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Wednesday, February 8, 1995

Speaker: The Honourable Gilbert Parent

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, February 8, 1995

The House met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*Translation*]

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR GENERAL

Mr. Guy H. Arseneault (Restigouche—Chaleur, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate His Excellency the Right Hon. Roméo LeBlanc, who has just been sworn in as Governor General of Canada. Mr. LeBlanc is clearly an excellent person for the job.

He has worked tirelessly and unstintingly for a united and prosperous Canada. In his speech this morning, Mr. LeBlanc expressed his love for Canada. As he said, it is up to us to build our future together as Canadians.

The choice of Mr. LeBlanc is an honour for all Acadians. As you know, he is the first Acadian to be appointed to the position of Governor General. We are proud of him.

I would like to wish His Excellency the Right Hon. Roméo LeBlanc and Mrs. LeBlanc success and happiness throughout this mandate.

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HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR GENERAL

Mrs. Monique Guay (Laurentides, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge, on behalf of the official opposition, the swearing in today of Roméo LeBlanc as the Governor General of Canada. Following his long career as a member of Parliament, minister and Liberal senator, his appointment as Governor General recognizes a life dedicated to politics.

Just as the Leader of the Opposition congratulated the Prime Minister in the House when the appointment of Mr. LeBlanc was announced, we also congratulate the Prime Minister on choosing, for the first time, an Acadian as Governor General.

We hope the Governor General will play a role in promoting the rights of francophone and Acadian communities in Canada. We acknowledge and respect the Governor General's right to defend Canadian unity, just as we must recognize the right of

sovereignists to defend their plans because, when all is said and done, the decision is for Quebecers to make and for them alone.

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[*English*]

CANADIAN AIRBORNE REGIMENT

Mr. Jack Frazer (Saanich—Gulf Islands, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, in her Standing Order 31 statement yesterday the hon. member for Brant attributed to me "comments denying any racism in the video depicting conduct of some members of the Canadian Airborne Regiment". I assume the hon. member took this statement, out of context and misrepresenting my position, from a media report.

Now I consider calling someone or an organization racist to be a very serious charge and demand factual evidence before levelling such a charge.

It is one thing to have my position misrepresented in the media but quite another to have it misrepresented in the official records of this House of Commons.

I make this statement to make clear that I did not and will not condone racism in any form. However, neither will I join the politically correct in flinging charges of racism before I know all the pertinent facts.

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PROJECT PRESERVATION

Mr. Andy Mitchell (Parry Sound—Muskoka, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to pay tribute to Project Preservation, an environmental youth group in my riding of Parry Sound—Muskoka.

Recently the group was honoured with the Ward Smith environmental youth award. This award is presented by the North Bay—Mattawa Conservation Authority for outstanding youth contributions to the local environment through awareness and action.

Project Preservation was established in the fall of 1986 as a response to the growing need for an active environmental group dedicated to education.

Within the past eight years, the need to protect our environment has grown and Project Preservation has evolved with it. Project Preservation's main focus is the publication of a bi-monthly newsletter called "Nature's Plea". "Nature's Plea"

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covers a wide range of environmental issues and provides an optimistic outlook to the problems we face.

Within the past year Project Preservation has organized numerous tree plants, litter clean-ups, benefit music festivals and campaigns such as the bad mail campaign, a project to combat junk mail.

My congratulations and best wishes are extended to Project Preservation and to—

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[Translation]

FEDERAL PUBLIC SERVANTS

Mr. Eugène Bellemare (Carleton—Gloucester, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, federal public servants are the government's most precious resource; they implement its programs, deliver its services and apply its regulations.

[English]

If there are to be program cuts or service cuts of any kind in the coming budget I ask that the government privatize or contract out these activities and give first crack to those public servants affected. I also ask that the government change the Superannuation Act to permit those affected from age 50 and on to be able to take voluntary early retirement without penalty.

Let there be no public servant penalized because of public service renewal.

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[Translation]

SHARING THE NATIONAL DEBT

Mr. Martin Cauchon (Outremont, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we were very surprised to hear that Quebec's Minister of Finance completely changed his mind last Monday about assuming a share of the debt if Quebec separates.

Minister Campeau stated that an independent Quebec will not be forced to accept something that undermines its economic development especially because "it is not our debt, it is Canada's debt".

The minister's recent statement basically contradicts a statement he made in 1994, that Quebec was worried when it saw the cumulative national debt reach \$550 billion as of March 31, 1994, because Quebecers have to pay 25 per cent of it.

The uncertainty created by such statements can only undermine the efforts of those who are working hard for the country's economic recovery.

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(1405)

FEDERAL PUBLIC SERVICE

Mr. Réjean Lefebvre (Champlain, BQ): Mr. Speaker, with the Prime Minister only too ready to make disparaging remarks

about federal civil servants, who according to him are sitting around and doing nothing, and with the government poised to slash public spending, four Liberal MNAs for the Outaouais prefer taking it easy in the sun to defending the interests of their constituents.

The stakes have never been higher for the federal public service in the Outaouais, as it faces the worst cuts in its history. Outaouais residents are worried about privatization, reduced services and the loss of their jobs. And while they worry, MNAs Middlemiss, MacMillan, Lafrenière and Lesage are away, indifferent to what is happening and doing nothing to stop it.

What sort of political commitment is it when these Liberal MNAs would rather relax in a warm climate than look out for the real problems of those they represent?

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[English]

ETHICS

Mr. Randy White (Fraser Valley West, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, serious allegations have been made concerning the business activities of the member for St. John's West for some months now. The Liberal government has been advised of the situation and a petition for recall has been circulated throughout her riding.

The *Evening Telegram* in St. John's has reported on this fiasco at length. CBC St. John's this morning made public that she is indeed the subject of an RCMP investigation.

This government talks so much about ethics, but will not walk the walk when its own members are involved. Since this government refuses to allow the ethics commissioner to report to Parliament or investigate individual MPs, then recall legislation introduced by the Reform member for Beaver River which was turned down by this government is now more important than ever to the people of St. John's.

Let me quote Janet Ryan from Torbay, Newfoundland: The Prime Minister "as leader of the country and the Liberal Party is morally bound to demand her resignation".

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[Translation]

FESTIVAL DU VOYAGEUR

Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (St. Boniface, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I invite you and all my parliamentary colleagues to come to St. Boniface, Manitoba, to take part in the Festival du Voyageur, which starts Friday, February 10.

This festival is a celebration of our history, our traditions and our culture, as well as the contribution of Manitoba's other founding nations, including all of Canada.

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Well-known stars will perform in Manitoba this weekend. We offer an impressive line-up of shows and events and we also have our joie de vivre.

This will be an opportunity to demonstrate how a small, rather isolated community can still be quite vigorous and willing to live and work with others.

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[English]

PARTY AFFILIATION

Ms. Paddy Torsney (Burlington, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have here a letter written by the member of Parliament for New Westminster—Burnaby dated January 9, 1995 in which he writes:

There is only one kind of event that will motivate the government to take notice of what mainstream Canada wants—soaring Reform Party memberships.

A burgeoning “card carrying membership” is far more effective than protests, letter writing, petitions, or other traditional types of lobbying.

I know you will understand why this is true.

I do not know why it is true. It is a flagrant misuse of taxpayer supplied stationery and franking privileges. It totally misrepresents the impact of petitions, letters and our work here in this House. It certainly makes me wonder why the member stands up to present petitions.

To all Canadians, especially to my constituents, I will listen to their opinions, whether they have a party affiliation or not. All Canadians have the right to be heard. They should continue to sign petitions, write letters and call their members of Parliament. They have a right to provide input to our work in this House.

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SENIOR MEN'S CURLING CHAMPIONSHIP

Mr. Bob Kilger (Stormont—Dundas, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell and I wish to congratulate the senior men's team from the Cornwall Curling Club in my riding of Stormont—Dundas. This foursome represented the province of Ontario at the recent Canadian Senior Men's Curling Championships held in friendly and hospitable Saint John, New Brunswick.

Lead George Dolejsi, second Keith MacGregor, third Thom Pritchard, the lone Glengarian on the team, and Skip Bill Dickie proved to be the pride of Ontario and Cornwall by winning the coveted Canadian Senior Men's Curling Championship.

(1410)

We commend them for their effort and dedication to this popular sport that enabled them to win such a prestigious national championship.

[Translation]

We are proud of them and we congratulate them.

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REFERENDUM ON QUEBEC SOVEREIGNTY

Mr. Michel Bellehumeur (Berthier—Montcalm, BQ): Mr. Speaker, results of the Léger & Léger poll published today clearly show that a No vote in the Quebec referendum means the exact same thing to English Canadians as it does to Quebec sovereignists.

Far from being a bargaining chip, a No vote is construed as a No to any constitutional change and any form of renewed federalism. The poll found that scarcely 10 per cent of respondents were not opposed to a special status for Quebec. In fact, two thirds did not recognize Quebec as a distinct nation.

The poll also shows that half of those surveyed feel that Canada should recognize Quebec as a sovereign nation should the Yes side win. In addition, some 58 per cent of Canadians are in favour of maintaining economic ties with an independent Quebec. Beyond the calculated threats of politicians, Canadians are saying clearly that they want to build a partnership that is sound and productive for everyone.

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[English]

IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEE BOARD

Mr. Art Hanger (Calgary Northeast, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the Immigration and Refugee Board is out of control.

In January, Boujan Inthavong was released from prison in B.C. and ordered deported because of his role in a brutal gang murder. Knowing the system, he got himself a lawyer and delayed his deportation by making a refugee claim. Unbelievably, the IRB gave refugee status to this dangerous criminal in a 15 minute hearing. Now he is here forever.

The IRB completely disregarded his crimes. But even more unbelievable is the stated refusal of the minister of immigration to intervene and stop this ridiculous refugee claim which has made a mockery of justice and a laughing stock of the taxpayers. He had the power to halt the hearing before it got started but decided not to. He went on record to say that he would not even attempt to overturn the decision.

Canadians are used to the stupidity of the IRB, but for the minister who refused to act when he had every legal right and responsibility is itself nothing short of criminal.

The Speaker: Colleagues, I would urge all of us in our statements under Standing Order 31 to be very judicious in our choice of words as we are coming very close to attacking one another as members. I would appeal to all of you to look at the

Oral Questions

statements that you are making and please see to it that the statements that are being made do not engage in personal attack.

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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Len Taylor (The Battlefords—Meadow Lake, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I believe it is time that Canada began to take a lead role in the establishment of alternative sustainable institutions.

With the rapid globalization of capital, the people of the world need more than ever institutions committed to democratic governance, decentralized decision making, transparency, community involvement, full and open public participation and full public accountability. We need institutions committed to sustainable development which promote social and economic justice including global health and education, energy conservation, renewable energy, micro-enterprise, sustainable agriculture and forestry, mass transit and the reversal of economic degradation.

Canada is hosting the G-7 in Halifax in June. We can begin this important process by taking a lead role as the host nation in calling for and working toward a full and fundamental review of the policies and practices of the 50-year old Bretton Woods institutions, projects and programs.

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PRIVATE PHILLIP BADANAI

Mr. Joe Comuzzi (Thunder Bay—Nipigon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me today to speak of a young man from Thunder Bay, Private Phillip Badanai.

Private Badanai was a member of the Lake Superior Scottish Regiment and is now a member of the Royal Canadian Regiment. He was serving as a peacekeeper in Bosnia on December 31, 1994 when he was injured in action. I am pleased to report to the House that he has made a full recovery.

Private Badanai is the son of Sharon and the late Norris Badanai of Thunder Bay, but more important, he is the grandson of Hubert Badanai who served with distinction as the member for Fort William from 1958 to 1968.

I am sure his father and his grandfather would be very proud of Private Badanai as all Canadians are with respect to his role as a peacekeeper on behalf of all of us.

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[Translation]

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR GENERAL

Mrs. Pierrette Ringuette—Maltais (Madawaska—Victoria, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it was a great pleasure for me to attend the swearing-in of the 25th Governor General of Canada, the Right Honourable Roméo LeBlanc.

(1415)

His Excellency delivered an historic speech. As an Acadian, he was able to link our past to our present, and to set forth the principles which will guide all Canadians to a promising future. The new Governor General is a remarkable man to whom all Canadians will be able to relate, because of his simplicity, his humility and his great wisdom.

I wish the very best to His Excellency, the Right Hon. Roméo LeBlanc, and to Mrs. LeBlanc in their new roles. As a French-speaking person from New Brunswick and member for the riding of Madawaska—Victoria, I speak for my constituents when I say how proud we are of this great Canadian, this great Acadian, who has shown that, in Canada, it is possible to achieve great things without relinquishing one's identity.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[Translation]

CANADIAN SECURITY INTELLIGENCE SERVICE

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, following allegations that the Reform Party had been infiltrated by a CSIS agent, the Prime Minister said repeatedly in the House that federal intelligence services had no mandate to spy on politicians, whoever they happened to be.

On December 16, Michel Robert, acting chairman of the Security Intelligence Review Committee, stated there was no file on the leader of the Reform Party. However, in a letter dated January 27, the executive director of the SIRC confirmed that since October 1989, there had been a file under the name "Preston Manning".

My question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister. Why did the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister, in October 1994, say in the House that no intelligence service had a mandate to spy on politicians, when we now know that CSIS actually has a file on the leader of the Reform Party and has had one for five years?

[English]

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this matter was explained fully in a letter to the parliamentary subcommittee by the chair of the Security Intelligence Review Committee.

He said that the file in question did not relate to the leader of the Reform Party but rather to a low level investigation about possible financing by a foreign country of the election campaign in question.

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When it was found that this was not the case, the investigation was terminated. The heading on the file did not accurately relate to what the file was about. It was not a file involving an investigation of the leader of the Reform Party.

[Translation]

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it was probably a coincidence that they picked the name of Preston Manning for their investigation. Just a coincidence, Mr. Speaker.

I want to ask the Solicitor General how Canadians and Quebecers can be expected to trust the Security Intelligence Review Committee, after its chairman denied the existence of a file on the leader of the Reform Party in December 1994 and its executive director confirmed, in January 1995, the existence of a file, that happened to be under the name "Preston Manning"?

[English]

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member should give complete information to the House. What the executive director of the Security Intelligence Review Committee said was that in spite of the initial name of the file, it did not relate to the leader of the Reform Party but rather to the investigation of possible financing of an election campaign by a foreign country, which did not turn out to be correct.

I think the hon. member should give the whole story to the House. It would help us have a better question period.

[Translation]

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Exactly, Mr. Speaker. We would like to have the whole story in the House. We wonder why the SIRC first denied the existence of the Preston Manning file before committee members and then confirmed that there was a file on the leader of the Reform Party.

Would the Solicitor General agree that the only way to get to the bottom of this, as he claims he wants to do, is to set up a genuinely public and independent commission of inquiry?

(1420)

[English]

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I wish the hon. member had listened to my answer instead of reading out the question he had already prepared.

My answer made it clear that based on information provided to me by the Security Intelligence Review Committee, the file in question was not about an investigation of the leader of the

Reform Party but about the possible questionable financing by a foreign country of an election campaign.

The Security Intelligence Review Committee, under the statute creating CSIS, is in effect a permanent royal commission with a specific mandate to keep under review the activities of CSIS. The quality of its work has been demonstrated by the comprehensive report of the Heritage Front affair that brought to light the issue about which the hon. member is talking.

While the Security Intelligence Review Committee operates at arm's length from the government, I would think that if the subcommittee wanted to hear further from the Security Intelligence Review Committee on this subject it would be happy to come back to the subcommittee.

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[Translation]

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. Jean-Marc Jacob (Charlesbourg, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Defence.

On March 16, 1994, I asked the defence minister in this House how senior officers at CFB Petawawa could let 2nd Airborne Commando members go around the base displaying Nazi flags on Canadian Forces vehicles as well as white supremacist and Ku Klux Klan insignia. Almost one year later, the broadcasting of revealing videos spurred the minister into action.

Can the defence minister assure us that the board of inquiry's mandate will not be limited to the events in Somalia because, if it is, we must conclude that dismantling the Airborne Regiment will allow the officers and NCMs who have committed unacceptable acts to avoid punishment by being redeployed to other regiments or even decorated?

[English]

Hon. David Collenette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have already announced publicly that the inquiry will begin as soon as the last court martial is concluded, which will be about the middle of March. It will deal with the Canadian Armed Forces deployment to Somalia in 1992-93; how the regiment was prepared for that deployment; how particular incidents which occurred in Somalia were reported, investigated and handled, both on the ground in Somalia and here in Ottawa at national defence headquarters.

I want to assure the hon. member and Canadians generally that all of the concerns that one might have about the incidents in Somalia and our engagement there will be subject to the inquiry's terms of reference, once the inquiry is established. As I said before, that inquiry will begin as soon as the last court martial is concluded.

*Oral Questions**[Translation]*

Mr. Jean-Marc Jacob (Charlesbourg, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I think that the minister forgot to answer part of my question. I also asked him for an investigation into the events on the base itself.

My second question is this: Does the defence minister confirm that, in a recent investigation, the military police seized a third videotape whose content may be more violent and even more shocking than the two previous ones? Can the minister promise that this new tape will not be destroyed like some of the evidence relating to the events in Somalia, which has vanished?

[English]

Hon. David Collenette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have no knowledge of the existence of the tapes or other evidence to which the hon. member is alluding.

If he has such evidence then hopefully he would make it available to me, and I could pass it on to the military police authorities. Of course that could be a subject of interest for the inquiry at a later date.

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SOCIAL PROGRAMS

Mr. Preston Manning (Calgary Southwest, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, many months ago the Minister of Human Resources Development launched his much touted review of social programs. He promised to radically transform our social safety net to make it more efficient and restore hope to those entrapped within it. Now, months later and millions of dollars later, nothing. The minister has failed to deliver on any of his promises and his failure will cost Canadians dearly in the budget.

My question is for the Deputy Prime Minister. Given the government's failure in this regard, what plans does it now have to reform social programs and when can Canadians expect the results?

(1425)

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Human Resources Development and Minister of Western Economic Diversification, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, unfortunately the hon. member is attempting to cast a very important initiative which has been very broadly and strongly endorsed by the Canadian people to help reform social policy in a light that only reflects his own particular pessimistic view of things.

The government is very much committed to continuing with social reform. We now have the committee report which has a number of recommendations in it. We are looking at that report very carefully. We will be responding to it within the time

required by the House in terms of a specific policy and we are going forward with our plans to bring in legislation this fall.

Social policy is well on track, unlike the policies and positions of the hon. member.

Mr. Preston Manning (Calgary Southwest, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the failure of the social program review has a direct impact on the spending in the budget.

As the government knows, over 60 per cent of its spending is in the social area. The budget cannot be balanced unless both social programs and social spending are substantially reformed.

Will the government not acknowledge that the primary reason the finance minister is now considering tax increases, which he was not doing two months ago, is because the human resources development minister failed to deliver on social programs and social spending?

In other words, will the government acknowledge that it is the taxpayers who are going to pay for the human resources development minister's failure?

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Human Resources Development and Minister of Western Economic Diversification, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will repeat the answer once again for the hon. member. I recall very well that during his election campaign he was a strong advocate of listening to the judgment of the people. Since he has been elected to the House it seems he no longer has much faith or trust in their judgment.

We still do and that is why we undertook for a period of four months a very serious, very extensive, very broad based discussion with Canadians. Over 100,000 participated in one way or the other.

Our reforms will be based on the judgment of the people, not on the curious and strange ideology of the hon. member opposite.

Mr. Preston Manning (Calgary Southwest, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the government has not yet provided any satisfactory explanation for the failure of the social program review. Surely one of the reasons is that the minister handed out millions and millions of dollars to liberal thinking special interest groups to lobby for the status quo and against spending reductions.

This is becoming the Achilles' heel of the government. The parole board has been weakened by patronage and special interest politics, as has the IRB and the social program review.

My question is for the Deputy Prime Minister. Instead of excusing and justifying patronage and special interest politics, when is the government going to acknowledge that it is this addiction which weakens the government's integrity and do something to correct it?

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Human Resources Development and Minister of Western Economic Diversification, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what the member calls an addiction

to special interest groups could much more properly be expressed as a real interest and willingness to find out what Canadians believe and what they say.

The proof of the value of having that kind of broad based discussion with Canadians is demonstrated in the kind of recommendations that the majority members tabled when the committee reported this week, unlike the Reform Party's recommendations.

The member for Calgary North, a member of the committee, is quoted today as saying that she hopes people do not misinterpret aspects of the Reform Party's report on social policy, admitting "they were not thought through very well before they were rushed into print".

