responsible for Public Service Renewal intends to review all federal programs and that review is already under way. So we are certainly looking at our own spending.

I would like to quote a document of which I am very fond, the budget: "It is essential that social security reform leads to programs that are more affordable and work better for Canadians. For the federal government, transfers must be no higher after reform than they are now. We want this reform process to be a co-operative one. We are providing a two-year period of predictability and modest growth in social security transfers to provinces while reform goes on. As promised by the Prime Minister, we will build towards a five-year period of stability in transfers."

That is what I said in the budget, that is what I said yesterday, that is what I discussed with all provincial finance ministers: co-operation. They agreed on it in January.

Mr. Yvan Loubier (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot): Mr. Speaker, how does the Minister of Finance explain that for lack of money, he is cutting transfers to the provinces, but at the same time his government has chosen to intervene brazenly, to say the least, in fields of provincial jurisdiction like youth and training programs. Does he not agree that when you have no money, you should mind your own business?

[English]

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development—Quebec): Mr. Speaker, the member refers to the fact that we are cutting—I cannot remember the expression that he used—our transfers to the provinces.

In fact, in the month of January, we settled equalization payments on a basis that had been deferred for a number of years by the previous government. The payments were very generous to the seven provinces that were receiving them.

Oral Questions

At the same time we met with the provincial finance ministers and told them we would not decrease the payments for a two year moratorium. It is the first time that has been done in a long time. They are used to the previous government simply cutting at will.

(1425)

Then we said to the provinces that together, co-operatively, we would begin to reform the social programs that Canadians wanted reformed so that we could deliver the services more effectively and at less cost.

* * *

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

Mr. Preston Manning (Calgary Southwest): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister.

Canadians are now beginning to see some of the details of the government's legislative program and their initial reaction is disappointment, not enthusiasm.

For example, when Canadians examine the human resources project announced last week to help unemployed youth, they find that 70 per cent of the funds are not for job creation at all and that most of the program is simply a rehash of old programs and Liberal ideas from the 1960s and 1970s.

Does the government not have any bold new ideas for assisting young people, and if it does, what are they?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, we have a program to assist young people.

Perhaps the hon. member does not agree with the idea that the federal government should spend money to help people, especially young people, but now I hear him say that we should spend money.

I am very happy he might find better ways but I am delighted for the nation to hear the leader of the Reform Party tell us to spend more money on young people. I take notice of that.

Mr. Preston Manning (Calgary Southwest): Mr. Speaker, we are talking about allocating money that is ready to be spent. The Prime Minister's reply simply illustrates my point that there is nothing new or creative or bold being said.

Real Reformers have been calling for a portion of federal educational transfers to be paid directly to young people through education and training vouchers and for immediate revamping of the students loan program to make repayments income-contingent.

These are bold and new ideas for encouraging youth preparation for the new economy. Could the Prime Minister tell us why

new ideas like these are not an integral part of the government's thinking or announcements on this subject.

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, it is exactly what the Minister of Human Resources Development is doing at this time. He is talking with the provincial governments about it and he is exploring a lot of these ideas. Some provinces think we are moving too fast.

The hon. leader of the Reform Party would move without talking to the provinces.

We want to make some changes. We would like to have a better system. We know that it would be preferable not to do it unilaterally so we are having discussions at this time. There was supposed to be a meeting yesterday. The provinces were not ready. We have postponed the meeting in order to give them more time.

We think it is the right thing to do. All the premiers are asking us to consult with them and it is something the hon. leader's own father used to ask of the federal government; that before moving we should consult with the provinces. We are consulting with them. We will see what they have to say and will advise the House.

Mr. Preston Manning (Calgary Southwest): Mr. Speaker, I think we are living in the past. The government's lack of new and bold ideas is not only evident in this field but in agriculture, the approach to the fishery and most seriously in the defence of federalism itself.

So far the government's only response to the threat of Quebec sovereignty is to promise a few more handouts like the headquarters of the Commission for Environmental Co-operation being put in Montreal. This is a tired, old-fashioned approach to winning support from Quebec voters by promising to pave roads and build buildings.

I ask again, does the government have some bold new ideas for Quebecers and all Canadians, in particular with respect to the revitalization of federalism?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I think that the hon. member knows the policy of this government.

The best way to convince the people of Quebec to remain in Canada is to have a good administration in Ottawa and have members of Parliament who show tolerance and not play on the prejudices of people.

* * *

(1430)

*[Translation]***FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Verchères): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Foreign Affairs. The situation in Bosnia has seriously deteriorated. The UN has lost all control

Oral Questions

and authority in the Moslem enclave of Gorazde, which has fallen to the Bosnian Serbs. Ignoring UN ultimatums and systematically violating ceasefire agreements, the Bosnian Serb army relentlessly pursues its attack on Gorazde despite that city's designation as a safe area by the UN.

Can the Minister of Foreign Affairs bring us up to date on the situation currently prevailing in Gorazde and confirm that the Bosnian Serbs' sustained attack has put an end to the peace process?

Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Foreign Affairs): Mr. Speaker, at lunch time, the Minister of Defence and I spoke with the Vice-President of Bosnia, Mr. Ganic. We reviewed the situation and we certainly deplore the escalation that seems to have taken place around some safe areas or enclaves where the Moslem population is at the mercy of Serbian troops' artillery. We cannot, of course, remain insensitive to this situation. There will be discussions with the representatives of allied countries to find as quickly as possible a solution to this situation that seems to be getting worse.

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Verchères): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the UN asked NATO to stand ready to launch air strikes.

Can the minister indicate if Canada is actively participating in the development of a strategy for the Western countries and the UN, in order to respond to the intractability of the Bosnian Serbs who chose to further their cause with weapons instead of negotiations?

Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Foreign Affairs): Mr. Speaker, certainly, Canadian representatives at NATO and the UN consulted one another and are participating in meetings to develop a common strategy. A first meeting at the level of NATO ambassadors was held yesterday and another one will take place tomorrow to decide on a common position in response to the UN Secretary General's written request.

We continue to think that negotiations are still the safest way to achieve lasting peace in the former Yugoslavia. We will not solve the problem by aggravating the military conflict. On the other hand, we are aware that we cannot remain indifferent to a handful of Serb fighters who ignore the ceasefires negotiated on all sides. We think that considerable efforts have been made by both the Croats and the Moslems, and it is now time for the Bosnian Serbs to come to the table and agree with the other parties on a peaceful solution to this conflict that has lasted for too long.

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[English]

FISHERIES

Mr. John Cummins (Delta): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister.

I listened closely to the \$1.9 billion fisheries announcement this morning. Could the Prime Minister tell the House why there was no economic diversification component to create real long term jobs in Atlantic Canada anywhere in the announcement?

Hon. David Dingwall (Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his question on an important subject but he is wrong.

Part of the package announced by the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and the Minister of Human Resources Development has a component dealing with regional disparities and how we might be able to facilitate the private sector, particularly small and medium sized business, to take advantage of economic opportunities in that region.

Mr. John Cummins (Delta): Mr. Speaker, a careful reading of the package failed to reveal the items to which the minister is referring. In our view the package failed to address the critical issue of economic diversification in Atlantic Canada. Does the Prime Minister not realize that his actions speak louder than words?

(1435)

The absence of the Minister of Industry at the announcement only creates the impression that the government considers Atlantic Canada, particularly Newfoundland, a region without economic hope. Why was the Minister of Industry not present at this announcement?

Hon. David Dingwall (Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member makes reference to the fact that the Minister of Industry was not in attendance. The hon. member should also say that the Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency was not in attendance either.

I want to assure the hon. member that in view of the commitments the Prime Minister has made and we made during the election campaign, each and every member of this cabinet, each and every member of this caucus, and each and every member of this party are firmly committed to assisting those who are in need, whether they be in the Atlantic region, in Quebec, western Canada or Ontario, to try to provide some economic assistance where possible.

* * *

[Translation]

ACTION PLAN FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval): Mr. Speaker, the youth program announced by the Minister of Human Resources Development a few days ago duplicates a number of programs that already exist in Quebec, including *Jeunes volontaires*, *Jeunes*

promoteurs, and *Chantiers Jeunesse*, plus all the training related to education.

In fact, the federal strategy will merely add to the overlap and duplication which already cost \$300 million annually in the case of Quebec alone.

My question is directed to the Prime Minister. Does he realize that by doing this, he is not only failing to deliver on his promise to eliminate duplication but actually adding to it, and that a substantial share of the funds that should go to youth will be used to support the federal bureaucracy that will be needed to administer the program?

Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister responsible for Public Service Renewal): Mr. Speaker, the federal government is at least as keen as any other government—and the Official Opposition—to eliminate duplication and overlap.

In the youth sector we have had federal programs that helped young people and will continue to do so. I said earlier that we have made every effort to avoid any duplication of programs that already exist in Quebec, especially the *Jeunes volontaires*, when setting up programs in that province.

It is also true that the youth unemployment problem is so serious that both governments must try to find appropriate solutions. They keep repeating that program overlap costs money. Of course it does, but probably not to that extent. Studies indicate that the costs of overlap is quite different from the figures that were mentioned. Of course, overlap can be reduced more readily in some areas than in others—

The Speaker: I am sorry to interrupt, but the hon. member for Roberval has the floor.

Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval): Mr. Speaker, once again, we have seen that the government, despite its concern for eliminating overlap, goes ahead and puts in a six-part program on top of what we already have in Quebec. I wonder where the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs is at.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Gauthier (Roberval): You had better listen, over there, since this is your business, and you voted for these policies, without considering the consequences. If \$10,000 is to be spent on each of these young people, did the minister consider how much money should—

The Speaker: Questions and answers are something we all care about. I would therefore ask hon. members on both sides of the House to keep their voices down, when they ask questions as well as when they give answers.

Oral Questions

(1440)

Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister responsible for Public Service Renewal): Mr. Speaker, I will simply repeat that the party currently in office is as intent as any other party on reducing overlap.

As far as our youth program is concerned, we have carried out extensive consultations and it is clear that our program meets the current needs of young people. And we do not intend to give up our right to help Canadians in need. In the case in point, there are Canadians in need who are not getting help from any provincial program. This is an area of shared jurisdiction and we have programs to implement in that area.

* * *

[English]

WHEAT EXPORTS

Mr. Charlie Penson (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, I would like to interrupt the theatre that is going on here to actually ask a question of the Minister for International Trade.

First, I would like to take a little different tact and congratulate the Minister for International Trade on the successful signing of the GATT in Morocco. While in Morocco the minister said that he would not yield to pressure from the United States on the question of Canadian wheat exports.

Is the minister willing to hold his ground until the world trade organization is up and running and let it decide that our wheat exports are not unfairly subsidized?

Hon. Roy MacLaren (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his kind comments.

The situation with regard to wheat is that we have engaged in continuing discussions with the United States for some months, culminating in some meetings in Marrakech where we had hoped to resolve the issue. However the United States and Canadian positions remain far apart.

It is open to Canada and to the United States to continue those negotiations or discussions if the United States chooses to pursue them. The United States has indicated that it had hoped to resolve the issue by Friday. We will have to see whether the decision of the United States by Friday is to proceed with discussions or to take some other action.

Mr. Charlie Penson (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the same minister.

Many concerned Canadian wheat farmers feel they are doing a good job, are being competitive and have adjusted to the new reality of free trade. Would the minister allay the fears of wheat farmers by saying that their interests will not be traded off to

Oral Questions

protect supply management in order to cut a deal with the United States in this area?

Hon. Roy MacLaren (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, most emphatically, yes.

Despite persistent United States efforts to link agricultural problems, there are agricultural differences between our two countries. We reject any such linkage. We shall deal with each issue on its merits. Certainly in the case of wheat we very much share the point of view just outlined by the member opposite.

* * *

[Translation]

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE REFORM

Mr. René Canuel (Matapédia—Matane): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development in Quebec.

Yesterday, officials from Opération Dignité 2, an organization which promotes regional economic development, appealed to the government for help. They are asking the government to postpone the UI reform for one year, as it will severely affect regions with a high proportion of seasonal workers, in Quebec as well as in other provinces.

Given the disastrous impact of this reform on the economy of predominantly rural regions, will the minister pledge to delay for one year the UI cuts announced in the budget, and actually do it?

(1445)

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development—Quebec): Mr. Speaker, it is precisely because we are very much aware of the enormous problem which unemployment represents everywhere in Canada, and certainly in rural areas, that we want to proceed with a reform of the unemployment insurance program. We want to really lower UI contributions so that small businesses can hire new workers, protect the poor, including single-parent families, and have the money to educate and train the workers of the future.

We made those decisions because we are keenly aware of the unemployment problem in Quebec and in rural Canada.

Mr. René Canuel (Matapédia—Matane): My supplementary is for the Minister of Finance and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development in Quebec.

Is the minister prepared to come and sit down—and not merely go through the area like he did during the election campaign—with residents of the Gaspé Peninsula and Lower St. Lawrence region to find, with them and with provincial offi-

cial, ways to make better use of current income security funds and create real jobs?

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development—Quebec): In the context of the social security reform undertaken by my colleague, I will certainly do so. However, I will not be the only one; other ministers are willing to go too. Nevertheless, as I have already said, I can tell you unequivocally that I am quite prepared to go and meet your constituents this summer.

* * *

[English]

HOUSING

Mr. Jim Jordan (Leeds—Grenville): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the minister responsible for housing.

The budget announcement that \$100 million over the next two years will be available to improve the housing of low income Canadians is being well received, particularly in rural Canada. Reinstating RRAP will create jobs and improve living conditions for low income Canadians.

Could the minister advise the House when the funds will be made available? What interest has there been from the provinces and territories to become partners in this program?

Hon. David Dingwall (Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his unexpected question.

We have had numerous deliberations with the provincial governments across the country. A number of them have agreed with us that there is a necessity for cutting out duplication and overlap. However a number of them for a variety of reasons have not wanted to proceed with us. For instance, in the province of Ontario there has been no sharing of that common vision.

Moneys under RRAP will be made available later this week. Applications can be processed in the coming weeks. I hope we will be able to have a fair amount of money in the system in order to provide the necessary repairs for the homes in need.

* * *

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS

Mr. Ed Harper (Simcoe Centre): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister.

Yesterday, the Prime Minister admitted that the gravy train is already at the station picking up loyal Liberals for well paid government jobs. It appears this government is prepared to pay a premium to get the gravy train to stop at Liberal advertising and polling stations. It is my understanding cabinet is considering guidelines to grant government contracts to Liberals even if their fees are 10 per cent higher than non-Liberal competitors.

Oral Questions

Will the Prime Minister commit to this House that his government's new guidelines, whenever they are released, will not consider old style patronage as an acceptable method of making hiring and contract decisions?

Hon. David Dingwall (Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency): Mr. Speaker, I do not know where the hon. member gets his information with regard to the context of guidelines which are to be released by the government.

I want to assure him however that the Prime Minister made a clear and unequivocal commitment to Canadians that this subject matter would be reviewed. The matter has been reviewed. We are in the throes of releasing those guidelines to the public. Members will then have an opportunity to assess their effectiveness.

I want to assure the hon. member the principles of competency, fiscal responsibility and transparency will be seen throughout those guidelines.

(1450)

Mr. Ed Harper (Simcoe Centre): Mr. Speaker, it is obvious the ethics counsellor is long overdue. Can the Prime Minister tell us when this appointment will finally be made?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, soon.

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[Translation]

PURCHASES OF FLU VACCINE

Mrs. Monique Guay (Laurentides): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Public Works, and it is a real question.

Strange things are happening in the Department of Public Works. In the procurement contract for flu vaccine purchased for the provinces, the minister, acting on his own initiative, split the contract equally between Connaught in Ontario and Bio Vac in Quebec. The minister says he found a Canadian solution to a Canadian problem. However, the contract share awarded to Connaught will be produced in the United States.

Since BioVac is offering these vaccines at \$1.70 per unit, why does the government insist on paying more—\$1.85 per unit—with its decision to purchase part of these vaccines in the United States, so that Quebec loses 26 high tech jobs and an investment project worth \$32 million will be cancelled?

[English]

Hon. David Dingwall (Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for the question. Obviously the hon. member does not have all of the facts.

The hon. member should be aware that in previous years the amount of the contract awarded to the company from the province of Quebec was approximately 38 per cent over a three year average.

This year because of the representations made by the hon. member and her party, all of which we took into consideration, we were able to have an agreement in principle where both parties, Connaught industries from Ontario and BioVac from Quebec, would be able to split a contract on a 50:50 basis. Keep in mind that the Government of Canada purchased less than 1 per cent of the vaccine and 99 per cent of that particular contract was purchased by the other provinces across this country.

[Translation]

Mrs. Monique Guay (Laurentides): Mr. Speaker, are we to conclude that the contract splitting was the result of pressure from ministers in Toronto, who prefer an approach that is more expensive and risky in terms of security and supply, to drum up business for a Toronto distributor, as opposed to awarding the whole contract to a Quebec manufacturer?

[English]

Hon. David Dingwall (Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency): Mr. Speaker, again I thank the hon. member for such a wonderful question.

I informed the hon. member and this House that two years ago in the province of Quebec BioVac did not get 50 per cent of the contract; 87 per cent of the contract went to the province of Ontario.

What we have provided under this particular regime is a 50:50 splitting of the contract. One per cent of that contract is purchased by the Government of Canada; 99 per cent is purchased by all the other provinces. If that is not equity I am sure the hon. member might want to go back to math school.

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YOUNG OFFENDERS

Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice.

In Edmonton on April 17 in the early hours of the morning a young couple, ages 36 and 37, with their two children, ages 9 and 6, were wakened by a noise. The mother, thinking it was one of her children, went to investigate. Three young offenders had broken into their house. When she confronted them they promptly stabbed her to death.

When is this minister going to act by sending a clear message to violent young offenders that the experiments of the seventies were a failure and they will be treated henceforth as the vicious criminals they are?

Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, we all read with shock and horror the facts of the case to which the hon. member has referred. I do

Oral Questions

not want to discuss that case because at least two people have been taken into custody and that is a matter for the courts.

Let me speak to the broader point the hon. member has raised not for the first time in this House. Let me say I have responded not for the first time in this House that this government, from its platform through to its present policy, has recognized the need for changes to the Young Offenders Act. A thorough review of the statute is needed to determine whether it continues to meet the needs of the Canadian public.

(1455)

As I have told my hon. friend in the past we are going to introduce legislation in this House in June to make specific changes to the statute. At the same time we will turn the Young Offenders Act in its entirety over to the justice committee of which the hon. member is a member for a thorough review to ensure it meets the needs of juvenile justice in Canada.

That is the same response I gave last time. I shall give that response the next time the hon. member asks the same question.

Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose): Mr. Speaker, unfortunately I will probably have to ask the same question about a new case. How many people have to die before this government will realize the legislation they have had in place for 16 years is useless? It is time to act.

This Young Offenders Act is inherently flawed. Any amount of tinkering this government will do will not fix it. We need completely new legislation for young offenders.

Will the minister replace this legislation? Will the minister scrap the act?

Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I have already said the justice committee will be asked to look at the act to determine whether it ought to be changed further, beyond the changes we are going to introduce in June.

Let me add that it seems to me the hon. member is falling into the error of assuming the tragedies to which he refers, the crimes to which he makes reference in his questions, can be averted or overcome by the simple expedient of changing a piece of legislation. The difficulties and problems to which he refers run deeper than that.

The approach this government is taking is not only to introduce changes to statutes as required, and that we shall do, but also to address the broader question of crime prevention in this country, also a priority for this government.

CONSUMER AFFAIRS

Mr. Tony Ianno (Trinity—Spadina): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Industry.

As the Canadian telephone sales and telemarketing industry continues to grow, so has an increase in telephone sales fraud. Telephone sales fraud has become alarmingly commonplace with some studies estimating that it defrauds the public of up to \$100 million. These fraudulent practices affect all Canadians but especially senior citizens.

What is the minister prepared to do or doing at this time to protect Canadians from this telephone sales fraud?

Hon. John Manley (Minister of Industry): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member not only for his question but also for raising this issue in the House of Commons at this time.

It is a very important concern not just of our department and of the Bureau of Competition Policy but it should be a matter of concern for all Canadians.

As he mentions senior citizens particularly have been victimized by fraudulent telemarketing activities. For that reason the Bureau of Competition Policy which is responsible for enforcing laws respecting misleading advertising has included a flyer with the old age security cheques. This notice warns senior citizens of the danger of telephone fraud and of making the appropriate inquiries when telephone calls are received.

Also the Bureau of Competition Policy in co-operation with the RCMP and provincial police forces will be increasing enforcement activities to see that the laws on the books are appropriately enforced.

* * *

[Translation]

PAY EQUITY

Mrs. Christiane Gagnon (Quebec): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the President of the Treasury Board. On the issue of pay equity, the media recently reported that the Government of Quebec and the Quebec union of provincial employees had come to an agreement. Some \$90 million will be paid in catch-up wages and another \$25 million in pay equalization adjustment in certain employment categories.

In view of the fact that the provincial governments in Quebec and Ontario continue to consider pay equity a key priority, does the minister intend to finally pay female employees of the Federal Public Service the amounts owed them pursuant to a ruling by the Human Rights Tribunal over three years ago?

*Government Orders**[English]*

Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure): Mr. Speaker, pay equity is a priority of this government. Indeed in the past the federal government has reimbursed employees to try to ensure pay equity.

There is a dispute currently before a human rights tribunal. We are presently exploring with the unions the opportunity to try to bring about a settlement in this matter. I hope that will be achieved and I will further report to the House on the matter.

* * *

(1500)

GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES

Mr. Jim Silye (Calgary Centre): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance.

Yesterday in the House the minister characterized spending cuts for next year's budget as massive. Last week the Prime Minister said that any additional spending cuts would be measured in millions not billions.

I would like to know, and members of the Reform Party would like to know, if the finance minister means massive in millions or does he mean massive in billions, or is he in agreement with his Prime Minister.

Who is actually deciding how much the cuts will be for the next budget?

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development—Quebec): Mr. Speaker, the statements I made and the statements of the Prime Minister flow directly from the budget document. We said that the cuts that were made in the budget were sufficient to bring us to the 3 per cent of GDP.

As well the budget talked about the large reform that was going to be carried on by the Minister for Public Service Renewal looking at it program by program.

That is the position of the government. It is very important to understand that it has not only been set out on countless occasions by the Prime Minister and by myself, it was also set out in the budget, and it is a position that we set out in the red book.

In other words what we said before the election we are carrying through after the election.

* * *

PRESENCE IN THE GALLERY

The Speaker: I draw the attention of hon. members to the presence in the gallery of Dr. Ejup Ganic, Vice President of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

The Speaker: I also draw the attention of hon. members to the presence in the gallery of the Hon. Eduard Kukan, Foreign Affairs Minister of the Slovak Republic.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS*[Translation]***CONTROLLED DRUGS AND SUBSTANCES ACT**

The House resumed consideration of the motion, and of the amendment.

Mr. Pierre de Savoye (Portneuf): Madam Speaker, I listened with great interest to the remarks the hon. member for Vancouver Centre made before Question Period. In her remarks, she repeatedly provided assurances to the effect that provisions not included in the legislation, which were to be covered by the regulation, would be appropriately covered. I am not quite sure that I am satisfied with that, but at least I had the pleasure of hearing her say that, in her mind, a solution may be found in precedents created in previous pieces of legislation.

(1505)

More specifically, I would like the hon. member to assure me that one way or another, the courts can, while not being legally bound to do so, induce people charged with possession or use of narcotics to seek rehabilitation and detoxification therapy.

At present, as we know, the law does not require a judge to deal with a youth, for example, in such a way as to get him or her rehabilitated or detoxified. It is left entirely to the discretion of the judge. Unfortunately, judges all too often put behind bars young offenders who really need treatment instead.

Finally, is it not unfortunate that mistakes of youth cause young offenders, children, and teenagers to have criminal records following them for the rest of their lives, when it would be so much simpler to set them back on the straight and narrow by decriminalizing offenses which are, by and large, minor and fight the big-time drug lords instead.

I will conclude on this note. In the hearings on Bill C-85, the ancestor of Bill C-7, members of the police forces themselves expressed concern about the fact that the bill did not deal with drug lords, but only small-time dealers.

I would appreciate it if the hon. member could comment on this.

[English]

Ms. Fry: Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the member for his question.

Government Orders

I listened when he spoke to the bill in the House. He made some very clear points which I tried to address in my speech today.

For over a decade it has been almost a precedent within jurisprudence that it has been a notion of the law that people would be sent for rehabilitation.

However, one of the key things about rehabilitation that we must remember is that you cannot force people to have treatment. They must be assessed first and that does not require a judge. All the judge needs to do is have the person assessed by a health professional who then decides whether the person is ready for rehabilitation or not.

That has always been done in jurisprudence over the last 10 years with regard to issues like this. I hope we will continue to do it because then the person would be assessed properly and treated if they so desire. As members well know, motivation and acceptance of addiction is an essential part of treatment.

Mr. Grant Hill (Macleod): Madam Speaker, I wonder if the parliamentary secretary could make a comparison between Bill C-85 and Bill C-7. Could she comment on how similar these two bills are?

Ms. Fry: Madam Speaker, the two bills are similar in that they have the same principle. However since that last bill we have talked with people like the Canadian Medical Association and some of the groups who found some problems with some of the clauses in this bill. As a result, we have dealt with some of the issues, as I said in my speech, that the CMA had found difficulty with, especially with regard to things like what you use as drug paraphernalia and the difference between drug paraphernalia and what is an essential part of some of our preventive programs for HIV. For instance a needle is now considered to be accepted and will therefore not be included in drug paraphernalia but would be accepted as a prevention. Those kinds of things are now eliminated from the old bill.

(1510)

Another thing that has been eliminated is the fact that physicians are not going to be considered to be traffickers if they are using a drug which they have been designated as being allowed to use if they are using it appropriately. Some of these things have been clarified in the bill. Therefore, some changes have been made in the bill to satisfy old questions that have been asked in the past.

Mr. Grant Hill (Macleod): Madam Speaker, I listened with great interest before question period to the member for Dartmouth. I must compliment him. I believe the member is an accomplished orator and some of the words and phrases he used I found a little stinging. My ears are still stinging with the rebuke of the hon. member.

I was particularly interested when he spoke of the partisan nature of the House, partisan in the sense that we should look at the intent and purpose of legislation and be able to look well beyond narrow party bounds.

I found this fascinating in regard to this bill. I would like to state categorically that where Bill C-7 speaks of controlling drugs and substances it gets the wholehearted support of the Reform Party. For the member for Dartmouth, I cannot say that strongly enough.

I want to go on from that statement but have it remembered through this discourse. Not so long ago Bill C-85 was in the House and the member and his colleagues were sitting on the other side. I would like hon. members to judge the partisanship that was registered about Bill C-85 at that time.

The member said that the present bill is simply codifying regulations. What did the member and his colleagues say about it not yet a year ago? I have gone back to the committee minutes and have a few of them here.

The member from Winnipeg, a colleague that I value, said the following: "The subject has not been given any media attention yet. I understand it was given first reading almost a year ago in June 1992. To rush through it within a couple of months will not speak well of Parliament at the least".

The same member said: "I do not want us to give any wrong impressions to the Canadian public about this very serious bill. It needs serious study". That is not partisan apparently when spoken by member of the opposition who was a Liberal.

I go on. This comment was not made by a Liberal but another member of the committee and in response to a specific question. "My understanding was that the bill would be passed to second reading on the understanding that we give it a thorough examination in committee. I agreed to that with one speaker and we agreed to that within our party. Then it gets into the committee and we are rushing through it to beat—" and there the member used an unparliamentary word, "—and for what, so Madam Sparrow can take on the Reform Party, is that it? I don't understand. We'd be nowhere?".

(1515)

These comments go on, comments made by my colleagues on the other side of the House now. I cannot say this strongly enough. If the bill is flawed enough to cause them to create a great stir in committee, surely the bill is flawed enough today to listen to constructive—I say this loudly to the member—criticism of this bill.

Maybe the member will look down at his feet and say constructive criticism cannot come from a member on this side. Surely it can come from a member on this side. It went on. Members spoke about really getting worried. Here is a com-

Government Orders

mittee with the government side trying to ram through the legislation. It even talked about putting closure on.

This bill took months and months in the previous Parliament. Surely it should not hurt to take a few hours of debate in this House that would be listened to. I am almost at a loss of words to listen to how partisanship could only happen on this side of the House.

I wanted to go over other comments made by people who appeared in front of the House. They were by S.J. Usprich and J.R.M. Solomon when reviewing this bill. These are not parliamentarians. They are individuals commenting on this bill. They said that this was a poorly drafted, intentionally over broad and vaguely worded piece of legislation. I agree.

I wanted to talk about some things in this bill that are good. It is traditionally suitable to only complain. I wanted to say what things I agreed with from the specific aspects that I am going to talk about. These are the medical aspects.

With the attempts to curb abuse of designer drugs and look alike drugs I agree. Stimulants, depressants, hallucinogenics, these drugs have proliferated in the laboratories of our country and our laws do not and have not kept up with those problems.

There is legislation in this act to prevent double doctoring. There is a huge black market in prescription medications. One of the easiest things for people to do is shop from doctor to doctor, getting the same prescription filled over and over again. The only way we have of preventing that is for our pharmacists to have access to the computers and to be able to catch that.

Double doctoring is a significant problem, an issue that I agree with fully. There are other things that would help this. Triplicate prescriptions will help. The use of computers at all pharmacies will also help but there are very specific provisions in this bill that are very vague and broad.

I heard a member from the Bloc speak about the things that an individual could inspect as they came into the practitioner's office; for example, open and examine any receptacle or package, examine anything found in that place, examine any label, take records, books or other documents, seize and detain, reproduce any document.

It was not so long ago that I had one of my colleagues say to me that patient confidentiality was being eroded in our country. Patient confidentiality is very important. Concerning the woman coming in to speak with her physician about sexual abuse when she was young, asking if these records are confidential, will anybody be able to look at them, the answer if this act is brought in will be no, your records are not confidential. That is a problem.

I thought I would take a light hearted look at a bit of the bureaucratic mumbo-jumbo in this bill. We talk about bureau-

cratise. The governor in council may, by regulation, designate any regulation made under this act as a regulation. In other words, we can make regulations about regulations to regulate whatever we want, including regulations. That is nonsense.

The act is also full of very specific definitions of the subjects and the substances covered in this bill and then goes on to say the governor in council may amend any of the schedules by adding to them or deleting from them any item or portion of an item. That does not fit with the exactitude that an act like this requires.

(1520)

In our country I believe criminal justice needs a thorough review. This bill should be part of that review. Gun control issues need a thorough review. The Young Offenders Act needs a thorough review. Victims' impact statements need a thorough review. Let us listen to the Liberal members who sat on committee a year ago and said that this act needs a very thorough review before it goes to second reading.

Whether or not the government is willing to take this to the justice committee or the health committee, I personally feel that it should be in the justice committee. I listened to the Solicitor General in this House agree to that. I also heard one of the justice committee members saying he felt that this should go to justice.

I would ask the members to recollect again my comment that in terms of the criminal justice issue with this act we are in total agreement. The bill is poorly crafted, poorly worded and has flaws in it that are almost too great to address in committee. I would ask the government to review very carefully this aspect of this act and to put it to the justice committee as we suggested.

Mr. Ron MacDonald (Dartmouth): Madam Speaker, I am glad I am still here because the hon. member raised a number of issues and I am pleased that he clarified his own position and I suspect of his party. I am not sure if he speaks for himself or his party on this issue.

This bill was before the previous Parliament and Liberals had some difficulty with it. We believe there were some things that were flawed. The context in which the previous government pursued legislation was a closed shop. Conservative government members went in to the committee like lambs with rings in their noses and were led by the parliamentary secretaries at the time. Even the worst bill, even the most obviously flawed bill would not be changed once the minister rose in his or her place and tabled it in the House.

We have given a commitment that we will not do that. We have seen this on a number of issues that committees have already started to examine. It was a different place and a different time and the government was committed when Bill C-85 was put in the last Parliament not to listen to any substantive suggestions for change in the bill. That was clear from the outset.

Government Orders

I believe the member is sincere in what he said here today. This is second reading debate. This is where parties and individuals agree or disagree to approve the bill in its principle, in its direction. Then it goes on to committee where we then have report stage. I would urge the member opposite if he is trying to make this place work better that if he agrees in principle with the bill to vote in favour of the bill, refer it to the committee with the concerns he has, which are legitimate, about whether there are flaws that can be fixed, and work at the committee level.

I can give a commitment from this side that our government is quite prepared to listen to any reasonable suggestions as to how legislation such as this can be made better. We are committed to making this Parliament and its committee system work.

Mr. Hill (Macleod): Madam Speaker, the rhetoric is great and I do hope the member is telling it exactly as it is. However, I feel and I sense that there is an ownership taken of a bill as soon as the member switched to the other side. I wish that were not the case. It does not seem fair to me that the bill can have changed so much in this short period of time.

I read both of them, they are not significantly changed. My sincere hope would be that this is in fact the way this Parliament would work. I cannot say this any stronger than I have already. When it went to the committee stage when those members were in opposition there was a howl and a scream of it being rammed through. I am not at all comfortable as I sit over here to see that same process take place. I am speaking of this loudly and I will watch with great interest.

I would also refer back to the member. If this is to be a co-operative Parliament would the member not look very carefully at the proposal to take this to justice? This is not, and I cannot say this strongly enough, a health bill. This is a justice bill.

(1525)

Ms. Hedy Fry (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Health): Madam Speaker, I would like to comment on some of the things that the hon. member said.

There are some differences in this bill. It is not the exact bill that was brought to the House last time around.

The word "provide" now in definition is changed so that it specifically says traffic. That means that a physician or a pharmacist's providing a drug to a patient is no longer in danger of being considered trafficking. That was one of the very poor things in the last bill that had to be changed.

There are a couple of other things. The fact that a patient goes to a physician or a pharmacist and takes away and possesses drugs also has been specifically defined in the bill so that we now know that is allowable and that is not considered to be a criminal offence.

There is one other thing I want to say to the member. It has to do with the fact that he was talking about physician-patient confidentiality. There is a great misunderstanding out there in the real world about physician-patient confidentiality.

What the member should know is that there is no such thing in reality; in no court or group or insurance company. In British Columbia, for instance, the insurance company of British Columbia that deals with traffic accidents can subpoena all of the clinical records of the patient regardless of whether they have to do with the accident. This is allowable and the physician and the patient have no recourse.

There is a precedent already here that the information between a physician and a patient is not that privileged as one would expect. It is not like the information between a lawyer and a client. Lots of laws so far have allowed for ministers of health to look at records if they believe, and this is what this bill says, that the physician and the patient were in agreement to use drugs for purposes other than therapy and other than appropriate physician-patient use.

This is going to be done by health professionals who are governed by the Privacy Act and by confidentiality so that no one should be able to see this but the particular minister and the particular inspector.

Mr. Dale Johnston (Wetaskiwin): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to be able to rise today and speak on Bill C-11. At the outset I would like to point out that I am certainly not opposed entirely to Bill C-11. There are some very good things in it.

I agree that we must educate the public as far as smoking hazards are concerned. I further agree that we should be placing an export tobacco tax on—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): I am sorry, is the hon. member aware that we are speaking on Bill C-7 right now? You are debating on Bill C-11.

