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**Monday, February 27, 1995**

**Speaker: The Honourable Gilbert Parent**

# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, February 27, 1995

The House met at 11 a.m.

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*Prayers*

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## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[*English*]

### CANADIAN VOLUNTEER SERVICE MEDAL FOR UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING ACT

**Mr. Jack Frazer (Saanich—Gulf Islands, Ref.)** moved that Bill C-258, an act respecting the establishment and award of a Canadian volunteer service medal and clasp for United Nations peacekeeping to Canadians serving with a United Nations peacekeeping force, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Mr. Speaker, Canadians take great pride in the Canadian forces record of peacekeeping throughout the world, a record which has brought praise from many quarters and has established Canada at the forefront of nations doing their part to foster a peaceful world; a world in which human values and needs are not only respected but also supported.

Bill C-258 is an act respecting the establishment and award of a Canadian volunteer service medal for peacekeeping to Canadian peacekeepers having served with a United Nations peacekeeping force. It also incorporates a clasp to be attached to the medal ribbon if the individual qualifies for the Nobel peace prize won by Canadian peacekeepers in 1988.

Recognition would not be limited to Canadian forces personnel but would also include Royal Canadian Mounted Police and other Canadian citizens who qualify.

At the moment there is no means to provide distinctive Canadian recognition for the risks they have taken and the contribution they have made. Thus, there is a deficiency in our honours and award system.

Peacekeepers do receive United Nations medals for such service. The United Nations medal awarded to Canadian peacekeepers is proclaimed by His Excellency the Governor General

in Council on the recommendation of the Prime Minister as a Canadian medal and therefore in the order of precedence in the Canadian honours system.

Canada does not have its own peacekeeping medal. According to our honours and awards committee, the United Nations medal adequately fulfils Canada's obligation to recognize our peacekeepers' contribution to our country.

However, the Canadian Peacekeeping Veterans Association does not agree, and after substantial consultation with many other interested individuals and organizations, nor do I.

Indicative of this feeling, a request for distinctive Canadian recognition submitted to the Canadian honours and awards committee by the president of the Canadian Peacekeeping Veterans Association was endorsed by many members of this house, a goodly number of whom now sit on government benches. However, the committee denied the submission, deeming the United Nations medals to be sufficient recognition.

The honours and awards directive reads: "In Canada today granting honours is a gracious, tangible, and lasting way to pay tribute to people whose achievements are exceptional, who have performed outstanding acts of bravery or who have benefited Canada or humanity in general". To be completely up front, it also states: "Not more than one honour should be given for any specific achievement, act or service".

I assure you that I have no wish to dilute the justification, meaning or stature of a Canadian medal, but there is a Canadian precedent. In addition to the 1939-45 war medal, and the 1939-45 star, if they served in any area of conflict, those who served outside Canada during the second world war were awarded the Canadian volunteer service medal as well as any campaign medals for which they qualified.

Also, in June 1991, some 40 years after the fact, a Canadian volunteer service medal for Korea was approved by the Queen's Privy Council for presentation to Canadian military personnel who participated in the Korean war in addition to the United Nations medal won by veterans of that conflict.

It is this same recognition I now seek for our peacekeepers. Other countries like Belgium, Ghana, Ireland, the Netherlands, and the United States already have distinctive national medal awards for their UN peacekeepers.

*Private Members' Business*

In introducing Bill C-258, I acknowledge that similar private members' bills have been submitted in previous Parliaments but unfortunately were not drawn for debate.

During the last Parliament the Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs recommended that a Canadian volunteer service medal for UN peacekeeping be established to recognize the service of Canadian military and non-military personnel who have served on peacekeeping missions. Parliament was dissolved before the government was able to respond to that recommendation.

There are Canadian awards for bravery and valour at home in peacetime, awards for bravery, valour and service in time of war, but despite the discomfort, dislocation, family disruption, danger and sacrifices made by our peacekeepers, we have no Canadian medal for peacekeeping. Regarding sacrifice, according to records maintained by the Canadian Peacekeeping Veterans Association 147 Canadian peacekeepers have made the supreme sacrifice for our country.

(1110)

On June 11, 1984 a special service medal was authorized to recognize service under abnormally difficult conditions for an extended period. The medal is always awarded with one of four bars on which is engraved the nature of the special service. One of these bars is designated *peacepax and humanitas*. *The other bars approved and awarded with the special service medal are for service in Pakistan, 1989 to 1990; service with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization since 1951; and Canadian forces station Alert in the Northwest Territories.*

What the special service medal does in the case of the peace bar is recognize those who participated in peacekeeping or humanitarian activities which for a number of reasons, but normally for length of service, did not qualify for a United Nations medal. According to award criteria this medal may not be awarded along with another medal recognizing the same service such as the United Nations medal.

While the special service medal properly fills one gap in our recognition of service, it does not provide that distinctive Canadian recognition for our peacekeepers who have been awarded United Nations service medals. Thus, their contributions around the world with the attendant honour and stature they have brought to our country remain unacknowledged by Canada.

Yet as I said at the beginning, Canada and Canadians take great pride in the contributions that we as a country have made to peacekeeping operations throughout the world. Unquestionably most Canadians know and are proud that these efforts have added to our stature in the world community.

In September 1988 Canadians took pride in their peacekeepers' having been awarded the Nobel peace prize. The clasp

proposed in addition to the peacekeeping Canadian volunteer service medal would recognize those people who won that honour for Canada.

A peacekeeping memorial monument has been erected here in Ottawa to honour our peacekeepers and that is important, but a monument does not provide individual recognition.

We Canadians should take more pride in ourselves, in our institutions, our history and our heroes. In this vein there is widespread support for unique Canadian recognition of our peacekeeping forces. We ask them to leave their friends and families to face harsh conditions, difficult situations and are consistently rewarded by their excellent responses to these challenges.

We tend to be slow to recognize our deserving citizens. It seems to be a Canadian trait: 40 years to recognize Korean veterans, 50 years to recognize Dieppe veterans, 55 years and still counting for Hong Kong veterans. A peacekeeping Canadian volunteer service medal and the clasp for the Nobel peace prize can be one of our unifying symbols. Its recipients would come from all walks of life, from every province, from Canadian citizens who represent most if not all our broad variety of ethnic backgrounds, the common denominator being their shared loyalty to and willingness to serve our country.

I want to quote from a 1943 directive issued by General Guy Simonds to his commanders in the First Canadian Division. In it he said:

The final criterion of a good or bad award is the reaction of the troops. If the troops feel it is a good award, it is a good award. If awards are criticized by the troops, they are bad awards. Before forwarding any recommendation, at each level the commander should ask himself the question: "Would the front line soldier, if he knew the facts, consider this well deserved?"

Bill C-258 is supported by the Canadian Peacekeeping Veterans Association, by the Canadian Association of Veterans in United Nations Peacekeeping, by serving and retired members of the Canadian forces, by many members of this House and by many Canadian citizens who have written or called my office.

We need only think back to the comments made by His Excellency the Right Hon. Romeo LeBlanc, Governor General of Canada, at his installation on the eighth of this month.

(1115)

Addressing the media in his remarks he said: "There is wonderful news out there and some of it you have covered magnificently. I recall the story you told us of Canadian peacekeepers in the former Yugoslavia who put down their weapons to pick up and comfort orphan children, abandoned by their terrorized caregivers. This is Canadian compassion in uniform and we have seen it many times and in many places, from Gaza to Cyprus to Rwanda".

Going on, he said: "It is for this reason that I requested that former Canadian peacekeepers be among today's guard of honour, the first guard of honour I shall inspect as Governor General and as Commander in Chief."

Thus it would seem that despite the reluctance of our honours and awards committee to agree, if we use General Simonds' criteria as a measure, a Canadian volunteer service medal for peacekeeping would qualify as a good award. It would seem obvious from what our Governor General has said, that he too supports the need for Canadians to recognize our peacekeepers.

As a Reform member of Parliament it would be inappropriate for me to recommend an award without considering the cost it will entail. It is estimated that the medal will cost between \$5 and \$7 a copy and added to that will be the cost of administration and postal charges. As of January 31, 40,594 Canadian forces personnel have served or are serving as peacekeepers. They have fulfilled a total of 52,577 tours of duty.

Additionally, since this recognition would also be extended to members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and Canadian civilians who qualify, their numbers must also be considered. I am unable at this time to determine how many they might be, but I believe it would be reasonable to project that the total qualified recipients, including the Canadian forces, are unlikely to exceed 50,000 in number.

If we double the maximum estimated price for the medal, to account for administrative and postal charges, we come to a maximum probable expenditure of \$700,000; a lot of money, but it seems a small price for Canadians to pay to properly recognize those of our citizens who have brought lifesaving intervention, compassion and assistance to so many, and such great honour and credit to Canada.

I understand that when the private members' bill committee was considering the status of this bill, it might have received some erroneous information which, in turn, may have influenced its decision not to make this bill votable.

We have an obligation to conserve that which is most noble in our past, to respect the wishes of those veterans who have sacrificed so much, to maintain an honour system that both reflects our Commonwealth traditions and establishes uniquely Canadian symbols.

I want to repeat the honours award directive I quoted earlier: "In Canada today granting honours is a gracious, tangible and lasting way to pay tribute to people whose achievements are exceptional, who have performed outstanding acts of bravery or who have benefited Canada or humanity in general."

Too often in today's society we are slow or fail to give recognition which is due. If we, as parliamentarians, are to take action to afford appropriate Canadian recognition to our peace-

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keepers, it is important that we give this bill a status which will enable us to exert the maximum influence to achieve that aim. Therefore, I ask for the unanimous consent of the House to designate Bill C-258 as a votable item.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** I wonder if I might seek some clarification from the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands who brought this motion to the House.

In his closing remarks he asked for the unanimous consent of the House. I want to be certain that, in fact, that request was being made by the hon. member.