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

An hon. member: That is priceless.

An hon. member: Are we surprised?

Mr. Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, there is no question that the member for Calgary North is certainly much more correct than the hon. member for Calgary south.

* * *

(1430)

[Translation]

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Mrs. Pierrette Venne (Saint-Hubert, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice.

During the last election campaign, the Liberal Party promised to put an end to patronage. But when it comes to appointing legal advisors, the government just keeps breaking its promises.

Can the Minister of Justice confirm that his department recently stopped dealing with a Cowansville law firm and gave its business to the law firm of Eugène Bachand, who is the president of the Brome—Missisquoi Liberal Association, while the law firm of Liberal candidate Denis Paradis was allowed to continue to do business with the Department of Justice to the tune of \$100,000 a year on average?

[English]

Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when the government goes to the private bar to obtain lawyers for assistance the chief criteria for that selection are competence and merit.

In Brome—Missisquoi and in places across the country the Department of Justice, since the election of the government, has reformed the process of selecting legal agents to ensure that they are properly trained and supervised, that they act without conflict of interest, and that services are provided in accordance with the highest standards of competence. Those are the criteria upon which we select agents.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

Mrs. Pierrette Venne (Saint-Hubert, BQ): Mr. Speaker, could the Deputy Prime Minister tell us whether the Minister of Justice gave this work to Eugène Bachand to get him to withdraw as the Liberal candidate for Brome—Missisquoi in favour of Denis Paradis?

The Speaker: My colleague, it seems to me that your question does not exactly fall within the mandate of the minister in question, but has to do with the party rather than the administration of this particular department.

* * *

[English]

WESTERN ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION

Mr. Cliff Breitkreuz (Yellowhead, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the minister of Winnipeg, or is it western economic diversification?

I recently released a critical study of his department which showed conclusively that his home town of Winnipeg was receiving a disproportionate amount of WED dollars. This report, which was based on information obtained directly from his department officials, showed that Winnipeg received five times more than Vancouver, seven times more than Calgary, and seventy times more than Regina between November 1, 1993 and November 15, 1994.

Why is the minister funnelling far more taxpayer dollars into Winnipeg than any other western city?

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Human Resources Development and Minister of Western Economic Diversification, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it seems to be my day with the Reform Party.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): As we heard in the last round of questioning—

The Speaker: It is getting more and more difficult to hear the questions and the answers. May I appeal to members to listen to both the questions and the answers.

Mr. Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, as we discovered in the last round of questioning, the accuracy and reliability of Reform Party reports are somewhat questionable. We can see it even more so in the report cited by the hon. member wherein the statistics were based upon only 20 per cent of the actual approved projects for western Canada.

If the hon. member and the Reform Party are trying to demonstrate to Canadians that they are the soul of rectitude when it comes to finances, it seems to me they should learn to count.

Oral Questions

(1435)

Mr. Cliff Breitzkreuz (Yellowhead, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the minister stands here and gives his version of the facts while officials recently told the media that Winnipeg receives a disproportionate amount of funds, even more than I stated in my report. No matter how we slice it, western economic diversification is largely about pork barrelling.

Is the minister willing to dismantle the department to show Canadian people that he will put the nation's finances ahead of his own pork barrel agenda?

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Human Resources Development and Minister of Western Economic Diversification, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, just to point out the old adage that figures never lie but liars use figures—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

The Speaker: Many times in the past we have quoted great writers. I would ask the hon. minister if he would withdraw the word "liars" used in that context. Would you please withdraw that word.

Mr. Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, seeing that it is a saying I learned at my mother's knee, I would certainly not want to have it refer to that specific member. I was using it as a general philosophical saying.

The Speaker: My colleagues, we cannot go from quoting great writers to our mothers' lullabies. Would the minister withdraw forthwith.

Mr. Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, I certainly withdraw any specific reference or any interpretation that the hon. member was a liar.

I will seek to refer to Bartlett's quotations—

The Speaker: Perhaps the hon. minister would go directly to his answer.

Mr. Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, just to answer the hon. member directly, I would first point out that in this past year, if one looks at the geographical allocation which of course we do not do because we have been promoting a strategy that tries to look at projects on a pan-western basis to benefit all regions, the province of British Columbia received close to 50 per cent of all funding coming from western diversification.

One member alone who happens to be a Reform Party member received upward of \$37 million in one grant. He takes the cake for having the largest allocation of any member. I congratulate the hon. member for his effectiveness. However, when we make city to city comparisons, I would also like to say to the regret of my Manitoba colleagues the city that benefited most per capita from investment from western economic diversification was the

great Queen city of Saskatchewan. I compliment the members of that area.

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[Translation]

UNITED STATES ENTRANCE FEE

Mr. Ghislain Lebel (Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Foreign Affairs. By proposing in its budget to levy a tax or entrance fee of \$3 per vehicle and \$1.50 per person entering the United States, the American government stirred up unanimous opposition in Canada and in Quebec, where such a tax is felt to be utterly contrary to the North American Free Trade Agreement.

Can the Minister of Foreign Affairs tell us how the U.S. government reacted to the protest made by Canada through its embassy in Washington?

(1440)

[English]

Hon. Roy MacLaren (Minister for International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I indicated to the House yesterday, we have raised this issue with the United States trade representative. We did so last week and we have done so more formally with the State Department. Our protests have been duly noted, but the response has been generally that the proposed measure has no chance of passing through the U.S. Congress.

Indeed it was only today that U.S. Senator Gramm of Texas said the proposal was as dead as Elvis Presley.

Some hon. members: He is alive, Roy.

The Speaker: It is always easier for me if I can see the person's face when the response is over.

[Translation]

Mr. Ghislain Lebel (Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I think the Governor General's cocktail party has gone to some people's heads.

However, I would like the minister to get up again and tell us what retaliatory measures he intends to take if the U.S. government insists on imposing a tax which would affect Canadians crossing the border? I want the minister to answer like a man.

[English]

Hon. Roy MacLaren (Minister for International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the question is hypothetical to a degree.

We do not anticipate that this tax will be imposed. If it were to be, there may be measures we can take to respond to such an action on the part of the United States government.

I would say again to the member opposite that it is our impression it is most unlikely that proposed tax will be applied.

RESEARCH GRANTS

Mr. Randy White (Fraser Valley West, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, someone over here said that we should research our questions a little more. I have a long disgusting list of Liberal research grants at my disposal.

My question is for the Minister of Finance who is making great sport of assuring the Canadian people in foreign money markets that his government is serious about fiscal responsibility.

Is he aware that the Ministry of Industry recently approved a grant of \$33,800 for the study of major league baseball in Detroit: "The Detroit Tigers, 1945 to 1992"? Can he explain to beleaguered taxpayers how spending their money like this is more important than lowering taxes?

Hon. Jon Gerrard (Secretary of State (Science, Research and Development), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I believe the hon. member is referring to grants under the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, an independent arm's length body that has done a great service to university researchers and has provided a very important foundation for knowledge in the country.

Mr. Randy White (Fraser Valley West, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, have we changed finance ministers in this government?

Perhaps the question was not fair to the finance minister so I will give him another opportunity to explain it. If he feels it is too tough, perhaps he could explain the \$13,000 grant given by the Ministry of Industry to study "Yankee Seamen: A Mariners' History of Massachusetts".

(1445)

Will this be useful to Canadian industry or is the government researching what happened the last time the people revolted against unfair taxation in Boston harbour?

Hon. Jon Gerrard (Secretary of State (Science, Research and Development), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to reiterate. The Reform Party has singled out individual components of what has been an extraordinary effort over a long period of time for the culture of this country supporting efforts in the universities, supporting the development of knowledge which has made a major contribution to the economy and to the well-being of Canadians.

* * *

[Translation]

STATUS OF WOMEN

Mrs. Christiane Gagnon (Québec, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Finance.

Oral Questions

According to persistent rumours, the next budget will reduce government funding for women's groups, which is causing concern among many women's groups, including the Fédération des femmes du Québec.

Does the Minister of Finance intend to continue the policy of the previous federal government by once again reducing government funding for community agencies that help women?

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development—Québec, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I said repeatedly, I do not intend to release the contents of the budget, in this House or elsewhere, before the appointed time.

However, I can assure the hon. member that the next budget will be very fair and that we are fully aware of the need to deal fairly with women's needs.

Mrs. Christiane Gagnon (Québec, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would nevertheless like to warn the minister about the impact of such cuts.

Does the Minister of Finance realize that by cutting funding to these groups he will put their survival in jeopardy, when these agencies play a unique role in promoting women's rights and improving their living conditions?

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development—Québec, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I can inform the hon. member that yes, we do realize that. We made that clear in the last budget, and we will do so again in the next one.

* * *

[English]

WHITE PAPER ON FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Mrs. Brenda Chamberlain (Guelph—Wellington, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday some Liberal colleagues and I talked about the future of the white paper on financial institutions.

I wonder if the secretary of state could give us an idea of when this paper will be released. This was extremely important for many people in my community who have a great interest in this particular issue.

Hon. Douglas Peters (Secretary of State (International Financial Institutions), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for her question.

I will be tabling a set of proposals, a white paper, on extending the safety and security of Canada's financial institutions. I will be doing so tomorrow.

The proposal is the result of some major consultations with the Department of Finance and others. On tabling the proposals I will be asking Canadians, those institutions that are affected and

Oral Questions

Canadians generally, for submissions to the Department of Finance on that white paper.

* * *

TAXATION

Mr. Dick Harris (Prince George—Bulkley Valley, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, this government still refuses to rule out tax increases in the upcoming budget. This should come as no surprise considering the Liberal's spending habits. For example, the minister of national decadence has had his Toronto office—

The Speaker: Order. I would encourage all hon. members to address each other with decorum. I would ask the hon. member to withdraw the word decadence.

Mr. Harris: Mr. Speaker, I am sorry the spending habits of the Liberals influenced my speaking. I withdraw that comment.

(1450)

Mr. Speaker, \$500,000 spent to refurbish the offices in Toronto, subsidization for posh houses for military brass and paying for their golf vacations in Florida. The minister of furnishings and oceans, not to be outdone, has spent millions of dollars on new equipment for his department and tens of thousands of dollars for his own office.

How on earth can the Prime Minister expect Canadians to cough up more tax dollars? Does he believe, as the hon. member from Broadview—Greenwood believes, that Canadians will simply roll over and pay?

The Speaker: The hon. member for Bourassa.

* * *

[Translation]

IMMIGRATION

Mr. Osvaldo Nunez (Bourassa, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration. Despite interventions by a number of women's rights groups, the minister intends to have a refugee from Trinidad and Tobago, who is the victim of spousal abuse, deported on Friday. She was divorced in 1991 after being beaten by her former husband, who has returned to Quebec on a special ministerial permit.

Does the minister intend to intervene by stopping the deportation of Taramatie Ramsuhag and her three children cancelled?

[English]

Hon. Sergio Marchi (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank the hon. member for his question and point out to him and his colleagues in the House that the individual in question, although it is difficult to talk about the facts of an individual case, has had two refugee

hearings. Both of those hearings turned out negative. Her removal, as a consequence of those negative hearings, was delayed so that the gender persecution guidelines—the only country in the world to have such guidelines—could be applied, were applied and those guidelines were negative.

I want to say to the hon. member—and I think he ought to be fair—that the system was completely fulsome and fair with this individual. If there is any new information that was not brought to light in three previous hearings I would urge the hon. member to bring the information to my attention so that it can be quickly considered.

[Translation]

Mr. Osvaldo Nunez (Bourassa, BQ): Mr. Speaker, since I am not satisfied with the minister's response, I now address the Deputy Prime Minister.

Does she intend to make representations to her colleague in immigration, since she was personally involved in 1993 in blocking the deportation of a group of 14 immigrant women, including Mrs. Ramsuhag, who were victims of spousal abuse?

Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we took measures in 1993. We are the only country in the world with an Immigration Act that contains guidelines on the institution of proceedings in the case of sexual discrimination. We promised this in 1993 and we delivered.

We are the only country in the world to recognize it. Some countries are discriminatory. These guidelines are to enable eligible women to obtain refugee status.

* * *

[English]

FARM CREDIT CORPORATION

Mr. Lee Morrison (Swift Current—Maple Creek—Assiniboia, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, during the winter break the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food reached way down into the Liberal hack bag in order to find an appointee for the board of the Farm Credit Corporation. Joan Meyer, a long time constituency backroomer, was campaign manager for failed Liberal candidate Rob Heindrichs and is married to Liberal party contributor and failed provincial candidate Don Meyer.

What qualifications, apart from her unimpeachable Liberal party credentials, does Mrs. Meyer have for this appointment?

The Speaker: My colleagues, I would ask you to consider the nature of the questions. Perhaps they might better be answered and more specifically answered on the Order Paper when we get down to specifics.

(1455)

I ask you to consider that when framing your questions. If the minister of agriculture wishes to address himself to the question I will permit it.

Hon. Ralph E. Goodale (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to address the question.

The person named by the hon. member is a very effective farm manager. She is also a business manager in her home community of Swift Current, operating a small business. She is heavily involved in a variety of community organizations, including providing assistance with respect to their financial matters. She is a new member of the board of directors, consistent with my policy and that of this government of enhancing gender balance on all government boards and agencies. I want women involved in the Farm Credit Corporation.

Mr. Lee Morrison (Swift Current—Maple Creek—Assiniboia, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, Brian Mulroney could not have answered it better.

Does the minister not realize that he does not enjoy the confidence of western Canadians and that appointments of this nature just further erode that confidence?

Hon. Ralph E. Goodale (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when it came time to make the appointment of Mrs. Meyer and others, I had the opportunity to consult with a broad variety of people across the country, including senior representatives of farm organizations. I indicated who I had in mind to appoint. The recommendations I was about to make were very well received by the farm organizations.

I suggest that if the hon. member wants to put his credibility on the line on who is the most popular in Swift Current—Maple Creek—Assiniboia, I will take him on any day.

* * *

TAXATION

Mr. Sarkis Assadourian (Don Valley North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have a very good question, unlike the members on the other side.

My question is addressed to the Minister of National Revenue. Canadians are made to believe by the Reform Party that their income tax goes only toward the federal government because there is no deduction shown for provincial taxes on paycheques.

In the case of Ontario the provincial tax box is blank. However, I believe this is misleading. What action can the minister take to make sure Canadians know which government is really getting their money and by how much?

Oral Questions

Hon. David Anderson (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member has raised an important point and I thank him for it.

The design of the form is ambiguous in certain respects. In Quebec, which administers its own individual taxes, the amount is shown in a separate box on the form but in the other provinces and territories, which harmonize with the federal government, the taxes collected are shown as a single lump sum.

I can assure him that this process is the most administratively efficient. It does lead to some misunderstanding and there is no intention to mislead Canadians concerning the amount of provincial tax paid.

We will take his representation and I will have the department look at it with a view to redesigning the form so that we can deal with this confusion that does exist with respect to which level of government receives the taxes individual taxpayers pay.

* * *

ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Kingsway, N.D.P.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Solicitor General.

Yesterday over 500 members of the RCMP marched for the first time ever on Parliament Hill to denounce the attempt of this government to deny them collective bargaining rights and to punish them for even talking about collective bargaining.

In view of the fact that this bill was condemned yesterday by the Liberal chair of the justice committee who said the bill was slid by the Liberal caucus and is an attack on the civil rights of RCMP members, how can the minister continue to defend this dictatorial, jackboot approach to dedicated members of the RCMP?

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, while the chair of the justice committee can speak for himself, I understand that he feels his comments were not completely and fully reported by the press. I would suggest that my hon. friend take that into account.

Also, there are 15,000 uniformed members of the RCMP. They have had their own labour relations system since 1975. They elect representatives to work on their behalf full time to protect their interests vis-à-vis management. I ask the hon. member to take that into account as well.

(1500)

The study of Bill C-58 is beginning this afternoon in the appropriate committee. I think at that time it will be confirmed that the bill simply confirms the basic position with respect to the management of the RCMP. It does not add to the powers of the commissioner and it does not take anything away from

Privilege

members of the force. That is why the House gave it second reading.

I commend it to the committee and to the House. It is designed to protect and enhance the position of the force as the prime policing organization in Canada and perhaps in the world.

* * *

PRESENCE IN THE GALLERY

The Speaker: Colleagues, I would like to call your attention to the presence in the gallery of four very distinguished visitors to our House today.

I would like to introduce to you the Hon. Henry N.R. Jackman, Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

The Speaker: Also, I would like to introduce to you the Hon. Ed Tchorzewski, Deputy Premier of Saskatchewan.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

The Speaker: As well, I introduce to you the Hon. Glynne Murray, Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office of Barbados.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

[*Translation*]

The Speaker: Dear colleagues, I would also like to acknowledge the presence in our gallery of Antonine Maillet, the distinguished author from New Brunswick and a source of great pride for Canada.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

[*English*]

The Speaker: I have a point of privilege and three points of order which I would like to hear.

* * *

PRIVILEGE

COMMENTS IN QUESTION PERIOD

Mr. Jim Hart (Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I raised a question of privilege on November 2, 1994 regarding an incident that arose from question period on November 1, 1994.

As you are aware, Mr. Speaker, the Deputy Prime Minister quoted from a letter I wrote to the Minister of Canadian Heritage regarding a concern of one of my constituents. This was done without my prior knowledge or permission or the prior knowledge or permission of my constituent.

At that time the Deputy Prime Minister stood in the House and argued that the letter was public domain. It was on this argument that the matter was dropped.

Since then I have received a copy of a letter from the CRTC to my constituent which was in response to my letter. In the letter from the CRTC the manager of correspondence and complaints division writes: "In accordance with your rights and the CRTC's obligations under the Privacy Act, unless you advise the commission otherwise, within three weeks of the date of this letter it will follow the usual practice of placing a copy of all correspondence related to your complaint on the licensee's publicly accessible file".

Clearly the CRTC regards the correspondence relating to my constituent's complaint as private as defined in the Privacy Act.

The letter from the CRTC is dated December 13, 1994. Considering the three-week requirement before making the correspondence public, my letter to the minister was not a public document until January 3, 1995.

The Deputy Prime Minister quoted from my letter relating to my constituent's complaint on November 1, 1994, two months before the letter was deemed a public document.

(1505)

In light of this new information, Mr. Speaker, I ask that you reconsider the matter. If in your deliberations of whether what I raise today constitutes a prima facie question of privilege, I ask that you consider the following.

By making my private letter available to the Deputy Prime Minister, the Minister of Canadian Heritage breached confidentiality. In so doing he interfered with my ability to function as a member of Parliament by calling into question whether issues on which constituents asked my assistance will be made public.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you find this to be a prima facie question of privilege. If you do so find, as is the usual practice of the House, as described in Beauchesne's sixth edition, citation 118, I will move that this question of privilege be referred to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there are two points for the Chair to consider. I submit this does not constitute a valid point of privilege.

The allegation is that there was a breach of confidentiality by the CRTC in giving information to the Deputy Prime Minister and that this may have been a violation. This is not acknowledged by our side at all. Even if it was, it would constitute a dispute in law on whether that law was breached. It is not something that the Speaker usually rules on. The Speaker has made the point on several occasions in the past that his role is not to discuss whether an issue is legal or otherwise but only whether the privileges of members of the House have been violated.

Finally, I submit to you, Mr. Speaker, that if the member has such a complaint with the CRTC he should file an appeal with the Privacy Commissioner and indicate in his appeal that he believes, if such is the case, that the privacy of his constituent has been denied.

In either case, this is not a matter for the House to deal with.

The Speaker: My colleagues, I read some place over the holidays that I usually take some time to deliberate.

The hon. member did raise this point in November. At that time I invited him to come back with new information if he had it. I wonder if the House would again extend to me its patience. If necessary I will come back to the House on this matter of privilege.

* * *

POINTS OF ORDER

STATEMENT UNDER STANDING ORDER 31

Mr. Jack Frazer (Saanich–Gulf Islands, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order in accordance with Beauchesne's sixth edition, page 111, citation 374. In a Standing Order 31 statement yesterday the member for Brant attributed to me comments which I assume were taken from a media report. The media report had taken me out of context and completely misrepresented my position.

It is one thing to have erroneous comments in the media, but it is quite another to have it read into the official record of the House of Commons. I respectfully request that the reference to me in that statement be withdrawn.

The Speaker: The hon. member gave me notice that he was going to raise a point of order. I would like to review not only the "blues" but also the television tapes so I can ascertain precisely what was said and in what context. I will return to the House if it is necessary.