Mr. Johnston: I am on Bill C-11, Madam Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): We are not yet at Bill C-11. We are still debating on Bill C-7. Resuming debate, the hon. member for Saskatoon—Dundurn.

Mr. Morris Bodnar (Saskatoon—Dundurn): Madam Speaker, it is interesting to hear all the different members in the House speaking on this legislation. It is interesting to hear that there is consensus on many points and disagreement on some.

Everyone, it appears, agrees that there is need for legislation for the control of drugs and that this be put into one statute. To date we have two statutes that govern this. It is important to have this in one statute; important for the public so that the public can from this point on refer to one statute and know what is allowed and what is not allowed and how the controls take effect.

Government Orders

It is also important that our children be protected from the parasites of society. The legislation in question takes that into effect. We all have the goal of having legislation that will control what many people consider to be a profession, a profession at the price and at the cost of our young people in society. We cannot have young people destroyed. We must not allow it. Apart from educating the public we still need legislation controlling, as I have indicated, these parasites in society.

(1530)

We cannot take legislation such as the legislation that has been proposed and rubber stamp it. Perhaps we have consensus on that as well. The legislation is so different. It is not just amending legislation but is new legislation which has been drafted, trying to foresee all the problems that may arise. By trying to foresee problems one tends either to overlook certain matters or give it too great a scope.

We must be vigilant that we do not throw out human rights. When we are dealing with legislation such as this innocent people will also be involved. We must not trample on their rights. In enforcing rights against individuals who breach the law we sometimes come into contact with people who are innocent and their rights are trampled upon. We must look at the legislation in this light.

In other words we generally have to balance the rights of the innocent people with the objectives of the statute itself. What better way to do this but in committee. It appears all people in the Chamber favour the legislation and its goals. We must be careful as we look at the legislation not to get to the stage where we in fact trample on the rights of individual people, innocent people.

Let me just give an example in this respect. We must be careful with the definition of trafficking. I am not saying the definition in the statute is adequate or inadequate, but let us just take a look at it. The definition of trafficking deals with selling. Traffic means to sell, administer, provide, transport, send or deliver.

Is that a definition we wish to have? Do we want people who simply send or deliver an item or provide an item to be trafficking? Then we have the definition of provide which means to give, transfer or otherwise provide in any manner. Do we want such a definition?

The problems we run into with such a definition of provide is that we could have too many people covered. We could have innocent people covered. We could have people who simply give medication to others within a home, people who have a proper prescription to a controlled substance, being guilty of trafficking.

Let me give an example. An individual, a spouse, may have a prescription for a controlled substance. The other spouse may be requested to fetch that particular item. By giving that substance

to a child to bring to the other spouse the initial spouse is guilty of trafficking. We do not want that. We cannot have that. We must be vigilant that innocent people are not covered by the legislation in this manner. In other words we have to balance here again. The balance requires that the innocent people be protected against the objectives of the statute.

We must also look at the provisions of the statute in certain procedural matters where preliminary inquiries are taken away from certain individuals.

The summary convictions portion of the statute is expanded thus eliminating preliminary inquiries. This may not be something suitable for the public. This may not be something we require or desire in the administration of justice. Depending on discussions in this area, discussions as to disclosure by the crown to the defence, this may be reasonable but it may not be reasonable. What better place to deal with it but in a committee.

We have to look at what the controlled substances are. What are we looking at? Part of the definitions in the schedules refer to derivatives and similar synthetic preparations.

(1535)

One has to look at the objectives of the legislation again which are to prevent the designer drugs, slight alteration to drugs and in that way getting around the legislation. We also have to look at the innocent people who can possess these particular items and not know that it is an offence.

Unless we have specific items indicated in the statute that we know are offences or not offences, it is difficult to function in society. We have to balance again. What better way to balance but to discuss it in committee. Let the committee take a look at it and thus be able to protect the innocent who may come into contact with the statute and also see to it that those who are trying to circumvent the legislation are duly dealt with.

One area that may create some problems is the area of possessing property or proceeds of any property knowing that all or part was obtained or derived directly or indirectly. I look at this matter and I have problems. The problems that arise are that individuals may have property they received. Store owners may receive money from people who they believe may be selling drugs but also have legitimate jobs. Those store owners are not protected if they sell products to that individual. This particular legislation might be too broad.

As well we have a problem with respect to legislation that deals with the Governor General being able to exempt police from the statute. Exempting police from the statute allows police in the investigation of offences under the statute to traffic. If police can traffic they can instigate offences. If they can instigate offences and if it is allowed we may have a problem in our criminal justice system with individuals who are too vigilant or too aggressive in attempting to protect society, and

Government Orders

by trying to protect society may in fact be pulling innocent people into the web. I see that my time has run out.

Ms. Judy Bethel (Edmonton East): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to participate in the discussion of Bill C-7 today, the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act. In the long term it will be one of the most important pieces of legislation considered by this assembly. Canada needs a comprehensive drug strategy and Bill C-7 provides it.

If we talk with community leaders in any of our cities we will soon hear that our current laws are not effective in dealing with the drug problems they face. Police forces across the country have pointed out that new laws are needed to deal with the techniques now used by drug offenders.

Neighbourhood groups are really frustrated because the law seems powerless to do anything even when they and the police know about drug dealings on their streets. Community workers who are trying to help young people choose a healthy lifestyle are discouraged because the law is not a partner in their cause. Often it is a detriment. Ineffective laws also bring disrespect for the law in general, and this is certainly true of current drug laws.

For all these reasons I welcome and support Bill C-7. It provides important new tools for the police and communities to use in fighting the drug problem in the country. This law will make it easier for police to prosecute drug dealers and it provides stronger penalties. It will allow the courts to consider aggravating factors in sentencing such as the involvement of children and the sale of drugs in school yards.

Bill C-7 is a comprehensive drug strategy and a major improvement from existing laws. There is, however, one aspect of the modern drug trade that is not covered. I would like to see the bill amended to close this loophole. I am talking about the use of fortified drug houses to avoid police prosecution. This is already a significant problem in Edmonton and many other cities. It will become an even greater problem as police forces begin to use other features of the new law.

I will briefly describe the problems and propose possible amendments for consideration by the committee in its review of the legislation.

(1540)

The first fortified drug house in Edmonton was appropriately called the Fortress, and that is exactly what it was. The plan is simple. Drug dealers rent an old house and fortify it through the addition of cement walls, steel doors, false entrances, trap doors and other obstacles. This delays police entry long enough to destroy any evidence of drug trade. The element of surprise, an important element in effective enforcement, is gone. These houses also allow for the exchange of money and drugs through

trap doors. There is no human contact between the dealer and the purchaser, eliminating other ways of catching dealers.

Over the years the Edmonton police service employed a number of tactics against the Fortress with little success. An appeal was made to the absentee landlord but he did not care as long he got his rent. In fact he legally challenged any moves by the city to close the place down.

The neighbourhood became very upset because the Fortress became a centre of undesirable activity. It ruined all their hard work to clean up their neighbourhood. Used syringes were discarded in nearby playgrounds where children could pick them up. Traffic noise and frequent street fights made the area unsafe. Older residents and families were forced to move away, adding to the cycle and the significant costs of inner city decay.

In response to the community the Edmonton city council tried applying every possible law relating to property and land use but ran into legal barriers at every turn. The fact is that there is no legislation to deal with this situation effectively. Drug dealers know it and openly flaunt the law.

I am told by the Edmonton police service there are now 12 fortified drug houses in operation in our city; some are sporadic operations and some are permanent. All of them present a major cost to communities and lead to more disrespect for the law.

In the United States the problem with fortified drug houses had to be dealt with through specific legislation. Some states like California have been successful. However we need to address this problem in Canada.

In order to make Bill C-7 a truly comprehensive drug strategy, I am proposing that it be amended to deal with the problem of fortified drug houses. There are three possibilities for amending the legislation to cover fortified drug houses. One is to include real estate in the definition of offence related property. Bill C-7 allows for the confiscation of property used in drug trafficking, but the definition specifically excludes real estate. Removing this exemption would be one way of addressing the problem.

A second approach is an amendment to create a new offence. The amendment would prohibit an owner, landlord or tenant from knowingly permitting a place to be used for the primary purpose of trafficking in illegal drugs. The Edmonton police service has drafted a proposed amendment which I will be pleased to provide the committee.

A third option is to establish a mechanism by which drug houses could be confiscated by the crown under specific conditions. Again the Edmonton police service has provided some suggestions which I will provide in writing to the committee.

Any of these amendments are consistent with the intent and the spirit of the legislation. They will address the significant problem of fortified drug houses which is not adequately

Government Orders

covered at this time. If we do not address the problem now fortified houses will spread as the way to avoid prosecution under provisions of the act.

This is an opportunity that we cannot afford to miss. Bill C-7 is a comprehensive drug strategy. Let us cover all the loopholes and give communities the tools they need to deal with the problem that creates untold damage in human lives and safety in our communities.

I urge my colleagues to support Bill C-7 and to support an amendment that will address the problem of fortified drug houses at the same time.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Pauline Picard (Drummond): Madam Speaker, I will be commenting on Bill C-7 in my capacity as Official Opposition health critic.

The Minister of Health has introduced on behalf of the government Bill C-7, An Act respecting the control of certain drugs, their precursors and other substances.

After reviewing this bill carefully and mindful of the seriousness of the health issues at stake here, I have to say that the bill misses the mark because of the underlying push to criminalize certain activities and that it is a failed attempt to modernize our approach to combatting this costly scourge on society.

(1545)

At the outset, I wish to point out to this House that I, along with the Bloc Quebecois, support the move to criminalize the sale of illegal drugs. Adequate and effective measures and pertinent legislation are needed to control mood-altering substances. Not just any legislation, mind you and, from my perspective as health critic, especially not legislation that focuses only on the repressive aspects of the issue and overshadows basic public health considerations. Such considerations must be a key component of any legislation, initiative or regulation aimed at combatting drug abuse.

In this respect, Bill C-7 needs to be radically amended. Although this bill was introduced by the Minister of Health, it does not contain any provisions designed to improve public health or the health of the many people who abuse drugs. In short, this bill proposes to fight one of society's ills through coercion and relentless legal efforts.

In the next few minutes, I will show how illegal drug use is much more of a health problem than a crime problem.

There are many reasons why a person turns to drugs. A person may be searching for a high or a feeling of euphoria or seeking temporary respite from the problems associated with depression or stress. Others who may find it difficult to keep up with the demands of our consumer-driven society see drugs as a way of overcoming fatigue or increasing their productivity. Teenagers

in search of an identity often try drugs to defy established authority or simply to conform to standards of behaviour dictated by their environment. An unhealthy family environment and pervasive poverty, violence and despair are often a one-way ticket to drug abuse.

The one common denominator in all of this is that drug abusers experienced health, emotional or social problems before they actually started using drugs. The criminal activity, that is obtaining and using the drugs, is secondary to their illness or social failure.

Canada's Drug Strategy was adopted to spearhead the fight against drug abuse.

A total budget of \$270 million over five years has been earmarked for the CDS. This works out to an average annual budget of \$54 million. So, to fight drugs, we will invest about \$1.98 per person per year. Yet, according to the revenue department, drug trafficking in Canada generates some \$4.6 billion, which represents \$168.52 per Canadian per year. If you invest \$1.98 to fight an activity which generates \$168.52, you are going to look like David against Goliath.

In 1984, the Addiction Research Foundation estimated that drug use led to additional medical care totalling \$2.728 billion, which is almost \$100 per Canadian per year, while the monies allocated for treatment and rehabilitation only represent \$0.75 per person, or 38 per cent of the CDS budget, and the funds for education and prevention are equivalent to \$0.63 per person per year, or 32 per cent of that same budget.

Every year, reduced productivity linked to drug use costs each Quebecer and Canadian the equivalent of \$37.54, while the costs of implementing the law amount to \$31.10. These figures are self-explanatory.

(1550)

The amount of money spent to fight drugs is nowhere near the health, social and economic costs generated by this plague, or the profits generated by this traffic.

The bill which is before us has no long-term vision regarding the fight against drugs, which is something we had to include as parliamentarians. On the contrary, this legislation proposes or suggests old and archaic recipes as an easy way out.

There is an explanation to that. By merely revamping the old Bill C-85 tabled by the previous government, this government is sending the message that initiative and new ideas are not its forte when dealing with such important issues.

Personally, I deeply deplore the fact that a bill from the Department of Health gives so little consideration to its own field of responsibility, namely public health in Canada. Instead of seeking to treat and rehabilitate innocent victims, this legislation provides for criminalization and incarceration.

Government Orders

What will our society, which claims to have the best health care program in the world, do to an innocent young person, who could be my child or yours and who is influenced by others into using soft drugs? Our society will give that young person a criminal record and give him a jail sentence. So much for our social ethic and our value system.

Whereas enforcement measures must be maintained and even strengthened to fight drug traffickers—those merchants of dreams who make such fortunes—victims of these despicable people must be helped, and that means being lenient and offering education, prevention and rehabilitation programs, as well as health care.

Is imprisonment an adequate solution, considering that 70 per cent of federal penitentiaries inmates use illicit drugs? Is making our laws more stringent a good idea, considering that numerous studies have repeatedly shown that fear of punishment or harshness is an insignificant deterrent among drug users?

When comparing risks of punishment with risks to health for drug users, concerns for health clearly win out.

I believe that Canadians are asking us to take effective drug control measures. To do so properly, we must reduce both the demand for and the supply of illicit drugs in a balanced way. A good approach will combine health, prevention and rehabilitation measures, and legal sanctions, too. Bill C-7, the amounts spent on the Canada Drug Strategy and their allocation do not effectively provide this balanced control.

That is why we must reject Bill C-7, review the Canada Drug Strategy and use the results of recent research to update our approach. Above all, we must give priority to values and concepts that emphasize a better quality of life through better public health.

You know, Madam Speaker, it is more mature to admit one's mistakes than to stubbornly repeat them. Therefore I call on the Hon. Minister of Health and the government to withdraw Bill C-7 and start all over. I assure them of my full co-operation in this.

[English]

Ms. Hedy Fry (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Health): Madam Speaker, I want to congratulate the member for a very eloquent speech. She made some very strong points.

However, the member should know that the drug strategy is also tied in with this bill and that 70 per cent of the money we now spend on looking at drugs is spent on the drug strategy which is the health component. It is the part that looks at prevention and ways of treating and rehabilitating people who are addicted.

I agree with many of the things the hon. member said about public policy and understanding the root causes of addiction and of people using drugs.

(1555)

One must also be aware of the number of people who prey on the vulnerable in our society. We have to find a way of dealing with the people who traffic in drugs, who prey on our young people and make them use drugs, knowing full well what they are doing by bringing them into an addiction that is very difficult for them to get out of.

This bill is aimed at some of those people. I wondered if the hon. member felt that that was also needed as well as rehabilitation and treatment.

[Translation]

Mrs. Picard: Madam Speaker, I would like to say to the hon. member that I have no intention of not criminalizing drug traffickers; it was not what I meant. Where I do not agree with this bill is that the 500,000 young people arrested so far for possession of drugs were given criminal records, fines and jail sentences and are now being turned into users and criminals.

What I ask from this bill is that this policy be reviewed to make it more helpful to young people, who are not criminals but users. We should bring in policies to encourage them to get treated for their addictions, to rehabilitate themselves and to become good citizens. I condemn Bill C-7 because it does not put forward such policies. What I find strange is that this bill comes from the Minister of Health and yet deals only with criminal offences.

[English]

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): I see no one rising for debate. Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the amendment?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): All those in favour of the amendment will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): In my opinion the nays have it.

And more than five members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): Call in the members.

(1600)

And the bells having rung:

Government Orders

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): Pursuant to Standing Order 45(5)(a), I have been requested by the chief government whip to defer the motion 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 5.30 p.m. today, at which time the bells to call in the members will be sounded for not more than 15 minutes.

* * *

[*English*]

EXCISE ACT

The House resumed from February 22 consideration of the motion that Bill C-11, an act to amend the Excise Act, the Customs Act and the Tobacco Sales to Young Persons Act, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mr. Gagliano: Madam Speaker, on a point of order. I think you would find unanimous consent, since we deferred the vote, to go on to Private Members' Hour as soon as we find the members who are on the agenda for Private Members' Hour.

Private Members' Hour will probably take us up to the time for taking the vote. Instead of doing Private Members' Hour after the vote, we will do it before. If there is unanimous consent, we could suspend the sitting temporarily. As soon as the whips find their spokespersons for Private Members' Hour the sitting can resume. Then we could suspend and start the votes.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): The sitting of the House is suspended to the call of the chair.

(The sitting of the House was suspended at 4.04 p.m.)

SITTING RESUMED

The House resumed at 4.10 p.m.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gagliano: Madam Speaker, I think you have the unanimous consent of the House to go back to government orders, and proceed with Bill C-11. After that, we will see what time it is and perhaps move on to private members' business before the division. I will come back to that, Madam Speaker.

I apologize to the House. I misunderstood but we would like—and I think there is unanimous consent—to move on to Bill C-11 right away.

[*English*]

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): Do we have unanimous consent to resume debating on C-11?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

EXCISE ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-11, an act to amend the Excise Act, the Customs Act and the Tobacco Sales to Young Persons Act, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mr. Jim Abbott (Kootenay East): Madam Speaker, this is an excellent opportunity for me to develop an issue in this House. I attempted to do this when the government was talking about rolling back the taxes or in fact went ahead with the whole business of rolling back the taxes on cigarettes.

Subsequent to that time it has been interesting to interview the interviewers, the people actually responsible for bringing the news to Canadians. Basically they have told me if you cannot say something and put your point over in 10 seconds it probably will not be news. It probably will not get on television. This is an opportunity then with a little bit more time than that to actually raise an issue I attempted to raise previously.

My issue is that of corporate responsibility. It is the responsibility the cigarette manufacturers and distillers have to the people of Canada. I have some questions about the way in which they are carrying out their responsibility.