**Mr. Frazer:** Mr. Speaker, if I may, I would like to enter that motion.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** The House has heard the terms of the motion. The hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands is asking for unanimous consent to make this motion votable. Is there unanimous consent?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

(1120)

**Ms. Mary Clancy (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to offer my comments on Bill C-258, an act which would establish a Canadian volunteer service medal for peacekeeping.

We on this side must sincerely congratulate the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands for his diligence in bringing this important matter before the House. We share with him a strong desire to give fitting recognition to Canadians who serve in these vital and often dangerous operations.

[*Translation*]

However, I regretfully cannot support this initiative and I want to use the time allocated to me today to explain my position to my hon. colleagues.

[*English*]

The first and most fundamental reason is that to create a decoration in this manner would run counter to the customs, traditions and procedures by which honours are granted in Canada.

As hon. members know, the powers of the crown in this country fall into two classes. The first are the powers that the crown exercises under statute law subject to the approval of Parliament. The second class of powers are those that are encompassed in what is called the royal prerogative.

These powers, which have their ancient roots in history, are not exercised with reference to Parliament. This is not to say that they are applied arbitrarily. Normally they are exercised by

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the crown acting on the recommendation of the governor general in council. That is the way it is done in this country.

There are problems of substance and application with respect to this bill, not with respect to the spirit. The bill proposes a volunteer service medal. This terminology echoes the second world war. A special medal was created then to recognize those who had volunteered as opposed to those who were conscripted for service. Today all Canadian military personnel are volunteers.

The bill is also retroactive to the first UN mission in 1947. This means that more than 150,000 persons would be eligible. But there is a more basic difficulty. This approach to the creation of honours would confine us to a narrow, tunnel vision view of needs and options. This is a serious practical drawback.

In order for medals, decorations and other honours to be meaningful, decisions about their creation and criteria must be made in context. For that reason many nations have established carefully crafted systems for the creation and award of honours. Canada has done that.

We have a Canadian honours system. That system was put in place in 1967. It includes a committee which advises the government on how the system should work. The honours policy committee has a broad mandate. It looks at the whole roster of occasions for honours and decoration, peacekeeping operations included.

It surveys the total population of potential recipients of honours. The committee makes its recommendations on the basis of certain clear principles. One is the requirement that people be honoured equally in relation to their contribution and that no one be overlooked. Another function of the honours system is to avoid debasing the coinage of honours by duplication or by the indiscriminate authorization of awards.

The honours policy committee can live up to these principles because it is able to see the whole picture. It is a proactive body. It seeks to search out and eliminate any inequities in the system. Periodically it surveys the honours scene in Canada to make sure that all Canadians who contribute to peacekeeping are treated equally and recognized publicly.

The committee makes it its business to consult with veterans and other groups. It looks at these matters in an international context. It is important, as we consider these matters, to remember that peacekeepers, ours and everyone else's, are honoured not only by their nations but by the international community.

The obvious example, but not the only one, is the United Nations which has created 28 medals to recognize the service of women and men from many lands who take part in various UN actions. Medals have also been struck by organizations other than the UN and many Canadians wear them proudly as their own.

[Translation]

I think that, in a way, these decorations are the most eloquent. Sooner or later, after serving side by side in peacekeeping operations, these men and women return to their units in their respective countries.

By wearing these decorations on their uniforms, they celebrate a comradeship in arms that transcends the differences among nations. These decorations proclaim that we are all serving the common cause of peace.

No award system, whether national or international, is perfect.

(1125)

It is therefore quite possible that, for technical reasons, some Canadian peacekeepers would not meet established criteria, thus missing out on awards recognizing their contribution.

[English]

One common example is air crew who quite often fly missions related to UN peacekeeping operations without becoming officially attached to those operations. The Canadian honours system recognizes these anomalies exist and precisely for that reason we have the Canadian special service medal with peacekeeping bar.

To sum up, this bill, worthy though it is in objective, would not in my opinion succeed in the goal of honouring equitably the contribution of Canadians. Indeed it would work counter to that goal. For that reason, with great regret and with very great respect for the spirit in which it has been brought forward by the hon. member, I am unable to support it.

[Translation]

**Mr. Jean H. Leroux (Shefford, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, Bill C-258 put forth by the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands respecting the establishment of a Canadian Volunteer Service Medal and Clasp for United Nations Peacekeeping is a way to recognize our military volunteers for their contribution to peacekeeping missions around the world.

I would like to take this opportunity to salute the courage and dignity with which our servicemen and women carry out their difficult task on peacekeeping missions abroad. They deserve our admiration and full support. I also have a thought for their families who also go through difficult times worrying about them.

Our forces are not new to this kind of operations. A leader in peacekeeping, Canada has gained in this area experience and expertise that has earned it respect worldwide. It should be noted that since the end of the cold war, regional conflicts and thus the need for restoring and maintaining peace have been increasing.

*Private Members' Business*

While a general war is highly unlikely in the present circumstances, we must recognize however that a high level conflict could erupt from any given regional confrontation, should it escalate.

The end of the cold war brought about a new world order characterized by a degree of uncertainty, instability as well as some new tensions. The democratization process under way in Eastern Europe is a good example of the ongoing changes. The instability caused by this transition is rekindling national vitality because of newly rediscovered collective identities.

So, in the context of a security policy, we must help countries such as those of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union that choose to become democratic. It must be pointed out that the emergence of new States did not result in chaos everywhere. National emancipation movements carried out though legitimate institutions materialized peacefully.

For example, the Czech and Slovak republics peacefully severed their federative ties. Similarly, Slovenia and the Baltic States achieved independence in an orderly and democratic fashion. That is how they were able to have their sovereignty readily recognized by the international community.

Another case in point is the Ukraine, the independence of which Ottawa was the first capital to recognize after the referendum won by the sovereignists.

We have no intention of burying our heads in the sand and ignore the constraints and challenges that come with the new world order.

(1130)

Thus, Canada, as well as an eventual sovereign Quebec, must continue to actively promote democracy. It should be pointed out that, before being perceived as a thorn in our diplomatic efforts and commitments abroad—I am referring of course to the unfortunate events which occurred in Somalia—the contribution of our military personnel to peacekeeping missions made Canadians and Quebecers very proud of their forces.

The situation in the former Yugoslavia, in Bosnia, in Rwanda and in Somalia was unprecedented and here is why. The apparent futility of our efforts, the risks involved for our soldiers, the astronomical figures which circulated regarding the costs of these operations, as well as the complexity of the political and military situations in these countries undermined the public support which, until then, was enjoyed by such operations. While in line with previous similar commitments, our peacekeeping mission in the former Yugoslavia quickly took on a very different nature.

The operation in Slovenia and in Croatia was truly a peacekeeping mission. In that sense, our troops had the responsibility to ensure compliance with already concluded peace agreements.

However, their role in Bosnia, Rwanda and Somalia had very little to do with traditional types of intervention. Canadian troops found themselves in a theatre of war, caught between belligerent factions. How can you maintain peace in a country where peace does not exist in the first place, where a political settlement has yet to be reached, and where every ceasefire is violated? That is when things started to deteriorate, particularly after the whole world was able to see on television unbearable atrocities which we thought no longer existed, but which are indeed very real.

There are lessons to be drawn from these operations. Canada's future interventions will have to meet more specific criteria. For example, the costs and complexities of modern-day interventions require the emergence of a new culture on the part of the strategists and the troops which will participate in future peacekeeping missions. Moreover, the recent events in Haiti reminded us of the need to base our interventions on democratic legitimacy and careful planning.

It is important to clearly define, with the United Nations, specific objectives and tasking orders. The Bloc Québécois feels that one of the primary duties of Canadian forces on the international scene must be to support, through participation, peacekeeping operations. In the future, our troops will have to be disciplined, trained to face the rigours of armed conflicts, adequately equipped, professional in their approach, and under good command.

I will support Bill C-258, but I want to point out that the candidates who served with a UN peacekeeping force and are eligible to receive the medal and clasp must meet criteria which are still not known and which will have to be clearly defined.

*[English]*

**Mr. Bob Ringma (Nanaimo—Cowichan, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, in speaking in support of Bill C-258 I have to ask the basic question of why a medal, or for that matter, why a Canadian medal. I would like to cover the ground here by trying to describe what is happening to our country in relation to this medal as an example.

(1135)

Medals generally are a reflection and a record of our history as a country, of our independence and of our associations. The key word is independence. Looking at our history as a country over the last 100 years we find we have ties to the United Kingdom. In times of war these ties have been rather firm and very loyal. That does not necessarily change over the years but it does in another sense. The loyalties are still there but other loyalties are built up.

We can look at the issue of wartime service in World War II, the creation of a Canadian army, the creation of the third largest navy in the world, and the expansion of the Royal Canadian Air Force. This gives us a good measure of the emergence of Canada

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as a nation on its own without defaulting what has happened and what the ties are to the United Kingdom.

In looking at our history we have to look at our loyalties. We certainly have had a loyalty to Great Britain. We have had a loyalty to our other allies, be it the United States or France. We have developed over the years new and greater loyalties to the United Nations and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. However, among all of these loyalties, associations and services we have a greater basic loyalty which is to Canada. We must allow our basic loyalty to ourselves to emerge.

The proposer has mentioned, and I would like to bring it out again, that this bill in no way attempts to usurp the royal prerogative of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada or the Prime Minister or the honours policy committee to establish honours and awards. Rather, it gives the government the opportunity to respond to the report of the House of Commons Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs which recommended that such a medal be established to recognize the service of the Canadian military in peacekeeping. That is the nub of it all.

A committee of this House is saying that we are Canadians and that we must do something to recognize what Canadians are doing. I did hear the words from the hon. member for Halifax explaining that there are entanglements and we should not remove this royal prerogative. I agree with this to a degree, but our greatest loyalty once again must be to ourselves.