[Translation]

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, you refused a question from the member for Saint-Hubert during question period. This question pertained to a matter which I will state, and I would then ask you why you refused it. This question dealt in part with appointments made by the government, thus pertaining to the role of government, and secondly, with the possible reasons for these appointments, pertaining therefore to the ethics of this government and of this Parliament. The Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister alike are to serve as guardians on matters of ethics, as was emphasized at the very beginning of this session.

Routine Proceedings

(1510)

So we are curious to know why this question was refused since, it would seem, such appointments and ethics are issues of government.

The Speaker: May I remind the hon. member that the Speaker does not normally have to state his reason for refusing a question, but I may say that it seemed to me at that moment, as I indicated, that this question did not pertain to the specific responsibilities of this minister of the government. I made that decision in good faith and I hope you will accept it as such.

Mr. Duceppe: Mr. Speaker, would it be possible for us to meet so you might explain to us—

The Speaker: Certainly. If the hon. member or the hon. member who asked the question would like to discuss it with me, I will be pleased to meet with them in my chambers.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[Translation]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): 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.

* * *

[English]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present the 58th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs regarding the membership of the Standing Committee on Government Operations.

If the House gives its consent, I intend to move concurrence in the 58th report later this day.

FISHERIES AND OCEANS

Mr. Ron MacDonald (Dartmouth, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the second report of the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans in relation to the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation.

Routine Proceedings

The committee requests a response from the government pursuant to Standing Order 109. I have a very short comment.

The committee travelled to many points in western Canada including Edmonton, Hay River as well as places like Garden Hill. We heard from over 100 witnesses on this very important issue.

The committee report is an attempt to strike a balance between the conflicting needs of those who are served by the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation, in order to assure those who feel that their interests are not being best served. They actually can aspire to success and those who are successful can continue to be so.

It is with a great deal of pleasure that I make this report from the fisheries committee to Parliament.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Benoît Tremblay (Rosemont, BQ): Mr. Speaker, allow me to mention that the hon. member for Gaspé, who is vice-chairman of the fisheries committee, was present each time the committee sat, went to all of the hearings in communities out west and was very active in the drafting of the report.

Since he is absent today because he is a member of the important committee on the draft bill on Quebec's sovereignty, I will present the Bloc Québécois' dissenting opinion. Overall, the Bloc Québécois agrees with the committee's report and agrees that responsibility for processing and marketing freshwater fish should be transferred to the provinces.

However, we have a problem with the conditions of the transfer. Since the committee recommends that responsibility be transferred, we think that now is not the time to change the rules on marketing freshwater fish, before even consulting the First Nations, the provinces and the territories which will be affected.

(1515)

Therefore, given the difficulties fishermen in remote areas are experiencing, the Bloc Québécois recommends that, at the first possible opportunity, the federal government jointly study with the provinces and the territories the possibility of granting special vending permits to remote communities throughout the transition period.

FINANCE

Mr. Jim Peterson (Willowdale, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present the eleventh report of the Standing Committee on Finance, a report concerning Bill C-59, an act to amend the Income Tax Act and the Income Tax Application Rules, in both official languages. We will table it with two amendments.

I wish to thank all members of the committee for their hard work and co-operation.

SWEARING IN OF HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR GENERAL

Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with the unanimous consent of the House and in accordance with custom, I move, seconded by the hon. member for Laurier—Sainte-Marie, that the speech of His Excellency the Governor General, the Right Hon. Roméo LeBlanc, together with the address of welcome made by the Prime Minister in the Senate Chamber on February 8, 1995, be printed an appendix to the official report of debates of the House of Commons, and form part of the permanent record of this Parliament.

(Motion agreed to.)

* * *

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with leave of the House, I move, seconded by the hon. member for Laurier—Sainte-Marie, that the 58th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, laid upon the Table today, be concurred in.

(Motion agreed to.)

* * *

[*English*]

DIVISION NO. 146

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think you would find unanimous consent pursuant to a conversation in this House on February 6 for the following motion:

That the *Hansard* and the Journals of the House of Commons be corrected to reflect that on December 13 on Bill C-226 the hon. member for Winnipeg North did vote on that bill and voted yea on the motion in question.

(Motion agreed to.)

[*Editor's Note: Revised Division No. 146 is as follows:*]

(*Division No. 146*)

YEAS

Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Adams	Althouse
Anawak	Arseneault
Asselin	Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing)
Baker	Bakopanos
Beaumier	Benoit
Bernier (Beauce)	Bertrand
Bethel	Bhaduria
Blaikie	Bodnar
Bonin	Boudria
Breitkreuz (Yellowhead)	Bridgman
Brown (Calgary Southeast)	Bryden
Bélair	Calder
Cannis	Chamberlain
Chatters	Collins

Comuzzi
Crawford
Cummins
Duncan
English
Finlay
Forseth
Gaffney
Gilmour
Grey (Beaver River)
Hanger
Harper (Calgary West)
Harris
Hayes
Hill (Macleod)
Hoepfner
Hubbard
Iftody
Jennings
Lastewka
Lee
MacDonald
Maloney
Mayfield
McGuire
McLaughlin
McWhinney
Mills (Broadview—Greenwood)
Mitchell
Murray
Nunziata
O'Reilly
Parrish
Penson
Phinney
Pillitteri
Reed
Richardson
Ringma
Scott (Skeena)
Silye
Solberg
Speaker
St. Denis
Stinson
Taylor
Thompson
Ur
Vanclief
Volpe
Wayne
White (Fraser Valley West)
Wood
Zed—137

Cowling
Culbert
de Jong
Easter
Épp
Fontana
Frazer
Galloway
Gouk
Grubel
Harb
Harper (Simcoe Centre)
Hart
Hermanson
Hill (Prince George—Peace River)
Hopkins
Ianno
Jackson
Keyes
Lavigne (Verdun—Saint-Paul)
Loney
Malhi
Manning
McClelland (Edmonton Southwest)
McKinnon
McTeague
Meredith
Mills (Red Deer)
Morrison
Nault
O'Brien
Pagtakhan
Payne
Peric
Pickard (Essex—Kent)
Ramsay
Regan
Rideout
Schmidt
Serré
Simmons
Solomon
Speller
Steckle
Strahl
Terrana
Torsney
Valeri
Verran
Wappel
Wells
Williams
Young

Dupuy
Fewchuk
Finestone
Fry
Gagnon (Québec)
Gerrard
Godin
Grose
Guimond
Hickey
Jacob
Knutson
Landry
Laurin
Lebel
Leroux (Richmond—Wolfe)
Lincoln
MacAulay
Manley
Marchi
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)
McLellan (Edmonton Northwest)
Milliken
Nunez
Patry
Peterson
Pomerleau
Rock
Shepherd
St-Laurent
Stewart (Northumberland)
Telegdi
Tobin
Venne—103

Routine Proceedings

Eggleton
Fillion
Flis
Gagnon (Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine)
Gauthier (Roberval)
Godfrey
Graham
Guay
Harvard
Irwin
Kirky
Kraft Sloan
Langlois
Lavigne (Beauharnois—Salaberry)
Leblanc (Longueuil)
Leroux (Shefford)
Loubier
MacLaren (Etobicoke North)
Marchand
Marleau
Massé
Mercier
Murphy
Paré
Peters
Picard (Drummond)
Rocheleau
Sauvageau
Sheridan
Stewart (Brant)
Szabo
Thalheimer
Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata)

PAIRED MEMBERS

Members

Bachand
Bouchard
Collenette
Dubé
LeBlanc (Cape/Cap Breton Highlands—Canso)
Ménard

Bevilacqua
Cauchon
Crête
Lalonde
Minna
Robichaud

* * *

(1520)

PETITIONS

VIOLENT OFFENDERS

NAYS

Members

Allmand
Assad
Barnes
Bellemare
Bergeron
Bernier (Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead)
Brien
Brushett
Caccia
Canuel
Catterall
Chrétien (Frontenac)
Dalphond—Guiral
Debien
Deshaies
Dhaliwal
Dromisky
Duhamel

Anderson
Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre)
Bellehumeur
Berge
Bernier (Gaspé)
Blondin—Andrew
Brown (Oakville—Milton)
Bélisle
Campbell
Caron
Chan
Copp
Davialt
de Savoye
DeVillers
Discepola
Duceppe
Dumas

Mrs. Jan Brown (Calgary Southeast, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I rise before this House on day three of this initiative to present petition number three, the second petition having been presented yesterday to the Clerk of the House.

These petitions are being presented on behalf of constituents who wish to halt the early release from prison of Robert Paul Thompson. April 11, 1995 is the date that has been set for his parole hearing.

The petitioners I represent are concerned about making our streets safer for our citizens. They are opposed to the current practice of early release of violent offenders prior to serving the full extent of their sentences.

Routine Proceedings

The petitioners pray that our streets will be made safer for law-abiding citizens and the families of the victims of convicted murderers.

ASSISTED SUICIDE

Mr. Dick Harris (Prince George—Bulkley Valley, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I am pleased to present four petitions from the riding of Prince George—Bulkley Valley all to do with the issue of euthanasia.

The petitioners pray that Parliament ensure that the present provisions of the Criminal Code of Canada prohibiting assisted suicide be enforced vigorously and that Parliament make no change to the law which would sanction or allow the aiding or abetting of suicide or active or passive euthanasia.

The first petition is from the Mennonite Brethren, Nechako Community Church in Vanderhoof, B.C. The second petition dealing with euthanasia is also from Vanderhoof, B.C. The third and fourth petitions are from Prince George, B.C. I am pleased to say that I personally support all four of these petitions.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. Sarkis Assadourian (Don Valley North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the pleasure of presenting two petitions from the citizens of Ottawa South, one of them signed by 55 members of the riding.

The first petition calls upon Parliament to amend the Canadian Human Rights Act to protect individuals from discrimination based on sexual orientation.

YOUNG OFFENDERS

Mr. Sarkis Assadourian (Don Valley North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the second petition signed by 63 members of the community asks that the names of young offenders be released. It also asks that the age limit for young offenders be lowered to allow the punishment to meet the severity of the crime.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. Ovid L. Jackson (Bruce—Grey, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to table four petitions on behalf of residents of my riding of Bruce—Grey.

Three of the petitions request that Parliament not amend the human rights code, the human rights act or the charter of rights and freedoms in any way that would indicate societal approval for same sex relationships or of homosexuality, including amending the human rights code to include in the prohibited grounds of discrimination the undefined phrase of sexual orientation.

ASSISTED SUICIDE

Mr. Ovid L. Jackson (Bruce—Grey, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the last petition requests that Parliament ensure that the present provisions of the Criminal Code of Canada prohibiting assisted suicide be enforced vigorously and that Parliament make no changes in the law which would sanction or allow the aiding or abetting of suicide, or active or passive euthanasia.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure today to rise in the House and present two separate petitions signed by my constituents from Red Deer.

With respect to the first petition the citizens express their disapproval to the government regarding any privileges extended to same sex relationships.

Therefore, the petitioners humbly pray and request that Parliament not amend the human rights code, the Canadian Human Rights Act or the charter of rights and freedoms in any way which would tend to indicate societal approval of same sex relationships and that the present provisions of the Criminal Code of Canada prohibiting assisted suicide be enforced vigorously.

ASSISTED SUICIDE

Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, in the second petition the citizens express their sentiments and great concern with respect to the aiding or abetting of suicide or active or passive euthanasia.

GUN CONTROL

Mr. Lee Morrison (Swift Current—Maple Creek—Assiniboia, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, it is my honour to table three petitions from constituents of my riding.

The first petition was signed by 133 members of the Shaunavon Wildlife Association at their annual awards banquet. They state that gun control regulations in Canada are already excessive and without evident benefit. Therefore, they call upon us in Parliament to desist from passing additional restrictive legislation with respect to firearms or ammunition and to direct our attention to the apprehension and adequate punishment of those who criminally misuse firearms or other deadly weapons.

I heartily concur with that petition.

(1525)

CANADIAN WHEAT BOARD

Mr. Lee Morrison (Swift Current—Maple Creek—Assiniboia, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, my second petition is also from constituents of mine, mostly in the Pangman, Truax and Ogema districts of Saskatchewan, requesting that the Canadian Wheat Board continue to be the sole marketing agency for export wheat and barley sales.

RIGHTS OF THE UNBORN

Mr. Lee Morrison (Swift Current—Maple Creek—Assiniboia, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the final petition has 65 signatures of constituents mostly from the Swift Current area. They are petitioning the House to immediately amend the Criminal Code to extend protection to the unborn child, to extend the same protection enjoyed by born human beings to unborn human beings.

Routine Proceedings

SENIOR CITIZENS

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise to present a petition signed by 351 residents of Kingston and the Islands. The petitioners call upon Parliament to reject any reduction of social benefits for seniors in any form, including deindexing or means testing.

GUN CONTROL

Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley East, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, it is my honour to present a petition today, mostly signed by members of the Chilliwack Fish and Game Protective Association in my riding. They are concerned that the proposed gun legislation being put forward by the Minister of Justice is excessively bureaucratic, will be extremely costly and they believe will be totally ineffective.

They ask Parliament to reject this legislative proposal and to direct the Minister of Justice to reconsider this approach toward coercive gun control. I agree with their sentiments.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. Charlie Penson (Peace River, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I have before me three petitions today from people in the Peace River riding.

The first one deals with the inclusion of the undefined phrase of sexual orientation in the human rights code. The petitioners request that Parliament not amend the human rights code that would change in any way and indicate society's approval for same sex relationships or homosexuality.

The petitioners feel that the majority of Canadians believe the privileges which society accords to heterosexual couples should not be extended to same sex relationships. I agree with their petition.

ASSISTED SUICIDE

Mr. Charlie Penson (Peace River, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions which have been signed by 148 members in my riding dealing with the subject of doctor assisted suicide and euthanasia.

The petitioners request that the present provisions of the Criminal Code of Canada prohibiting assisted suicide be enforced and that the sanctity of human life be respected. The petitioners also ask that Parliament not repeal or amend section 241 of the Criminal Code in any way and thus protect the most vulnerable members of our community. I concur with them.

GRANDPARENTS RIGHTS

Mr. John Williams (St. Albert, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition on behalf of 93 Canadians.

The petitioners request that Parliament amend the Divorce Act to include a provision similar to article 611 of the Quebec

Civil Code. It states that in no case may the father or mother without serious cause place obstacles between the child and the grandparents and that failing agreement between the parties the modalities of the relations are settled by the court.

They also request an amendment to the Divorce Act that would give a grandparent who is granted access to a child the right to make inquiries and to be given information as to the health, education and welfare of the child.

I am pleased to state that I am happy to endorse the contents of this petition.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. Ed Harper (Simcoe Centre, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition today on behalf of the constituents of Simcoe Centre.

The petitioners request that the Government of Canada not amend the human rights act to include the phrase "sexual orientation". The petitioners are concerned about including the undefined phrase of sexual orientation in the Canadian Human Rights Act. Refusing to define the statement leaves interpretation open to the courts, a very dangerous precedent to set. Parliament has a responsibility to Canadians to ensure that legislation cannot be misinterpreted.

ASSISTED SUICIDE

Mr. Ted White (North Vancouver, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition on behalf of Don Petersen and 27 others.

(1530)

The petitioners draw the attention of the House to the following. Whereas the majority of Canadians are law-abiding citizens who respect the law; whereas the majority of Canadians respect the sanctity of human life; whereas the majority of Canadians believe that physicians in Canada should be working to save lives, not to end them, the petitioners pray that Parliament ensure that the present provisions of the Criminal Code of Canada prohibiting assisted suicide be enforced vigorously and that Parliament make no changes in the law which would sanction or allow the aiding or abetting of suicide or active or passive euthanasia.

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Kingsway, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present a number of petitions.

First, I have a petition which is signed by residents of a number of communities in British Columbia, including the Fraser Valley. The petitioners draw the attention of the House to the fact that the current Criminal Code denies people who are suffering from terminal or irreversible debilitating illness the right to choose freely and voluntarily to end their lives with the assistance of a physician.

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They therefore call upon Parliament to amend the Criminal Code to ensure the right of all Canadians to die with dignity by allowing people with terminal or irreversible and debilitating illness the right to the assistance of a physician in ending their lives at a time of their choice, subject to strict safeguards to prevent abuse and to ensure that the decision is free, informed, competent and voluntary.

FYROM

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Kingsway, NDP): Second, Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present a petition which has been co-ordinated by the Hellenic Canadian Congress of Canada and signed by hundreds of Canadians of Hellenic origin and friends in British Columbia.

The petitioners note that Canada has strong and enduring economic, political and strategic ties with Greece, being its ally during every major conflict in this century. They comment on the historical evidence with respect to Macedonia having been a part of the Greek nation for over 25 centuries that Greece has no claim on the territory of FYROM. They express concern about FYROM hostile propaganda campaign against Greece and its hostile constitutional provisions.

Therefore the petitioners call upon Parliament to refrain from taking any action involving recognition of FYROM until such time as its government renounces the use of the name Macedonia, removes objectionable language from its constitution, abandons the use of symbols implying territorial expansionism, ceases hostile propaganda against Greece and, finally, adheres fully to the norms and principles of the conference on security and co-operation in Europe.

THE SENATE

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Kingsway, NDP): The third petition, Mr. Speaker, is a petition which calls upon the Parliament of Canada to recognize the absurd waste of money in the Senate of Canada.

It notes that the Senate is not elected and is not accountable to the people of Canada and therefore calls upon Parliament to end this wasteful use of taxpayers' money and abolish the Senate.

DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Kingsway, NDP): My final petition, Mr. Speaker, is one which relates to the issue of the conversion of military jobs and facilities to civilian use. It is signed by a number of British Columbia residents and calls upon Parliament to use 1 per cent or more of the savings produced by the reduction in the Department of National Defence budget for

the establishment of a national conversion resource centre and local conversion committees at each Canadian defence facility.

QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS

Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if Questions Nos. 96 and 126 could be made Orders for Returns, these returns would be tabled immediately.

The Deputy Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House that Questions Nos. 96 and 126 be made Orders for Returns?

An hon. member: Agreed.

[Text]

Question No. 96—**Mr. Hill:**

For each of the last three years, (a) how many times were firearms used in the commission of criminal offences, (b) how many charges were laid under section 85 of the Criminal Code in each province, (c) how many of those charged with this offence were the legally registered owner of the firearm used in the commission or attempted commission of the crime, (d) how many charges were withdrawn, (e) how many charges resulted in acquittals, (f) how many charges resulted in convictions, and (g) what sentences were levied when convictions were registered?

(Return tabled.)

Question No. 126—**Mr. Simmons:**

What action is being taken by the Department of Finance and the Department of National Revenue to resolve the problems associated with the tax assistance for retirement savings TARS program, including the need to improve accountability for the costs and results of the TARS program; the need to review, revise and strengthen the current compliance strategy; and the need for both departments to improve the information provided to Parliament on TARS, as outlined by the Auditor General in his 1994 report?

(Return tabled.)

[English]

Mr. Milliken: Mr. Speaker, I ask that all remaining questions be allowed to stand.

The Deputy Speaker: Shall the remaining questions stand?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

MOTION FOR PAPERS

Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would as that the Notice of Motion for the Production of Papers be allowed to stand.

The Deputy Speaker: Shall the Notice of Motion for the Production of Papers be allowed to stand?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*Translation*]

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS ACT

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill C-47, an act to amend the Department of External Affairs Act and to make related amendments to other acts, as reported (with amendments) from the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

Hon. John Manley (for the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.) moved that Bill C-47, an act to amend the Department of External Affairs Act and to make related amendments to other acts, as amended be concurred in at the report stage.

The Deputy Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to.)

(1535)

[*English*]

Mr. Manley (for the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.) moved that the bill be read the third time and passed.

Mr. Jesse Flis (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise in this House today in support of Bill C-47, as amended by the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank the official opposition and the Reform Party for their co-operation in improving the bill by suggesting certain technical changes. This is what I enjoy about Parliament, when parties can work together to improve a bill.

This bill contains housekeeping measures related to the Department of External Affairs Act. As I have previously stated in this Chamber, the government made a commitment to Canadians to change the name of the Department of External Affairs to the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

This change in name reflects the accomplishments and independence of Canadian foreign policy since World War II and Canada's maturity from a colony to a dominion, to a sovereign nation. It embraces the contemporary mandate and responsibilities of the department. The changes to the Department of External Affairs Act contained in this bill are not substantive. The bill changes the legal name of the department, titles of the minister and titles of senior officials.