During the time this whole issue was boiling another member of the House approached me with two empty Export A cigarette packages. Both of them had been purchased illegally. One was purchased three weeks prior to the government taking its action in bringing forward its measure on export taxes. The other was purchased one week before.

Both packages appeared to me to be exactly the same, until I studied them a little more closely. The first package given to me had on it "25 Class A Finest Canadian Filter Cigarettes" and very proudly "Product of Canada". The package that was purchased one week later, approximately one week prior to the government announcing its export tax, had on it "R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co., Winston Salem, NC, Under Licence from R.J.R.—MacDonald, Inc., Canada".

It appears what was going on here was that the company expected there was going to be some form of export tax. Rather than manufacture the product in Canada and selling it to the U.S. where it would then be taken to a point where it could be brought back into Canada, the company's concern was why would it pay that export tax. It appears the company decided to manufacture the product, which appears for all purposes by its packaging to be exactly the same product, in Winston Salem, North Carolina

Government Orders

thereby avoiding the action the government took about one week later.

My point is Corporations in Canada should be responsible. Corporations in Canada should not do things that will feed into a situation such as we had prior to the government taking action.

(1615)

We had terror, particularly in the area where the majority of this product was coming through. We had fear and we had murders going on and it was all surrounding the whole issue of illegally smuggling cigarettes back into Canada.

Yet I suggest with greatest respect that it appeared to me that none of these companies was taking any substantial action, they were not contributing to this problem of terror, this problem of fear, this problem of murder that was happening over these things.

Furthermore, I found absolutely unfortunate the fact that at exactly the same time the taxes were rolled back on the cigarettes the distillers sent to all members of this Chamber a plastic 750 millilitre bottle explaining that 83 cents out of every dollar that is paid for that bottle one way or another go to taxes.

It might be instructive, granted this is only by my personal recollection, to think for a second about how the taxes on cigarettes and the taxes on alcohol were raised to the level they were. As a youngster, as a young man and through my adult life I can recall many times that people were saying they could get away with adding more tax to cigarettes, adding more tax to alcohol because people want these products and therefore are going to pay it, therefore it is a good revenue source.

Granted this is only by my personal recollection but I do not imagine too many of the members here or the Canadian public would contest that. It was something that happened.

We do end up with the fact that on alcohol we have 83 cents out of every dollar going to the tax man. This obviously works against the corporate agenda. So it is that the Canadian public naturally becomes cynical. It says obviously that if things are working contrary to the corporate agenda what is going to happen is that companies are going to take whatever action required in order to protect their position.

We have now discovered through a process of market studies and things of that nature that higher taxes do lead to lower consumption, particularly on the part of young people. I suggest it is the height of cynicism that it would appear as though these manufacturers were not only feeding the product into the system that included within itself the terror, the fear and the murder, they actually took action to try to get around the fact that this

government, attempting to act responsibly on behalf of Canadian people, brought an export tax in as was assumed.

If there is low public respect for politicians I suggest equally that in Canada on the part of many Canadians there is low public respect for corporations. I suggest to these and other corporations that maybe within the sound of my voice, within the sound of this speech, they examine their motives, take a look at the whole issue of corporate responsibility. Rather than trying to circumvent Canadian law, rather than trying to get around the well intentioned actions of this and other governments, they work with them and act in a socially responsible manner.

If we do not have respect on the part of ordinary citizens for those corporations that put forward the capital to bring forward the jobs, if we do not have respect on the part of ordinary citizens toward politicians, the next step is not very far away and that step is one of anarchy. I would hate to see that happen in this nation.

(1620)

I appreciate the opportunity to develop this story. As one postscript, however, I suggest this story which I have just narrated in this House was available to the Canadian news media. I went around to many reporters and attempted to sell this as something they could be bringing forward and none of them paid any attention. It has been suggested to me the reason for that is that it could not be explained in ten seconds on television. If our newscasting has reached that point then maybe the newscasters of today have to also be prepared to take a more responsible attitude, as I am suggesting.

Mr. Dale Johnston (Wetaskiwin): Madam Speaker, after one false start maybe we will get right on with it this time.

I appreciate the opportunity to speak to Bill C-11 and I will for the most part agree with the substance of Bill C-11. I do think that it is extremely important that we educate the public about the hazards of smoking and in that way I agree with the bill. I further agree that the export tax on tobacco products is a step in the right direction.

However, it is the companion motion to Bill C-11 that I have difficulty with. I am going to speak along the same lines as my colleague.

What particularly bothers me about relieving the taxation on cigarettes and tobacco is the fact that we on this side of the House are particularly in favour of stronger enforcement laws against smuggling.

We have excellent police forces in Canada and we have laws that certainly cover the situation. Why is this so much different than any other lawbreaker would be? Let us take speeding for example. If we have a lot of non-compliance as far as the speed limits are concerned we never once consider abolishing the speed limits and allowing anyone to drive any speed they want.

Government Orders

In fact, we come up with some very ingenious methods, the latest of which is probably the photo radar. If you break the speed barrier you automatically have a picture of your licence plate taken and you get the bill in the mail. Of course you have no defence against that whatsoever.

Here we have a method whereby we can deal directly with the problem rather than saying that we are going to change the rule so that we will not be troubled with having to catch these speeders anymore.

When we reduce taxes on cigarettes it is a little like the gas war. When the guy across the street lowers his gasoline prices then that behooves me to lower my gasoline prices to stay competitive. It looks to me like we are actually getting into competition with these smugglers and in fact allowing them to set the government's agenda. I have a real problem with that.

The other thing about this companion bill is that we have no idea how much money the government is foregoing as far as reducing the taxation on these cigarettes.

We have heard over and over again that its policy is to broaden the tax base. By its own admission it would like to see the deficit reduced and that is either going to take reduced spending or increased taxation and the term the Liberals have come up with is broadening the tax base.

Here we have a contradiction to that. We have a voluntary giving up of perhaps hundreds of millions of dollars. If taxes are reduced in this area it would naturally seem to follow that they will have to be increased in other areas in order to come up to roughly the same level. That is a question in my mind. Where is this foregone revenue going to come from? Obviously it will have to come from somewhere.

(1625)

As has been mentioned, any time that governments consider raising the taxes on the so-called sins, alcohol and tobacco, the sin taxes, it is always debated in this House and in fact right across the provinces in the legislatures. Often times I am sure the debate would go along the lines that we can certainly raise these taxes because people should have to pay for their sins and not only is it a good revenue builder but it is a deterrent for people to actually partake in the so-called sins of alcohol and tobacco.

We are doing two things by raising taxes on the so-called sins. That has always been the argument as well as the fact that we feel if you utilize tobacco and alcohol then the chances are you will need the health care system more than the average person, and so you should be paying your fair share in order to maintain the health care system.

That this bill increases the age limit for the legal purchase of cigarettes it is commendable. At the same time the government is making the product more affordable to those people who do desire to smoke.

Now that we are making it easier, or at least more affordable, to buy cigarettes are we in fact going against the argument that smokers should be paying a higher price for a health care system that would probably see more usage because of their habit? We are talking about a health care system that seems already to be overburdened.

In my opinion there has been a very clear precedent set here. How does this government plan to answer the question that my colleague has raised as far as the Canadian distillers' request is concerned, as far as lowering the taxation? According to my figures, the taxation on a bottle of spirits is in the 87 per cent range. That means that out of the 13 per cent that is left the manufacturer must produce, bottle, advertise, label, ship and pay all its personnel costs and take its profit.

What that also does is encourages a new generation of rum runners. It is a kind of revisitation of the 1920s. Certainly there is money to be made in the bootlegging of illegal alcohol.

Is this a problem in Canada today? I certainly believe it is. According to statistics that I think all members of this House received we estimate 17 million cases of spirits sold in this country per year. Of those, 4 million cases of 12 bottles each are illegally smuggled into Canada.

How do we arrive at the 4 million cases? It is through communication with the provincial liquor boards, the comparison of per capita sales in the United States, and discussion with Revenue Canada Customs and law enforcement agencies. Those figures are pretty reliable.

When we have a problem like this the solution, in my opinion, is not a really simple one. A step in the right direction is a get tough attitude with the smugglers. I think we also have to really increase the profile of enforcement. We not only have to make enforcement more effective, it has to appear to be more effective. We also have to increase the penalties on smuggling. I equate it with upping the ante, particularly when it comes to smuggling cigarettes and alcohol for the purpose of trafficking.

I think we could also add into that the smuggling of guns. Perhaps that is a subject for another day, and I hope to get an opportunity to speak on that at a later date.

Another thing that is ultimately important and that this bill does address is that we ought to be educating the public about the potential health hazards of tobacco. If we agree with the government's policy on reducing taxes and it actually reduces the incentive to smuggle then we have to apply it to the alcohol smuggling problem as well.

Private Members' Business

(1630)

In conclusion, I believe that Bill C-11 has merit. In my opinion it would have been a better bill if it had the budget implications included in it. We are not sure just how many hundreds of millions of dollars the Canadian government has foregone in this instance and what the total cost of the program is.

I find myself leaning toward supporting this bill but I would have been much happier to see the financial implications.

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

[Translation]

Mr. Gagliano: Madam Speaker, at this time, I think we will do what we wanted to do at the beginning. I think you will find there is unanimous consent to move on to private members' business right away. We should then be finished in time for the call of the bell.

So if you asked for unanimous consent, I think you would get it.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): Am I to understand that the proceedings on the adjournment motion will take place after the vote or will they be cancelled?

Mr. Gagliano: If we could have unanimous consent to move on to private members' business, we will hold the necessary consultations during the debate and decide whether there will be proceedings on the adjournment motion.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): It being 4.37 p.m., the House will now proceed to consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on today's *Order Paper*.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

HIGHWAY 16

Mr. Jim Jordan (Leeds—Grenville) moved:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should enter into an agreement with the province of Ontario to expand Ontario highway 16 south from Ottawa to highway 401 at Johnstown, into a four lane highway in order to ensure road safety and enhance travel in and out of the nation's capital.

He said: Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to speak to this motion. I have been trying to move it along this far and get it discussed at this level ever since I have been in the House of Commons. I feel I have made one small gain on this.

I want to give a short history and geography lesson for the people across Canada who may need some familiarizing with the location of this highway and hopefully elaborate sufficiently so that people will see that it does have a national interest.

Highway 401 is the main east-west highway through south central Canada. If you have ever travelled through Ontario by motor car you have probably been on the 401. That is the main thoroughfare.

The 401 passes about 80 kilometres south of metropolitan Ottawa, Ottawa-Hull. It is about 100 kilometres from where we are right now to highway 401, the main busy thoroughfare that passes through southern Ontario. The link to get to that highway, however, is highway 16. My hope would be to some day see it a four lane highway, a north-south link between this part of Canada and the 401 and the northern United States.

(1635)

My riding is not very far away. It has two bridges coming in from northern New York. I would like to think that some of the people would be interested in the nation's capital. However when they look at a two lane road, having been accustomed to four lane roads, they would be more inclined to stay on the four lane highway and move out of this area either to Toronto or Montreal.

I want to make it clear that the northern stretch of this highway, about 15 to 20 kilometres, is being constructed at this time into a four lane highway but the remaining 60 kilometres will be still only a two lane highway. There was pressure for the highway to be built to four lanes about 15 years ago and the layout is there for four lanes.

They have expropriated almost all the land that would have to be expropriated. They have bypassed the towns and the villages. Very often those are points of great dispute when one is bypassing a community. That has all been done. The right of way is there for four lanes. It just needs the political will to move on with it.

The only way you can get from the nation's largest centre, Toronto, to the nation's capital by a four lane highway is to go to Montreal. Then you can come back to Ottawa on a four lane highway. That lack of access to the nation's capital should be of national interest because of the ever increasing traffic flow on the existing road into the capital from the south. First and foremost is the safety aspect.

In the seven year period from 1985 to 1992, there were 39 deaths on that highway. There were 721 reported accidents and probably minor accidents that were not reported. Ninety per cent of the accidents occurred in the southern portion of the highway, in other words, the part that is not being constructed into four lanes, the part where there is no plan currently to improve the highway.

The federal government has some responsibility because it is the road into the nation's capital. That is why I presented this motion. There is nothing novel about spending federal funds to construct highways. Indeed, we announced a great infrastructure plan not too long ago. A lot of federal government money has been spent on highways.

Private Members' Business

I have a list here starting back in March 1993 during the previous government, I will admit, of federal funds going into the highways in Alberta, Manitoba, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. There were no funds for Ontario. No arrangement was made for federal government funds to be spent on highways in Ontario. That is what I am asking for now. I am asking members to support the idea of a four lane highway into the nation's capital.

I could support this motion with further documents if it were appropriate. I could table those with maps and so on. I have statistics showing the great increase in traffic flow that has occurred on that part of the highway since the first part was completed many years ago.

We hear a lot about the information highway these days and I am sure it is very important to Canada. We hear a lot in eastern Ontario about Pearson airport. It is the busiest—the best some would say—and the largest in Canada. Its needs are very important and they have to be addressed. I am sure they will be addressed.

We have not heard very much about access into the nation's capital by means of a four lane highway. A better access road linking the capital area with highway 401 would make the whole Ottawa area more accessible to all Canadians who travel by road. Just as important, as a citizen of eastern Ontario, it would make more accessible our biggest and best trading partner, the United States. It is less than 100 kilometres away but you cannot get to the United States on a four lane road from the nation's capital.

(1640)

The infrastructure program was announced with great enthusiastic support from all provinces. It was to create employment, give jobs to unemployed Canadians and stimulate the economy of the nation.

It is estimated that the completion of the highway from 401 to the nation's capital would create over 12,000 person years of direct employment. It would create an awful lot of jobs for a few years while it is in the construction stage.

The infrastructure program is to get our country and our communities ready for the time when the nation's economy is moving ahead and a good deal of what constitutes a moving economy I think in the minds of most Canadians moves by highway traffic.

As far as I know the current provincial government in Ontario has never even considered completing the access road from the nation's capital to 401 except in the north end. Mr. Speaker, if you examine the political map of Ontario you will understand why that part is being done. The current Ontario government has one MPP from this part of eastern Ontario and she is from Ottawa. The highway is being built to four lane standards in this

part of Ontario but as far as I can tell no plan has been made to extend it. The only part of the highway that is being done is adjacent to Ottawa and it is for a political reason.

I know that the usual partnership arrangement with the three levels of government does not quite fit the infrastructure plan. The cost of one-third of the highway would be far too great for the small rural townships. Small rural townships in Ontario have never had to build major highways. They just do not have the tax base to do it.

When I asked people to show an interest in my motion, a lot of people from outside the Ottawa area were interested in speaking to it. This suggests to me that fixing this highway has a broader appeal than just to selfish people like myself who live in eastern Ontario. It does have a national flavour to it.

Also with reference to the infrastructure program, the time line would be far too restrictive. It could not be completed by 1997. I cannot imagine it being done that quickly. However that is a minor thing. Apart from those variances the main criteria of the infrastructure program would be met and far exceeded in building highway 416; the creation of jobs—I have given the statistics on that one—and accessing eastern Ontario to markets both domestically and internationally.

The priorities of the current provincial government have to be changed and that is the reason for my private member's motion. I think perhaps one-third federal funds; I am not suggesting the provincial government exceed the plan for more infrastructure funds. I am suggesting it arrange its priorities differently, one-third federal funds, two-thirds provincial funds. I am sure that would make a satisfactory arrangement and there would not be any more money spent. It would just be redirecting the money.

The plans for the project have been in place for years. What we need now is the political will in the province to move on with this.

Before its defeat three years ago, the previous Liberal government of Ontario had announced a plan. It said it would complete the project by 1999. I was there for the press announcement. The media were there and they said it was a long way into the future, 1999. I will tell you it would look pretty good to eastern Ontario right now if somebody said the highway would be completed by 1999. That date would look extremely good because it might still be possible, but do not hold your breath.

Let me make it clear again, it is a rearranging of priorities that I am asking for in the infrastructure program, with the federal government's involvement being one-third. I am asking the provincial government to be a little flexible, rearrange its priorities and spend two-thirds on this much needed project. I know how important and how very much needed the infrastructure programs are to all communities, but we have infrastructure

Private Members' Business

needs beyond those local levels. I think this one warrants being addressed as almost an emergency need.

(1645)

If the government of the province of Ontario misses this opportunity by not putting highway 416 on its priority list, we who live here and are interested in the economic development of eastern Ontario will have to wait once again to see even the start of a project which is already 20 years overdue. It has been 20 years since the original plan was set and nothing has been acted upon since.

I am asking in my motion for the two levels of government, the federal level and the provincial level, to get together to make the infrastructure program fit the needs of eastern Ontario and the capital region, the capital region of Canada being the fourth largest metropolitan area in Canada, by constructing a four-lane highway in order to ensure road safety and enhance travel in and out of the nation's capital. I am sorry it is not a votable motion, but I have sensed a great deal of support for it.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): 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 Mercier—Manpower Training; the hon. member for Bourassa—Immigration; the hon. member for Lévis—National Defence; the hon. member for Drummond—Tainted Blood Inquiry; the hon. member for Jonquière—Native Communities.

[*English*]

Mr. Dick Harris (Prince George—Bulkley Valley): Madam Speaker, I rise in the House today to speak to the motion. On its surface I cannot find the normal things wrong with it.

The member for Leeds—Grenville clearly stated that he was not requesting additional federal government funds, which I appreciate. Certainly this side of the House looks for that in every motion. He talked about the safety concerns on the roadway. I appreciate the statistics that he presented in his background material have borne out the cause of concern.

I am not going to take too long on this motion. If I have any concerns it would be whether changing the rules of the infrastructure program as laid out in the famous red book would set any kind of precedent we might regret later on down the line. The infrastructure program clearly calls for a sharing of one-third federal government, one-third municipal and one-third provincial.