We are moving in the direction of being our own authority in this country. From the Statute of Westminster back in 1933 and over the years we are continuing to move in that same direction.

When it comes to the issue of medals we have already heard that we are coming up with belated recognition for things such as Korea. When I came back from Korea in 1952 I was awarded a United Nations medal and a British Commonwealth medal for service in that country.

(1140)

Forty years after the fact Canada belatedly decided it should issue its own medal for this service. Several years ago it came up with the Canadian volunteer service medal for Korea. It has now also come up with other awards in recognition of Canadian service which include: the 1983 special service medal; the Dieppe clasp, Dieppe occurred over 55 years ago and we have only come to provide belated recognition of it; and for the merchant marines. Service by the merchant navy took us 50 years to recognize.

We have received belated and sometimes no recognition at all. Hong Kong has been mentioned. This country has not yet recognized the service of our people in Hong Kong 55 years ago. There is no recognition of what I believe was called the ferry command. Civilians and military alike were ferrying aircraft

from Canada and the United States over to the war zone in the U.K.

We are moving in that direction but we are dragging our feet. To give another illustration of moving somewhat in the same direction, I participated in a non-United Nations peacekeeping effort in 1973. We went to Vietnam to replace the old, almost useless international commission for supervision and control. I should not say useless; it was hamstrung. Its hands were tied as to what it could do.

In any event in 1973, Canada along with Indonesia as another representative of the western world and Poland and Hungary sent a non-UN commission, a quadripartite commission to Vietnam to oversee whatever peace we could muster out of that sad country. As a result of that I was asked to head up a committee to strike a medal. It was a very interesting experience.

A committee of four got together, one representing each of the four countries. We designed a medal. We designed a ribbon incorporating the colours of the four countries involved: red-white, red-white, red-white, and red-white-green. We came up with a unique medal. It was certainly unique in its execution because it was hand forged in a back alley of Saigon. Nevertheless we came up with a medal of our own for issue to the 1,000-plus members of that specific commission.

The illustration of this is that you can do things on your own or in concert with others. We did it quickly. We did it inexpensively. We came up with a unique medal in observation of that specific enterprise.

I see that other countries have issued their own medals. Ghana, Belgium, the Netherlands, the United States, and Ireland are issuing their own UN medals. Canada is first among equals in United Nations service. Surely if there is any country in the world that must have its own UN service medal, it is Canada.

In conclusion, since my colleague was unable to get unanimous approval to designate Bill C-258 as a votable item, I would ask that we unanimously vote to refer the bill to the Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs. Let us get together and at least refer the bill to that committee so that it can assess the merits of the bill in proper time. Therefore I move:

That Bill C-258, an act respecting the establishment and award of a Canadian Volunteer Service Medal and Clasp for United Nations Peacekeeping to Canadians serving with a United Nations peacekeeping force, be not now read a second time but that the order be discharged, the bill withdrawn and the subject matter thereof referred to the Standing Committee on National Defence.

(1145)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is there unanimous consent?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

*Private Members' Business*

**Mr. George Proud (Hillsborough, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to speak today in favour of the bill put forward by my colleague from Saanich—Gulf Islands.

We hear everyone praising our peacekeepers. We talk about our peacekeepers everywhere we go. It is a Canadian tradition. Every high school student in Canada is taught that the Right Hon. Lester B. Pearson invented peacekeeping in the 1950s to defuse the Suez Canal crisis. Yet it seems to me at times that we certainly as governments over the last number of years have been ashamed of that fact. We have never seen fit to give a medal to our own Canadian peacekeepers, as was mentioned so eloquently a moment ago by the hon. member for Nanaimo—Cowichan.

I have listened to the debate over the last five years in the House and when we brought the matter before the Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs. There has to be a better way of recognizing our military people. Canadians have served in practically every peacekeeping effort since the Suez crisis from Cyprus to Cambodia and from Pakistan to the Israeli withdrawal from Egypt.

Our peacekeepers have served Canada and the United Nations well. They have brought honour to our country and they should be appropriately recognized. For a country with our tradition it is only fitting that a government strike a volunteer service medal for those Canadians who served in peacekeeping operations.

We are not talking about special treatment of privileges. We are talking about honour. Right now, as has been mentioned many times here, our peacekeepers receive a medal from the United Nations for their service. However they do not receive a medal from their own country. That is a shame.

Some people have suggested that such a move is unprecedented. That is not so. As has been said today, the volunteers in Korea have received a Canadian medal to commemorate their service to peace. Granted, they waited 40 years and probably would never have received it except that we committed troops at the time of the gulf war in 1991. At that time it was deemed to be a special area and a medal would be struck for that. It was pretty hard for the government not to come through with a medal for the Canadian people who served in Korea.

We tend to play down this business of giving medals to our troops who serve in various areas. Maybe that has some merit at times. There are countries that some people think give too many medals. I have come to know a lot of the people who participated in peacekeeping efforts around the world in the last number of years. We have come into our own as a country. We have served in every conflict in this century. I believe the time has come to change the rules if that is what we have to do.

(1150)

No one has said anything about the royal prerogative, but maybe it is time that we took a look at the way things are done. We are great people in the House of all political parties for saying it is time for change. I found last summer as we travelled the country looking at our defence policy that sometimes it was hard to change things. Sometimes it is hard to change minds, even though we all go in with grandiose plans for making things work differently.

It would be a shame if we fail to provide recognition of our peacekeeping veterans, the same recognition we gave to people who served in the Korean war and the first and second world wars. I do not think these people should have to wait 40 and 50 years for the government to give them credit where credit is due.

Canada is a country that is called on. We have more missions going now than we have had for many years. We are always ready to do our part even with dwindling resources and not the best equipment that our people should have out there. We do not hear them complain about it. We see letters from organizations across the country urging us to support the bill that we bring forward a peacekeeping medal and clasp for our peacekeepers.

We have not gone far enough in this age. We talked about it, as I said, in 1990 in the Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs. Perhaps, as has been suggested, it should lie with this committee to bring forth a way of doing it without having the wrath of the government against us or the wrath of those in Parliament who do not believe these things are noble or necessary.

We should be ashamed of ourselves as governments and as parliaments for not having done something sooner. The gulf war had to come along before the Korean veterans were recognized with their own distinctive Canadian medal. I see nothing wrong with the soldiers getting the United Nations medal and one from our own country.

At the end of the day I hope there is some resolve that we can send the matter to committee and have some recommendations come forward. I do not believe for a moment we are doing anything wrong by recommending that we give this medal to our peacekeepers. It would be a great day in our country if we could do that. We can sit here and talk about all the rules to stop this legislation. They are there, but I do not see why we cannot come up with some way to change them and make this medal a reality.

**Mr. Art Hanger (Calgary Northeast, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise in the House today to speak to the bill presented by the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands.



*Private Members' Business*

The bill which I strongly support has as its main purpose the establishment of a volunteer service medal for members of the Canadian Armed Forces who have served in peacekeeping missions under United Nations command. In my view and that of many others this is a long overdue idea that deserves to be considered very seriously by the House and by the Canadian government.

As we all know Canada has been involved in UN sponsored operations since the 1940s. Canada has also been the most constant and faithful contributor of troops to peacekeeping missions. In return our involvement in areas like Lebanon, Cyprus, El Salvador and Cambodia has truly been a source of pride for all Canadians.

(1155)

While we have taken pride in this heritage of service abroad, we have failed to adequately recognize the efforts and the courage of thousands of servicemen and women who have answered without question the call of the Canadian government whenever it has sounded.

Under present guidelines Canadian peacekeepers do not receive a distinctively Canadian medal. Ever since 1949, the year of the first UN sponsored military observation mission in India-Pakistan, Canadian service men and women have not been formally honoured by the Government of Canada by the awarding of a Canadian medal. The medals awarded to date have been issued by the United Nations thereby making them foreign awards. This oversight, which hopefully cannot be interpreted as a lack of gratitude, must be remedied.

In the words of a former peacekeeper, now a member of the Canadian Peacekeeping Veterans Association, the adoption of Bill C-258 is "an opportunity to help right the wrong". Canada's reputation as a country concerned with peace around the world is in large part attributed to the professional ability and courage of past and present peacekeepers. The role that Canadians have taken in UN peacekeeping is recognized throughout the world. It is now time for the Canadian government to do the same.

Today I will try to explain why in my personal view this is such a timely initiative. The idea of establishing a Canadian volunteer service medal for United Nations peacekeeping has a great deal of merit, not the least of which is to bring Canada up to par with other peacekeeping contributing nations such as Belgium, the Netherlands, France, the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland which already award their own peacekeeping medals in addition to those awarded by the United Nations.

The new medal would also give visual recognition of the great honour that was bestowed upon Canada by our peacekeepers when the United Nations peacekeeping operations won the Nobel prize in September 1988. Indeed the idea has a great deal of merit. However it appears all the more relevant in light of a

certain number of developments both on international and national levels that in recent years have demonstrated the need to seriously question ourselves on what peacekeeping represents to us and, in that light, what level of commitment we are prepared to live up to.

In the course of the debate that has been going on in Canada over the past few years on these issues it has appeared quite clear that Canada's involvement in peacekeeping operations is a reflection of its internationalist approach to world affairs.

The recent defence white paper concluded:

Multilateral security co-operation is not merely a Canadian tradition; it is an expression of Canadian values in the international sphere. We care about the course of events abroad and we are willing to work together with other countries to improve the lot of all manner of peoples.

The Reform Party has repeatedly echoed this international commitment. We believe that Canada's ability to play a role on the international scene rests to a large extent on our continued dedication to the principles of international co-operation and collective security.

Furthermore Canada is not blind to the lessons of history. Our historical experience has underscored the need to develop and maintain effective multilateral institutions that can confront as effectively as possible any challenge to international security and stability and, if all other means fail, respond to aggression with determination and leadership.