Under this act the Secretary of State for External Affairs will become the Minister of Foreign Affairs. The title of the Minister for International Trade will remain unchanged. The title of a

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junior minister, the Minister of External Relations, will change to become the Minister for International Co-operation.

The official opposition had some concern with that, why have that position if it is not filled? The government would like the flexibility in case there is a need to appoint such a minister in the future.

The titles of senior officials, including the term under-secretary, will reflect the changes made to ministerial titles. For example, the Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs will become the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs.

The amendments passed by the committee following second reading of Bill C-47 were housekeeping measures as well. Clause 7, for example, was amended at the request of committee members of the official opposition to more clearly define the roles and responsibilities of the minister as they related to aid and trade. This was done.

Government members sponsored amendments to clauses 18 and 19 of the bill. Clause 18 of the bill was amended due to a technical error in the drafting of the bill. Clause 19 was amended so that it would concur with amendments that have been passed by Parliament to the French version of the Financial Administration Act.

Bill C-47 makes no substantive changes to the structure of the department. Rather, the change in name contained in this legislation reflects the current mandate of the department and the modernity of the Canadian statehood as reflected in the government's response to the special joint committee reviewing foreign policy that was tabled here yesterday in the House by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and also by the Minister for International Trade.

Both of these reports highlight how important foreign policy and this department are to Canadians. At home and abroad the employees of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade serve and promote the interest and values that Canadians hold dear. Let us join together in congratulating them on many years of excellent service and their continuing commitment to Canada and Canadians.

The Governor General this morning at his installation complimented and praised our peacekeepers and the good they are doing and the positive image they are giving Canada around the world. I would like to take this opportunity to give the same recognition to our foreign service members who work abroad, all of them, whether it be in the external affairs section or international trade, because Canada does have an excellent image. Anywhere you travel around this globe or in speaking to the diplomatic corps here in Ottawa, you will hear nothing but the highest praises for Canada.

(1540)

We all can take some credit. The people representing Canada around the globe especially deserve a lot of credit for the kind of

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image building, for the spreading of Canadian values and interests around this globe. Hopefully through our example people around the globe will have better lifestyles.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Philippe Paré (Louis-Hébert, BQ): Mr. Speaker, we have before us today, in third reading, Bill C-47 to amend the Department of External Affairs Act. This is a bill of very little substance, containing almost nothing but changes in wording. It is not very innovative, and does not drastically change the way the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade operates.

All in all, this is a bill of little significance, which fits in nicely with the general level of the bills introduced by this government so far, since the opening of the session, in January 1994. Like the GATT agreements implementation bill, Bill C-47 makes cosmetic changes. It is therefore without much enthusiasm that the Bloc Québécois supports this bill which, after all, rejuvenates somewhat the old Department of External Affairs Act by giving it a more modern name.

However, the government could have taken this opportunity to make changes that could have had the merit of eliminating grey areas and clarifying certain aspects related to the purpose of Canadian foreign policy. We would have liked the new legislation to streamline the department's corporate structure by removing a few positions that have remained vacant since the Liberals came to power and which cannot be all that crucial if they have not been filled. I am referring to the positions of minister responsible for international co-operation, associate deputy minister, and co-ordinator for international economic relations.

I believe the position of Minister for International Co-operation is totally useless, since the current government does not deem to attach enough importance to international development to include in a piece of legislation the mandate and the principles governing the responsible agency. Why appoint another minister, or leave that possibility open, if that minister is going to be accountable to another department? Canadians no longer have the means to afford illusions. The government does not want to abolish positions which are deemed useless since they are currently vacant. Is its insistence that these positions remain in the act due to the fact that it wants to preserve its authority to make discretionary appointments? Do the Liberals have friends looking for jobs?

It is true that, considering the social program reform which they want to impose to Canadians, the Liberals probably do not wish to see their friends out of work. On a more serious note, I will try to show that the government missed a great opportunity to clarify its objectives in the context of official development assistance.

The day after the government tabled its foreign policy statement, it is appropriate to remember that there are three key objectives that will guide the government's activities on the international scene: the promotion of jobs and prosperity; the protection of our security in a stable international framework; and the sharing of our values and our culture.

Among the values that the government wants to promote, the Minister of Foreign Affairs referred, in his speech here yesterday, to generosity, compassion and co-operation. As well, the majority report of the joint committee reviewing Canadian foreign policy proposes that the government set the reduction of poverty in the world as the first objective for official development assistance.

That being said, how are we to interpret clause 7 in Bill C-47, and I quote:

The minister may develop and carry out programs related to his powers, duties and functions for the promotion of Canada's interest abroad, including the fostering of the expansion of Canada's international trade and commerce and the provision of assistance for developing countries.

In committee, the clause was split in two: A and B.

(1545)

How can a foreign policy focus on promoting Canada's interests and at the same time claim that eliminating poverty is to be the goal of its official development assistance?

During the foreign policy review, many witnesses and experts stressed the need to clarify the objectives of official development assistance. The joint committee also reminded the government that it was not CIDA's role to promote trade. Unfortunately, clause 7 appears to maintain these inconsistencies. We would have liked to see another amendment to the existing legislation, specifically on international development. The official opposition in this House has already suggested that a specific legislative framework was needed for the Canadian International Development Agency. We believe that Bill C-47 could have provided for these changes. In fact, in our dissenting report on Canada's foreign policy review tabled last fall, we recommended such changes.

There would have been a number of advantages to adopting enabling legislation for CIDA. Separating Canadian official development assistance, once and for all, from any involvement in international trade is a prime example. In fact, the confusion today within the Department of Foreign Affairs about interests and objectives as they affect international development exists because there is no separation between trade and aid. The Auditor General made that clear in his latest report.

We certainly do not want to give the impression that it is wrong to promote Canada's trade relations. On the contrary. We too are aware of the fact that over 20 per cent of jobs in Canada are tied to our exports of goods and services. What we do not

agree with is the government's refusal to separate what should be separated, thus making official development assistance dependent on commercial interests. This is no doubt why the government made no commitment either in its policy on the gradual elimination of tied aid, despite the recommendation of the joint foreign policy review committee. The same recommendation was made by the development assistance committee of the OECD.

The official development assistance budget is suffering in all this confusion. Too many Canadian businesses are currently benefiting from CIDA funds that should go instead to international development, because of the ambiguity surrounding this issue. The priorities of the aid program simply cannot be linked to the objectives of Canada's trade policy. It is vital that CIDA be protected from the influence of the various departments it regularly deals with, often to the detriment of the aid itself.

CIDA's mandate should also have been clarified in a constituent act. However, we understand from the government's recent statement on Canadian foreign policy that such an act is not one of its objectives.

Yet the special joint committee responsible for reviewing Canadian foreign policy recommended, in response to pressure by Bloc Quebecois members of the committee, that Parliament pass a bill establishing the fundamental principles of development aid. It also recommended in its majority report that such development aid provided by the government be subject to regular review by committees of the House and of the Senate.

The response of the Canadian government was that, while the intention was noble and justified, the government did not intend to pass such a bill on the grounds that it would not necessarily serve the goals of aid and would reduce program flexibility. In other words, the government was of the opinion that legislation on development aid would be too restrictive.

By clearly establishing the goals of development aid and the mandate of the agency responsible for carrying out international cooperation programs, the government would evidently be forced to follow strict rules of conduct. It would probably no longer be possible to promote international trade via development programs or, at least, this would be somewhat awkward for a government which prides itself on being in charge of one of the most generous countries in the world.

(1550)

Small gestures most often reveal the underlying agenda of a government, and, in this regard, clause 7 is quite revealing. Although the ministers of this government make speeches about eliminating poverty and reducing the gap between rich and poor countries, when bills are tabled in the House of Commons, other considerations always take precedence over Canadian and Que-

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becois values, even though the government claims it wants to promote them.

This comes as no surprise, considering that, in its February 1994 budget, the government cut the official development assistance budget, tightened unemployment insurance eligibility and forgot to address the inequities in the tax system that the official opposition had been pointing out for months.

It was with the same agenda that the government claimed to go ahead with social program reforms, while its real goal, which was finally announced by the Minister of Human Resources Development, was to cut the social program budget by \$15 billion over 5 years.

Therefore, the government's method is the same whether it is dealing with domestic or foreign policy: it says one thing, but does another. Thus the meaning of the slogan of the foreign affairs committee's former chairman is becoming clearer: foreign policy reflects domestic policy and domestic policy reflects foreign policy.

In conclusion, the Bloc Quebecois criticizes the government for not having clarified in this bill where it is going with its aid programs for the poorest countries of the planet. Instead, it satisfied itself with simply changing the name of the Department of Foreign Affairs. Instead of checking into a spa to rejuvenate and revitalize, it preferred to slap on more make-up. We can only wait for the next attempt.

[English]

Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, it is with pleasure and some degree of surprise that I rise in the House today to debate Bill C-47, an act to amend the Department of External Affairs Act.

I would like to tell the House why I am surprised to be speaking today. It is because I was not told until 4 p.m. yesterday that the bill would be up for debate. The government did not bother to tell our House leader's office until 3.30 p.m.

Is it another example of how the government wants to act in matters such as this one? It possibly handles the country like this as well. Even more surprising, Bill C-47 was not an upcoming government bill on the House of Commons Order Paper for Monday.

Only yesterday the Parliamentary Secretary to the Government House Leader attempted to lecture my esteemed Reform colleague from Peace River and myself on a point of order about how hard the government was working to give us advanced warning of upcoming events.

If less than a day is what the government considers to be plentiful warning time, I suppose the member for Kingston and the Islands was right. However, with the bill going into third reading the government has no real reason to spring it on us.

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I would ask the government to give us an informal call in the future so that we have a fair chance to prepare ourselves. After all, if we cannot have serious, well prepared debates in Parliament, Canadians will not be getting the service they deserve.

Getting to the issue at hand, Bill C-47, the Reform Party will be supporting the bill. It modernizes the Department of Foreign Affairs. Although Bill C-47 will not bring about major changes in substance to the way the Department of Foreign Affairs is operated, it shows an evolution of the department to reflect the needs and values of Canadians in the 1990s.

I would like to highlight what I think Canadians expect from the Department of Foreign Affairs. Many people do not even realize it is of much importance to them. My constituents will ask why we are spending so much time working on that committee and in that area. I could ask them what they watch in the newscast at night, what their jobs are or what many of their jobs are related to. In my constituency we have a large petrochemical industry, almost 90 per cent of which goes to foreign areas. We have agriculture, a great deal of which goes to the United States and other places. When those matters are mentioned they realize the importance of foreign affairs in their everyday life.

(1555)

As a result we have hopefully encouraged more interest in foreign affairs. At least now I am asked on occasion: "What is happening in foreign affairs?" The modernization the government is undergoing in Bill C-47 provides an opportunity to highlight the directions in which we think foreign affairs should go as the people of Canada are telling us from a grassroots level.

Canadians want to think of us as a middle power, as being in a middle power position. They want to be proud of Canada. In many cases we are a bit laid back when it comes to talking about how great our country really is. Only when they travel outside the country and talk to others about Canada do they realize what sort of country we have and what sort of profile we have. We need to use that profile to develop a far thinking foreign affairs policy to help us utilize not only opinions from outside but what we have going for us on the inside.

In yesterday's statement I was disappointed in not seeing emphasis being put on the use of more of our multicultural benefits, our people who are trained, who know, who have relatives and understand other countries. I was also disappointed that we did not make more use of our foreign students and Canadians we send to universities around the world. They are a great asset we do not keep track of and we do not utilize.

I hear on the streets that CIDA needs to become more accountable. Certainly people want a transparent agency. They

are not prepared to hear about the terrible mistakes made in that agency or about the ridiculous projects that are funded such as the underwater breeding of water buffalo in Thailand. They do not particularly want to fund projects unless they see some value to them for the people they are trying to help.

There has to be accountability. There has to be a reporting mechanism to Parliament. There has to be a greater utilization of NGOs in that whole area. One of my colleagues will be talking about that later. We certainly need to target what we have to do. We cannot do everything for everybody, and we recognize that.

In looking at the bill, we should be concerned and asking questions about administration from the top. We should be asking if the minister really needs under-secretaries. Do we really need the deputy positions? At this point in our financial crisis we need to be asking: Should we not be cutting from the top instead of doing it the easy way by cutting from the bottom? Often we cut from the bottom up instead of from the top down. We should emphasize to the minister that we want it to be different in the Department of Foreign Affairs. We should be examining under-secretary and deputy positions long before we talk about cutting people in the field.

As far as world organization is concerned, I agree with the hon. member opposite who said that our foreign service is doing an excellent job. I have had the opportunity to visit a number of our foreign consulates and will continue to visit them. We have some great leadership out there and people who are doing the job for us. I will come back to that point in a minute. The world is now divided into three units. It consists of the EU, developing and working together, becoming a very important economic, political and in some cases military unit.

(1600)

The second unit is the Asia-Pacific region. It started out with one tiger, then two. Now there are seven tigers that are really moving forward in the world. We must recognize that and learn how to deal with them.

The third unit is the Americas, which have been ignored by us, with the exception of the U.S., for a long time. Now we are starting to look at these countries, at Mexico and Central and South America. They become the third major unit of the world with which we will be dealing.

It is important that we put into place our role in the Americas. It is important that we become a leader. When talking to people in some countries, particularly in South America, they say: "We want Canada to be our mediator, to be between us and the elephant. You are used to sleeping beside that elephant and dealing with it. We want you to take a leadership role in helping us to know how to deal with the U.S." They are looking for us to

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show leadership. At this point they are basically saying that they have not seen us take that role as strongly as we might.

I mentioned peacekeeping. That is a very important area and one in which Canada has a high profile. It is important that we thank all those peacekeepers for the fantastic ambassadors they are to the world. I believe we all agree on that. As well, we must recognize that we need to know where we are going and what we are doing when it comes to peacekeeping. We just cannot be everywhere. Therefore, we must develop criteria.

The old threat of the cold war is gone. Now we have a much more difficult threat to our security. We have all kinds of things like health problems, the AIDS epidemic and many other health problems that threaten our country.

We also have environmental problems. Countries like China are proposing to build coal generating plants which could affect the environment around the world. We need to be leaders in that area and show that leadership to other countries of the world.

Immigration, migration and refugees are also problems we have to deal with.

We are concerned that 80 per cent of trade is with the U.S. We realize we must diversify. Unfortunately, a great many people say: "Okay, I deal with the Americans. They speak the same language, they understand us and it is very easy". However when times get a little tough, companies start looking offshore for trading arrangements and then as soon as times get better in the U.S. they drop those connections and go back to the U.S. Industries must be encouraged to change.

I have had an opportunity over the last year and a half to meet a lot of different people. I recall some members here met with a Kuwaiti group of MPs. The one question we had from the Kuwaiti MPs was: why did Canada not get more contracts? Obviously we were there and we tried to do our share in that whole situation in Kuwait, but we did not get the contracts. We were there to do everything else but we did not get the business contracts for the rebuilding of the country. Why? There was one answer which was that we are not aggressive enough. We are too passive, too laid back. We do not push this country they way we need to.

I met with the ambassador to Chile and received much the same message: Why are you not more aggressive? Why do you not take more action?

This summer I was in London, Sweden and Paris and I asked the question: "How could we do more business? What more should we do?" I was told: "You need to become more aggressive". That is the message the world is giving us. As MPs we must then carry that message and certainly foreign affairs has to get that message out.

(1605)

Foreign affairs is important to Canadians. It now represents a couple of million jobs in this country. It represents 30 per cent of our GDP. Therefore when we talk about its importance we should not have any trouble convincing anyone.

The new arrangements replacing GATT with the World Trade Organization will go a long way in helping us market our products. I really believe this will be a forward moving process for us as Canadians.

The expansion of NAFTA obviously is of significance, something that the Canadian government should greatly encourage. It should be part of any foreign affairs policy and one that should be greatly emphasized.

We cannot underestimate the importance of the Americans. They have largely been responsible for our becoming the seventh largest trading nation while we are only 31st in population. While Canadians strive to diversify their trade, we must continue to emphasize the importance of our relationship with the U.S. Therefore the trade aspect of foreign affairs is extremely important.

In the embassies I have visited I have found they now put more and more emphasis on the trade aspect. It must be encouraged and continued. We have to be a little careful as well because someone in France raised an interesting point with me. We have about \$6 billion in trade with France and about \$6 billion in trade with Korea. But 60 per cent of the trade with France is in sophisticated fine tuned instrumentation. With Korea about 95 per cent is raw materials.

Before we change the whole emphasis of foreign affairs and get rid of our European connections to go rushing to the new markets of South America and the Orient, we have to be a little careful and look at what we are selling. We will run out of raw materials. That is not where the jobs are. That is not the area we should be emphasizing. Trade is an important part of foreign affairs. The Canadian people expect it to be an important part.

We have mentioned other areas that we should discuss very briefly, certainly UN reform. The United Nations is 50 years old today. It is disappointing to look at the document we got yesterday to see a lack of any sort of forward thinking in terms of what we mean when we say that we are in favour of UN reform.

What do we mean? What are we going to do? How are we going to be leaders to change the UN? We can make many suggestions but the same terminology comes out of foreign affairs or any department of government. We must look at efficiency, accountability and effectiveness.

We hear the horror stories. People like Major-General MacKenzie talked about phoning the UN on a Friday afternoon. "We have the troops pinned down. What do we do?" He was told: "Call back on Monday". Then the system was reformed. They

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put in a fax machine. We could then have written confirmation that he was in trouble. He still had to wait until Monday morning.

The United Nations needs to be reformed and it should be done from the top. We need some ideas. We need to start off. We need to force countries to pay their dues. I do not blame the Americans for not paying their dues because they are saying: "Get your act together and then we will pay our dues". We have to be in a position where we can be leaders in those reforms.

The UN needs an early warning system. My wife and I toured Rwanda and stayed in villages in 1985. We knew then a conflict was brewing and that the two tribes were having problems. We have had all kinds of peacekeepers and all kinds of NGOs tell us about the problems brewing but we did nothing. I applaud the government for mentioning in its statement yesterday that it needed to develop an early warning system. Then I noticed that the government totally forgot about the bad idea it had about the sort of UN force where we would lose our sovereignty. While that idea was floated it certainly died, fortunately for all of us.

(1610)

We need to deal with international criminals. The people who commit these atrocious crimes need to know that they are going to be punished by the world. They need to know that the UN will deal with international criminals and that it will be much faster than our criminal justice system.

We need to have a whole administrative reorganization and we can be leaders there. Also, we need to examine our membership and we need to push for a much higher role in the United Nations.

As well, we should look at the reorganization of the whole Department of Foreign Affairs and, most important, our foreign missions. We are opening more and more of them but we need to examine the job they are doing. We need to set some criteria.

Last year I visited nine embassies and I asked them: "If you were on the foreign affairs committee what would you want to change?" Almost to the very last person and almost to the clerks they said: "We want a definite direction; leadership from the top; set an example and stop sending mixed messages. One day you are this way; the next day you are that way. We do not know what we are supposed to represent Canada as being because we are getting mixed messages from the top".

I am emphasizing leadership and that is what we should be getting out of the reform of Bill C-47. We should be coming up with major ideas for that leadership.

Again mentioning peacekeeping, criteria must be developed. It is so important. How long are the peacekeepers going to be there? What is it going to cost? What exactly are we trying to accomplish? We have a great many hot spots on the burner right now. Places like Burundi, Nigeria and the former Soviet Union,

just to name a few, are potential hot spots where we may have to get involved. We need some very important planning.

The last couple of days we have heard a lot about grassroots public input. I get a little upset when I read in the reports that we have spent five days debating major foreign affairs issues. The problem is that we could have read the results or what was going to happen in the newspaper the day we were preparing our speeches. The decisions were released early. They came out at the United Nations. We had already confirmed we were going back to Bosnia but we were debating it.

As rookies we can probably take that, but I guess after we have been here a while we start saying: "Yes, we want consultation, but do not make up your mind until you hear it". That has to be the message that goes through when we start talking about reforming foreign affairs and the way it is handled. Listen to us. Do not make decisions beforehand.

I understand that in the next week—and we probably will not find out until the day before—we are going to be debating whether we should send our troops back to the former Yugoslavia. It would be nice to think that every member in the House could talk about that; could give their point of view on whether we should renew our return over there or has the government already decided? I hope that it has not.

When it comes to public input I go a bit further and look at the national assembly that we had, the group which met here. We invited 125 people. The only problem was that they were academics. They were the elite of the country. They were not the grassroots. They were all by invitation and it was pretty disappointing.