If we are to spend this credit card infrastructure program money anyway, I am wondering whether changing the rules to

accommodate a need in the member's riding will set a precedent in the future throughout the life of the infrastructure program that we may have to address later. If we make an exception for one, we may find ourselves having to make exceptions for others. Even though this particular one might have justifiable merit in the minds of many, will the others who seek exceptions to the general rules of the infrastructure program have merit? Could they cause us any harm?

The member has stated that he would like to see the provincial government pick up two-thirds of the cost. I have seen the reports on the financial position of the provincial government. I am wondering whether that is at all possible with the state of the finances of the province of Ontario.

(1650)

Clearly the premier of Ontario has stated on a number of occasions that they simply do not have enough money to go around. On one project, highway 407 I believe it is, they have sought financing from the private sector to help complete it. I am wondering whether it might be an idea for them to do that in this case.

Does the provincial government have \$300 and some million to invest in the project even if the rules were changed? My main concern is whether we are setting a precedent both on making the exception from the municipal contribution and on the extension of the time limit of the infrastructure program application to be completed. I am wondering whether the precedent may cause us a problem down the road on other applications.

We are not being asked to spend any more federal money, any more federal funds than have already been allocated, the one-third sharing. Apart from those two points I do not have any opposition to the motion. Perhaps the member might be able to explain the two points.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Paul Mercier (Blainville—Deux-Montagnes): Madam Speaker, as my hon. colleague just noted, the motion calls on the federal government to enter into an agreement with Ontario to widen Highway 16 between Highway 401 and Ottawa.

At present, Highway 16 links Ottawa to Highway 401, passing through the Brockville area. The stretch of highway in question is approximately 65 kilometres long. Traffic along this stretch of roadway is heavy, but not excessively so. I have been told that on average, between 15,000 and 30,000 vehicles travel this highway every day.

The road is relatively straight and the danger lies in the fact that drivers frequently pull out to pass other vehicles.

Private Members' Business

The posted speed limit on this highway varies between 50 and 90 kilometres per hour. However, most traffic travels at a speed of 90 kilometres per hour. Improved highway control would no doubt enhance safety.

I have also been told that the Government of Ontario is considering a project to expand this highway and that roughly \$15 million has already been spent on a study of the proposed new route. It would seem, therefore, that Ontario has already given considerable thought to this project. As my hon. colleague noted, the timetable for completion would be rather long, perhaps as much as 20 years.

Highway 16 runs through a portion of the riding of Leeds—Grenville, which obviously explains my hon. colleague's interest in the project. As he indicated, as far as the northern stretch of the highway is concerned, costs would be divided into two stages.

According to the Ontario Ministry of Transport, construction costs would total \$200 million, while the price tag for the remainder of the four-lane highway would be \$180 million.

I gather the federal government's assistance is being requested because there is no four-lane highway linking the Nation's Capital to the capital city of the largest province in Canada. A four-lane highway would cut 30 minutes off the travel time. However, Madam Speaker, if we go along with this reasoning, then the federal government should be entering into a similar agreement with Quebec to expand Highway 50 into a four-lane highway linking Ottawa to another provincial capital, namely Quebec City. A four-lane highway would knock not 30 minutes, but 45 minutes off a five-hour trip. Ottawa would then be only four hours or so away from either Toronto or Quebec City.

(1655)

If the motion carries, I would also call upon the federal government to stop dragging its heels on participating in the extension of Highway 13 so that Mirabel and Dorval airports can finally be linked.

All things considered, I question why Canadian taxpayers should have to pay for building four-lane highways in Ontario. Ontario should use the money from the infrastructure program if it wants federal funds to complete this project. My hon. colleague explained that he was not seeking additional funds, although this is not clear from his motion. I ask that the general rules of the infrastructure program be applied without exception and that no precedents which could be invoked later by other ridings be set.

[*English*]

Mr. John O'Reilly (Victoria—Haliburton): Madam Speaker, I thank the House for the opportunity to speak on Motion M-3 in the name of the member for Leeds—Grenville.

The highway 16 connection of Ottawa to highway 401 has more to offer than just a few minutes off the drive. Making a two-lane highway into a four-lane highway would allow for a much safer route. There is only one nation's capital to deal with and the access is poor unless one lives in Montreal.

Highway 7 on which I travel from Ottawa to the Tweed turnoff is a very popular route for large trucks to and from Toronto and Ottawa. That section of highway 7 is extremely overburdened because of the poor access from Ottawa to highway 401. This stretch of highway 7 is the most dangerous piece of two-way highway in Ontario. A better, safer route to our nation's capital is what we are asking for.

My trip to the House includes highway 7 usually four times a week to and from my riding of Victoria—Haliburton which is four hours from Ottawa by car, the only way I have to get here. School buses, transport trucks, camper vans, motor homes, motorcycles, cars pulling trailers, walkers and bicyclists all use that stretch of highway 7 from Tweed to Ottawa. Completion of highway 16 would ensure less risk to the people on highway 7 from Ottawa to the 401.

Highway 37 is very busy. It runs from highway 7, down through the village of Tweed, to the top of Belleville to connect with the 401. We could ask Elmer Buchanan, the MPP for Hastings, about his unfortunate accident this past winter on highway 37 from which he is still recovering. I am sure the Ontario government would take that into consideration.

My thrust is not immediate on highway 16. My thrust is on relieving the burden of the entrance to our nation's capital along highway 7. In conclusion I urge all members to support the bill.

Mrs. Beryl Gaffney (Nepean): Madam Speaker, this issue has been before the people of the nation's capital for a great number of years. The hon. member for Victoria—Haliburton, my colleague who just spoke on the issue, adequately explained or visually explained the problems people have in trying to get to the nation's capital. Whether they are coming to Ottawa on the present highway 16 or whether they are coming on Highway 7, both roads are very dangerous.

In 1988 we were talking about the free trade agreement in the House. It was the first bill I had to vote on having been elected in 1988. Madam Speaker, you will remember you were newly elected at the same time. We sat in the House right up to December 23.

(1700)

One issue I raised in my maiden speech in the House of Commons was with regard to the free trade agreement and particularly highway 416. I raised the importance to the nation's capital of having that four-lane link prepared and the effect it would have on the economy. It is the only four-lane link that would connect us to Toronto. It would be the only four-lane link that we had to connect us to New York State. Presently we have a

Private Members' Business

two-lane highway connecting us to both Toronto and New York State.

I refer to the comments of the member from the Bloc Québécois who spoke earlier on why should we give it to Ontario when we should give the same thing to Quebec. I would like to correct the gentleman and advise him that federal moneys have gone into roadworks in the province of Quebec.

We already have a four-lane link between the nation's capital to Montreal and right through to Quebec City. If my memory serves me correctly it goes right through to Rivière du Loup and the Gaspé peninsula. I have travelled that route on many occasions. Therefore the precedent has already been set.

I am looking at transportation infrastructure agreements. In 1993 the federal government put in a \$10 million project in roadwork infrastructure in the Northwest Territories. In B.C. it put in \$30 million; Saskatchewan, \$35 million; Nova Scotia, \$30 million; New Brunswick, \$130 million. I could go on and on but there was not one penny that went into the province of Ontario.

The province of Ontario has long been recognized as the engine of growth in this country. We who live in Ontario are very proud of that. We are very proud to help the provinces that do not have the financial resources we have had historically up until this point in time, to sustain not only ourselves in this province but also the people in the other provinces. We have been pleased to do that.

However the province of Ontario today is going through very tough economic times. We no longer have the manufacturing base we had before. We have lost hundreds of thousands of jobs. Whether it is the result of the free trade agreement I think the jury is still out on that. We need to do things that are going to increase economic growth. We need to do this not only in all of Ontario but we need to do it specifically here in the nation's capital.

Why should we put federal money into a roadway coming into the nation's capital? For goodness sakes, it is the nation's capital. The eyes of the country are on this capital city. We talk about our Canadian dollar and how it flips up and down. Is it any wonder it flips up and down when we cannot even put a four-lane highway into the nation's capital? It is absolutely disgraceful.

The argument of the gentleman from the Bloc Québécois does not wash with me and it does not wash with the majority of Canadians.

The improvements to this highway are long overdue when one considers the increase in traffic over the 25 years plus that I certainly have been a resident of the Ottawa-Carleton region.

We have seen the traffic patterns increase. As a result of this heavy traffic we see the accidents have increased in this area.

There is the commercial business, the recreation business, the tourist traffic. This morning my colleague from Leeds—Grenville and I were at a meeting. We met with the tourism industry from eastern Ontario. What is happening to the tourism industry? What is happening to the tourism industry in the nation's capital? Do members know how many dollars from the tourism industry support governments, support the federal government, support the provincial government?

It is very shortsighted on our part not to recognize the economic importance we as a nation as a whole would realize from such a structure being expanded. The construction of highway 416 to a four-lane highway is precisely the kind of infrastructure we as the government are talking about. It is something that is needed in the province of Ontario.

It would provide jobs and would improve jobs, which would contribute to the productivity and competitiveness of area employers. The four-lane link is vital to the continued growth of eastern Ontario.

I cannot be dramatic enough in speaking to my colleague's motion. Our future in eastern Ontario depends upon it.

(1705)

Even setting that aside, set aside eastern Ontario and think of the nation's capital. You people from Quebec, think of your capital city, Quebec City. How many times in the province of Quebec have you heard Quebecers say: "Oh, Quebec City gets everything. We don't get anything in Montreal. We don't get anything in Hull". At that point in time you have a federal government which has been especially kind to you, which has helped with bridges, which has helped with roads and which has helped with the infrastructure in the province of Quebec.

I say the same thing to Toronto, to Queen's Park. Look at all of the beautiful roads in Toronto. I do not want to crap all over Bob Rae and what he is doing. My colleagues would like me to, but for goodness sake, Queen's Park is not any different from Quebec City where they think of their own and they want to make sure that the capital of their province is well looked after.

Would you not agree with me that Quebec City is probably better looked after in terms of infrastructure as compared to Montreal? Would you not agree with me on that? Or Ottawa?

This is the seat of our Canadian Parliament. It is the seat of all our national institutions. Our museums, our arts centres, our galleries, everything that is national in scope is here in this region. Maybe we should do as Washington does. Maybe we should make this little precinct around the nation's capital, on both sides of the river. Make this a separate little province or a

Private Members' Business

regional area or territory that could receive these special dollars to ensure it is an area we can be proud of.

People come here from all over the world. My God, heaven forbid if they are driving from Toronto and they have to come in on the two-lane highway. They cannot believe they are on the road to the nation's capital.

I believe my time is almost up. I have gone on in trying to impress upon this House the importance of this issue to me, to the nation and to the capital. All of us in this House should be very concerned. I hope all members will support my colleague from Leeds—Grenville on this issue.

Mr. Pat O'Brien (London—Middlesex): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity today to second and to speak to this motion which calls for the government to enter into an agreement with the province of Ontario to expand highway 16 into a four-lane highway.

This motion placed by my esteemed colleague from Leeds—Grenville is meant to help increase road safety and to improve travel in and out of the nation's capital.

Unfortunately this motion has been prompted by a series of tragic accidents, including the death of one young woman from the member's own riding. I compliment him on his attempt to alleviate any future tragedies that may occur on this 40 kilometre stretch of highway which connects Ottawa to the 401.

I too would like to encourage both the federal government and the province of Ontario to consider committing funds for the national infrastructure program to improve and expand highway 16. Money spent on such highway projects is money well spent and therefore I am pleased to support and to second this motion.

Many would think that such a motion does not directly affect my riding of London—Middlesex. However numerous students from London—Middlesex have left their homes to attend university in the Ottawa area. Many of these people drive home to visit their families for holidays via the 401. Obviously Londoners are among many thousands of Canadians who yearly come to the nation's capital to see the Parliament Buildings and the other beautiful sites of this city.

When taking highway 16 to the 401 people are faced with a busy exit out of Ottawa as they begin their six to seven hour drive home in good weather. On a return trip after this drive they are faced with driving on a busy highway that is used by all kinds of vehicles from tractor trailers, to vans, to mobile homes and motorcycles. By this time it is usually dark, which only adds to the dangers.

If you are like me, Madam Speaker, you worry about the safety of your children on the road. For many parents in my riding that last stretch of highway 16 is extremely nerve racking.

Even the most experienced drivers are faced with the unnecessary risks of this particular road.

Tourists also use this road when visiting the nation's capital. Since 1985 over 700 accidents have occurred. Canadians from every province and territory use this road. The roadways to and from our nation's capital should be a source of pride to Canadians and not a constant worry.

(1710)

This motion was put forward by my colleague primarily for safety reasons. I live in a region that is served by a major highway, the 401, as my colleague mentioned earlier. We have all seen far too many people lose their lives on that dangerous highway as well. As traffic has increased over the past decade so too have terrible accidents. For this reason alone both the federal and provincial governments would be wise to seriously consider this motion.

As a member of this government I am proud we have made a strong commitment to the funding of Canada's transportation infrastructure. Safety is and should be the primary reason for the expansion of highway 16, yet there is another vital reason for completing this important project: economics.

Several of the members from the national capital region have said in this House over the past several years that expanding companies in the region such as the high tech industries are faced with insurmountable transit problems when dealing with markets beyond the region. I hear the very same concerns expressed by businesses in my own riding of London—Middlesex.

This is truly a national issue. Improving the roadways in southwestern Ontario and across our country is very important to people in all parts of Canada. Time and time again constituents tell me of the need for better links with other regions so that small business and other vital sectors are able to benefit from access to other markets.

Good road systems open up new markets for existing small and medium sized businesses, which in turn creates jobs for people in all parts of Canada. In my riding, industry is steadily expanding. Commercial markets are facing increased challenges in dealing with markets beyond our region.

In speaking to this motion every one of us could easily draw a parallel to our own particular ridings. As my colleague from London East well knows, a number of surveys have shown time and again that transportation problems are at the top of the list of concerns of the people of the city of London. National surveys indicate the very same concern.

It would be extremely shortsighted and parochial of anyone in this House not to look at this motion with a view to supporting it. Surely it is a national issue when it concerns the nation's capital.

Private Members' Business

It is a great pleasure for me to support the motion and I ask all members in the House to do the same.

Mrs. Marlene Catterall (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Treasury Board): Madam Speaker, I too am pleased to congratulate my colleague from Leeds—Grenville and to speak in support of his motion.

I do not know if the infrastructure program is the best or only way to fund the improvements to highway 416 which have been needed for so long. However I do know that I recently saw a list of announcements for funding of major transportation projects. There was not one for eastern Ontario.

There was funding for the Go transit system in Toronto. Supposedly it was a railway project but really it is an urban transit development that is of assistance to the local community in the metro Toronto region. In this region of eastern Ontario and the nation's capital, we have not had that kind of co-operative approach to meeting our transportation needs.

I do not think I need to tell anybody in this House that government is undergoing a major transformation. That has meant the economy of this region, our nation's capital, is undergoing a major transformation.

It is a challenge to our regional economy which started back in the mid-seventies with the decentralization of a number of government operations and the removal of 15,000 jobs from the downtown area to across the river to Hull. Personally, that is something I support because I support the idea of an integrated national capital covering both sides of our river.

I also support very much the idea of getting services to Canadians out in the communities and getting a federal presence across this country from coast to coast. Anything that builds national unity is important to all of us in this House and to all Canadians.

Our community was presented with a major challenge back then, nearly two decades ago now. We were suddenly left with close to one million square feet of empty office space in downtown Ottawa.

(1715)

The local business community working together with our board of trade, our Economic Development Corporation, our businesses individually, building owners and managers, rose to that challenge and addressed the issue of diversifying our economy.

We are now facing another major change in our major employer. I do not think it is a surprise to anybody in this House that we are looking at a major rethink of what the role of government is, how much service to the public we can afford, what has to be done by government and what should be done in other ways, what is the proper role of the federal government and the provincial governments.

Again, for my community in this region of eastern Ontario that is going to mean another major change to our economy. The work that our business community in co-operation with our public and municipal politicians particularly and the federal and provincial politicians over the years has done to diversify our economic base is a foundation on which we can face further changes.

If the federal government as the major employer in this region is going to have a significant impact on the community like other major employers in other regions then there is also an obligation to work in partnership with the community to help the adjustment. We are doing that with National Defence, for instance. Where we are closing bases across Canada we are setting up processes to work with the local communities to readjust their economies.

We need to look as well at how we co-operate with the community in the nation's capital toward supporting that community's efforts to diversify its economy.

Transportation is key to that. We cannot have a healthy economy if we cannot get our goods to market, if we cannot get to our customers and if we cannot get our customers here.

We have had a long battle about adequate air transportation out of Ottawa, links to our markets and to the United States and so on. However, road transportation is also important.

We have heard described the situation of highway 16 as a funny little dumb-bell that has a magnificent expanse wonderful interchange with the Queensway through this region on one end and then it sort of dwindles off into a windy, curvey little road that, as people have said, is dangerous.

Most important, it is of tremendous cost to people who want to do business with this region, who want to do business out of this region. It is a major inhibitor to the development of our high technology sector which is one of the strongest in the country. That is an issue not only for this region but for the nation.

This is one of the hubs of the future of high technology in Canada and without that critical mass in locations like the nation's capital, like my city of Ottawa, like the member for Nepean's community of Nepean and throughout this region, high technology in the nation is not going to flourish. We happen to have built the beginning of that critical mass here. It is in the national interest for that to flourish. Again, the transportation link is important.

Others have spoken very eloquently of the importance of tourism, our second biggest industry in this region. You cannot visit it if you cannot drive to it or if you cannot get to it. I believe that we have a responsibility to build a sense across this nation that our capital is something that all Canadians should be proud of. We seem to have done just the opposite of what most nations have done and developed our nation's capital as a place to be avoided, shunned and criticized.