In so reflecting Canada's global values the Canadian forces have contributed incessantly to international security. Over the past few years the sheer number of UN sponsored interventions requiring Canadian participation has dramatically increased. The result has been to stretch Canada's peacekeeping resources to their extreme limit.

The nature of multilateral operations has also changed enormously. The range of activities these operations involve has expanded to encompass the complete set of military activities from preventive deployment and observation to enforcement and reconstruction.

This has spurred a debate at the international level about the need to more clearly determine the nature of any multilateral operation, whether peacekeeping, peacemaking or humanitarian, before deployment actually takes place.

(1200)

In Canada we have become more sensitive to the need to define the conditions under which our forces will be deployed in areas of conflict.

From the perspective of those Canadian men and women who serve or who have served under UN command, and on whose behalf I speak today, these developments have meant more intensive training, increased stress and wider responsibilities. Although most of us do not have an immediate knowledge of what a soldier's job entails, it must be clear to all of us that the

political and military trends in the nineties have made the soldier's job considerably more difficult than in any other era.

Not since the Korean war have Canadian servicemen and women been burdened with such a wide array of responsibilities at home and abroad. Increasingly these people are asked to move beyond their traditional role of seeing to the nation's defence into non-traditional areas such as the delivery of humanitarian aid and the reconstruction of war-ravaged societies.

The physical and psychological strains associated with immersing oneself in an alien culture and with meeting stringent performance criteria are necessary so that both the individual and the group can withstand the ultimate test of combat. While they must be ready to endure the most difficult and unfriendly working conditions, the soldiers of the nineties must also be flexible. They are asked to be diplomats, aid workers, law enforcement officers as well as warriors. They are expected to exercise an unprecedented level of self-discipline by constantly adapting to fit the prevailing situation.

In wartime, roles and objectives are clearly defined. In operations other than war, the soldier is often forced to change roles from day to day, even moment to moment. The peacekeeper must draw on his combat infantry skills if a fire fight breaks out, and then revert to his diplomatic or humanitarian self. The soldier of the nineties must be more educated than ever before. He must be acquainted with political, military and sociocultural dynamics of the crisis area in which he has been deployed. That is not an easy feat, if we consider the intractable nature of some of the conflicts which Canada has helped to monitor.

The complex security problems which confront the international community today defy easy solutions. Often those solutions, for which a multilateral response has been deemed the most appropriate, are also the most complicated. Some conflicts, such as the ones in the former Yugoslavia and Somalia, are ones for which it is very difficult to define objectives that reflect a clear sense of perspective.

Moreover, soldiers are asked to perform to the best of their ability, even in the most ambiguous and uncertain situations. They are expected to be sensitive to political, social and cultural realities on which even their superiors are unable to provide information and leadership.

It is also important for the Canadian government to recognize this state of affairs. Peacekeepers have served Canada's interests well since the end of the second world war. This contribution from our servicemen and women has become more and more costly in terms of personal commitment and loss of life.

A Canadian volunteer service medal would not compensate for the sacrifice and deprivation, whether physical or emotional, nor can it constitute a form of restitution for the families of

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those who have given their lives in the search for peace. The Canadian volunteer service medal must be seen as a token of our collective appreciation, as a formal recognition by the people and the Government of Canada of the increasingly perilous and arduous role demanded of peacekeepers and, as my colleague said, of "their continued display of courage and dedication to their assignments, which have been the hallmark of Canadian peacekeepers".

I certainly support this bill.

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

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[English]

### YOUNG OFFENDERS ACT

The House resumed from February 24 consideration of the motion that Bill C-37, an act to amend the Young Offenders Act and the Criminal Code, be read the third time and passed.

**Mr. Dennis J. Mills (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to have the opportunity to speak on third reading of this bill. I begin by reviewing the highlights of the bill and after that I would like to put special emphasis and focus on that part of the bill which has to do with rehabilitation.

(1205)

For those who have come to the debate recently, the minister announced, when tabling the bill on June 2, the highlights would include sentences for teenagers convicted of first and second degree murder in youth court to 10 and 7 years respectively. Sixteen and 17-year olds charged with serious personal injury offences would be dealt with in adult court unless they can show a judge that public protection and rehabilitation can both be achieved through the youth court. It includes extending the time that 16 and 17-year old young offenders who have been convicted of murder in an adult court must serve before they can be considered for parole.

It also includes improved measures for information sharing between professionals like school officials and police, and with selected members of the public when public safety is at risk, as well as retaining the records of serious young offenders longer. Finally, it includes provisions to encourage rehabilitation and treatment of young offenders in the community when this is appropriate.

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I want to focus on the last point. I am happy to see that the very first clause of the bill deals with the whole point of underlying causes and rehabilitation. I would like to read directly into the record clause 1(1):

(a) Crime prevention is essential to the long-term protection of society and requires addressing the underlying causes of crime by young persons and developing multi-disciplinary approaches to identifying and effectively responding to children and young persons at risk of committing offending behaviour in the future;

(a.1) while young persons should not in all instances be held accountable in the same manner or suffer the same consequences for their behaviour as adults, young persons who commit offences should nonetheless bear responsibility for their contraventions;

Clause 1(2) says:

The protection of society, which is a primary objective of the criminal law applicable to youth, is best served by rehabilitation, wherever possible, of young persons who commit offences, and rehabilitation is best achieved by addressing the needs and circumstances of a young person that are relevant to the young person's offending behaviour;

I would like to talk about this part of the bill because I believe it is an area where we in the community are not putting enough emphasis today.

I go back to a book that I had a chance to review this morning before I came to the House. It is *Father Flanagan at Boys Town*. Boys Town is situated about 10 miles outside of Omaha, Nebraska.

I can remember one night flying in from Toronto with a colleague from Saskatchewan. We were talking about Notre Dame in Saskatchewan, but the subject of Boys Town came up. What has been going on for many years now at Father Flanagan's Boys Town in the United States of America is something that we as legislators should take time to revisit.

For those who do not know, Father Flanagan started this environment many years ago when he took in homeless boys, young boys without parents. However he also took about 20 per cent of the number, young offenders.

(1210)

The rehabilitation record of Boys Town has been described by some of the best psychiatrists and doctors as to being almost a totally mysterious phenomena. Father Flanagan worked with these young men in developing their character. He exposed them to apprenticeship and athletics. It did not matter what their religious background was. The boys could be Jewish, Protestant or Catholic, but he made sure that a portion of their life each week had some sort of religious training.

I tell this story because the track record of the Boys Town situation applies just as much today. It is just as relevant as it was many years ago when this institution started. There are just as many young people today who are involved in situations where their family life is under great stress and strain. I believe

that many of these homes that we have in our communities do not have the same sophistication as that institution has.

As we go through the process of putting more emphasis on rehabilitation, we should also be reviewing the types of institutions we have to make sure they are relevant and that we are getting the maximum impact.

So often today a young offender is put into an institution where some of the values that a Boys Town has are just not present; the values of caring and sharing with one another and being a little bit more sensitive to character building. The institutions are just not sensitive. I am not saying that our institutions should be totally ignored but that they should be re-examined.

The Minister of Justice made the following statement in his press release, which I want to emphasize: "That legislation is only one part of the answer to violence among young people. Poverty, alcoholism, family violence, racism, illiteracy and many other factors may lead to criminal acts by young people and adults alike and must be tackled as a whole". The minister said this when he issued his press release. Those words are very important.

When we go through this bill I am hoping that the whole area of rehabilitation can be given very special review and emphasis. We should look at some of the rehabilitation systems and centres that exist all over North America. I would like to refer very specifically, as I said, to the Boys Town example in the United States where the track record of rehabilitation is apparently second to none anywhere in the world. If a Boys Town environment can happen in the United States why can we not have similar institutions in Canada?

[Translation]

**Mrs. Francine Lalonde (Mercier, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member who just spoke could also have looked at the system we have in Quebec, a system that was put in place a number of years ago and that, as far as we are concerned, has proved its worth. Unlike the bill to which the hon. member was referring, our system is not based on the premise that young people can be rehabilitated through repression.

Unfortunately, this bill leans towards repression. It gives the public the impression it will be better protected because young offenders who are 16 or 17 years of age and are tried in adult court will get longer sentences.

(1215)

The public is being deluded. It has yet to be established in the literature that increasing sentences acts as a deterrent in such cases. I do agree wholeheartedly with a number of points the hon. member made. We must look at what causes crime, and even more important, we must ensure that when young people have committed a crime, they are given, considering their age,

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every opportunity,—this is important for society as well—to get out of the kind of life that they have chosen or into which they have been led, not perhaps altogether voluntarily, considering the problems many of them have had.

This bill is even more offensive in the case of Quebec, where we have set up a system I would urge the hon. member to come and see, and not just in the large urban centres. We really had to put a lot of work into this system; we had to call on multidisciplinary resources and take a more community-oriented approach based more on compensation for damages or on the actual rehabilitation of the young person.

The federal legislation, which will have to be administered by Quebec, will have a very disruptive impact on this system. This is true in other provinces and it is also true in Quebec. The government ignores existing systems that work well and imposes or adds a system based on repression, a system that does not connect with systems that already exist and have proved to be effective.

This is outrageous, and does not bode well for the future. I think this is just one more reason to say that as far as guidance, social justice and equity are concerned, we are perfectly capable of doing the job ourselves.

The Quebec Bar Association submitted an extensive brief to the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs, in which it accurately summed up the situation in Quebec. It said that young offenders in Quebec are eligible for alternative treatment of their case, which involves a referral to the Youth Protection Branch, proposals for an arrangement and the use of alternative sentencing such as reimbursing the victim or doing community work. In fact, almost 47 per cent of the cases are handled this way. Where alternative sentencing is not a possibility, all such cases in Quebec will be tried by a special youth court. Once the court has handed down a sentence, it will be up to the health care and social services network to see that it is carried out.