(1615)

Why do we not use our 295 MPs to go out in their constituencies and talk to their people, give them some information and get the people's opinions? Do not just go to the elite and get that answer from them.

Canadians expect foreign affairs to be a leader, to be an honest broker for dispute resolution and effective multilateralism. We should be a respected and effective middle power. Canada can make a special contribution. Let us make sure that we do make that. Let us make sure that when we say we are modernizing the whole department we really mean that. Let us live within our means. Let us be proactive and effective in showing fiscal responsibility. In that role we can add a great deal.

In looking to the 21st century a lot of good things are going to happen. As we heard this morning in the swearing in ceremony, let us talk about some of the good things.

We in foreign affairs will have the advantage because Canada has such a good reputation. Let us use that. Let us play on that. Let us make the very best of that. Let us make Canadians start feeling better about themselves as well. We tend to be shy. We

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tend to be apologetic. We do not tend to be as strong as we should in the area of foreign affairs.

I felt the committee report was excellent. We worked well together. I felt the information we gathered was of high quality. I felt the report process was successful.

However, I was disappointed yesterday because I saw things like we will some day try to achieve 0.7 of GDP. The reason I have problems with that is let us face it, today and for the foreseeable future we are probably going to go to 0.3. It is not even feasible that we can maintain 0.4 where we are approximately today. Why put in 0.7? That sends the wrong message to the NGOs. It sends the wrong message to foreign governments. It does not show leadership. I feel that is incorrect. That is a bad image and that is how we are going to tarnish that image of Canadians.

I feel as well totally ignoring the CIDA problem is at the peril of the government. People are saying cut off aid. We know that is wrong. We know that is not just. We know they do not really mean that. We have to explain it to them. What are the advantages of aid? What is the advantage of CIDA? Let us make sure that it is not just a government slush fund for the minister and Prime Minister when they travel abroad. I think that is a vital part of the selling job that should be done.

As far as culture is concerned we would really like to see business get involved in that. If it is really as useful as we say it is I am sure business will want to be involved.

The reform of the international monetary system and looking at the IMF is an area that was not touched. We have again a great opportunity to show leadership this year in Halifax in June when the G-7 meets to talk about the reform. I know that we are going to deal with that in the committee. I hope it will be looked at and thought about more clearly than our foreign affairs report was.

In conclusion, as I have said we are going to support this motion. We are supporting this bill because it is a modernization. We hope it will also go much further to really get into what Canadians are thinking and to really put forward a new approach going from this century into the next one. I am sure that will make Canada an even greater country than it is today.

(1620)

Mr. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure today to speak to Bill C-47, a bill to change the name of the Department of External Affairs to the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

We have no opposition to this bill at all and therefore no position to oppose it whatsoever. It does not change the resource allocation within it, nor any significant restructuring. However,

as we broker no opposition to it, let me talk about some concerns I have about the department and let me give some hope and constructive suggestions we have to perhaps change its focus somewhat, making it an even better organization than it already is.

I preface what I am about to say by reaffirming what my colleague said, that we have only had a few hours to address this bill. We hope that in the future the government will give us more time to do that.

First and foremost, if we are to have a Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade it must be one that lives within its means. Currently, as we know, the government is spending 25 per cent more than what it takes in. The department must, as all departments must, make an effective cut to its budget.

As I said before, the government is now spending over \$40 billion more than what it takes in. If the department of foreign affairs were to make at least a 25 per cent cut, then we would have a department that would be able to live within its means.

The joint committee had an ideal opportunity to go ahead and do this. It could have given the Minister of Finance a hand by putting forth some constructive suggestions to do this. Unfortunately 20 out of the 60 recommendations that were put out asked for more money, if not explicitly then at least implicitly.

This does not make any sense whatsoever. It does the department and the people who worked very hard on the committee a grave injustice. I cannot emphasize this enough. I hope in the near future the department will take it upon itself to put forth the constructive cuts required to make it sustainable in the future.

I will not put forth criticisms without putting forth some constructive suggestions in some areas of budgetary cuts. One of the areas that our party has put forth is that bilateral government to government aid should be decreased or eliminated.

Unfortunately, when we go out in the field we see that a lot of the aid Canadians and our government give in good faith to help those people who need it the most tragically does not get there. I have seen foodstuffs given by the Canadian government being sold over the counter to various areas or being bargained for arms and ammunition. This is not where the Canadian government or people want this aid to go.

Another thing we have to do and which we did not do in the committee, although we listened to a lot of NGOs, is to determine which NGOs are doing a good job and which are not. Which are giving the money they are given to the people who need it the most and which are not? We need to determine criteria that can be applied to the NGOs to tell us which NGOs are doing a good job and determine ways in which we can

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measure this in the future. This has never been done but it is something we must do in the future.

Another thing we have not done as a country and that no country has done is determine which international organizations we should and should not be members of. Currently we are a member of a vast number of international organizations, in many of which there is a lot of duplication.

If we are having difficulty in being a member of these organizations, so are other countries. No country in the world has taken the initiative to try to streamline these down. Canada has a unique opportunity to do this. We ought to go ahead and determine which organizations are duplicating themselves and which are not, making some constructive suggestions to the international community to determine where we can co-opt the functions of these organizations into one or fewer. It would save us money and would therefore save a lot of other people money.

Another thing we ought to, which this bill gives, is a method to streamline the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. By changing the name perhaps we can use this as a stepping stone to amalgamate various areas within the ministry to save the taxpayers a significant amount of money.

Another area we need to address is one that I recently had some experience in, the Department of International Trade.

(1625)

There are a number of exporters in this country who have spoken to me about the fact that they would like to be able to capitalize on international markets more effectively. They are not able to do this for a number of reasons.

One thing the Department of International Trade can do is inform Canadian exporters about places where our exporters can capitalize, where we have an expertise that other countries do not.

Currently the biggest problem is getting the information out in a timely fashion. As a result other countries can get contracts on the international stage that really should belong to Canadians. They are jobs that could be brought home, jobs that we can do as well or better than other countries.

I would ask that people in the department look for ways to tell our exporters in a timely fashion about opportunities that exist abroad that they can capitalize on for themselves and for Canadians.

One area that we have not used enough is our embassies. We can utilize our embassies internationally to be the eyes and arms for our exporters abroad. They are in the trenches and they can tell the department what is available to our exporters.

I will move on to a slightly different focus. If we stand back and look at the large threat that exists today we will see that the

world is not a safer place in the post cold war era. Last year there were at least 120 conflicts in the world. Over 90 per cent of these conflicts were internal. Why is this so? There are a number of reasons. One essential reason is the burgeoning world population that has been out of control for decades.

From 1950 until the present, a short period, we doubled our population; a population that took from the beginning of time until 1950 to develop. In the next 25 years we will double that population again.

There are those who say this is not a problem, that we will find ways to deal with this. I would submit that right now we have no way to deal with it and there has been nothing in the recent past to prove otherwise.

Out of this expanding population will be an increasing conflict for limited resources. Out of that conflict will come a migration of people. We have seen recently on television the horrible genocide and carnage.

In the trenches all of the foreign aid and development that countries such as Canada and other principle countries put forth will go for nothing. We will wind up back at square one. It makes absolutely no sense whatsoever not to address this threat to security if we continue to give aid. It has to be addressed before our development needs are addressed.

Security not only involves the military aspect, which is what we have had over the last hundreds of years, but also security involving the environment, economic and resource management. This is the single most important threat not only to foreign security but also to our own. Many people in this country would argue who cares what happens half a world away, put a fence around them, let them kill each other. This has sometimes been said about Bosnia.

If we want to argue independent of humanitarian terms, argue on what affects us, let us say that what happens half a world away will one day wind up on our doorstep. These conflicts produce a number of things, a migration of people, a demand on our resources through international trade and also on defence. It also puts our people in harm's way, our defence personnel who have provided exemplary service in the past.

There is one way to deal with this in the near future. It is something that no country has ever taken the initiative to do, but I think Canada can, the aspect of preventive diplomacy. This country has a unique opportunity to go around the world and develop a consensus to try to address these conflicts before they blow up. Once they blow up we get into the very expensive aspect of peacekeeping and peacemaking and everything it entails. On the other hand preventive diplomacy is cheap by comparison.

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(1630)

Why Canada? As our new Governor General mentioned this morning in a very eloquent speech which I thought was one of the few speeches that brought us together and concentrated on our similarities rather than on our differences, we are one of the few countries in the world that has managed to bring together a truly historic mosaic of people in a peaceful setting.

That reputation should not be undersold by anybody in the House because it is internationally renowned. We may not realize it, but people in countries around the world look to Canada as the example of a country that has managed to merge different people from different walks of life, different colours, different religions and different ethnic groups into a peaceful and relatively harmonious mosaic.

We can and we must take the initiative to act as the honest broker to bring together NGOs, academics, politicians, the United Nations and international financial institutions to determine a series of reproducible measures that we as the international community will enforce when conflicts are about to blow up. This is fundamental to international security in the future and, as I said before, cost effective.

Finally I will concentrate on a few specific issues I have had recent experience in and, as I have seen before, cause a great deal of tragedy. One is the trafficking of small arms. People may not think it is much of a problem, but I was recently in a third world country where the destabilizing effect of small arms is dramatic. I was in areas where an AK-47 could be bought for as little as \$20. In these areas resources are depleted, populations are growing and small arms are proliferating. The result is a pot ready to boil over and an area that is very unstable.

We must act as a world leader to develop an international consensus on how we are to go about severely restricting the production, sale and movement of small arms. Canada should act as a leader in banning two things: first, mines and, second, anti-personnel devices. These weapons have absolutely no place in warfare. They are meant merely to destabilize a civilian population and are meant to kill civilians. I have seen it with my own eyes.

Unfortunately, when a so-called war is over, because of the proliferation of the aforementioned a country is unable to get on its feet for decades. The cost to the international community is in the billions of dollars. It is one of those things we can pay now or pay later. I would submit it is a lot better to get involved in this early than late.

I hope the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Department of International Trade will take these suggestions into consideration in their future endeavours. I know people on this side of the House are prepared to work toward furthering those suggestions.

Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a question of the hon. member who just spoke. Because of his experience in being abroad and seeing some of the firsthand work our money is doing around the world, I wonder whether he has any insights to share with respect to how we can produce some long term results in some of the countries in which we are putting money.

What could we do that would finally make these people independent and contributing members to the world society instead of drawing from it?

Mr. Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his question. If I had that answer it would certainly be wonderful.

There are a few things, I would submit in my humble experience, we could do. One would be to address the international security aspects. We cannot get a country back on its feet until the security aspects are dealt with. As I said before, that involves freeing the country of mines and putting in place a strong judicial system, as well as the necessary foundations of democracy to have a populace with confidence in its government. We are a democratic country, one that is well respected for our democratic institutions. We can and have done a lot to help these democratic institutions.

(1635)

Another fundamental aspect is how we channel our aid. I think we will find a lot of agreement in the international community that international aid must go through NGOs as opposed to through governments. Much aid in the past has gone directly into the hands of foreign governments and in turn has become parts of personal bank accounts in Switzerland and other countries, or has been used to build people's personal empires through the purchase of arms and bribery. That is completely wrong and is not where our international moneys were meant to go.

As I said before in my speech, we need to look at the NGOs to determine which ones are doing a good job and which are not. We have to determine a set of criteria. We have to determine an end point that we want to address through committee reports. That is something the government agrees on. We wish to help the poorest of the poor. We can do that but we have to determine which NGOs are doing a good job and which are not. Once we do so, we can determine where we are proportioning our money.

It is an interesting and an exciting project, one that I hope the government through the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Department of International Trade will take up. If we can do that, we can effectively channel the aid money Canadians give to other countries.

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I will finish by saying that many people in my riding and other ridings ask: "Why are you giving money to people half a world away?" If we want to argue purely on selfish grounds, the economic impact in a positive way to our exporters is very great because we are generous on the international stage. We take part in international organizations in an effective fashion and we bring forth to the international community some sense of peace, stability and sensibility.

If we continue to do so we will have on the international stage a clout far greater than what our population would normally give us.

Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley East, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I have a comment and then a fairly quick question.

One point is on the saleability of foreign assistance and why it is necessary. The member struck on a very important point. It is becoming increasingly difficult to convince people that we should be spending increasing amounts of money on foreign assistance. Yet, for some of the reasons the member mentioned, it is still important.

Could the member comment in general terms on the advisability of increasing spending on primary education in the third world as part of our aid package as opposed to university education?

One report I read mentioned that basic education in the third world decreases the number of children in a family from an average of four and a half or five to three or three and a half. The reason is that a basic education allows a person to get a job, to understand basic birth control methods, to expand their horizons in business and so on.

As opposed to a very costly university education that we support around the world, does the member think we should emphasize or spend more of our money on the basic education aspect?

Mr. Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca): Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague hit on a very important point. We do get more bang for our buck by investing in primary education versus expensive post-secondary education.

We cannot have a stable country without a stable populous. We cannot have a stable populous unless the populous has a vested economic and social interest in the country in which it lives.

One primary way of doing it is to enable the people to have the rudiments of an education: give them some literacy and give them the ability to take care of themselves. If we give them the knowledge to take care of themselves we have helped to create a sustainable situation.

(1640)

It is also more difficult for individuals to sway a population for their own illicit gain if the population is educated. It is easier

to reason with a population that has the rudiments of education than one that is living in a primitive state of affairs. That has borne itself out time and time again.

As my hon. colleague just mentioned, one of the great benefits of providing primary education is that we see a population reduction. We see a reduction in the number of babies born. It gives women control of reproduction, which is fundamental in enabling them and their families to get control of their economic and social lives.

The Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

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

[*Translation*]

The Deputy Speaker: It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 38, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby—gun control; the hon. member for Davenport—Bill C-62.

* * *

[*English*]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think you would find unanimous consent, after the consultation I have had with the two opposition parties, for the following motion:

That from 5:30 p.m. today until the time of adjournment the House will not entertain any adjournment or other dilatory motions.

(Motion agreed to.)

* * *

GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION ACT (FEDERAL AGENCIES)

The House resumed from February 7 consideration of the motion that Bill C-65, an act to reorganize and dissolve certain federal agencies, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mr. Randy White (Fraser Valley West, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to speak to Bill C-65 which makes an attempt at reorganizing and dissolving certain federal agencies. The one I will be talking about is ACOA.

The attempt in the bill is to reduce the number of board members from 18 to 7. I want to talk about whether or not that is truly effective. Another thing I want to talk about with respect to the bill is patronage, about which we had a long discussion yesterday.

My hon. colleague from Burin—St. George's said yesterday that there will always be patronage. Whilst the Liberals

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maintain that there will always be patronage, perhaps there will be people whom we know to be competent who should go into certain jobs. I call into question whether or not patronage is appropriate in some positions. I have for a long time been rather outspoken about patronage appointments to the Senate. The Reform Party has been rather clear about a triple E Senate, which is elected, effective and equal.

We have seen time after time Liberals and Conservatives putting their friends in the Senate where they are paid until age 75 and live rather well on the backs of the taxpayers. It is time to give up on those kinds of patronage positions which give your friends truly a more advantageous position in life than those who are equal and even perhaps more qualified for the positions.

(1645)

Look at the recent Senate appointments which fly in the face of the vast majority of Canadians. There were five Senate appointments made by this Prime Minister to the Senate. One of them indeed was a sitting member of Parliament. I question the anti-democratic move of doing that. This individual was elected in his own riding and now the Prime Minister just fetches him out of it and says: "I am going to run one of my buddies in here and see if we can get him in as well".

That flies so much in the face of what people believe. I cannot believe this government is reproducing what the Conservatives did. And the Liberals yelled and screamed about that when the Conservatives were the government. Even the Governor General's appointment is basically patronage today. That speaks for itself.

I have had a great deal of experience with refugee boards which are again political appointees. They make a pretty good salary and make what really amounts to life and death decisions. Some of the decisions have been far from credible. Some of the individuals on those boards are far from credible and do not meet the qualifications, skills or abilities in some cases.

Yet we still have patronage. Members from the opposite side say patronage will always be. I have to question the logic of that. Many people are questioning the logic of it and what we get is more patronage.

I have to question the patronage in parole boards. I have to question the patronage of immigration adjudicators, the patronage in harbours, boards, commissions across this country. Why can we not publicly advertise for these positions and take people based on their qualifications, skills and abilities?

There is a recent patronage appointment that we complained about two days ago. We would have complained about it again today but we could not get it on in question period because we only had five questions and it was number six.

Let us look at the individual who was most recently appointed to the CRTC. The Prime Minister stood up in the House yesterday and talked about that very position. He talked about the need to look at people for skills and abilities and so on.

When we checked on that appointee we found there were problems. In fact the Prime Minister said himself that if we found certain problems with this perhaps the government would not make that appointment but it has made the appointment. We find problems with it. If we really dig deep in a lot of these positions it sways, it gets away from skills and abilities and qualifications. That is wrong for government.

We have to look at the damage that creates in the parole board, in refugee boards, and so on. We have to look at the victims and the common ordinary citizens who by the way never get this opportunity unless they have been a member of a Liberal campaign committee and so on and so forth. What opportunity does the average law-abiding Canadian citizen get for these kinds of jobs? It does not happen.

Let us look at the cost of these positions: \$85,000 and \$90,000 for some of them. Why not advertise for these positions? Why not do what any other corporation does? Crown corporations do it.

I really want to talk about ACOA. It is my favourite thing to look at in this country. I was glad to hear the minister today announce that he is doing away with grants altogether. I would not give the minister much credit for that. The announcement was made subsequent to when we disclosed all of the bad grants in ACOA. While it is nice that the minister did that we will take credit for it in the House of Commons and throughout this country.

(1650)

Now to reduce the ACOA board in members only is actually laughable. Just think about this. The minister says that what is going to happen is that ACOA will no longer give grants. It will basically be giving loans. They will not be forgivable loans but repayable loans as far as I understand it from yesterday's discussion. It is venture capital basically.

FBDB does the same thing. Why is it we are just reducing the number of boards? Why can we not just collapse this organization, get rid of its administration and allow FBDB to do the job?

I asked that question yesterday of the member from Halifax. On December 8 I asked a question in the House about FBDB versus ACOA. I did not get a satisfactory answer from the minister so I asked the same question last night in what we call the late show. I put the question clearly and distinctly.

What I received from the member for Halifax who answered the question was a two minute speech, your basic Liberal rhetoric on issues about ACOA, but it did not answer the question. Therefore, I am going to come back to that and I am

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going to ask it again and again and again. Hopefully the member for Halifax will not be answering because I do not think she knows much about it.

The question has to be: Why are we reducing the number of board members in ACOA? Why are we not eliminating ACOA? What we are doing here in C-65 is surface scratch. One does not have to go very far with this Liberal government to look at surface scratch. One only has to look a little at the Young Offenders Act.

The majority of people in this country are concerned about the Young Offenders Act. They talked, we talked and many people talked about lowering the age, about advising citizens out there of sexual offenders and so on. The Minister of Justice came up with a ridiculously weak, limp act for young offenders.

Gun control was the same thing. In trying to address crime the government went to gun control. The budget was the same thing. The Liberals did nothing on the budget last year and they are still spending money like Mad Hatters over there. We demonstrated that today in some of the ridiculous research grants.

Bill C-44 did all but nothing in immigration because in the final analysis they will not be removing the bad guys anyway. That is what I call surface scratch.

When somebody brings in a bill like Bill C-65 which states that the number of board members is going to be reduced from 18 to 7, I ask what is wrong with these folks across the way? Why can they not go out and do the job fully? Why are we surface scratching?

We have to look at a new vision here. There are a lot of documents now that mention a new vision. In his book the leader of the Reform Party talks about a new vision. Lots of documents refer to a new vision in Canada.

What we have here is a traditional party entrenched in an old vision. So old is that vision that when they tried to come up with something new in HRD with the social programs, it collapsed. They stand in here today and have the gall to try to tell people that is what they want. We heard it all across the country. They said that is what they want, no change, which is exactly what they received with this government because this government lacks vision. It is vision that we need.

Bill C-65 is not a new vision, it is traditional. They are talking about saving money but it is surface scratch. There is hardly any money in this.

(1655)

If you want to get rid of an organization, get rid of ACOA and save some money. The administrative travel expenses within ACOA are a national disgrace. It is all over the country.

Everybody knows about it. There is nothing touched in it. They just reduced the number of directors.