Private Members' Business

I think part of building a nation is building pride in your nation's capital and part of that is the sense that many people in other countries have that one thing you want to do as a citizen during the course of your life is visit the heart of your nation, your nation's capital.

(1720)

We do not have that sense as Canadians. I am not going to blame it on the poor condition of highway 16 from the American border and from the great metropolis of Toronto to the nation's capital. If we do want to build that sense of pride in the nation, pride in our fellow citizens, pride in our nation's capital, then we have to make it possible for people to get here.

Let me conclude by saying that this project for a long time has had the full support of our business community, the Ottawa-Carleton Board of Trade, our Economic Development Corporation, all municipalities in this region. It is just another link not only for Ottawa, not only for the communities surrounding Ottawa, but also from our neighbours in Quebec to southern Ontario and beyond.

As I mentioned earlier, the federal government is an important employer in this region. It accounts for about 20 per cent of the jobs in our region. A fairly good job has been done of spreading about 70 per cent of the public service jobs across this country and I as a Canadian am proud of that.

Nonetheless, the public is still an important employer and I believe there is an obligation for our government as it is making changes in the local economy to consider all its decisions that impact on us and to work with us as it does with other communities across Canada in a period of economic adjustment. Transportation, a good road link into the capital, is important to do that.

Mr. Gurbax Singh Malhi (Bramalea—Gore—Malton): Madam Speaker, I am rising in the House today to support a motion proposed by my hon. colleague from Leeds—Grenville.

Motion M-3 moves that, in the opinion of this House, the government should enter into an agreement with the province of Ontario to expand Ontario highway 16 south from Ottawa to highway 401 at Johnstown into a four lane highway in order to ensure road safety and enhance travel in and out of the nation's capital.

As a member of Parliament from the greater Toronto area I feel that it is in the best interests of my constituents that I rise to support this motion today. Countless travellers from my constituency of Bramalea—Gore—Malton and other areas around Toronto visit Ottawa on a regular basis. Naturally they take highway 401.

On highway 401 they can travel in relative safety at their own pace. Passing lanes provide the option of travelling at different speeds. Motorists are not subject to the distraction of someone riding their bumper, nor do they feel the frustration of driving behind someone whose car is incapable of keeping up with the flow of traffic.

The multi-lane design of highway 401 ensures a relaxed frame of mind which seems to me is conducive to driving.

All of this is lost, however, when they turn on to highway 16 to get to Ottawa; gone are the passing lanes, gone is the option of travelling at their own pace, gone is the relaxed atmosphere in which to drive.

Numerous accidents occur on highway 16 every weekend. Frustrated drivers take risks they normally would not have to take. In the period from 1985 to 1992, 39 deaths have occurred on the road as well as 721 reported accidents with countless injuries.

This is the main route for motorists travelling to Ottawa from western Ontario. Thousands of tourists come from across Ontario every year to see this beautiful city and its wonderful sites, Parliament Hill included.

An overcrowded, single lane highway does not give a favourable first impression of the city. This is clearly a well travelled route. We owe it to all visitors to provide them with a safe and sensible route to their nation's capital.

There has been support of this expansion since the road was built almost 15 years ago. Now it is time to act.

As most of my honourable colleagues know, the federal government in co-operation with provincial and municipal governments has recently launched the two-year, \$6 billion Canada infrastructure works program. The program reaffirms our commitment to get Canadians back to work by creating 50,000 to 65,000 direct jobs and represents a significant long term investment in Canada's economic competitiveness. It also represents an important step forward in intergovernmental co-operation for the benefit of Canadians. Ontario has committed \$722 million to date toward the project.

(1725)

Good infrastructure is vital to a good quality of life. It helps keep our environment clean and makes our cities liveable. Good roads and transportation services reduce costs, reduce expensive tie-ups and minimize wear and tear on vehicles. Cities that work are central to the health of the economy.

At present the only way many of our industries can transport their products into and out of the nation's capital using a four lane highway is to go to Montreal first. This option is clearly ridiculous. One of our government's goals is to make it easier for small and medium sized businesses to succeed. As most

Government Orders

small and medium sized business do not have access to air transport, roadways are their greatest allies. Let us give them a hand.

To summarize, I support the motion initiated by the member for Leeds—Grenville: “That, in the opinion of this House, the government should enter into an agreement with the province of Ontario to expand Ontario highway 16, south from Ottawa to highway 401 at Johnstown, into a four lane highway in order to ensure road safety and enhance travel in and out of the nation’s capital”.

This is the main thoroughfare for many visitors to Ottawa. During a seven year period, from 1985 to 1992, 721 accidents have occurred on this stretch of road, causing 39 deaths and countless injuries. Highway 16 is also an important economic lifeline for Ottawa. In a time when the government is committed to rebuilding and reinforcing this nation’s infrastructure, highway 16 must not be overlooked.

The Speaker: There being no further members rising for debate and the motion not being designated as a votable item, the time provided for the consideration of Private Members’ Business has now expired and the order is dropped from the Order Paper, pursuant to Standing Order 96(1).

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

BUDGET IMPLEMENTATION ACT, 1994

The House resumed consideration from April 15 of the motion that Bill C-17, an act to amend certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on February 11, 1994, be read the second time and referred to a committee; and of the motion.

The Speaker: It being 5.30 p.m., pursuant to order made on Friday, April 15, 1994, the House will now proceed to the deferred division to dispose of Mr. Milliken’s motion.

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

(Division No. 32)

YEAS

Members

Adams	Alcock
Anawak	Anderson
Arseneault	Assad
Assadourian	Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre)
Bakopanos	Barnes
Beaumier	Bellemare
Berger	Bernier (Beauce)
Bertrand	Bethel
Bevilacqua	Blondin—Andrew
Bodnar	Bonin
Boudria	Brown (Oakville—Milton)
Brushett	Bryden
Caccia	Calder
Cannis	Catterall
Cauchon	Chamberlain
Chrétien (Saint—Maurice)	Clancy

Cohen	Collenette
Collins	Comuzzi
Copps	Cowling
Crawford	Culbert
DeVillers	Dhaliwal
Dingwall	Dromisky
Duhamel	Dupuy
Easter	Eggleton
English	Fewchuk
Finlay	Flis
Fontana	Fry
Gaffney	Gagliano
Galloway	Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier)
Gerrard	Godfrey
Graham	Gray (Windsor West)
Grose	Guarnieri
Harb	Harper (Churchill)
Harvard	Hopkins
Hubbard	Ianno
Iftody	Irwin
Jordan	Karygiannis
Keyes	Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)
Kirkby	Knudson
Kraft Sloan	Lastewka
Lavigne (Verdun—Saint—Paul)	LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso)
Lee	Lincoln
Loney	MacLaren (Etobicoke North)
MacLellan (Cape Breton—The Sydneys)	Maheu
Malhi	Maloney
Manley	Marchi
Marleau	Martin (LaSalle—Émard)
Massé	McCormick
McGuire	McKinnon
McLellan (Edmonton Northwest)	McTeague
McWhinney	Mifflin
Mills (Broadview—Greenwood)	Minna
Mitchell	Murphy
Murray	Nault
Nunziata	O’Brien
O’Reilly	Ouellet
Pagtakhan	Parrish
Patry	Payne
Peric	Phinney
Pickard (Essex—Kent)	Proud
Reed	Regan
Richardson	Rideout
Ringuette—Maltais	Rock
Rompkey	Scott (Fredericton—York Sunbury)
Serré	Sheridan
Simmons	Speller
Steckle	Szabo
Telegdi	Terrana
Thalheimer	Torsney
Ur	Valeri
Vanclief	Volpe
Walker	Wells
Whelan	Zed—146

NAYS

Members

Ablonczy
Bachand
Benoit
Bernier (Gaspé)
Blaikie
Breitkreuz (Yellowhead)
Bridgman
Canuel
Chatters
Cummins
Daviault
Deshaies
Duceppe
Duncan
Fillion

Forseth
Gagnon (Québec)
Gilmour
Gouk
Guay
Hanrahan
Harris
Hayes
Hill (Macleod)
Jacob
Johnston
Lalonde
Langlois
Lavigne (Beauharnois—Salaberry)
Leblanc (Longueuil)
Leroux (Richmond—Wolfe)
Loubier
Marchand
Mayfield
McLaughlin
Meredith
Morrison
Nunez
Penson
Pomerleau
Ramsay
Sauvageau
Silye
Speaker
Stinson
Thompson
Tremblay (Rosemont)
Williams—95

Frazer
Gauthier (Roberval)
Godin
Grey (Beaver River)
Hanger
Harper (Simcoe Centre)
Hart
Hermanson
Hoepfner
Jennings
Kerpan
Landry
Laurin
Lebel
Lefebvre
Leroux (Shefford)
Manning
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)
McClelland (Edmonton Southwest)
Mercier
Mills (Red Deer)
Ménard
Paré
Picard (Drummond)
Péloquin
Rocheleau
Schmidt
Solomon
St-Laurent
Strahl
Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata)
Venne

PAIRED—MEMBERS

Members

Asselin
Campbell
Debien
Peters
Pillitteri
Stewart (Northumberland)

Brien
Crête
Guimond
Peterson
Plamondon
Young

(1800)

[English]

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

[Translation]

Mr. Gagliano: Mr. Speaker, I believe that you will obtain unanimous consent to apply the result of the vote just taken to the main motion.

[English]

The Speaker: Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[Translation]

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

[Editor's Note: See list under Division No. 32.]

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Supply

(Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and referred to committee.)

* * *

SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY—OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

The House resumed, from Monday, April 18, 1994, consideration of the motion:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should:

(a) amend the Official Languages Act to reflect the philosophy of "territorial bilingualism", which holds that French should be the predominant language of Quebec and English the predominant language of the other provinces, and that federal government services should be available to official language minorities in their own language in any part of the country where there is demonstrable local public demand;

(b) continue to facilitate the use of English or French in the debates and other proceedings of Parliament, in the records and journals of Parliament, in federal courts, and as the languages of federal legislation; and

(c) refrain from expending monies on those aspects of language which fall under the sole jurisdiction of the provinces.

The Speaker: Pursuant to Standing Order 45(5)(a), the House will now proceed to the deferred division on the supply proceedings.

Mr. Bellemare: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. We are going to vote on a motion that is very divisive for Canada, that is very negative, in fact. The mover of the motion is not present. Can we—

(1805)

The Speaker: With all due respect for the hon. member, I do not believe that is a point of order. Order!

(The House divided on the motion, which was negated on the following division:)

(Division No. 33)

YEAS

Members

Abbott
Benoit
Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville)
Chatters
Duncan
Forseth
Gilmour
Grey (Beaver River)
Hanrahan
Harris
Hayes
Hill (Macleod)
Jennings
Kerpan
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)
McClelland (Edmonton Southwest)
Mills (Red Deer)
Penson
Schmidt
Speaker
Strahl
Williams—43

Ablonczy
Breitkreuz (Yellowhead)
Bridgman
Cummins
Epp
Frazer
Gouk
Hanger
Harper (Simcoe Centre)
Hart
Hermanson
Hoepfner
Johnston
Manning
Mayfield
Meredith
Morrison
Ramsay
Silye
Stinson
Thompson

Government Orders

NAYS

Members

Adams
Anawak
Arseneault
Assadourian
Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre)
Bakopanos
Beaumier
Bellemare
Bergeron
Bernier (Gaspé)
Bertrand
Bevilacqua
Blondin—Andrew
Bonin
Boudria
Brushett
Bélisle
Calder
Canel
Catterall
Chamberlain
Chrétien (Saint—Maurice)
Cohen
Collins
Copp
Culbert
Davault
Deshaies
Dhaliwal
Dromisky
Duceppe
Dumas
Easter
English
Fillion
Flis
Fry
Gagliano
Galloway
Gauthier (Roberval)
Godfrey
Graham
Grose
Guay
Harper (Churchill)
Hopkins
Ianno
Irwin
Jordan
Keyes
Kirkby
Kraft Sloan
Landry
Lastewka
Lavigne (Beauharnois—Salaberry)
Lebel
Leblanc (Longueuil)
Lefebvre
Leroux (Shefford)
Loney
MacLaren (Etobicoke North)
Maheu
Maloney
Marchand
Marleau
Massé
McGuire
McLaughlin
McTeague
Mercier
Mills (Broadview—Greenwood)
Mitchell
Murray
Nault
Nunziata
O'Reilly
Pagtakhan
Paré
Payne
Phinney

Alcock
Anderson
Assad
Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing)
Bachand
Barnes
Bellehumeur
Berger
Bernier (Beauce)
Bernier (Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead)
Bethel
Blaikie
Bodnar
Bouchard
Brown (Oakville—Milton)
Bryden
Caccia
Cannis
Caron
Cauchon
Chrétien (Frontenac)
Clancy
Collenette
Comuzzi
Cowling
Dalphond—Guiral
de Savoye
DeVillers
Dingwall
Dubé
Duhamel
Dupuy
Eggleton
Fewchuk
Finlay
Fontana
Gaffney
Gagnon (Québec)
Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier)
Gerrard
Godin
Gray (Windsor West)
Guarnieri
Harb
Harvard
Hubbard
Ifody
Jacob
Karygiannis
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)
Knutson
Lalonde
Langlois
Laurin
Lavigne (Verdun—Saint—Paul)
LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso)
Lee
Leroux (Richmond—Wolfe)
Lincoln
Loubier
MacLellan (Cape Breton—The Sydneys)
Malhi
Manley
Marchi
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)
McCormick
McKinnon
McLellan (Edmonton Northwest)
McWhinney
Mifflin
Minna
Murphy
Ménard
Nunez
O'Brien
Ouellet
Parrish
Patry
Peric
Picard (Drummond)

Pickard (Essex—Kent)
Proud
Reed
Richardson
Ringuette—Maltais
Rock
Sauvageau
Serré
Simmons
Speller
Steckle
Telegdi
Thalheimer
Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata)
Ur
Vanclief
Volpe
Wells
Zed—197

Pomerleau
Péloquin
Regan
Rideout
Rocheleau
Rompkey
Scott (Fredericton—York Sunbury)
Sheridan
Solomon
St—Laurent
Szabo
Terrana
Torsney
Tremblay (Rosemont)
Valeri
Venne
Walker
Whelan

PAIRED—MEMBERS

Members

Asselin
Campbell
Debien
Peters
Pillitteri
Stewart (Northumberland)

Brien
Crête
Guimond
Peterson
Plamondon
Young

(1810)

[English]

The Speaker: I declare the motion lost.

* * *

**ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES
READJUSTMENT PROCESS**

The House resumed consideration of the motion; and the amendment.

The Speaker: Pursuant to Standing Order 45(5)(a) the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred division on the amendment to motion No. 10 under Government Business.

The question is on the amendment.

(The House divided on the amendment which was agreed to on the following division:)

(Division No. 34)

YEAS

Members

Abbott
Adams
Anawak
Arseneault
Assadourian
Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre)
Barnes
Bellemare
Berger
Bertrand
Bevilacqua
Bodnar
Boudria
Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville)
Brown (Oakville—Milton)
Bryden
Calder
Catterall
Chamberlain
Chrétien (Saint—Maurice)

Ablonczy
Alcock
Anderson
Assad
Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing)
Bakopanos
Beaumier
Benoit
Bernier (Beauce)
Bethel
Blondin—Andrew
Bonin
Breitkreuz (Yellowhead)
Bridgman
Brushett
Caccia
Cannis
Cauchon
Chatters
Clancy

Cohen
Collins
Copp
Culbert
DeVillers
Dingwall
Duhamel
Dupuy
Eggleton
Epp
Finlay
Fontana
Frazer
Gaffney
Galloway
Gerrard
Godfrey
Graham
Grey (Beaver River)
Guarnieri
Hanrahan
Harper (Churchill)
Harris
Harvard
Hermanson
Hoepfner
Hubbard
Iftody
Jennings
Jordan
Kerpan
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)
Knutson
Lastewka
LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso)
Lincoln
MacLaren (Etobicoke North)
Maheu
Maloney
Manning
Marleau
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)
Mayfield
McCormick
McKinnon
McLellan (Edmonton Northwest)
McWhinney
Mifflin
Mills (Red Deer)
Mitchell
Murphy
Nault
O'Brien
Ouellet
Parrish
Payne
Peric
Pickard (Essex—Kent)
Ramsay
Regan
Rideout
Rock
Schmidt
Serré
Silye
Solomon
Speller
Stinson
Szabo
Terrana
Thompson
Ur
Vanclief
Walker
Whelan
Zed—191

Collenette
Comuzzi
Cowling
Cummins
Dhaliwal
Dromisky
Duncan
Easter
English
Fewchuk
Flis
Forseth
Fry
Gagliano
Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier)
Gilmour
Gouk
Gray (Windsor West)
Grose
Hanger
Harb
Harper (Simcoe Centre)
Hart
Hayes
Hill (Macleod)
Hopkins
Ianno
Irwin
Johnston
Karygiannis
Keyes
Kirkby
Kraft Sloan
Lavigne (Verdun—Saint—Paul)
Lee
Loney
MacLellan (Cape Breton—The Sydneys)
Malhi
Manley
Marchi
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)
Massé
McClelland (Edmonton Southwest)
McGuire
McLaughlin
McTeague
Meredith
Mills (Broadview—Greenwood)
Minna
Morrison
Murray
Nunziata
O'Reilly
Pagtakhan
Patry
Penson
Phinney
Proud
Reed
Richardson
Ringuette—Maltais
Rompkey
Scott (Fredericton—York Sunbury)
Sheridan
Simmons
Speaker
Steckle
Strahl
Telegdi
Thalheimer
Torsney
Valeri
Volpe
Wells
Williams

Government Orders

NAYS

Members

Bachand	Bellehumeur
Bergeron	Bernier (Gaspé)
Bernier (Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead)	Bouchard
Bélisle	Canuel
Caron	Chrétien (Frontenac)
Dalphond—Guiral	Daviault
de Savoye	Deshaies
Dubé	Duceppe
Dumas	Fillion
Gagnon (Québec)	Gauthier (Roberval)
Godin	Guay
Jacob	Lalonde
Landry	Langlois
Laurin	Lavigne (Beauharnois—Salaberry)
Lebel	Leblanc (Longueuil)
Lefebvre	Leroux (Richmond—Wolfe)
Leroux (Shefford)	Loubier
Marchand	Mercier
Ménard	Nunez
Paré	Picard (Drummond)
Pomerleau	Péloquin
Rocheleau	Sauvageau
St-Laurent	Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata)
Tremblay (Rosemont)	Venne—48

PAIRED—MEMBERS

Members

Asselin	Brien
Campbell	Crête
Debien	Guimond
Peters	Peterson
Pillitteri	Plamondon
Stewart (Northumberland)	Young

(1820)

The Speaker: I declare the amendment carried.