The choice that Quebec has made to entrust young offenders to institutions that come under the department of health and social services illustrates its philosophy in this matter. The ultimate aim is rehabilitation in the medium and long terms rather than a panacea of repression, which at best offers society only short term protection.

The crime rate among adolescents in Quebec is one of the lowest in the country, in fact, the second lowest. The adoption of Bill C-37 will upset all of our institutions whose role so far has been to promote rehabilitation.

(1220)

I might add that imprisonment, by itself, while appearing to protect society, and which, even in the bill, is of limited duration, often ends up making criminals out of those who were initially only unfortunate or unlucky young individuals. If you want to be sure to turn 16 and 17 year olds into criminals, send

them to prison. The longer the sentence, the better your chances of achieving that effect.

We are strongly opposed to this bill. We believe that the minister, who, in any case, had said he wanted to review all the legislation to do with young people, should have examined the overall situation before tabling this bill. Having done so, he could have offered Canadians and Quebecers, not a comforting short term system, but a medium and long term one, which would prove less costly and permit the building of a society where people would really feel safe, because young people would have the opportunity to reintegrate into society rather than risk being handed another prison term.

We will oppose this bill vigorously. We hope Canadians will appreciate our arguments. During our tour on social program reform, I heard it said everywhere in Canada, except in Quebec, that people were looking to Ottawa for an answer and for social justice through strong national standards.

It seems to me that the adoption of a bill like this one casts doubt on Ottawa's ability to show the way to social justice, fairness and hope for all Canadians and Quebecers, and particularly for young people.

[English]

**Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, there is one statement that is factual about the justice minister's attempt at dealing with young offenders: He is blindly following a political policy that became extinct the last time his party was in power.

The justice minister is trying to convince Canadians that his proposed legislation, Bill C-37, is dealing with justice. This legislation is another attempt by this government at social manipulation and social engineering. It is not legislation to deal with justice.

The justice minister should be concerned in dealing with those who have ignored and broken the established laws. The minister should be concerned in dealing with legislation that forces youth law breakers to understand that law-abiding members of society will not tolerate, condone nor accept the fact that criminal behaviour will go unpunished.

I know punishment is a foul word to the opposite side, but it is a concept that is expected by the citizens of Canada. What we have here is legislation that outlines more reasons why offending youths should not expect punishment for crimes committed on law-abiding members of society. This legislation offers youth even more reasons to believe that the justice system will find reasons to excuse their criminal behaviour.

This justice minister's first idea of justice is crime prevention. As good as that sounds, this legislation was supposed to deal with crimes already committed by young offenders. Instead, this minister wants to bypass his ministry and put the blame for violent antisocial youth on provincial social service

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agencies that are not fulfilling their mandate to provide youth with an alternative to criminal action.

Canadians desired and demanded that this minister address the problem of increasing violence by youth. There is an epidemic of youth who commit crimes and laugh at the justice system's inability to show them that crime does not pay. Instead of putting teeth into the criminal justice system, this minister is continuing on a path designed by his government to present high sounding words that do not change anything.

(1225)

Canadians want change. Canadians want their concerns addressed. And once again, this government offers excuses as to why change is impossible.

The existing Young Offenders Act has the proper first priority. The first declaration of principle in the existing act states: "While young persons should not in all instances be held accountable in the same manner or suffer the same consequences for their behaviour as adults, young persons who commit offences should nonetheless bear responsibility for their contraventions".

What does this minister offer? An excuse that because offending youth have committed crimes, that it is a failure of crime prevention policies administered by provincial agencies. The minister just does not get it. He does not understand that until his ministry becomes interested in justice and not downloading the responsibility for his failure to do his job to the provincial agencies, violent youth will not bear the responsibility for their antisocial actions.

Canadians are not asking for excuses from the justice minister; they are asking for justice that condemns violent behaviour by antisocial youth. Canadians demand that the justice minister remove the loopholes in the Young Offenders Act which allow violent youth to kill or maim Canadians with no consequence of justice affecting the violent criminal. Instead, what do we get? Legislation that says crime prevention methods failed so we must blame crime prevention.

May I remind this minister that the consequences of death or maiming cannot be changed. Canadians expect that justice must make the accountability for violent crimes swift and sure. Instead, Canadians are offered excuses why this justice minister would rather find causes for violent crimes than offer justice for victims of violent crime.

Before this minister gets on his high horse and states that we on this side of the House are only interested in locking up all who break the law, let me remind him that I am talking about violent youth. This side of the House fully supports alternative measures for non-violent first offenders.

Another question is, where does the funding for these facilities come from? It is very noble of the minister to talk about crime prevention. His party has been doing so since the last time they were the majority in the House. Rather than putting tax dollars into preventing crime, the Liberals preferred then just as they do now, to waste tax dollars on dubious expenditures benefiting friendly special interests such as, blueberry jelly, a study of Christmas lights, or the effects of lullabies on babies.

The recommendations for social service expenditures by the provinces that this minister disguises as justice will cost his government nothing. However the citizens of the provinces that this minister will coerce into buying this bill of false goods may not be so lucky.

The justice minister has seen the studies that state provincial social services now in place to assist youth at risk of crime are under-resourced and understaffed. This justice minister knows that provincial social workers trying to prevent crime by youth are and have depended on the Young Offenders Act to provide the services they cannot afford. This justice minister knows that provincial crime prevention will not receive federal funding because his government foolishly squanders tax dollars on programs of limited benefit to all Canadians rather than crime prevention for youth.

Unfortunately, this minister and government are again using window dressing to try and convince Canadians that what is in the store is worth buying. As we all know, not only is the store empty, but the management of the store is empty of new ideas as well. Canadians will not buy this government's line that it knows best and Canadians know nothing.

The chair of the justice committee asked in the House why we on this side of the House oppose spending money on social programs that will reduce crime. May I remind those opposite that this legislation was intended to address justice. This side of the House believes that crime prevention is cost effective and beneficial to both the future criminal and victim. However, this bill is supposed to address how the justice system must deal with those who have already committed violent crimes against society, not outline the failings of provincial social services.

It is obvious we have reached the crux of this government's ability to govern. Seeing through all the flowery words and smoke and mirrors, Canadians will realize this government does not even understand the role the justice department must play in making justice mean something to violent youth.

(1230)

Instead of justice this government offers a social service review. As we know, this government has already stated that reforming social services, just like changes that bring justice for victims of youth crime, is impossible.

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In his last report the Auditor General took a bold step. The Auditor General said that it is time this government took a look at the legislation that was passed to see if the tax dollars are achieving the purpose of the legislation.

We have social programs that hurt society, family programs that destroy families, aboriginal programs that keep Canada's aboriginals from ever gaining self-sufficiency and expenditure control legislation that allows government spending to spiral out of control as it has. Every time one of these programs fails we spend more money. These changes to the Young Offenders Act will not deter one violent youth from crime but will cost more money.

This justice minister has neglected to answer several questions important to this legislation: What is the Young Offenders Act supposed to do? Will this legislation do it? How can we tell the difference? No one in this House will disagree that the Young Offenders Act is intended to separate hardened adult violent criminals from youth. It is further intended to separate hardened violent youth from the non-violent kid who got in with the wrong crowd and made a foolish mistake.

No one will disagree that the youth making a non-violent mistake deserves a second chance. The problem with this legislation is the same as what is rampant in the adult justice system. No one is held accountable for their violent crimes. A day hardly goes by without discovering that a violent adult or youth who should have been separated from society is back on the street and has taken another victim.

This government did not take justice seriously in the past. This legislation clearly shows the Liberals still do not take justice seriously today. Canadian society wants violent youths separated from potential victims, not reasons from this government why crime prevention fails.

Let me serve notice here and now. If the Prime Minister and his justice minister ignore public demand that violent crime by youth be addressed, the good old days for the Liberal Party will end anytime before the next election. This Liberal government must apply the auditor general's recommendation to the Young Offenders Act. It must give value for tax dollar by protecting society from violent youth, not spending more tax dollars on a failed policy of social engineering. This government must hold violent youth accountable for their violent crimes.

In conclusion, I would like to say how disappointing it is to see that after much input from Canadian citizens and many other organizations throughout the country what we have come up with is Bill C-37. In the long run it will change nothing. It is change that Canadians are looking for. It will not come through a legislation that does not get serious about violent crime.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Pauline Picard (Drummond, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise again in the House to share my views on Bill C-37, an act to amend the Young Offenders Act.

We in the Bloc Québécois agree that youth crime is a very serious problem. The media regularly inform us of specific crimes that are so violent that no one can remain indifferent.

Examples abound and remind us constantly that violence pervades all levels and all aspects of our society. Our task is to ensure that our laws put a stop to such heinous crimes while clearly demonstrating that we have no tolerance for crime.

Unfortunately, the amendments to the Young Offenders Act tabled by the justice minister will in my opinion worsen the present situation by virtue of the repressive approach taken.

Bill C-37 proposes three fundamental amendments to the Young Offenders Act. Firstly, the bill proposes longer sentences. Secondly, it would send to adult court young 16 and 17 year olds accused of offences involving serious bodily harm.

(1235)

Thirdly, the bill would improve the methods of sharing information between the police, the judiciary and certain members of the public. These three amendments to the act are fundamental and alter certain basic principles of the present legislation. To begin, then, longer sentences clearly demonstrate that the principles of prevention and rehabilitation, although mentioned in the first paragraph of the new bill, are no longer government objectives.

The proposal regarding greater accessibility of information is somewhat similar. What the minister is proposing is to make the offender realize that he is a criminal. As a constant reminder, authorities will inform the offender's community, classmates and teachers, as well as his neighbours. Instead of encouraging rehabilitation to any degree, this approach will, on the contrary, etch in the young person's mind that, from that point on, he is considered a criminal, a public enemy. This approach is like branding young offenders and dangerously compromises their chances of rehabilitation.