Let us not talk about surface scratch here. Let us talk about new vision. We had an admittance yesterday that the Liberals have practised "corrupt patronage". That is a quote in *Hansard* and came from a Liberal member by the way. I believe it was the member for Burin—St. George's.

I would agree with that. You only have to look at some of the patronage appointments. I will refer to the *Globe and Mail*. I think everybody across the country has read this by now and are shaking their heads about patronage appointments.

Look at this: A tax court judge was an MP. Here is an individual, former provincial candidate in Mississauga, southern Ontario. Here is a fellow, a candidate in Quebec in 1993, one from Calgary Northeast and a three time candidate in Edmonton. On and on and on it goes. It cannot be a coincidence that all of these past candidates in 1993 have the skills, abilities and qualifications for the job. That cannot be the case. This is clearly padding your friends and it is totally wrong.

In 1992-93 ACOA wrote off in excess of \$53 million. I would like to ask members opposite what the difference is between a repayable loan that is written off so that the borrower does not have to pay, and a grant.

An hon. member: There is no difference.

Mr. White (Fraser Valley West): There is no difference between a grant and a loan that is never repaid. If ACOA is now into repayable grants many of which are written off, then collapse ACOA. Fold it. Do not just get rid of the directors, get rid of ACOA. Save the taxpayer a whole bundle of money. Save them \$50 million in write-offs for certain and then let FBDB take its place, or the banks. Has anybody ever thought of dealing with the banks?

Yesterday another speaker opposite said that we already have a very efficient government. I have to ask, if the Liberals think they have an efficient government then they are really out to lunch. That is what the change is all about. That is why the last party from Jurassic Park sits with two members here. That is exactly the mentality that is going to have this second party join Jurassic Park in the next election. The assumption that it already is an efficient government is totally erroneous.

I cannot say much more about this because I could run down all of these other reductions in boards and institutions but they are basically all the same. This is surface scratch. The government does not really intend to save a lot of money here. It is just taking out a few things to make it look good. It has done it time and time and time again in the last year.

The question is: Who does the government really think it is kidding over there? There are people actually watching and they

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are a lot smarter today than they were before. Bill C-65 is surface scratch. It is Liberal do nothing legislation, much like Bill C-44 was.

(1700)

Mr. John O'Reilly (Victoria—Haliburton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if in questioning the hon. member whether he would consider the appointment of the National Parole Board, for instance. The new chair of the National Parole Board is a career civil servant with no political connections. He came through the ranks, was appointed on the basis of his qualifications after being interviewed. I wonder if he would recognize that as something the government has started, and is that what he considers to be a patronage appointment?

Does he want us or the government to leave the Senate completely dominated by the Tories, holding back the Pearson airport deal as an example? Is that what he expects to do?

Also, does he not recognize that in some of the appointments the Prime Minister is making, such as Ed Broadbent and so forth, that there are no pensions, no double dipping, that with any new appointments by the Prime Minister people like Ed Broadbent are being asked? Does he not realize that Roméo LeBlanc, a man for all seasons, a fair, honest Acadian, a person who fits the Prime Minister's style was a good appointment?

Mr. White (Fraser Valley West): Mr. Speaker, when making so many patronage appointments, the obvious thing has happened with governments over the past decades. They make some that are good, naturally; they even make some from other parties, I suppose. That covers them for making the majority, or many of them, their friends.

Look at this list. A member of Parliament's campaign manager in Vancouver Centre was executive assistant to the ministers of justice and energy, mines and resources in the eighties; assistant to a former Nova Scotia Liberal leader; assistant to various Ontario MPPs. These are Liberal Party hacks.

Of course some will be made based on qualifications, skills and abilities so exactly what has happened here can be done. A member stands up and says: "Look at this one; let me identify this one; what do you think of it?" That particular individual may be good based on qualifications, skills and abilities. I do not know the particular individual and his qualifications, skills and abilities, but I do know there are many people on parole boards who do not have the qualifications, skills and abilities.

Mr. O'Reilly: Answer the question.

Mr. White (Fraser Valley West): I think I just have. He asked me if this particular person on the parole board had the skills and abilities. I do not know that particular person. My

answer is there are a lot who do not. I can tell the hon. member that.

The next question I believe the member asked was on the Senate. He asked whether—it is a wise thing I suppose—there should be more Conservatives than Liberals in the Senate. I think he has missed the point. We are talking about the ability to have an elected Senate so that perhaps the senators could be neither Liberal nor Conservative; what a novel idea, not a party hack.

That is the problem. It is like firing your brother or your sister. They get them into the Senate. These governments are not going to change. As soon as the Liberals got in the whole country new darn well they would start putting Liberals into that Senate. The only way to stop that is to get a party into this government with no friends in the Senate, none at all, so we will not be marrying off: "We need some to offset the Conservatives and the Liberals in this Senate". Talk about traditional thinking, that is traditional thinking. What is wrong with a triple E Senate?

I am sorry, I am not sure what the third question was.

Mr. O'Reilly: Roméo LeBlanc.

Mr. White (Fraser Valley West): Roméo LeBlanc, the Governor General. That position is considered by most as the highest plum on the plum tree. Whether or not his skills and abilities fit the job, I am not really sure what his skills and abilities are.

(1705)

I will say right now I am not in favour of having a Governor General position in this country, nor am I in favour of Lieutenant Governor positions in this country. That is why I was not at the session today nor the party tonight. Whether or not the individual has the qualifications it is just tradition.

I was asked today why I was not there. I said that I really did not intend to think like these traditional good old boys here. Maybe we should be questioning whether there should be a governor general or a lieutenant governor. The individual I was talking to said that is tradition. I told him that is what is wrong here. What is wrong with questioning this good old tradition? What is wrong with questioning the fact that this government wants 50 per cent or more of the Senate to be Liberals?

An hon. member: What is wrong with that?

Mr. White (Fraser Valley West): There is a lot wrong with it. You would have to go a long way in this country today to find many people who would want Liberal Party hacks or friends of the government or anybody else appointed to the Senate. That is what is wrong with that. Elect them. Give the average, ordinary Canadian citizen on the street an opportunity to be a senator.

Mr. Mike Scott (Skeena, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer the minister a hearty nice try on his Bill C-65. The bill is

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an act to reorganize and dissolve certain federal agencies. This is good. It would be a lot better if it were just a bill to dissolve certain federal agencies.

I represent a riding with a major sea coast and my constituents will sleep better knowing that the Canadian Salt Fish Corporation has been dissolved. I also cannot express anything but pleasure at the knowledge that the National Film Board has been reduced from eight to six members. I hope it will not find itself unable to make appalling decisions due to its short staffing.

I want to say with a straight face that I am confident that the President of the Treasury Board experienced real difficulties in getting the civil service to agree to these cuts. I mean no sarcasm by saying this.

In Mr. Martin Anderson's book *Revolution: The Reagan Legacy* he describes his own bureaucratic battles to get rid of the board of tea tasters within the U.S. executive branch. He failed. I think the minister deserves credit for what he has done. Let us have a hearty nice try for him and then let us get serious.

How big is our spending problem? How big are our debt and deficit problems in Canada? The Liberal government appears recently to have noticed that its own lust for big government coupled with Progressive Conservative incompetence has saddled this nation with an on-book debt of over \$500 billion and an unfunded liability in the Canada pension plan of about a like amount, and we continue to have annual deficits in the range of \$35 billion to \$40 billion.

For years the established political parties laughed the debt off: "We are creating assets. We owe it to ourselves. What is a billion? We have a culture to create". Whoops. I will tell you what a billion is. It is a one followed by nine zeros. It is so much money that if you spent \$1,000 a day since the birth of Christ you still would not have spent a billion dollars today. As a matter of fact you could go on for approximately another thousand years. If you spent \$20 a day since the dinosaurs vanished, you still would not have spent \$500 billion. What I am getting at is that it is a lot of money even by the standards of this government.

How much has the minister saved us? How long has it taken him to save us that money? It was Albert Einstein who once said it is impossible to solve a problem by thinking on the same level that caused it. He was right. If we are going to try to eliminate our deficit and get our budget under control we are going to have to do some bold new thinking.

(1710)

Mr. English: Mr. Speaker, I believe the member for Winnipeg South rose at the time when the member for the Reform Party rose. I would ask that you consider allowing the member for Winnipeg South to speak.

The Deputy Speaker: The parliamentary secretary is absolutely right. The Chair made an error. A name had been taken off the list and the next name on the list was the member for Skeena.

If the member wishes to interrupt the speech to go back on line to get it correct, the Chair is obviously happy to do that. I am in the hands of members.

Does the member for Skeena wish to stand down to get the order right? Or does the member for Winnipeg South wish to let the member continue and the public will understand that the mistake was made by the Chair?

Mr. Scott (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, I think it would only be appropriate since I am approximately halfway through my remarks that I be allowed to continue.

The Deputy Speaker: I will call on the hon. member for Winnipeg South to make a point of order if he wishes to do so.

Mr. Alcock: Mr. Speaker, that is fine.

Mr. Scott (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, if we are going to try to get our deficit and our budget under control we are going to have to engage in some bold new thinking. We cannot go on the same old way. We cannot go on making the same old assumptions. It really is true that as Tony Robbins expressed, insanity is doing the same thing over and over again, expecting a different result.

The Progressive Conservatives certainly proved it with their refusal to tackle program spending. What they did was considered insane either politically or in terms of the national interest.

Apparently the Liberals were too busy scoring partisan points to notice what had happened, let alone why. Look at the minister's social policy review. Having helped create our impossibly expensive social programs, having made many extravagant promises that drive our welfare state, the minister set out to produce sweeping reforms without changing his approach. He failed.

While we all feel a little pain at his embarrassment, even humiliation, in failing so spectacularly and so publicly in the most important assignment of his long and sterile career in politics, those of us on this side also feel a certain annoyance that the minister, given such responsibilities, was unable to rid himself of old and discredited ideas about the proper role of government.

The idea the minister did not have and the idea that the Minister for Intergovernmental Affairs did not have are one and the same. They did not ask whether the programs we are spending too much money on are working. They just assumed everything was fine, but we were not quite efficient enough.

The programs are not working. What we need is bold and original thought. We need clearly expressed yardsticks for measuring their success. If they are not working we need to shut them down.

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Actually, as I stand here and say that it does not sound all that clever or difficult. I wonder why the minister did not think of it, or the Prime Minister, or the President of the Treasury Board. If they had they would have noticed something, not something small and subtle, not a little tiny point of light in the distance. They would have noticed a huge, roaring fire, consuming money in amounts that are literally astronomical, and for nothing that we can see that we want.

I refer to our social programs. They consume two thirds of non interest spending by the federal government. They consume more than \$80 billion a year. In a country that is unimaginably rich by historical standards, these immense social program expenditures are taking place side by side with the apparent disintegration of our society. We spend billions on poverty relief but apparently poverty keeps getting worse. We spend billions on health care and our spending grows geometrically. Yet waiting lists lengthen, equipment deteriorates and our politicians go for treatment in the United States.

(1715)

We are paying 5 per cent of payroll into the Canada pension plan yet it is an unfunded liability and has reached half a trillion dollars to date. Half a trillion is a five followed by eleven zeros.

Meanwhile, the President of the Treasury Board, to save us all from bankruptcy, has decreased the board of directors of the CBC from 15 to 12. Were they spending over \$12 billion each? Perhaps the government will tell us every little bit helps. I am here to say that it does not, not enough. I am here to say that Ralph Klein was right when he said: "You have to go hunting where the ducks are". The ducks are in the social programs, not in the board of the Canadian Cultural Property Export and Import Act, and that is where we have to go hunting.

When the minister spends as many months and as much political capital as he has to eliminate the post of secretary of the Canadian Film Development Corporation, it is that many months and that much political capital he cannot spend on changes that would really matter.

I do not know whether hon. members opposite ever watch *Yes, Minister* or whether they are too busy living it. However, they should watch it because it is not just funny, it is very accurate. In one episode when the minister is criticising his permanent secretary, Sir Humphrey Appleby, for the amount of bureaucracy that exists, Sir Humphrey tells him quite rightly that it has nothing to do with him, it has nothing to do with the bureaucrats. "The reason there is so much bureaucracy", he insists, "is that the Parliament keeps creating programs and they all need to be administered".

The total cost of administration for the federal government is \$20 billion. The deficit is close to \$40 billion. We would have to shut it all down twice to balance the budget. This bill does not come close.

I realize that to make a real dent in the deficit, the government would need two qualities it does not possess in any great quantity: courage and imagination. Even the Republicans in the United States have found that what the public wants to hear is that they are cutting bureaucrats, not programs. To say that is to take the easy way out. It is not the bureaucrats who are causing the deficit, it is the programs. Before one can say that, one has to be able to think it and that is where the active imagination comes in.

Many members opposite have been in politics a long time. They do not realize that the ideas that were once bold and new have gone stale and timid in the decades since. They do not understand that "government knows best" has been tried and it has failed miserably.

However, I put it to them directly that when one is looking at a roaring fire that is consuming some \$40 billion a year and one responds by changing the definition of a peace officer under the laws governing the International North Pacific Fisheries Commission, one is totally missing the point. One had better take a step back and take a good hard look at the overall structure of government and then one had better be willing to tell people openly and honestly what was found. The government has to tell the people that Ralph was right. It has to tell them that we have to go hunting where the ducks are and that they are in big social programs, not in the board of trustees of museums. Then it has to cut them.

Let us have a rousing "nice try" for the minister but let us be clear that he failed. Maybe it is time that he stepped aside. Maybe it is time that the human resources minister and the Prime Minister stepped aside and let a party that truly knows and truly has the vision to resolve these problems take control.

Mr. Reg Alcock (Winnipeg South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have heard some talk today from both of the speakers of the Reform Party on this bill about bold new thinking, new vision, a new way of doing business and yet all I hear is very old political rhetoric. I would like to ask the member in all seriousness what he feels is served by coming into the House and talking about the long and sterile career of a member of the House or denigrating the person. It is one thing to come forward and raise a legitimate concern about an individual who may be misperforming his or her task or about a policy decision of the government. But it is another to come forward as members of his party have done today and, as some might call it, slander other Canadians, without a scintilla of evidence, without any proof, in fact standing up and admitting that they had not bothered to check the qualifications, but of course they were unqualified.

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(1720)

The question I would like to ask is in the business of good government, how is a bold new vision served by that kind of tactic?

Mr. Scott (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, I would like to respond to the hon. member's comments by stating that the minister has been in the House for a long time, not always on the government benches. He is part of a government that began its administration in the late sixties with a vision of "we can help Canadians because we are all knowing and all powerful and able to solve all Canadians' problems for them. All we need is their money and their co-operation. If we do not get their co-operation we will force it down their throats".

This vision was expressed by the Liberal Party and has been around for some two and a half decades now. It has failed miserably. The consequences of that failure is what we are dealing with today. Yes, the Conservatives had a hand in it too. The Conservatives are culpable because they had an opportunity to do something about it in 1984. They looked it in the eye and walked away from it.

It is a creation of the Liberal Party. It is a creation of ministers such as the one I was referring to. It serves the Canadian people to understand not only how we are going to deal with our problems but how we got here in the first place and the bad ideas that brought us to the brink of debt and ruin.

Mr. Jean-Paul Marchand (Québec-Est, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the sad part of Bill C-65 is that the government is acting pretty well like the Conservative Party acted in encouraging patronage. The government is not implementing a law that is reducing patronage at all. It is a public relations exercise, as our colleague in the Reform Party mentioned earlier, scratching the surface.

I wonder whether or not it is confusing a lion's roar with a burp. Yesterday when the government introduced Bill C-65 it mentioned it as being a great improvement in government, a great advancement, aggressive government, progressive government. It is as though we are dealing with Conservatives who are giving us the impression that they are really changing something when in fact they are not. We are living with the same system of patronage, give or take a few things. Certainly it is the case of the mouse that roared or mice that are trying to roar but they are certainly not giving us much to deal with anyway.

Mr. Scott (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, I find myself in rare agreement with my colleague from the Bloc. I appreciate his remarks.

I think what he is getting at is essentially what I was trying to say in my intervention. The government is trying to display to Canadians that it is doing something but when you get beneath the surface, it is not. It is really sad when Canadians not only are

expecting but are hoping against hope that the government really is going to do something.

(1725)

They understand it is crunch time. They understand that it is time to pay the piper. They are saying: "Let us get on with it. Let us face up to our problems in this nation and let us overcome them". The government is telegraphing false hope.

I think that is what the member is alluding to. We do not see real systemic change. What we see is window dressing.

Mr. John English (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have heard comments about surface scratching and burping and other qualities.

Yesterday when we talked about the actual numbers I recall the government had eliminated 589 positions. It has appointed only 700. That strikes me as far more than scratching the surface.

Moreover in the *Globe and Mail* article that was frequently cited today and yesterday, 80 people were identified with ties to the Liberal Party out of 700 appointments. One would find in the public opinion polls that there are probably more Liberals than that.

The Reform Party has difficulty with the kind of argument it is making. What I have heard from members of the Reform Party in the past is that the problem is Ottawa, the problem is government, the problem is the civil servants.

These boards are made up of Canadians from across the country. Many of them are regionally appointed. Many agencies are regional. Certainly some of them are appointments of people who reflect the views of the government. That is natural because you do have to change things. The majority on the boards are not now Liberal because they were appointed by the previous government.

If you in the Reform Party are out to change—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. parliamentary secretary and all members will please put their remarks to the Chair for the reasons that have been explained many times in this House.

Mr. English: Mr. Speaker, members of the Reform Party surely will recognize that there is an advantage for their party to have people appointed from outside the House of Commons, from outside Ottawa to supervise activities carried on by Ottawa.

Mr. Scott (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, I would like to respond to the comments of the hon. member by saying that he is trying to insinuate that there are really not many political patronage appointments being made.

Yet we sit in the House week after week asking the Prime Minister why he continues to make political appointments. He keeps shrugging his shoulders and saying that there are only Liberals in Canada, there is nowhere else to go.

I cannot believe the arrogance of that response. It will come back to haunt this party and the Prime Minister. It is indicative of the fact—everyone who sits in the House knows it—that virtually all of the important political appointments that have been made since the government was elected are patronage appointments. They are going to friends of the government. They are going to Liberal hacks and insiders. Canadians are starting to get the message. The media is reporting it. It is going to come back to haunt the government much as it came back to haunt Mr. Mulroney and his Progressive Conservatives.

Mr. Roger Pomerleau (Anjou—Rivière-des-Prairies, BQ): Mr. Speaker, when I listen to my friends from the Reform Party and the way they talk today, I fully understand why they will probably form the next government. They know how to target the real problems.

I would like to ask my hon. colleague a question. He was talking about having an active imagination and looking at the overall structure of the government. I would like to ask him if he would agree to start with plucking the other place.

Mr. Scott (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, it has long been the position of this party and of myself personally that the Senate can be an important place if we adopt the principles of triple E. As long as it is a haven for patronage political appointments it will never be regarded with any credibility by Canadians anywhere.

The Deputy Speaker: It being 5.35 p.m. the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on today's Order Paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

FRESH WATER

Mr. Bill Gilmour (Comox—Alberni, Ref.) moved:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should support a policy that Canada's fresh water, ice and snow will be protected so that at all times and in all circumstances Canada's sovereignty over water is preserved and protected.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to present and speak on this motion. The motion I am presenting to the House today deals with the need for the government to support a policy that protects and preserves Canada's sovereignty or control over its own water.

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Let me begin by emphasizing why we should pursue a policy which protects and preserves Canada's sovereignty over water. On the surface it appears that we already have control over our water. However this is not the case.

The present terms of NAFTA—and I will go into them in more detail later—directly affect Canada's sovereignty over her water. We have sovereignty only until a sale has begun or a river has been diverted. At that point the supply of water under NAFTA cannot be stopped and we lose control of this very precious resource. At this point in time Canada's control over water is hanging on a thread and we need to take action to rectify the situation.

I will go into detail later to explain exactly how the terms of NAFTA affect our sovereignty over water and how this situation can be fixed. However, first I wish to emphasize to the House why we must protect our water because it appears that the significance of this resource has been underestimated by many Canadians and this perception is likely due to the fact that water is so abundant in Canada.

Canada has more water per capita than the vast majority of nations in the world but clearly its value should not be underestimated. Water is our most valuable resource and our sovereignty or control over this resource must be protected at all times.

In the view of many experts water will be the most important resource of the 21st century. Clearly Canadian control over this political, economic and environmental commodity is paramount. Many experts have suggested that what oil has been in the past century water will be for the next.