Mr. Hopkins: Mr. Speaker, I stood up and voted in the usual manner and I sat down in the usual manner. There were so many people shouting at me to tell me to stand up to vote I did not hear my name. I just want to be assured that my name has been duly recorded.

(1825)

The Speaker: I know how you feel.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gagliano: Mr. Speaker, I think you will find there is unanimous consent for proceeding immediately with the vote on the main motion and for applying to the main motion the division just taken on the amendment.

[*English*]

Mr. Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing): Mr. Speaker, if I understand correctly, it will be necessary for the member for Yukon, the member for Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing and the member for Regina—Lumsden to be recorded as a negative vote on this motion.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Government Orders

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

*(Division No. 35)***YEAS**

Members

Abbott
Adams
Anawak
Arseneault
Assadourian
Bakopanos
Beaunier
Benoit
Bernier (Beauce)
Bethel
Blondin—Andrew
Bonin
Breitkreuz (Yellowhead)
Bridgman
Brushett
Caccia
Cannis
Cauchon
Chatters
Clancy
Collenette
Comuzzi
Cowling
Cummins
Dhaliwal
Dromisky
Duncan
Easter
English
Fewchuk
Flis
Forseth
Fry
Gagliano
Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier)
Gilmour
Gouk
Gray (Windsor West)
Grose
Hanger
Harb
Harper (Simcoe Centre)
Hart
Hayes
Hill (MacLeod)
Hopkins
Ianno
Irwin
Johnston
Karygiannis
Keyes
Kirkby
Kraft Sloan
Lavigne (Verdun—Saint—Paul)
Lee
Loney
MacLellan (Cape Breton—The Sydneys)
Malhi
Manley
Marchi
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)
Massé
McClelland (Edmonton Southwest)
McGuire
McLellan (Edmonton Northwest)
McWhinney
Mifflin
Mills (Red Deer)
Mitchell
Murphy
Nault
O'Brien
Ouellet
Parrish
Payne
Peric
Pickard (Essex—Kent)

Ablonczy
Alcock
Anderson
Assad
Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre)
Barnes
Bellemare
Berger
Bertrand
Bevilacqua
Bodnar
Boudria
Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville)
Brown (Oakville—Milton)
Bryden
Calder
Catterall
Chamberlain
Chrétien (Saint—Maurice)
Cohen
Collins
Copps
Culbert
DeVillers
Dingwall
Duhamel
Dupuy
Eggleton
Epp
Finlay
Fontana
Frazier
Gaffney
Galloway
Gerrard
Godfrey
Graham
Grey (Beaver River)
Guarnieri
Hanrahan
Harper (Churchill)
Harris
Harvard
Hermanson
Hoepfner
Hubbard
Iftody
Jennings
Jordan
Kerpan
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)
Knutson
Lastewka
LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso)
Lincoln
MacLaren (Etobicoke North)
Maheu
Maloney
Manning
Marleau
Martin (LaSalle—Émond)
Mayfield
McCormick
McKinnon
McTeague
Meredith
Mills (Broadview—Greenwood)
Minna
Morrison
Murray
Nunziata
O'Reilly
Pagtakhan
Patry
Penson
Phinney
Proud

Ramsay
Regan
Rideout
Rock
Schmidt
Serré
Silye
Speaker
Steckle
Strahl
Telegdi
Thalheimer
Torsney
Valeri
Volpe
Wells
Williams

Reed
Richardson
Ringuette—Maltais
Rompkey
Scott (Fredericton—York Sunbury)
Sheridan
Simmons
Speller
Stinson
Szabo
Terrana
Thompson
Ur
Vanclief
Walker
Whelan
Zed—188

NAYS

Members

Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing)
Bellehumeur
Bernier (Gaspé)
Bouchard
Canuel
Chrétien (Frontenac)
Daviault
Deshaies
Duceppe
Fillion
Gauthier (Roberval)
Guay
Lalonde
Langlois
Lavigne (Beauharnois—Salaberry)
Leblanc (Longueuil)
Leroux (Richmond—Wolfe)
Loubier
McLaughlin
Ménard
Paré
Pomerleau
Rocheleau
Solomon
Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata)
Venne—51

Bachand
Bergeron
Bernier (Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead)
Bélisle
Caron
Dalphond—Guiral
de Savoye
Dubé
Dumas
Gagnon (Québec)
Godin
Jacob
Landry
Laurin
Lebel
Lefebvre
Leroux (Shefford)
Marchand
Mercier
Nunez
Picard (Drummond)
Péloquin
Sauvageau
St—Laurent
Tremblay (Rosemont)

PAIRED—MEMBERS

Members

Asselin
Campbell
Debien
Peters
Pillitteri
Stewart (Northumberland)

Brien
Crête
Guimond
Peterson
Plamondon
Young

* * *

CONTROLLED DRUGS AND SUBSTANCES ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-7, an act respecting the control of certain drugs, their precursors and other substances and to amend certain other acts and repeal the Narcotic Control Act in consequence thereof, be read the second time and referred to a committee; and of the amendment.

Government Orders

The Speaker: Pursuant to Standing Order 45(5)(a), the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred division on the amendment at the second reading stage of Bill C-7.

The question is on the amendment.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gagliano: Mr. Speaker, I think you will find there is unanimous consent for the results of the division on the amendment to Bill C-7 to be applied in reverse of the division on Bill C-17.

[*English*]

The Speaker: I am sure you all heard the motion and understand it. Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(The House divided on the amendment, which was negatived on the following division:)

(*Division No. 36*)

YEAS

Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing)	Bachand
Bellehumeur	Benoit
Bergeron	Bernier (Gaspé)
Bernier (Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead)	Blaikie
Bouchard	Breitkreuz (Yellowhead)
Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville)	Bridgman
Bélisle	Canuel
Caron	Chatters
Chrétien (Frontenac)	Cummins
Dalphond—Guiral	Daviault
de Savoye	Deshaiies
Dubé	Duceppe
Dumas	Duncan
Epp	Fillion
Forseth	Frazer
Gagnon (Québec)	Gauthier (Roberval)
Gilmour	Godin
Gouk	Grey (Beaver River)
Guay	Hanger
Hanrahan	Harper (Simcoe Centre)
Harris	Hart
Hayes	Hermanson
Hill (Macleod)	Hoeppner
Jacob	Jennings
Johnston	Kerpan
Lalonde	Landry
Langlois	Laurin
Lavigne (Beauharnois—Salaberry)	Lebel
Leblanc (Longueuil)	Lefebvre
Leroux (Richmond—Wolfe)	Leroux (Shefford)
Loubier	Manning
Marchand	Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)
Mayfield	McClelland (Edmonton Southwest)
McLaughlin	Mercier
Meredith	Mills (Red Deer)
Morrison	Ménard
Nunez	Paré
Penson	Picard (Drummond)
Pomerleau	Péloquin
Ramsay	Rocheleau
Sauvageau	Schmidt
Silye	Solomon
Speaker	St-Laurent
Stinson	Strahl
Thompson	Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata)
Tremblay (Rosemont)	Venne
Williams—95	

NAYS

Members

Adams	Alcock
Anawak	Anderson
Arseneault	Assad
Assadourian	Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre)
Bakopanos	Barnes
Beaumier	Bellemare
Berger	Bernier (Beauce)
Bertrand	Bethel
Bevilacqua	Blondin—Andrew
Bodnar	Bonin
Boudria	Brown (Oakville—Milton)
Brushett	Bryden
Caccia	Calder
Cannis	Catterall
Cauchon	Chamberlain
Chrétien (Saint-Maurice)	Clancy
Cohen	Collenette
Collins	Comuzzi
Copps	Cowling
Crawford	Culbert
DeVillers	Dhaliwal
Dingwall	Dromisky
Duhamel	Dupuy
Easter	Eggleton
English	Fewchuk
Finlay	Flis
Fontana	Fry
Gaffney	Gagliano
Galloway	Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier)
Gerrard	Godfrey
Graham	Gray (Windsor West)
Grose	Guarnieri
Harb	Harper (Churchill)
Harvard	Hopkins
Hubbard	Ianno
Iftody	Irwin
Jordan	Karygiannis
Keys	Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)
Kirkby	Knutson
Kraft Sloan	Lastewka
Lavigne (Verdun—Saint-Paul)	LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso)
Lee	Lincoln
Loney	MacLaren (Etobicoke North)
MacLellan (Cape Breton—The Sydneys)	Maheu
Malhi	Maloney
Manley	Marchi
Marleau	Martin (LaSalle—Émard)
Massé	McCormick
McGuire	McKinnon
McLellan (Edmonton Northwest)	McTeague
McWhinney	Mifflin
Mills (Broadview—Greenwood)	Minna
Mitchell	Murphy
Murray	Nault
Nunziata	O'Brien
O'Reilly	Ouellet
Pagtakhan	Parrish
Patry	Payne
Peric	Phinney
Pickard (Essex—Kent)	Proud
Reed	Regan
Richardson	Rideout
Ringuette—Maltais	Rock
Rompkey	Scott (Fredericton—York Sunbury)
Serré	Sheridan
Simmons	Speller
Steckle	Szabo
Telegdi	Terrana
Thalheimer	Torsney
Ur	Valeri
Vanclief	Volpe
Walker	Wells
Whelan	Zed—146

Adjournment Debate

PAIRED—MEMBERS

	Members
Asselin	Brien
Campbell	Crête
Debien	Guimond
Peters	Peterson
Pillitteri	Plamondon
Stewart (Northumberland)	Young

[Translation]

Mr. Gagliano: If there is unanimous consent for the House to divide immediately on the main motion on Bill C-7, I ask that the results of the division be applied in the same manner as the division taken on Bill C-17.

The Speaker: Agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(1830)

[English]

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

[Editor's Note: See list under Division No. 32.]

(Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and referred to a committee)

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

[Translation]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

MANPOWER TRAINING

Mrs. Francine Lalonde (Mercier): Madam Speaker, on April 14, I put a question to the Prime Minister and reminded him that the Premier of Quebec said:

Job training is, according to Quebec's traditional position, a basic issue of respect for our jurisdiction over what affects us directly.

And I asked him:

Given these statements...does the Prime Minister still think that Quebec's demands are mere whims?

Madam Speaker, the Quebec National Assembly voted unanimously in favour of the following resolution:

That the Quebec National Assembly ask Mr. Jean Chrétien and the federal Liberal government to abide by the unanimous consensus of all parties in Quebec on the need for Quebec to exercise exclusively its jurisdiction over manpower training.

Madam Speaker, considering the current situation, this unanimous resolution demonstrates the very serious concern of all Quebec's elected representatives for the manpower training issue.

There is more, however. Since then, we have heard statements from other important sources in Quebec. This morning I read in the Quebec media that the Forum pour l'emploi is opposed to Ottawa's centralist policies. Who does the Forum pour l'emploi represent? The Forum includes central labour organizations, as one would expect, but it also includes Quebec employer associations. It includes representatives of regional organizations, the Mouvement Desjardins, and just about any organization that is connected with job issues.

Finally, Claude Masson, a respected editorial writer in Quebec, who seldom shares the views of the Official Opposition, made some comments in *La Presse* which I would like to read to the Prime Minister before he answers my question. Mr. Masson said, in referring to manpower training:

If governments, as they keep repeating *ad nauseam*, really want to serve the public and at the same time substantially reduce public spending, it makes good sense to have only one government in charge of manpower training, and the government that is closest to the workers, the unemployed and people on welfare and knows best what they need and what it can offer them is the provincial government, in this case the Government of Quebec. This is not a matter of ideology but of common sense, not a constitutional choice but a practical and realistic one.

Madam Speaker, does the Prime Minister realize that by reviving disputes between Quebec City and Ottawa on an issue that is the subject of unanimous agreement in Quebec, he not only gives his centralizing vision precedence over the interests of the unemployed but also clearly shows to all Quebecers—federalists and others—that the only federalism possible for them is one of confrontation and scorn for their people?

[English]

Mr. Maurizio Bevilacqua (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Human Resources Development): Madam Speaker, clearly the federal government has exclusive jurisdiction over unemployment insurance. Much of what we do in the labour market area is based on that responsibility: for example, employment services, counselling, training and labour mobility programs.

Specifically our employment services and the programs and services flowing from these are adjuncts to the UI program. They go hand in hand with UI to reduce costs primarily by getting claimants off UI as quickly as possible and keeping them off UI as long as possible.

Continued federal intervention in this area is a legitimate exercise of jurisdiction. Virtually every jurisdiction in the world which has an unemployment insurance program has associated with it an unemployment service as well as other active programming to help the unemployed return to gainful employment quickly. Federal interventions in the labour market help people avoid claiming UI either in the short term or the long term and reduce the costs of UI by shortening the duration of claims either in the short term or the long term. This applies regardless of

whether funding is channelled through the UI account directly or whether these programs are funded by tax dollars.

(1835)

Nevertheless all government have agreed that we need to find ways to co-operate more in order to provide better service to clients, to increase efficiency and to eliminate any duplication that may exist.

The federal government is actively pursuing agreements to achieve this end even while the reform of social security is under way. Any major changes in labour market roles and responsibilities of governments will be based on the outcome of the comprehensive social security review.

[Translation]

IMMIGRATION

Mr. Osvaldo Nunez (Bourassa): Madam Speaker, on January 26 and March 10, I put questions in this House to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration concerning the plight of approximately 50 Salvadorian refugees in Montreal who are facing the threat of deportation to their native country. Despite my pressing the point, no action has been taken and the problem remains unresolved to this day.

Yet, my request that this group of individuals be granted permanent resident status on humanitarian grounds was and remains extremely legitimate. If these individuals were forced to return to their country of origin, their safety and their lives would be placed in danger.

Moreover, on December 19, 1993, the minister's colleague, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, recognized himself that political violence was again on this rise in El Salvador. Several reports by the human rights commission of this country, by the UN and by Amnesty International have all reached the same dramatic and incontrovertible conclusion: El Salvador's death squads are still active.

I myself travelled to that country and stayed there from March 15 to 22 last as part of a Canadian mission to observe elections that were taking place. My colleagues and I saw that life in that country had by no means returned to normal. During the election campaign, over 30 people were murdered.

Moreover, we saw firsthand that the peace agreements concluded under the auspices of the UN had been violated and that numerous election irregularities had occurred.

On March 10, I urged the minister to take the time to meet this group of Salvadorian refugees to learn firsthand how grave the situation had become. This group had taken the time to travel to Ottawa from Montreal. Despite giving the minister prior notification, he steadfastly refused to meet the Salvadorians.

Adjournment Debate

I am asking the minister again today to grant permanent resident status to these 50 refugees living under the threat of deportation. I also want to take this opportunity to call to his attention the apparently forgotten case of another young Salvadorian refugee, Mr. Mauricio Flores Romero, who took refuge five months ago in the basement of a Calgary church where he has been living ever since under far from auspicious conditions.

I visited this young man last February. Every member of his family, except for him, has been granted refugee status. I was deeply touched by this meeting. His application is very legitimate. Once again, I ask the government to have some compassion for this claimant.

(1840)

[English]

Ms. Mary Clancy (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Citizenship and Immigration): Madam Speaker, officials with the Department of Citizenship and Immigration met with representatives of the Centre de Développement Salvadorien to discuss this issue on three separate occasions: January 31, February 15 and March 3.

As a result of these meetings we made two commitments to the organization and to the Salvadoran community in Canada. First, all Salvadorans facing removal from Canada would have their cases reviewed to ensure they would not be at risk if returned to El Salvador. Second, officials who conduct these reviews would be in possession of the most recent, up to date information on country conditions and political events in El Salvador. We have delivered on these commitments.

All unsuccessful refugee claimants from El Salvador facing removal from Canada benefit from an extra review in addition to the current post claim determination review. Each case is reviewed to ensure that they will not be at risk if returned to El Salvador. In addition, we have ensured that officials are kept informed of the country conditions through reports and bulletins of human rights organizations, the United Nations observer mission in El Salvador, and information from our representatives in Central America.

[Translation]

We must not lose sight of the fact that the fundamental issue here is refugee protection, not immigration. At some point, we have to accept the decisions handed down in the course of this process. Our refugee determination system is recognized as one of the fairest and most generous in the world.

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. Antoine Dubé (Lévis): Madam Speaker, on March 18, I asked the Deputy Prime Minister if she could promise on behalf of the government to implement the recommendation of Canada 21 Council, a committee charged with reviewing Canada's defence policy that recommends building in Canada three support ships for humanitarian aid and peacekeeping. I also

Adjournment Debate

asked the Deputy Prime Minister if she could promise to give the MIL Davie shipyards the mandate to develop the “smart” ship, which could effectively support Canada’s peacekeeping efforts.

Unfortunately for the thousands of MIL Davie workers threatened with job loss who need a little hope, we only had a vague answer like “we are looking into it”. That is tragic, but it is always the same answer with this government. We ask questions, but they go unanswered. When we get answers, for example in the case of the Magdalen Islands ferry, we are promised an answer in two months, but the time goes by and still no answer. I hope that in the “smart” ship case, the government will be diligent for once.