Also, transferring 16 and 17 year olds who have committed "violent" crimes to adult court raises many concerns. Firstly, this amendment is futile since most violent cases are already being transferred to adult court at the request of crown prosecutors. In addition, these amendments go against the grain of Quebec's system.

Over the years, Quebec has developed a structure that strikes a real balance between protecting the public and rehabilitating delinquents. This structure also ensures that young people are taken in hand from the moment that they begin to exhibit behavioral problems or to compromise their health or safety. Also, under the Quebec system, young people are referred to

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establishments run by the Department of Health and Social Services, not by the Department of Justice. This shows that Quebec focuses its efforts on rehabilitation. In this sense, Bill C-37 undermines the very spirit of Quebec's current system.

This bill is repressive. As I pointed out at the bill's first reading, there are two competing schools of thought regarding juvenile delinquency: one that centres on the young criminal, emphasizing arrest, referral to a court, sentencing and punishment, and one that centres on reintegration, focusing on the causes behind delinquency and attempting to put juvenile delinquents back on track, without increasing the likelihood of their becoming repeat offenders.

It seems obvious to me that the second, which fosters prevention and rehabilitation, is the better school of thought. Criminologists recognize that criminal behaviour stems from more than one cause. It is most likely that crime results from a combination of related factors such as education, family situation, poverty, drug abuse, promotion of violence, unemployment or injustices. When this bill was tabled, the Minister of Justice told us that reintegration, prevention and rehabilitation would be integrated into his reforms.

Yet, after reading this bill several times, I do not see a single measure reflecting this concern. Of course, there is the policy statement in section 1 of the bill, but not a word about it in the substantive sections. Section 1 is a smokescreen that tones down the repressive aspect of this bill. It becomes obvious that the federal government must review its approach to youth crime. We need a more realistic review, which would first address the social and economic realities behind crime and implement social development programs and initiatives focused on rehabilitation and prevention.

(1240)

This bill raised serious concerns in Quebec, not only among social and correctional authorities but also among politicians and academics. After Bill C-37 was tabled, Quebec's National Assembly gave almost unanimous support to a motion sending a very clear message to the federal Minister of Justice: "Let us continue to address our problems in our own way". There was also a general outcry from experts such as psychoeducators, criminologists, specialized lawyers and social workers.

Quebec has often been a leader in the treatment of young offenders. As early as 1942, Quebec brought to 18 years the minimum age for assuming responsibility, a move that some other provinces followed only in 1982. Over the years, Quebec developed a whole structure, a system to maintain the right

balance between protecting the public and rehabilitating young offenders, which is just as commendable a goal.

It must be recognized that Quebec gave itself an innovative penal and social system to treat juvenile delinquency. For almost 15 years, Quebec has emphasized rehabilitation over mere repression. Our system strives to go beyond the surface to identify the underlying causes of delinquency and rejects the idea that life imprisonment is the only solution for delinquents with serious family and social problems.

The young offender is quickly placed under the care of the Ministry of Health and Social Services and the youth protection directorate, with surprising results. According to several serious studies, society recoups its financial investment in the rehabilitation of a young murderer in less than five years through the young adult's productivity, through his work, his taxes and his purchasing power.

In conclusion, we in the Bloc Québécois strongly believe that rehabilitation and prevention are the only acceptable way to address youth crime. That is why we do not support Bill C-37.

**Mr. Michel Daviault (Ahuntsic, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak again on this bill to amend the Young Offenders Act, enacted in 1984 to replace the Juvenile Delinquents Act, and the existing federal legislation governing matters related to juvenile crime and justice in Canada.

This bill sets a new legal framework to guide society's response to young people who contravene criminal law, basically. Many of its provisions are based on a legalistic approach with an emphasis on fair application of the law and the necessity for young persons to assume responsibility for their actions. However, because of their age and degree of maturity, young offenders obviously have special needs that require a level of assistance that just does not exist in the adult system. But the bill does not reinforce this aspect of assistance to young offenders.

In this bill, a young person is no longer a person between the ages of 12 and 18 but one between the ages of 10 and 15, which means that anyone over sixteen will now be tried in adult court, while it will still be possible to transfer a young offender under sixteen to adult court.

Essentially, this bill is driven by an arbitrary and unjustified wave of repression, promoting more heavy-handed judicial measures against young offenders, rather than effective preventive and rehabilitation measures.

On this subject, like my colleagues, I will quote from the conclusions set out in the brief presented to the standing committee on justice by the Quebec Bar Association. In essence, it said: "It is very clear that Bill C-37 was introduced in response to pressures by citizens demanding to be better protected through a more effective fight against serious crimes but repression did not appear to be the solution, and for good

reasons we might add. Quebec found its own way of dealing with the problem and wants to continue using the successful approach of rehabilitation, or reorientation. All we are asking for is to be able to maintain the good results we have achieved so far with respect to juvenile crime”.

(1245)

Since 1984, the Young Offenders Act was amended twice, that is in 1986 and in 1992.

In 1986, amendments were made to allow public disclosure of the identity of a young person accused or found guilty of a crime, when that person is a threat to the public, and when such disclosure is necessary to facilitate the arrest of that person.

In 1992, the act was amended to increase the maximum sentence for murder from three to five years, that is three years in detention and two under mandatory supervision. However, if the young offender is considered to be a threat to public safety, he can be kept in custody for a period longer than three years.

Also in 1992, the provisions regarding referrals to an adult court, in the case of serious crimes, were clarified. A young offender aged 14 or more must be referred to an adult court when the penalty that can be imposed by the youth court no longer ensures public safety, nor the rehabilitation of the offender.

Consequently, since 1984, the provisions of the act have become stiffer.

However, since the increase in crime rate for the year 1992 only went up two per cent, compared to an average of five per cent in previous years, does this not confirm that the current act is sufficiently harsh and that there is no need to make it more repressive?

Why not wait to see the results of the amendments made in 1992? Since these amendments are relatively recent and also because of the statistical lag, it is difficult to evaluate their impact.

In its brief, the Quebec Bar Association deplored this decision to proceed, first with the amendments and only then with a thorough review of the legislation and a study of the youth crime rate. Reversing the procedure would have made it possible, in addition to what Quebec has been able to bring to this area, to identify the mechanisms needed to make the system efficient and effective. Furthermore, a preliminary study of the youth crime rate would have made it possible to establish the impact of the amendments adopted in 1992 and find out whether their objective had been achieved, as would seem to be the case according to the latest judgments of the Appeal Court.

The bar association concluded that Bill C-37 should be withdrawn. It goes on to say that if this is not politically

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feasible, the minister should at least postpone his review until he has examined the youth crime rate.

Bill C-37 does nothing to deal with the problem of youth crime, and I think that is the crux of this debate. Until effective measures are put in place to prevent crime, we will go on amending our laws to make them more severe and repressive. We must look at the whole picture. Of course, penal laws are necessary, but they cannot deal with the factors that lie at the root of crimes against persons and property.

Dealing with crime is not just a matter of sanctions but above all a matter of prevention and effective social reintegration.

In a study for the Research Branch of the Library of Parliament, Patricia Bégin writes that it is becoming increasingly obvious that the methods traditionally used to keep crime in check do not suffice to eliminate crime and the fear it inspires. There is growing support for the concept that considers the social and economic environment that leads to criminal behaviour and for implementing programs and social development measures aimed at eliminating situations that are conducive to crime.

In fact, the problem lies with the administration of justice and the application of the provisions of the Act. It seems that most violent crimes covered by the Young Offenders Act can be dealt with effectively under the existing legislation.

Everything is in place: the provisions and the means to apply them. But the persons in charge either refuse to use them or get bogged down in unacceptable backlogs.

In a story run by *La Presse* on June 8, 1994, Normand Bastien of the youth section at the Montreal community legal centre said that the long wait until sentencing is what really causes the problems. In Valleyfield, the average is 266 days, in Montreal, 180, in Joliette, 163. Another major contributor to the problem is that only 29 per cent of the cases are resolved.

Mr. Doob from the University of Toronto published a report called “Beyond the Red Book” following a workshop to identify amendments which should be made to the Young Offenders Act. In it he stated that there is no crisis among youth that would warrant fundamental or immediate changes to the Young Offenders Act. Amending the Young Offenders Act would probably have no significant effect on crime, he said.

(1250)

Furthermore, he implied that if the federal and provincial governments really were serious about protecting the public, they would invest more in crime prevention and in public awareness of juvenile delinquency. According to him it is cheaper and more effective to prevent crime than to keep young offenders in custody.

Lastly, I would like to comment on the part of the bill on divulging information on young offenders. One of the under-



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lying principles of the Young Offenders Act is that any information connecting a young offender to a crime is not to be divulged.

This reflects a desire to prevent an individual from being labelled as a habitual offender at an age when he does not possess adult judgement. Repeated breaches in confidentiality in respect of a young offender's record will make it more difficult for him to be rehabilitated and reintegrated into society.

In closing, I would like to point out that the former Quebec justice minister would have preferred the status quo and expressed concern and disappointment over Bill C-37. This reaction clearly shows that overlaps in the area of justice carry a high price, both administratively and in respect of the system's efficiency.

In fact, Ottawa is venturing into a dead end for Quebec, but Quebec will be responsible for administering the system. Once again, the recommendations made by Quebec and by the bar association have been wholly forgotten.

Recent statistics concerning average daily incarceration records for young offenders in 1992 appearing in the Statistics Canada publication *Juristat* indicate a rate of incarceration of 10.4 per 10,000 young persons in Quebec. This is much lower than the average Canadian rate of 21.3. At 32 per 10,000 young persons, Saskatchewan has the highest rate of incarceration. What do these disparities mean?