Canadians have such an abundance of water that it is often taken for granted. We often forget to look at the future and conserve our supplies or to look at the larger picture, which may only be as far as our neighbours to the south, to see where water has become the commodity of the future.

Its value has been underestimated and overlooked in international agreements and the consequences will be serious. Water is a precious resource. It could also be a valuable bargaining tool, a card that we should not be too quick to play.

Most of Canada's fresh water supply is concentrated in the Great Lakes, which accounts for 20 per cent of the world's fresh water supply and represents 95 per cent of North America's surface water. The Great Lakes are the most important natural resource shared by Canada and the United States. The Great Lakes provide a reliable source of fresh water for one-fifth of the U.S. and one-half of Canada, supplying 26 million people with drinking water.

The 1985 international joint commission concluded that cumulative use of water in the Great Lakes basin is likely to double by the year 2000. Current estimates suggest that the total global consumption is likely to rise tenfold during the 20th

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century and that water scarcity will be of increasing concern, particularly for most arid and semi-arid countries to the south.

Of increasing importance to Canadians is that right next door Americans are facing significant water shortages as their resources are dwindling. The only natural source of water from Colorado to California is the Colorado River and its tributaries which provide water to seven states. It has been drastically reduced as a result of overuse and mismanagement.

The most important source of underground water in the U.S. is the Ogallala aquifer. Six states from Nebraska to Texas are completely reliant on this aquifer, yet it is currently being drained at a rate 50 times faster than it is naturally refilling. To paint an even bleaker picture, we must consider the fact that U.S. land west of the Rockies to the Pacific coast is arid and agriculture in these areas depends almost exclusively on irrigation. A significant portion of North America's fresh produce is grown in this region.

Clearly the American water crisis is serious and under increasing domestic pressure. With our abundance of water we are the closest and most logical source of water for our American neighbours. The Americans do and have looked to us for water.

There have been at least 13 proposals for large scale diversions of water to the U.S. from the Great Lakes. In B.C. there are 19 Canadian companies that hold surface water licences to bottle four million litres of water every day for the American market. More than 30 companies have planned to export fresh Canadian coastal water by supertanker.

One B.C. company was on the verge of negotiating a deal to ship 12.4 billion litres of water to Santa Barbara, California, in 1990 at an estimated price of \$34 million U.S. However the deal was never finalized because of local contentious issues.

Last month Alberta announced its proposed water conservation and management act which would make Alberta the first province in Canada where water rights could be bought and sold. This has been viewed by many as opening the door for eventual exports of water to the U.S.

This motion is not about whether we should or should not export water to the United States. However it is about our ability to make decisions without losing sovereignty or control over our water, ice and snow.

There are many arguments for or against water exports on political, economic and environmental grounds. This motion is about Canada's ability to maintain the right to choose how or if we wish to market our water and Canada's right to maintain its sovereignty over water in any given circumstance.

We must retain our ability to choose what we want to do with our water, whether we want to sell it and, if so, we must retain the ability to choose whether we wish to continue such activities, particularly in times of shortage of our own domestic water supply.

Economically it may make sense to market water to the Americans or elsewhere some time down the road. However, before these exports take place there must be an agreement with the Americans that allows Canadians to proceed with water exports without the threat of loss of control over that resource.

As it now stands Canada is vulnerable in the event of any water exports or diversions. Despite our abundance of water it would not be to our advantage to begin or enter into any major water exports because our ability to control the use and planning of that resource is undermined by the North American Free Trade Agreement.

There has been a great deal of confusion regarding NAFTA and water, particularly during the last election when the agreement had not yet been signed. There are still many problems with NAFTA and water rights and these concerns must be addressed.

The main area of concern is that water is not one of the items specifically exempted under the terms of NAFTA. Article 309 prohibits controls by Canada covering the sale or export of any good destined for either the United States or Mexico. Water in Canadian rivers and lakes is not mentioned in the export prohibition that NAFTA directly sanctions, which means that water will be freely exportable. Under NAFTA we cannot place restrictions on our ability to sell water.

In addition, water is also subject to the same rules as tradable goods under NAFTA and includes the right of national treatment. This means Canada cannot give Canadians better access to Canadian water than it gives to the Americans or the Mexicans. The concern is that under NAFTA once water is diverted to the U.S. it cannot be stopped even in times of our own domestic shortage. Once we begin to sell our water to the Americans our control over that resource is lost.

(1740)

Article 2101 of NAFTA requires that any trade restrictive measure taken relating to the conservation of any exhaustible natural resource, including water, be made effective in conjunction with restrictions on domestic production or consumption. In other words, any trade restrictive measures on water must be applied on a national basis. If we are to cut back on our water supplies to the Americans, we must take the same cuts ourselves no matter what kind of domestic shortage we have at home.

Under the present deal we cannot give ourselves any better treatment regarding water than we do to our NAFTA partners.

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Whatever we charge ourselves for water must be in line with the price we charge other NAFTA partners.

These restrictions place a heavy burden on Canada. Under the present agreement it would be extremely unwise for Canadians to enter into any large scale water exports with the Americans. Personally I find it incredible that Canada actually agreed to such restrictive terms in the first place.

Whether or not water was included in NAFTA negotiations is unclear. Previous and current governments have argued and continue to argue that we have not sold our rights to water in the NAFTA. The argument or justification for the deal is that Canada is not obliged to sell water to the U.S. under NAFTA. This is just political banter because once we begin to sell we cannot turn the tap off. Our sovereignty over water has clearly been sold out in the present NAFTA.

No matter how we look at it, the truth is that we no longer have the control to do as we choose with our water. It is a Pandora's box, for once it is opened sovereignty is lost. The deal has placed Canadians in a precarious position that must be addressed before control of this resource is clearly lost.

Government legislation such as Bill C-156 sought to ban large scale exports in 1988. However it died on the Order Paper before being implemented.

The Prime Minister's pledge to prevent any large scale water exports from taking place as long as he is Prime Minister made in early November 1993 is meaningless without corresponding backup legislation and a NAFTA subagreement. I challenge the Prime Minister to back up his resolve to control Canadian water with strong legislation ensuring sovereignty and control over this precious resource, followed up with NAFTA negotiations to ensure the same.

An additional point I wish to make is that these laws and any future restrictions are completely redundant because NAFTA states that no party may restrict the export of any good destined for the territory of another party. Any domestic water policies could also be shot down by a trade dispute panel as unacceptable interference in the free market.

Clearly the only possible solution, if Canada is to maintain sovereignty over water, is to negotiate a side agreement to NAFTA that specifically exempts water from the terms of the agreement.

Negotiations of the agreement regarding water were promised by the Liberal government before the agreement was signed. Are we about to see the Liberals fail to deliver on yet another promise? I surely hope not.

Immediately after the last election, early in November of 1993, the Prime Minister publicly stated: "It is time to talk about Canada's desire to renegotiate aspects of the deal". The

Prime Minister promised that he would not sign any international or bilateral trade agreement that would oblige Canada to export water.

Shortly after the election the Prime Minister guaranteed to Canadians that "water remains under the control of the Canadian government". He guaranteed that this was a fact and promised to "make sure it is like that".

The Prime Minister went on to say that he had a message for President Bill Clinton: "Do not even dream that NAFTA gives the United States unlimited access to Canadian water. That is because water and the North American Free Trade Agreement do not mix". These are simply empty promises as the Prime Minister has so far failed to follow through.

(1745)

Canadians are still waiting for the government to live up to its commitment. If water and NAFTA do not mix, why did the Prime Minister sign the deal? And why has he made no effort to negotiate these other aspects? The only justification the Prime Minister and his trade minister had for signing the deal was that nothing in NAFTA forces Canadians to sell a good that we do not wish to sell.

It is true that NAFTA does not force us to sell our water. However, NAFTA forces us to continue sales once we have begun, and places severe restrictions on our ability to regulate and control the marketing of our own resource. It is not enough to have the power to make the decision to sell water. Canadians must have the power to shut off the tap when it is felt necessary.

Once a decision is made to export water, future exports should not be mandatory. It is simply not good enough for this government to merely pledge to prevent the export of bulk water to the U.S. as was done immediately after the NAFTA agreement was signed in November 1993.

Canada caved in on an opportunity to provide special protection for water in the original free trade pact with the U.S. and should have taken the opportunity to make the necessary amendments before signing the deal. It is still not too late to act.

I would like to point out that earlier this month Mexico received a \$20 billion aid package from the Americans to help stabilize the Mexican peso, on the condition that credit lines be guaranteed with Mexican oil export revenues. What does this have to do with water, you ask.

Canada is in a similar situation to Mexico with the current load Canada and Canadians are presently carrying. There are predictions that Canada may require a bailout from the Americans, and similar to American conditions on Mexican oil exports, loans will undoubtedly put conditions on Canadian resources, such as water.

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In conclusion, we desperately require a clear written understanding that Canada has sole control over its water resources. Canada must protect its sovereignty over water and negotiate a side agreement to exclude water from NAFTA. This issue is far too important to ignore.

Mr. Ted McWhinney (Vancouver Quadra, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very appreciative of the intervention by the member for Comox—Alberni. I share his concern and the government shares his concern for the maintenance of Canada's riches, Canada's natural resources.

I also have some particular interest in this subject because it touches an area in which professionally I have given it some attention. It is of course true that sovereignty is the basic constituent element of a state and sovereignty extends to its territory, its land, the resources of that land both under and above it, fixtures, to the air space above, and to the territorial sea. It is elementary that sovereignty cannot be derogated from except by the sovereign personality himself.

So to this extent Canada retains full sovereign rights unless we ourselves choose freely to contract out of those and that would be an obligation entered into under international law. It is a fact that we have led in the international law related to protection of natural resources, our own and also those of other countries. We have been interested in clean air. We have pioneered the treaties and the protection of the atmosphere. We have led the way in the proper utilization of the law of the sea, and its protection from pollution.

Also, I may say in pursuance of this, because not all states have accepted our high standards, we have not merely negotiated and led the way to international treaties and multilateral treaties extending protection of the law of the sea, but we have negotiated bilateral treaties with numbers of other countries when the international or multilateral action was slow in coming. For example, we have extended zones of 200 miles from our coast, the better to exercise these international law norms.

(1750)

I mention this simply to say that Canadians have led in this area. It was something very much in our minds when we negotiated specific agreements with the United States in relation to the Great Lakes, in relation to international waters, international rivers. It was also very much in our minds when we negotiated the North American Free Trade Agreement, the trilateral agreement with Mexico and the United States.

It happens that during the election campaign in October 1993 this issue was raised in the public debates: Is there any derogation from Canada's control over its natural resources, over its water in particular by virtue of the NAFTA agreement. This was something to which all candidates, certainly in my part of the

country, addressed themselves. The answer is very clear: There is nothing in the NAFTA agreement itself derogating in any way from our sovereign powers over our water resources.

However there is a point in international diplomacy and international law in which for greater security one acts in accord with the Latin phrase, Mr. Speaker, and you and I both deplore, as Lord Justice Denning called the attempt to fetter law by recourse to Latinisms. I will quote the Latin phrase *ex abundanti cautela* but I will repeat it in its essential, for greater assurance. I said to those who asked me then: I will seek a clarifying statement that makes assurance doubly sure. Immediately after the election and in fact during the campaign, I asked the Prime Minister if we could address ourselves to this and this is what has been done.

A trilateral agreement was signed by the Prime Minister of Canada, the President of the United States and the President of Mexico. It is what is called a joint declaration. Annexed to the NAFTA agreement is the joint declaration of December 2, 1993. It says it very clearly and recites what is in any case I think as a matter of interpretation clear in the NAFTA agreement itself.

The statement annexed to NAFTA establishes that NAFTA creates no rights to the natural water resources of any party to the agreement. Unless water in any form is entered into commerce and becomes a good or a product it is not covered by the provisions of any trade agreement including the NAFTA. I could read the balance of this but I think therein is the essential.

What is the legal status of a joint declaration of this sort, a statement annexed to the NAFTA agreement? I do not want to bore you with technicalities but the fact is that what are called by various names, joint declarations, agreed interpretations, joint statements, provided they are signed by the parties to the agreement become part of the agreement.

The best known example of this is of course the SALT I treaty, the strategic arms limitation treaty of 1972 between the United States and the Soviet Union. It has many, perhaps 30 such declarations and agreed interpretations annexed to it, and they are binding in terms of interpretation of the treaty.

I would simply say this to the hon. member for Comox—Alberni. We are sensitive to his concern, which we share, for the preservation of our great natural resources, for the preservation of our water. There is nothing in NAFTA, nothing in any international agreement to which Canada is party derogating from our retention of full sovereign rights over water within Canada, whether it be in lakes or whether it be in the water supplies on mountain slopes unless and until it enters into a commercial form, which means in this context, bottled. In this situation it will not be subject to NAFTA arrangements. There is no recourse to any one of the NAFTA arbitral or dispute settlement procedures.

I do not see any reason to go beyond this at this stage. However, the government may at some future stage wish to make declarations for purposes of Canadian internal needs of this sort. However in international law we are fully protected. Our sovereign rights are fully preserved.

(1755)

On that basis I would simply say again that I welcome the expression of sentiment by the member for Comox—Alberni. I share his views. I believe all members of the government do. I do not believe though that there is any need for any further action to be taken at this stage. I thank him again for his thoughtful intervention.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre de Savoye (Portneuf, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I listened with great interest to the hon. member for Comox—Alberni as he presented his motion. I also listened to the remarks made by his colleague opposite, the hon. member for Vancouver Quadra.

Let me read the motion over, for the benefit of those who are watching the debate:

That, in the opinion of the House, the government should support a policy that Canada's fresh water, ice and snow will be protected so that at all times and in all circumstances Canada's sovereignty over water is preserved and protected.

It is not the first time that this issue is raised in the House of Commons. We will recall that in May 1991, Mr. Fulton, who was a member then, presented a notice of motion asking for a national water council to be established to control, among other things, all freshwater export proposals. He was not the only member involved in this debate.

In another notice of motion, the current Liberal member for Davenport suggested that, in the opinion of the House, the government should strengthen the federal water policy by tabling a bill prohibiting the export of water by tanker, through a channel, a new pipeline or by interbasin transfer.

(1800)

Clearly, this debate is not new. In fact, it goes back such a long way that I would like to quote what the current Minister of Human Resources Development, the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre, said in this House on Friday, May 28, 1993.

At the time, the minister was a member of the opposition. He said: “—we must afford national treatment to all goods and services. Goods are defined as having the definition given under the GATT. Article 2201 of the GATT defines natural water, including ice and snow, as a good”.

He also said: “If the United States sometime in the future, next year or the year after, decides it wants to exercise its legal right as contained in the agreements to require Canada to export up to the proportion then it would supersede any policy that is now on the books”.

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Further on, the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre added: “I think the very first item would be that the federal government make it very explicit that the present moratorium on water exports that the British Columbia government has introduced is the policy of Canada. The federal government should very clearly take an immediate position on that question”.

We are now in a new Parliament. Last year, the government, with Mexico and the United States, issued a declaration on the interpretation to be given to the terms of NAFTA. In essence, that interpretation is as follows: NAFTA does not establish any rights to the natural water resources of one of the parties. Water, as found naturally in lakes, rivers, reservoirs, aquifers, hydrographic basins, is not a good or a product, is not for sale, and consequently is not and has never been covered by the terms of any agreement. International rights and obligations concerning natural water are set forth in separate treaties and agreements, negotiated for that very purpose, such as the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909 and the 1944 treaty signed by the United States and Mexico.

However, this joint declaration by the three countries does not mean that Canada has an overall policy regarding sovereignty over water resources.

[English]

In short, Canada does not possess any policy on water resource as a commodity.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, you know, as we all do, that Canada is the country with the largest fresh water resources in the world. In November 1987, the hon. Tom MacMillan, the then Minister of the Environment, announced a federal policy on water resources, clearly stating that the federal government was opposed to large-scale exports of Canadian water. The minister then introduced Bill C-156 to enact this commitment into law. But since that bill died on the Order Paper when Parliament was dissolved on October 1, 1988, we do not have a policy at this time.

According to the Constitution, jurisdiction over water resources is shared between the federal and provincial governments; in general, the provinces have jurisdiction over natural resources, including water, within their borders. However, the provinces' very wide jurisdiction over water resources within their territory is limited by the specific powers granted exclusively to the federal government, including fisheries, shipping, relations with foreign governments, federal lands, Indians, projects likely to benefit Canada in general, as well as peace, order and good government for the country.

I might add for the benefit of my constituents that, unfortunately, the federal government does not always live up to its responsibilities regarding outboard motors on certain lakes, as in the case of the unfortunate lakeside residents in Lac aux Sables. Some problems are also emerging with respect to

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seaplane bases; I am, of course, talking about the people who live along the shores of Lac Saint-Augustin.

But let us get back to water as a commodity. Canada currently exports water to the U.S.; a network of canals carries the water to population centres at the Canada-U.S. border and then on to nearby communities in the U.S.

For instance, the water supply system in Coutts, Alberta crosses the border to meet local needs in Sweetgrass, Montana. Under another agreement, Gretna, Manitoba supplies Neche, North Dakota with water. Similar arrangements exist between St. Stephen, New Brunswick and Calais, Maine.

These cross-border water transportation systems are small in scale and do not require inter-basin transfers. They offer a practical way to rationalize local supply, so we are not talking about exports as such. As for exports by water tankers, the volumes contemplated at this time are insignificant.

The North American Water and Power Alliance project, developed by a Californian engineering firm, was among the major projects that attracted a great deal of attention. It would have necessitated the diversion of water from the Mackenzie and Yukon river systems, going south, through a passage in the Rockies, down to the United States, to supply southwestern states with irrigation water and produce hydro-electric power, perhaps also create waterways. But this project, fortunately, was never considered viable by the Canadian government or the American government.

Another project, namely GRAND Canal, was first submitted in 1959 and has been a focus of attention ever since. This project calls for the impounding of James Bay to collect the waters flowing from Ontario and Quebec rivers as well as the reversal of 17 per cent of their flow towards the south. Water from the Great Lakes would then be diverted to the southwestern part of the U.S. and the arid zones of Western Canada.

Simon Reisman, at the time the chief negotiator for Canada in the free trade talks with the United States, and former Quebec Premier Robert Bourassa championed this water diversion project. But opponents of the project argued that its benefits were purely theoretical and that even its economic impact could be negative.

(1805)

In the 1985 report, the authors of the study on federal water policy pointed out that transfers between basins, like any other major water development project, cause major changes in the environment by interrupting the flow of waterways, flooding regions, transferring forms of life and even modifying conditions in the atmosphere and the oceans. The ultimate consequences of these changes are unpredictable.

We believe that federal criteria should emphasize the federal and national interests to be considered in a framework policy on the water resource. Factors to be considered would include: first, the consequences for the fisheries and navigation in federal waters, international waters and waters under more than one jurisdiction; second, international considerations of an economic, political and strategic nature; third, the possible impact on the capability of our water reserves to meet the long-term needs of Canadians and Quebecers, bearing in mind the lack of certainty about those needs and the cumulative effect of exports at the regional and national level; fourth, the impact on the environment and the economy at the regional level; fifth, the consequences for aboriginal people and other social groups and the size of compensation payments in the event of adverse effects; and finally, the general economic benefits for Canada.

How we should manage our water resources is a very timely question. It was raised this evening, and now we must decide what the answer will be.

[English]

Hon. Raymond Chan (Secretary of State (Asia-Pacific), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to talk about Canadian sovereignty over water.

More than any other country Canada is blessed with an abundance of fresh water. Water is a fundamental part of our heritage. It provides the basis for much of our industrial activities. Our lakes and rivers along with the snow and ice of winter provide recreational opportunities for Canadians and support a thriving tourism industry.

The preservation and protection of our water resources is a matter of vital concern to all Canadians. The issue of large scale exports of fresh water has been the subject of public debate at various times over the last three decades within Canada.

Concern has focused on proposals such as the grand canal and proposals to divert water from British Columbia to California. However, no scheme for the large scale diversion of Canadian fresh water across the border has won the support of any level of government within Canada.

More recently concern has been expressed that first the free trade agreement and then NAFTA diminish Canada's sovereignty over its water by obliging us to sell water to the United States.

I would like to make it clear that the Government of Canada considers sovereignty over our valuable water resources a fundamental principle that must and will continue to be upheld.

The Canadian government will not support any plans for the export of water through independent transfer or diversion from the Great Lakes or from any other water body.