You should know that the Canadian navy’s AOR-type supply and logistical support ships are coming to the end of their life. Moreover, these three ships are not equipped for humanitarian support and peace missions. For example, Canada must now rent foreign ships to transport the vehicles, equipment and supplies needed to support our troops overseas. It usually takes several weeks before these ships are available to begin to take on the materiel our soldiers need.

The MIL Davie shipyard already has a solution for this problem with its project for a versatile strategic transport and supply ship, known as the “smart” ship. For peacekeeping operations, a single “smart” ship can carry a mechanized battalion group including 70 armored troop carriers, 21 tanks, 96 trucks, 8 M-109 armored self-propelled howitzers, 50 jeeps and 50 trailers, together with 300 tonnes of munitions and the fuel required for the vehicles.

In another configuration, a single “smart” ship can provide the support needed for airborne operations with 600 infantry soldiers and 24 transport helicopters that can be used for refugee evacuation in particular. With a different configuration, the “smart” ship can transport everything required to operate an air base for 24 CF-18s, which would have been very useful for our forces during the gulf war, for example.

(1845)

In the event of a natural disaster, the “smart” ship can be quickly modified to transport a range of vehicles such as ambulances, trucks, materials, construction equipment, water tanks, fuel and bridge-building equipment. Up to 192 containers can fit on the main deck and be loaded with food, clothing, tents and other supplies. These ships would have been very useful in Somalia or when Hurricane Andrew hit Florida a few years ago.

In case of a spill at sea, the “smart” ship can carry small clean-up boats to do the job. It can also carry clean-up equipment such as chemical dispersants and material to contain and absorb the spill. Its huge storage tanks can also be used to hold

the recovered hydrocarbons. It can accommodate a 600-person clean-up crew and be used as a command, control and communication ship.

I hope that this time, faced with these facts, the federal government will stop dragging its feet when we propose a project that meets the new realities of today’s world. Above all, do not give us answers like the one from the Minister of Transport in a letter sent a few weeks ago to the City of Lévis, talking about a business plan that had already been filed a year ago.

So we hope that the person representing the minister today will be able to give us a clearer and more definite answer.

[English]

Mr. Fred Mifflin (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs): Madam Speaker, I appreciate the hon. member’s question and the interest of where he is coming from.

He is out to get support for the hundreds of workers in his riding. As somebody who has over 6,000 fishermen and plant workers unemployed, and it looks like they will be for the next five years, I can certainly identify with the thrust of his question.

I responded to the first part of his question the day he asked it in March. What gave rise to his question was one of the recommendations made by the Canada 21 report. The Canada 21 Council submitted a very thought provoking report which is still being reported on in the media and is among the first of many submissions the government hopes to receive over the course of the defence policy review.

The hon. member’s question concerned the recommendation that the planned acquisition of three submarines be cancelled and replaced by the purchase of three peacekeeping support multi-role replenishment ships, that he so adequately describes, from domestic shipyards. His proposal of course is to give MIL Davie a mandate to develop these ships.

The Canada 21 recommendation is a very complex one. The report is complex, and this particular recommendation prompts questions about the need for peacekeeping and more specifically the future of Canada’s defence policy.

As I stand here this evening the special joint committee is meeting in an adjacent room. They are addressing the future of Canada’s defence policy and precisely this kind of question.

As the Prime Minister suggested and indeed stated in November when speaking of the defence review it is on the basis of the conclusion of such a review that the government will best determine the long term requirements, including equipment, for our forces.

Adjournment Debate

There are some recommendations in the report that simply must await the outcome of the policy review and this is one of them.

Certain things about the report are of a different nature. For example the government was in total agreement that a defence policy review was necessary and indeed had embarked on it before the recommendation was made. There are some other recommendations, for example in the case of the defence infrastructure and the reduction of the headquarters staffs where the government is in basic agreement with the council and has already taken action.

The response to the hon. member is that I can understand where his suggestion is coming from, but he will have to wait until the defence policy review is completed by the end of this year. I would say there will be decisions forthcoming in the new year after the review.

[Translation]

TAINTED BLOOD INQUIRY

Mrs. Pauline Picard (Drummond): Madam Speaker, I have spoken in this House many times to express my growing concern about the lack of financial resources needed by the commission of inquiry on tainted blood for Mr. Justice Krever to get to the bottom of this outright scandal.

Judge Krever himself told the daily *La Presse* on November 24, 1993, that the funds granted to the commission and to the Canadian Hemophilia Society were clearly insufficient and that it would be difficult to show what really happened in this tainted blood affair.

The time has come to give more money to this commission and the Canadian Hemophilia Society.

(1850)

But every time I spoke in this House to ask the minister to act or to grant the funds essential to the proper operation of this commission, she always repeated the same thing, that the request was being considered by Treasury Board and a decision would be made as soon as possible.

How can the minister justify the government's slowness to allocate more funds? What are the minister's intentions on this? These questions are unanswered.

The minister should realize sooner or later that her inaction has and will have a major impact on the work of this commission and its findings. For example, the Canadian Hemophilia Society, the only real defender of the victims of the scandal, is now financially unable to send one of its members to follow all the proceedings of the commission of inquiry.

Who is in a better position than a member of the Canadian Hemophilia Society, which knows every aspect of this affair, to follow it up and properly inform the lawyers on location? However, the inaction of the minister and her government does not allow it and deprives the least fortunate victims of an opportunity to defend themselves in the same way as those who hold economic and political power.

The democratic principle whereby all are equal before the law is being violated, this time with the consent of the minister and her government. Even worse, neither the minister nor the Prime Minister have seen fit to act on the many distress signals from the Canadian Hemophilia Society.

Do the government and the health minister really care about their citizens' welfare? Indeed, do they have something to hide about this shameful saga, one unworthy of a modern society? Why are the minister and her department systematically obstructing the repeated requests of the Canadian Hemophilia Society and thus making any openness in this case impossible?

Need I remind you that lack of openness will leave a bitter memory for all the victims of tainted blood and their families. These victims are entitled to know the circumstances surrounding this scandal and this is the government's and the minister's responsibility. No one has a right to hide the truth and to silence anyone who could clear up this horrible nightmare.

It would be in the minister's interest to speak out clearly and as soon as possible on granting additional funds for the inquiry on tainted blood and for the Canadian Hemophilia Society, as requested by Mr. Justice Krever, so that justice can be done.

My question is simple: what is the minister waiting for to act?

[English]

Ms. Hedy Fry (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Health): Madam Speaker, the hon. member is the health critic for the opposition and therefore she is aware of the complexity of the issues surrounding the blood inquiry by Justice Krever.

She is also aware that it was the federal government and the Ministry of Health that has with the provincial governments put forward the money initially and has helped and assisted in every way for the Krever commission to occur.

Therefore, we are very supportive. We are anxious and we are willing to find out what the commission has to say.

The commission has been meeting in many cities across the country and is still doing so. It is getting very valuable information. Therefore, at this time the commission is not in any way impaired due to lack of funds or due to lack of resources. While we are speaking now officials from the Ministry of Health are discussing what to do for future funding.

Adjournment Debate

In the meantime I would like to stress that the commission is carrying on. It is still able to listen to evidence with all the resources that are necessary for it to function at this time.

[*Translation*]

NATIVE COMMUNITIES

Mr. André Caron (Jonquière): Madam Speaker, on March 18, after the tabling of the annual report of the Canadian Human Rights Commissioner Mr. Max Yalden, I put a question to the Deputy Prime Minister, whose reply was unsatisfactory.

(1855)

In his report, the Human Rights Commissioner was very critical of the way native people were treated by the Government of Canada under the Indian Act.

I do not think one has to be an expert on Amerindian issues to realize that aboriginal people in Canada often suffer job discrimination, that they live in a state of forced dependency on the federal government as a result of the Indian Act and face a number of social problems that merely reinforce the prejudice against native people. We do not need learned studies to realize that significant changes are urgently needed to improve their living conditions.

In response to my question in about the strategy and concrete measures the government had in mind to correct a situation that was both deplorable and well known, the Deputy Prime Minister merely replied that her government was negotiating agreements with aboriginal peoples aimed at granting them a form of self-government, and that as a result of this process the department of Indian affairs could ultimately disappear.

Aboriginal nations, Quebecers and Canadians expect more specific answers from the government when discussing issues that are so important to the future of these communities. Although it has plans to conclude an agreement with aboriginal peoples involving their inherent right to self-government, the Government of Canada, through its minister of Indian affairs, is dragging its feet, avoids answering the questions and refuses to be specific about the form aboriginal governments will take.

Will these governments be constituted along ethnic lines? Will they have specific and exclusive territories? Will they have legal and fiscal powers? Will they be able to sign agreements with other governments? There is complete confusion and uncertainty about these issues which are extremely important to the country, and that is because the government just keeps repeating that negotiations are under way with various aboriginal nations.

We want to be informed about the negotiating process. We want to know about the Government of Canada's definition of native self-government.

Finally, considering the recommendations of the Human Rights Commissioner who indicated in his report that the Indian

Act encourages the dependency and marginalization of aboriginal peoples, could the Minister tell the House what specific measures he has in mind to put an end to the social and economic problems created by this paternalistic legislation?

[*English*]

Mr. Jack Iyerak Anawak (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development):

[*Editor's Note: Member spoke in Inuktitut.*]

[*English*]

I am pleased to respond to the question raised by the hon. member for Jonquière on March 18. The answer to his question about the federal government's strategy for implementing the recommendations made in the Human Rights Commission's report can be found in the red book, otherwise known as "Creating Opportunity: the Liberal Plan for Canada".

He has to understand that it took many years to get to the stage where we are now starting to discuss self-government issues with the aboriginal groups of Canada. It is going to take some time to get agreement from the different aboriginal groups whether they are Indian, Inuit or Métis. He has to understand it is going to take some time. It took us an awful lot of time to get to the stage of what he calls complete confusion. It is going to take a while to try to sort out that confusion. I ask the hon. member to be patient and assure him that we are working on those things.

The federal government's red book has identified many of the same issues as those outlined in the commission's report: the aboriginal right to self-government, land claims, the Indian Act and aboriginal justice. These are priority areas which the federal government has dedicated itself to working on in partnership with aboriginal people. Together we must find solutions that will lead to improvement in the economic and social conditions in First Nations communities.

The federal government is acting on the premise that the inherent right to self-government is an existing right in the Constitution. The Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, as I said earlier, has initiated a discussion process with aboriginal leaders and leaders of the provincial and territorial governments.

Following these discussions the federal government intends to translate its policy intent into concrete action. When aboriginal people assume more control over their own lives, we will be in a much better position to make the kind of changes that will work best in our communities.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): It being 7 p.m., this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 7 p.m.)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Tuesday, April 19, 1994

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

Government Response to Petitions

Mr. Boudria	3193
-------------------	------

Income Tax Act

Bill C-238. Motions for introduction and first reading agreed to	3193
Mrs. Gagnon (Québec)	3193

Petitions

Killer Cards

Mr. Maloney	3193
-------------------	------

Questions on the Order Paper

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

Income Tax Act

Bill C-9. Report stage	3194
Motion for concurrence	3194
Mr. Anderson	3194
(Motion agreed to.)	3194
Motion for third reading.	3194
Mr. Walker	3194
Mr. Loubier	3195
Mr. Speaker (Lethbridge)	3199
(Motion agreed to, bill read the third time and passed.)	3201

Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Process

Mr. Rock	3201
----------------	------

Motion	3201
Mr. Walker	3201
Mrs. Guay	3202
Mr. Abbott	3203
Motion	3204
Ms. Bridgman	3204
Mrs. Ablonczy	3206
Mr. Anderson	3207
Mr. Silye	3208
Division on motion deferred	3209

Controlled Drugs and Substances Act

Bill C-7. Consideration resumed of motion for second reading.	3210
Mrs. Venne	3210
Mr. MacDonald	3213
Ms. Bridgman	3213
Amendment	3214
Mr. Forseth	3214
Mr. Bodnar	3216
Mr. MacDonald	3217
Mr. Hill (Macleod)	3220
Mr. Bellehumeur	3220
Mr. Bellehumeur	3221
Mr. Dumas	3224
Ms. Fry	3224

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Bicycle Paths

Mr. Lavigne (Verdun—Saint-Paul)	3227
---------------------------------------	------

Human Rights

Mr. Duceppe	3228
-------------------	------

Ontario

Mr. Harper (Simcoe Centre)	3228
----------------------------------	------

Sustainable Development

Mrs. Kraft Sloan 3228

Killer Cards

Mr. O'Brien 3228

Curling Championships

Mrs. Sheridan 3229

Employment Forum

Mr. Landry 3229

Members of Parliament

Mr. Epp 3229

Manpower Training

Mr. Bernier (Beauce) 3229

Gun Control

Mrs. Bakopanos 3229

Killer Cards

Mr. O'Reilly 3230

Bloc Quebecois

Mr. DeVillers 3230

Transport Canada

Mr. Paré 3230

Federal Government

Miss Grey 3230

East Coast Fisheries

Mrs. Payne 3231

Economic Growth

Mr. Cauchon	3231
-------------------	------

World Curling Champions

Mr. Solomon	3231
-------------------	------

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Action Plan for Young People

Mr. Bouchard	3231
Mr. Massé	3231
Mr. Bouchard	3232
Mr. Massé	3232
Mr. Bouchard	3232
Mr. Chrétien (Saint–Maurice)	3232

Transfer Payments

Mr. Loubier	3232
Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	3232
Mr. Loubier	3232
Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	3232

Youth Unemployment

Mr. Manning	3233
Mr. Chrétien (Saint–Maurice)	3233
Mr. Manning	3233
Mr. Chrétien (Saint–Maurice)	3233
Mr. Manning	3233
Mr. Chrétien (Saint–Maurice)	3233

Foreign Affairs

Mr. Bergeron	3233
Mr. Ouellet	3234
Mr. Bergeron	3234
Mr. Ouellet	3234

Fisheries

Mr. Cummins	3234
Mr. Dingwall	3234
Mr. Cummins	3234
Mr. Dingwall	3234

Action Plan for Young People

Mr. Gauthier (Roberval)	3234
Mr. Massé	3235
Mr. Gauthier (Roberval)	3235
Mr. Massé	3235

Wheat Exports

Mr. Penson	3235
Mr. MacLaren	3235
Mr. Penson	3235
Mr. MacLaren	3236

Unemployment Insurance Reform

Mr. Canuel	3236
Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	3236
Mr. Canuel	3236
Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	3236

Housing

Mr. Jordan	3236
Mr. Dingwall	3236

Government Contracts

Mr. Harper (Simcoe Centre)	3236
Mr. Dingwall	3237
Mr. Harper (Simcoe Centre)	3237
Mr. Chrétien (Saint-Maurice)	3237

Purchases of Flu Vaccine

Mrs. Guay	3237
-----------------	------

Mr. Dingwall	3237
Mrs. Guay	3237
Mr. Dingwall	3237

Young Offenders

Mr. Thompson	3237
Mr. Rock	3237
Mr. Thompson	3238
Mr. Rock	3238

Consumer Affairs

Mr. Ianno	3238
Mr. Manley	3238

Pay Equity

Mrs. Gagnon (Québec)	3238
Mr. Eggleton	3239

Government Expenditures

Mr. Silye	3239
Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	3239

Presence in the Gallery

The Speaker	3239
-------------------	------

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

Controlled Drugs and Substances Act

Bill C-7. Consideration resumed of motion for second reading	3239
Mr. de Savoye	3239
Mr. Hill (Macleod)	3240
Mr. Hill (Macleod)	3240
Mr. MacDonald	3241
Ms. Fry	3242
Mr. Johnston	3242

Mr. Bodnar	3242
Ms. Bethel	3244
Mrs. Picard	3245
Ms. Fry	3246
Division on amendment deferred	3246

Excise Act

Bill C-11. Consideration resumed of motion for second reading	3247
---	------

Suspension of Sitting

(The sitting of the House was suspended at 4.04 p.m.)	3247
---	------

Sitting Resumed

The House resumed at 4.10 p.m.	3247
-------------------------------------	------

Excise Act

Bill C-11. Consideration resumed of motion for second reading	3247
Mr. Abbott	3247
Mr. Johnston	3248
(Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and referred to a committee.)	3250

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Highway 16

Mr. Jordan	3250
Mr. Harris	3252
Mr. Mercier	3252
Mr. O'Reilly	3253
Mrs. Gaffney	3253
Mr. O'Brien	3255
Mrs. Catterall	3256
Mr. Malhi	3257

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

Budget Implementation Act, 1994

Bill C-17. Consideration resumed of motions	3258
---	------

Motion agreed to on division: Yeas, 146; Nays, 95	3259
Motion agreed to on the following division: Yeas, 146; Nays, 95	3259
(Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and referred to committee.)	3259

Supply

Allotted Day—Official Languages

Consideration resumed of motion	3259
Motion negated on the following division: Yeas, 43; Nays, 197	3260

Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Process

Consideration resumed of motion	3260
Amendment agreed to on division: Yeas, 191; Nays, 48	3261
Motion agreed to on division: Yeas, 188; nays, 51	3262

Controlled Drugs and Substances Act

Bill C-7. Consideration resumed of motion for second reading	3262
Amendment negated on division: Yeas, 95; nays, 146	3264
.....	3264

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

Manpower Training

Mrs. Lalonde	3264
Mr. Bevilacqua	3264

Immigration

Mr. Nunez	3265
Ms. Clancy	3265

National Defence

Mr. Dubé	3265
Mr. Mifflin	3266

Tainted Blood Inquiry

Mrs. Picard	3267
Ms. Fry	3267

Native Communities

Mr. Caron	3268
Mr. Anawak	3268