Similarly, in regard to cases heard before youth court ending in convictions, broken down by type of custody for 1992-93, the March 1994 issue of *Juristat* reports a total of 10,259 cases in Quebec with its population of nearly seven million, and 19,882 in Alberta with a population one sixth the size. What can account for such a great difference, almost twice as many as in Quebec?

As for cases before youth courts with guilty verdicts, broken down by province and territory, the January 1994 issue of *Juristat* reports a rate of 83.1 per cent in Quebec. In Yukon, the rate is 53 per cent, in Manitoba, 54 per cent and in Ontario, 61.2 per cent. Are these provinces too eager to go to trial? I think this issue merits further reflection before new amendments to the act are passed into law. We will vote against this bill.

[English]

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

**Some hon. members:** Question.

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

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

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

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

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

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

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

*And more than five members having risen:*

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

*And the bells having rung:*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** Pursuant to Standing Order 45, the division on the question now before the House stands deferred until tomorrow at 5.30 p.m. at which time the bells to call in the members will be sounded for not more than 15 minutes.

\* \* \*

(1255)

[Translation]

### FIREARMS ACT

The House resumed from February 16 consideration of the motion that Bill C-68, an act respecting firearms and other weapons, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

**Mr. Jean-Paul Marchand (Québec-Est, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to speak on Bill C-68. If only the people in the west could understand a little more French, they would hear the words of a Bloc member on a subject of considerable concern to them: the registration of firearms and other measures. This bill is extremely complex and has a lot of parts to it.

My first reaction, in examining the bill, was to say that I never want Quebec to become a Florida or a Texas. I am not talking about the weather, but rather the matter of carrying arms. I do not want us to do what they do in Florida or Texas, where people head out on a Saturday evening with a gun in their pocket and often end up having the misfortune of settling accounts with a gun or some other firearm.

This situation promotes violence. There is a good reason why statistics indicate a much higher rate of homicides and violent crime in the States than in Canada, even with the difference in population size. This, I feel, is one cultural difference that should be promoted in Quebec, perhaps in Canada as well. In my ideal society, with a sovereign Quebec, there will be fewer reasons for and causes of violence. I dream of a tolerant country, one that respects human values. I dream of a country where people can talk freely and democratically and where they will not need to use firearms to settle accounts.

For me, the point of supporting a sovereign Quebec, is to keep the difference, for various reasons. This is just one of many reasons, because there is a very big difference between the position taken by most Canadians and that taken by most Americans when it comes to firearms. But a similarity now seems to be arising between the two countries when we listen to the Reform Party. In their push for no restrictions on the right to

carry firearms, they have advanced certain American arguments, such as the one whereby mandatory registration of firearms or limited access to them would be an attack on personal freedom. This is utter nonsense.

It is not at all difficult to understand the Americans' point of view. The right to carry firearms is part of their culture, as it were. The West was won with guns. Far more Americans carry guns than do Canadians and, if I am not mistaken, the use of firearms is a right in the States. In fact, I wonder if it is not enshrined in the American Constitution and if Americans will therefore be obliged to live with much wider access to firearms than is permitted here in Canada.

When the statistics on homicides and violence are compared for Canada and the United States, they are, not surprisingly, much higher for the United States.

(1300)

In 1991, there were 753 homicides in Canada, compared with 24,000 in the United States. These statistics are mind-boggling. They moved the judicial committee of the American Senate to declare that the United States was the most violent and self-destructive nation in the world.

Being a reasonable person, I cannot rule out the fact that the very large number of firearms in the United States contributes, in some degree, to this difference, to this very high level of violence and murders in that country. When we see, for example, in Florida or elsewhere, people using rifles to shoot at drivers on the freeway, I would rather do everything in my power to build a country where people do not have to experience such extreme, absurd violence. I would rather encourage the development of a country where violence is being reduced. I know that it is no easy task. The bottom line is that we must create an environment where people feel safe and comfortable.

People who support the free movement of or access to weapons argue that pistols or rifles provide better protection against violence. This is a frequently used argument in the U.S., where the murder rate is extremely high. There are proportionally three times as many murders in the U.S. as in Canada. Again, I do not think that getting a weapon is a good way to protect oneself. On the contrary, I think that arming oneself is an incitement to violence. All human wisdom since the beginning of western civilization demonstrates that violence begets violence. All the evidence shows that those who arm themselves are getting ready for violence.

To reduce violence in society, it would be quite reasonable to try to restrict access to firearms. After all, what are firearms for, if not for killing? Firearms are designed to shoot and kill. Firearms are extremely dangerous weapons and their access

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should be restricted. It is normal and reasonable for a self-respecting country to want to reduce violence in society.

Of course, sportsmen who use weapons for hunting, farmers who use them to put down sick animals or for other reasons, all those with specific reasons to use firearms should have access to them. I am not arguing with that. But, in general, firearms should be abolished or access to them should be restricted at least. Handguns have no place in the cities. No one should have access to firearms without sound reasons.

(1305)

The problem is that Bill C-68 does very little in that regard. It may be a step in the right direction, but it does not do what the public wanted it to do.

Surveys have been conducted on the registration and possession of firearms. They show clearly that more than 80 per cent of Canadians and 91 per cent of Quebecers wish that access to firearms were made more difficult, that it not be so easy to acquire firearms. They also wish that military assault weapons and handguns be banned and that stricter controls be imposed on the sale of firearms. That is what one public opinion poll after another has shown.

The vast majority of Canadians and Quebecers are against unrestricted access to firearms in Canada. Apparently, the government failed to represent this view in Bill C-68. We know that many interests are involved.

Besides the public at large, there are manufacturers, associations promoting the use of firearms, a number of individuals who are particularly fond of firearms, which they think are symbols of strength and power. These people seem to have a rather major influence on the government. While being in the minority, they have pressured the government into making this bill not as stringent as it could have been.

If the intent had been to come up with a serious, progressive, forward-looking bill aimed at looking after the interests of the majority, the bill would have had more teeth. I should add that Bill C-68 is not a bad piece of legislation. It contains some good provisions, while others are definitely bad.

However, it is an improvement over the current act. The intent of the bill is good. If it is felt that registering firearms will limit access to such weapons, assuming that is the underlying principle of the legislation, then it is a good thing. However, it remains to be seen whether this will indeed be the case.

This is an improvement over the old system which was absurd. In the past, anyone could buy a firearm. The buyer had to register the firearm, along with his name and address, in an inventory which was checked by the Quebec and Ontario provincial police, or by the RCMP elsewhere in the country. That was a summary verification to see if the names, addresses and serial

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numbers were properly indicated. However, if the register got lost or was destroyed by fire, that was it. No trace of its contents was left.

(1310)

That registration process was really a joke. It was a mere formality which had little impact and which was useless in terms of monitoring who had access to firearms.

I should point out that, along with this very limited control over the sales of firearms, the current legislation also provides for the delivery of permits to carry and store guns. However, the existing law is essentially inadequate.

Bill C-68 contains some good and some not so good provisions. If I have time to do so, I would like to make a few suggestions to improve its content.

First of all, Bill C-68 proposes to establish a licensing system for persons wishing to possess firearms. In other words, it establishes a system for the registration of all firearms. Controls in this bill include a check to confirm the absence of public safety concerns before the transfer, transport, import or export of a firearm. It imposes restrictions on other dangerous articles such as cross-bows, certain knives and silencers. It revises the Criminal Code to impose stricter sentencing, and it includes a scheme for prohibiting, as a result of criminal conduct, a person from future possession of firearms.

I think we can say that this last restriction, which would prohibit access to firearms by criminals, is entirely acceptable and desirable.

I think that any legislation that prohibits a criminal from having access to a firearm is a boon to the general public.

As far as stricter sentencing is concerned, there might be a little more to say. There are certainly some positive aspects. I will not have enough time to discuss the firearms registration mechanism as such. I would have quite a few questions about the system for the registration and storage of information and whether the proposed system is better than what we have now. There would be a lot to say about this, but unfortunately my time is limited.

There are some very good points, and I am thinking, for instance, of the obligation to register all firearms. At least the police would have a way to enforce a court order prohibiting an aggressor from possessing firearms. In addition to criminals, this would also apply to the guy who beats his wife every Saturday night. He may not have a criminal record as a bank robber or murderer, but it seems to me he should not have a weapon, at least not a firearm, in his home. He should seek treatment if he beats his wife, of course, and at least, he should

not have access to a firearm. So this bill would allow the police to prohibit certain people from possessing firearms—

Mr. Speaker, I see you are signalling that my time is almost up. I thought I had twenty minutes. Are you sure I have only one minute left? I thought I had five or ten minutes left.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** If I may be of assistance, the hon. member started his speech at 12.55 p.m., almost twenty minutes ago.

(1315)

**Mr. Marchand:** Thank you for that information, Mr. Speaker. I shall therefore conclude very quickly by saying that this bill contains both good and bad. In my opinion, this system will be expensive. Once again, registering weapons is not a bad thing, but in looking at this bill the following questions come to mind. Will it prevent someone from registering his weapon? Will it prevent someone from killing his neighbour if he so wishes? Will it prevent a young person from committing suicide with a gun? Will registration be truly beneficial for society in the long term? Will it reduce crime rates? I rather have my doubts, Mr. Speaker.

[*English*]

**Mr. Jack Ramsay (Crowfoot, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I have listened to the speech and I have heard remarks like violence begets violence, firearms are meant to kill, and access should be limited.

I do not know how much of the hon. member's speech related to the issue we are wrestling with in Bill C-68, that is bringing forward a bill that enhances the safety of our communities, homes and society.

If the member honestly believes the registration of rifles and shotguns will reduce the criminal use of these firearms, would he tell the House how that will do it?