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Small scale exports such as bottled water must meet the environmental requirements of both the federal and provincial governments. Steps have been taken to ensure that Canada retains full control over the use of water in all its forms.

For example, the federal water policy approved by cabinet in 1987 provides a strong expression of Canada's intention to maintain sovereignty over its water. The federal water policy states that the government will permit no large scale water exports. It also provides for the federal and provincial governments to work together to develop a licensing return for small scale water exports.

(1810)

To ensure federal responsibilities for environmental protection and international trade are taken into account, regarding the NAFTA it is the position of the Government of Canada that Canada's sovereignty over its water resources is in no way diminished.

Under the NAFTA Canada maintains complete discretion over the exploitation and use of its water. The NAFTA does not oblige any partners to exploit its water for commercial use, sell it to other countries or export water from its lakes or rivers. Thus Canada has no obligation to export water under the NAFTA agreement.

The NAFTA applies only to water that has entered into commerce and has become a good or a product such as bottled water or water in tanker trucks. Water packaged as beverage or in tanks is the reference in section 7 of the Canadian implementing legislation for the NAFTA.

On December 2, 1993 the governments of Canada, Mexico and the United States as parties to the NAFTA issued a statement confirming that NAFTA does not oblige any of the parties to export water. Here is what the trilateral statement has to say about water:

The NAFTA creates no rights to the natural water resources of any party to the agreement.

Unless water, in any form, has entered in the commerce and become a good or product, it is not covered by the provisions of any trade agreement, including the NAFTA. And nothing in the NAFTA would oblige any NAFTA party to either exploit its water for commercial use or begin exporting water in any form. Water in its natural state in lakes, rivers, reservoirs, aquifers, waterbasins and the like is not a good or product, is not traded, and therefore is not and never has been subject to the terms of any trade agreement.

Clearly the Government of Canada has been vigilant in protecting our precious supply of water in all its forms. I can assure the House that Canada will continue to preserve and protect its sovereignty over water resources.

Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, at least I will get the last word this way.

I want to basically develop a case for the importance of water. Many of the speakers who have gone before agree this is certainly an important commodity in this country. We have to

really address the question of protecting Canada's sovereignty over this water. Again it is an example of where Canada has shown leadership but needs to continue its vigilance and its leadership.

The member for Vancouver Quadra introduced some of our leadership in the law of the sea, the Great Lakes clean-up and all of those examples. However, he then closed by saying that we do not need any action. I really disagree with that comment. Action is essential to ensure this valuable resource maintains its position and that we retain our sovereignty over it.

We should not take this commodity for granted. In the future demand is going to do nothing but increase. Anybody who has gone to California might know, as the member who introduced this bill mentioned, the aquifer being drained at 50 times its replacement in California and the central U.S. is a major problem. Anyone can look at the Colorado River and see what has happened there to realize that California is short of water. California has a population of 32 million and because of that the demand for water is only going to increase. I think it is reasonable to say that the price of water will be greater than the price of oil or gas down the road some time.

Since Canada has a major supply of fresh water, it is essential for humans, for agriculture, for industry, for our future well-being that we preserve this water.

(1815)

I would like to talk a little bit about the preservation and then what I see as being threats to the sovereignty and control of this water. It is a renewable resource but it is only renewable if it is managed properly. Groundwater is renewed by rainfall and by snow melt. It can, however, be very quickly overused and the aquifers can disappear. There are many examples where aquifers that were once very productive have gone down dramatically. I mention the central U.S. as the biggest example.

Certainly agricultural and industrial uses put a severe drain on aquifers. In many cases, permits are given without looking at the big picture. One more project is approved and then one more project and then another. No management is involved until a disaster occurs.

One of the contaminators of our water supplies is industry. It has improved a lot, but we can see what happens when we do not manage it simply by looking at the Great Lakes and what we did there.

Of particular interest to me are landfill sites. All across Canada we are implementing more and more landfills. We have the time bombs from the past that are leaching into our groundwater. We are installing new landfills but we say they are okay because we are putting liners in them. The only problem is the liners are only good for 25 years. The leachate collection system plugs up and we do not know what will happen after 25 years. Experts are now telling us that contaminants could leach from those landfill sites into our groundwater for 800 years.

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Canadians had better take note of this and had better start managing this resource much better.

I foresee a federal umbrella organization to provide the information, the technology, the collection of that technology. The provinces would then be involved in the actual distribution of this information, with the municipalities delivering the service. We must have this organization or this resource will be lost.

We need to look at our rivers and our streams. We need to look at the protection of our watershed areas. Logging, recreation and development are having a great impact on our watersheds. Above all, I again emphasize the government's involvement in this.

We are not moving very far in this direction and I would encourage the Minister of the Environment to get involved now. I am glad the member put this forward so we can talk about water again. The last member who spoke indicated how significant he felt it was. Certainly the member from the Bloc who spoke indicated a real understanding of this as a resource.

Let us manage it then and let us not let things like pollution, sewage problems, industrial waste problems, landfill problems and the lack of planning that destroyed the Great Lakes literally and will take who knows how long to revive, happen in the future.

What are the two major problems facing Canada in 1995? They can be related to the sovereignty of water. Two things should be thought about here. Number one is the Quebec situation. One might ask how that relates to water and its sovereignty.

One thing I have heard very little talk about is the St. Lawrence Seaway and the St. Lawrence River. Who controls this waterway? Who has sovereignty over it? Is it Canada? Could it be Quebec? Could it be the U.S.? This is something that the Quebec people should be asking Mr. Parizeau and the federalists. Let us talk about this issue. Let us talk about the potential threat that the negotiations over this major seaway could have in relation to the whole issue of Quebec. I see that as being a threat.

(1820)

Hydroelectric power could relate to water. The member from the Bloc mentioned there have been proposals for draining water from Quebec and Ontario into the United States.

The second major issue relating to this is the debt and deficit. That has already been touched on. How does that affect water sovereignty? Let me put this scenario to you.

If the Minister of Finance fails to make the necessary cuts or raises taxes causing a financial crisis, and there will be a financial crisis if he fails to deal with the problems we have right now, what might be the reaction? A great deal of our debt is held by U.S. creditors. The IMF literally becomes a receiver if

Canada becomes insolvent. We have seen what happened to Mexico. That has been mentioned as well. The Americans are tough to deal with, they are hard dealers. They put on conditions and say: "You will perform this way". Mexico has lost its sovereignty because of the \$50 billion bailout that Mr. Clinton arranged.

These are concerns we should be thinking about. It is fairly obvious that if our creditors decide to call their loans the one thing that 32 million people in one state in the United States need is water. It seems kind of far fetched and does not seem possible.

We have heard about inter-basin transfers but that is not possible. Fifty years ago there was a project in Alberta called Prime that I was a bit involved with. It was a plan to drain water from Alberta down to California. The idea is there, it is on the table. If we in fact do become insolvent water will be one thing that will be called for as a way to repay some of our debt. When you are in debt you really do not have much choice. I see that as a threat to our sovereignty.

In conclusion, Canada must deal with its debt and deficit. It must deal with the Quebec situation and ask about the St. Lawrence Seaway. We must not sign long term deals.

The British Columbia power situation where long term deals were signed is a good example of what happens if you sell the farm too soon. A side deal must be negotiated in NAFTA so that we will never start shipping water to the U.S. As has been pointed out although there is no obligation to start, once started there is no cutting back. It cannot be reversed. The Prime Minister promised but he did not keep that promise.

I believe we must control this resource. We are going to leave future generations a debt. Let us not leave them the loss of a valuable resource like water.

Mr. Jesse Flis (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, at a recent town hall meeting this issue was raised along with the deficit and the debt. I asked the audience that if we closed the borders to the U.S. and closed the borders to Canada so that there were no exports or imports, no exchange of goods and services, which country would last longer? Some constituents said naturally the U.S. because of its wealth, et cetera, that it is an influential super-power.

After a bit of discussion everyone in the audience agreed that Canada would last much longer. Why? Because of our resources. What is the most important resource? Water. In a way I am pleased that the hon. member for Comox—Alberni has raised this issue. It has given us a forum to debate.

I wish that the Reform Party would not use fear tactics on the Canadian people. The issue of the export of water was raised during the free trade debate. It was calmed down. Then it resurfaced during the NAFTA debate. People got an answer and

they were satisfied. Now the Reform has raised this fear tactic again.

The hon. member for Vancouver Quadra and the secretary of state quoted a statement from NAFTA that the three countries signed. I will repeat it for the Reform Party so they can pass it on to their constituents. "The NAFTA creates no rights to the natural water resources of any party to the agreement". It cannot be more clear than that. "Unless water, in any form, has entered into commerce and become a good or product" and the Secretary of State quoted the whole statement signed by Canada, Mexico and the United States. I do not know what further guarantee we want.

(1825)

The follow-up speaker for the Reform Party compared Canada with Mexico. Again another fear tactic. Surely to goodness we do not in this House get up and compare Canada with Mexico. We have a strong Canadian dollar. It fluctuates, yes, but please do not compare the Canadian dollar with the peso.

Again, fear tactics are being used. I can assure the hon. member and I can assure Canadians that the policies we have in place do allow for the export of bottled water. What is wrong with that? We import water from Italy. We import water from France. We import water from Poland and from the U.S. They buy our water. I see nothing wrong with that.

We also have protection against re-routing rivers, et cetera. There is protection there. I do not know what further protection there could be.

The hon. member complained that the hon. member for Vancouver Quadra finished off his debate by saying that we do not need any action. He said that no action is needed at the moment because of the legislation and the agreements that are in place now. He did not say that we do not need any action. Canada is continually vigilant and it has an excellent track record in initiating and pushing multilateral treatments such as the law of the sea.

Being born and raised in Saskatchewan I appreciate the value of water. We had plenty of well water in Saskatchewan, all we wanted, but we did not have any soft water. The only soft water we could get was what we caught from rainwater and spring snow to put into the cistern. One day the children, my brothers and I, were playing with the rainwater and we wasted almost a whole barrel. When Dad came home from town you know what we got. It was the belt he sharpened his razor on and we got it across the buttocks. That is how precious soft water was in Saskatchewan at the time.

That reminds me to this day how vigilant we have to be, and the government is. Even in the Arctic. The ice caps are water. Look at what happened when the U.S. dumped its submarines in the Arctic. We know how easily the Arctic can affect the environment of the whole hemisphere.

Adjournment Debate

The hon. member knows we addressed that issue when we were reviewing our foreign policy. Hopefully the committee in planning its future work will address the whole issue of water, not only water in H₂O form but also water in ice form, in ice caps on the mountains, in the air, et cetera.

If all three parties in this House co-operate I do not think we need any change in our present guarantees. That does not mean we should not be vigilant. From that standpoint I thank the hon. member for raising this in the form of a private member's motion so that we could have this debate in this House.

[Translation]

The Deputy Speaker: My colleagues, shall we call it 6.30 p.m.?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: As no other member wishes to speak and since this was not chosen as a votable motion, the hour provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired. Pursuant to Standing Order 96, this item is dropped from the Order Paper.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

[English]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

GUN CONTROL

Mr. Paul E. Forseth (New Westminster—Burnaby, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, on December 14, 1994, I questioned the Minister of Justice on four orders in council concerning prohibited weapons. January 1, 1995 was the infamous date that those orders were to become effective, much to the dismay of many honest gun owners in Canada.

It is common knowledge that many Canadians are upset with the minister's gun control package. The minister is feeling the heat from his own colleagues in the Liberal caucus who are against the intrusive gun control that he promised in his announcement.

In my question I referred to two court decisions, Repa and the Queen, 1982, and Theodore Pierce Simmermon and the Queen, 1993. In both cases the presiding judge made a ruling that the weapons order was invalid because it was not subjected to parliamentary scrutiny in accordance with section 116(2) of the Criminal Code:

The Minister of Justice shall lay or cause to be laid before each House of Parliament, at least thirty sitting days before its effective date, every regulation that is proposed to be made under subsection (1); and every appropriate committee as determined by the rules of each House of Parliament may conduct inquiries or public hearings with respect to the proposed regulation and report its findings to the appropriate House.

Adjournment Debate

Recently a third case has been heard in the courts, this time in British Columbia, *Regina v. Martinoff*. Vancouver provincial court judge H.J. McGivern followed the decision of the Alberta case.

In December I clearly asked the minister to explain to this House why he had not complied with this section of the code. Instead of answering my question, the minister went on to tell me that the orders in council were made under section 84 of the Criminal Code which does not require the sort of procedure outlined in section 116(2).

I understand the Criminal Code very well and I know that under section 84 the minister can initiate orders in council without the inclusion of a reference to Parliament as is set out in section 116(2).

However, I do not understand how the minister can cast a blind eye to three court cases in Canada that have overruled orders in council under section 84. What is the minister scared of by bringing such orders before the House and before an appropriate committee?

The minister stated in his response to me with respect to the case in Alberta that judgment was wrong in that respect and that he will succeed in the appeal. Clearly the minister should not be making a public evaluation on a specific case if the case is in the appellate division of the court. Rather, it should be the duty of the minister to look at the various courts and make decisions and comments based on the momentum of rulings.

The Liberal government prides itself on consultation processes and discussion papers. It has produced so many of them it is running out of colours to name these papers.

The Reform Party has always promoted consultation but only if there is a conclusion to the discussion. Why is it that a government supposed to be keen on openness did not discuss the topic of prohibited weapons?

Before the parliamentary secretary scribbles down an answer to tell me that there was an emergency for the overall safety of Canada, I want to fill him in on a few of the statistics taken from a survey of causes of death in Canada.

Statistics Canada in 1992, and it is about the same now, said that 155,746 people died of diseases, 90 per cent of all deaths in Canada. For example 3,437 died in car accidents, 2 per cent of all deaths. Thirteen hundred and fifty-eight died of AIDS, .7 per cent of all deaths. Two hundred and forty-seven died of homicides caused by firearms, that is, .14 per cent of all deaths. Sixty-three died of gun accidents, .03 of all deaths.

In addition, let me point out that based on these statistics it is 336 per cent more likely that a male will die as result of a gun than will a female.

The minister needs to put his priorities in the right place. He needs to let Parliament and therefore the people who elected us as members of Parliament to evaluate if certain firearms should be banned or prohibited.

I do not have a great amount of time but I want to ask the minister several specific questions and would greatly appreciate clear and precise answers. With three court cases before him, will the minister acknowledge that these are not isolated cases but rather cases of significance and bearing and that his decision to proceed with orders under section 84 was wrong and ill fated?

When a clear procedure is outlined, why would the minister make every effort to avoid it, thus causing further complications in the courts? Why would he not even live up to the spirit and the intent of Parliament? Given that in the end broad public support and co-operation is required for gun regulations to work, why would the minister risk his whole package in the public spirit of co-operation just to prove an obscure procedural point?

Will the minister call back the orders in council and resubmit them under section 116(2) enabling wider consultation and an honest democratic process?

(1835)

Mr. Russell MacLellan (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the issue appears to stem from an interpretation of section 116 of the Criminal Code.

Through orders in council adopted pursuant to section 84 of the code, firearms may become prohibited or restricted.

It seems that in one case with which I am familiar, the case of *Simmermon* decided by the Alberta Court of Queen's Bench, it was ruled that these orders in council must be subjected to the procedure provided by section 116(2) of the code.

According to the section regulations made pursuant to section 116(1) must be laid before each House of Parliament at least 30 sitting days before they are to become effective so that public hearings may be conducted. It appears that the court felt that orders in council made under the authority of section 84 of the Criminal Code are also regulations adopted pursuant to section 116(1).

I understand that it is the view of the Attorney General of Alberta that this is not the appropriate interpretation and that an appeal of that Alberta Queen's Bench decision has been launched.

I was pleased to note that the Minister of Justice in his reply to the hon. member observed quite correctly in my view that orders in council made under the provisions of section 84(1) of the Criminal Code do not fall within the ambit of section 116 of the code.

Adjournment Debate

The minister made his position quite clear: "Although there is a judicial decision of the trial court which holds that it is necessary even under section 84 to lay the regulations before the House, that decision is under appeal to the appellate division of the court in Alberta. We have every confidence the judgment was wrong in that respect and that we will succeed in the appeal".

Given the case is before the courts it would obviously be inappropriate to comment further other than to reaffirm our confidence that the court of appeal will rule that the making of orders in council pursuant to section 84 of the Criminal Code is not governed by the regulation making power of section 116 of the code.

BILL C-62

Hon. Charles Caccia (Davenport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in December I asked the President of the Treasury Board for his assurance that Bill C-62, the Regulatory Efficiency Act, would not apply to the Fisheries Act or any other legislation which protects the environment. The minister replied that it is not the purpose of the bill to compromise environmental protection.

Although the proposed legislation is not intended to harm the environment, health or safety, the adoption of Bill C-62 would fundamentally alter the very structure through which regulations are both created and enforced. In other words, Bill C-62 poses a threat to what we have developed over decades in the form of national regulatory standards.

If regulation has become outdated or irrelevant, then let us change it. Apparently over the next two years 250 regulations are to be repealed and another 400 will undergo major revisions as a result of the findings in the 1992-93 regulatory review. Review of existing regulations will make the regulatory system more efficient but it will not threaten the fundamental premise of regulation making namely that regulations apply to everyone, rich and poor, regardless of influence or power.

Under Bill C-62, however, any minister would negotiate separate compliance agreements with any business or individual and replace designated regulations. It will be between the respective minister and individual applicant, not between Parliament and the Canadian public that individual agreements will be approved.

In addition, in certain cases where trade secrets are involved or if the agreements contain information which could threaten a company's competitive position, then secrecy would be invoked. Gradually then we can see how the regulatory system would change and we would face a situation over time in which there would be a standard for those who can afford law firms and consultants and another for those who cannot.

The Canadian Manufacturers' Association has stated that made to measure regulations as proposed in this bill would save, mostly to big business, over \$3 billion a year. Treasury Board has pointed to these projected benefits but seems to have overlooked the cost side of the equation.

The proposed bill if enacted would lead to thousands of agreements. What will then be the cost to the public for approving, monitoring and enforcing such agreements?

In times of fiscal restraint does the government really want to establish a two-tier system of regulations based on separate negotiated agreements? Would that be in the public interest? Will approving, monitoring and enforcing thousands of individual compliance agreements further our quest for better levels of enforcement and standards?

Canadians by far prefer one regulatory system, one that applies equally to all, a regulatory system that leads to better results in the public interest. For this reason I ask whether the minister would withdraw the legislation and instead produce a white paper for public discussion.

In the meantime the Minister of Justice plans to introduce amendments to the Statutory Instruments Act very soon. The amendments are to simplify and accelerate the regulatory process and offer a better channel for achieving regulatory efficiency in an equitable and comprehensive manner.

Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Treasury Board, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the bill is but one part of the government's overall approach to regulatory reform.

Over the past year we have been actively reviewing some 40,000 pages of regulations and moving to change hundreds of the most obsolete and problematic regulations in the next year. No longer will trains have to have spittoons, for example.

As well, we will be bringing in changes shortly to the Statutory Instruments Act that will create a more efficient and less time consuming way of developing and changing regulations. That is the second part of our plan for regulatory reform.

Bill C-62 is a third part of our program. What we are trying to do here is to create a tool for use in special circumstances only, where an individual or a company feels it can achieve the goals of regulation but wants to do so in a manner that is not exactly as laid out in a particular set of technical regulations.

We have carefully and painstakingly crafted these tools to make sure they do their job without reducing the protection that environmental or other regulations give the Canadian public. I would like to point out that the bill is one of the first pieces of process legislation ever tabled in the House of Commons that enshrines as an inviolate and absolute principle the goal of sustainable development.

Adjournment Debate

It is the environmental movement, I point out, that has been at the forefront in recent years in urging governments to include sustainable development as a legislative principle. The act we are talking about explicitly does this. It says that no agreements can be approved under the act in any area whatsoever, unless it is considered with the goals of sustainable development, period.

[*Translation*]

The measures proposed in this bill are optional.

[*English*]

If the Minister of the Environment does not want to use them with respect to any set of regulations, she does not have to do anything, thereby effectively exempting those regulations from the application of the bill.

The bill is truly a democratic innovation. It will allow individuals, whether farmers, union members, taxpayers or even politicians, to force the government to examine its own regulations. From a common sense point of view it will force departments to look closely at possibly rigid, inflexible and often outdated rules to see if there is a better, cheaper and more sensible way to do things.

[*Translation*]

The Deputy Speaker: Pursuant to Standing Order 38(5), a motion to adjourn the House is deemed to have been adopted.

Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 6.43 p.m.)

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