**Mr. Marchand:** How will registering arms reduce the level of criminality? I do not believe it will necessarily. Bill C-68 has a great number of flaws. I really do not believe it will necessarily reduce criminality.

On the other hand registration is not such a bad thing. We register practically everything. Our cars are registered. We are registered when we are born. We are registered when we get married. Every important element and tool of one's life is registered. It is a normal fact of life. The problem is that not registering arms is abnormal. There is a certain abnormality in not registering arms particularly because arms are very dangerous tools. They are weapons.

Normally they are used to harm or kill people. I am not talking about sportsmen who hunt or farmers who use arms to protect themselves from predators. Those are very special cases.

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However there are other uses. I am talking about the Saturday night special, the AK-47 and other arms that are ascribed within the atmosphere of violence, protection, rights, liberty and so on. They should certainly be limited.

If registering arms could help reduce the number of arms circulating in Canada, that would be a positive step. I do not think it is harmful to anyone, even collectors who have arms or who love arms, to suggest that their arms should be registered.

As I say there are a lot of flaws in the bill, but there are positive points in the sense that the government is trying to go in the right direction.

(1320)

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member commented that he was not sure whether or not registration would reduce crime in Canada. I would like to pose a proposition to him and possibly he might consider whether or not crime would be affected.

Statistics have shown that since 1974 some 16,000 firearms have been reported lost, missing or stolen. We can imagine how many guns are lost, missing or stolen that have not been reported. These guns are out of the control of the legal owner. They are now out there most probably in the hands of the criminal element in society.

Certainly we can imagine that the registration of firearms brings to bear a greater responsibility on the careful gun owner and should do something to ensure that gun owners take a greater level of care.

The member may also wish to know gun clubs are now reporting that many gun owners are getting rid of their guns. Many of them report that something like 60 per cent of gun owners have not fired a gun in the last year and some 40 per cent have not fired their firearms in the last five years.

In that regard, because fewer guns would be available to the criminal element, would the member not agree that registration of firearms would reduce crime in Canada?

**Mr. Marchand:** Mr. Speaker, I am not opposed to the legitimate use of firearms for those people who have good reason such as sportsmen and farmers, to use two examples. However I have questions about whether registration would do anything to help reduce criminality.

I have a hypothetical example. If the system worked perfectly, in other words there was a control system somewhere in Ottawa where all firearms would be listed in a little computer and we would have a complete list of all firearms everywhere in the country, does the member think those people who have illegal projects in mind might be able to get their hands on that list and determine that Joe Schmoe living on such and such a street has an awful good collection of firearms? It would incite a certain

number of people to go to Joe Schmoe's house and steal all his firearms. It is a way of possibly encouraging the illegal use of firearms. Registering the firearms does not necessarily have an effect on criminality.

There is another flaw in this law. If we register firearms it will not prevent Joe Schmoe from shooting his neighbour on a Saturday night. It is not because his firearm is registered that he will not kill his neighbour. It being a registered firearm will not prevent his son or daughter from killing himself or herself. It does not prevent anything at all.

However, if the minister had been conscientious and had gone the limit, he would have demanded from the moment a firearm was sold in Canada that it had a control mechanism, in other words one needed a key to be able to use it. It can be done. Technically we can control the use of firearms in the sense that a key would be needed to open it and use it. As long as it is locked, whether it is sitting on the back seat of the car or in the living room, it could not be used as readily. One would need the key to use the firearm. At least that measure would limit the misuse of firearms.

Many other suggestions could be made, but I do not believe registering firearms would necessarily have an effect on the reduction of criminality in Canada in spite of the fact that I think this measure is a step in the right direction. Despite the fact that the Bloc will suggest improvements for the proposed law we will probably support it.

(1325)

**Hon. Ethel Blondin-Andrew (Secretary of State (Training and Youth), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to debate Bill C-68, an act respecting firearms and other weapons. The debate before us is a complicated and highly emotional one for all those involved and implicated in the bill.

Aboriginal people, for instance, are worried about the potential infringement on their treaty rights. Shooters are concerned with the restrictions placed on their sport and outfitters are worried about the impact the legislation will have on their business. These are all serious concerns which if not addressed could pose some serious hardships in the north and of course in other parts of Canada.

The potential infringement the legislation could have on treaty rights and its impact on traditional aboriginal way of life are threats that aboriginal people have sought to prevent since the signing of their treaties. Treaties were signed to ensure the protection of aboriginal rights that were then entrenched in the Constitution under section 35 of the charter.

As treaty rights go or as rights go in aboriginal country, rights are considered and treated as absolute but in the reality of the political world and in the name of concessions, compromise and goodwill we are looking at some half-measures.

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According to the Sparrow decision of 1990 hunting and fishing rights have been recognized by the Canadian government. It would appear to be damaging to the fragile relationship being forged between the aboriginal people and the Government of Canada if the bill infringed on these rights.

This is the concern being expressed. However I have assurances that the legislation will not infringe on these rights. Special considerations have been given to sustenance hunters and in particular aboriginal hunters who make up a large portion of all sustenance hunters.

Let me, for instance, express the concern brought forward by Mr. Sam Gargan, member of the Legislative Assembly for the Northwest Territories for Deh Cho, who said:

I have an uncle who cannot read or write. He cannot tell you what muzzle velocity means. He cannot tell you how calibres are determined. He can however tell you that you need a .303 to shoot a moose, that it is best to use a shotgun to shoot ducks, that a .22 is the best for rabbits and upland birds. He can tell you not to carry a loaded gun with a live round in the chamber. He can tell you how to safely transport a gun in a truck or a boat.

The same would apply to a skidoo. He continued:

Gun ownership is not rocket science. It is a matter of common sense. In the NWT the vast majority of gun owners have been taught gun safety at a very young age and I sincerely believe that any program on gun safety to be offered in the NWT has to be changed to fit the realities of the situation both fiscally and morally.

Mr. Gargan went on to say:

I also believe that the legislation, as it now stands, violates treaty rights as guaranteed in the Charter of Rights and may well be in contradiction of the Sparrow decision—To this end I can virtually assure you that should this legislation proceed as written, there would be a court challenge from Canada's aboriginal community.

These are the words of a member of the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories, the majority of whose constituents are aboriginal.

In the north the aboriginal people hunt to eat, not to harm other people. Many northern people living in isolated or remote communities cannot afford the inflated northern prices of meat. We cannot just go out and order half a side of beef at southern prices. The cost of living is 40 per cent higher.

Today in southern stores such as Loeb a kilogram of ground beef costs \$3.95.

(1330)

The same kilogram of beef in Deline in a community is \$6.80. This makes hunting and owning a rifle not only a right but an economic reality. Hunting in an aboriginal community is also a community event. Food that is caught or that is hunted is shared with everyone. Hunters donate food to those who are unable to hunt for themselves such as elders and widowers and people who are disabled. Without firearms many in the north could not afford to eat.

My experience with firearms has been since I was a child, since as long as I can remember. In my family we learned gun safety. It was absolutely paramount. The camp where my parents go on an annual basis is in grizzly bear country. In grizzly bear country you do not just have a .22 rifle. You must have a high powered rifle. I must say if you are going to have a key mechanism to use, please do not do it when you are in grizzly bear country if you want to live to see another day.

The realities are very different around this country and I understand the intent of this bill. I understand the complexity. I understand the difficulty the minister has had to deal with this bill across the country.

I cannot imagine having the fortitude to go out there to meet the masses on such a complicated and emotional bill. I would like to say that I admire this man for having done that. However, the debate rolls on and the bill has gone to committee. The bill is being debated today. There are a number of special things that will happen.

My hon. colleague across the way from the Bloc Quebecois indicated that most times the use of firearms is intended to hurt or kill another person. That has not been my experience. It has allowed us to live. It has allowed us to overcome difficulties.

During the war, during the depression and during recessions in Canada our people were able to survive because we have instruments that allow us to exercise the right to be able to fend for and feed our people. Those instruments in most cases in modern terms are not bow and arrows. They are firearms. That is one of the instruments we use to exercise that right.

The Minister of Justice in his commitment not to impact treaty rights has struck a team of officials who will travel and meet with aboriginal groups across Canada to discuss how this bill can be implemented without negatively impacting treaty rights and the traditional way of life.

These consultations have been directly mandated in this legislation. Section 110 allows for the governor in council to make regulations on aboriginal people and to adapt the regulations for the purposes of that application.

Michell Adkins, a Haida lawyer, was recently hired by the Department of Justice to consult with aboriginal people. Along with other departmental officials, she will be travelling to communities to explain the legislation, to listen to their concerns and make recommendations to the minister on how to amend this legislation with respect to treaties and traditional life.

There are many issues that need to be addressed in the consultations. The Minister of Justice has suggested the necessity of finding a better definition of sustenance hunter to reflect the aboriginal way of life.

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He is also committed from what I am being informed by departmental officials to decentralize the role of the firearms officer and provide community control of the implementation of this new firearm strategy, ensuring aboriginal participation.

I would like to encourage all of the First Nations, Metis and Inuit people to take full advantage of these consultations to ensure that the registration of firearms can be done in full consideration of their treaty rights, especially with respect to Sparrow and section 35 of the charter.

Some of the issues which have already been brought to the minister's attention will be addressed and among the consultations is the cost of registration. Currently under Bill C-68 there will not be a charge for sustenance hunters to obtain a firearms licence. However, there are no clear guidelines on how fees will be applied in registering firearms and the transferring of ownership of guns.

(1335)

Through consultations with First Nations, Metis and Inuit, it is my hope that an amendment can be made to eliminate the cost of transferring and registration of firearms by sustenance hunters, as these costs would be an economic hardship on people who cannot afford to buy their food and use their firearms as a tool to feed themselves and their communities.

It is felt that it would be an additional economic hardship in a community that already has quite a large group of unemployed people who rely on other sources to continue living and surviving.

Borrowing and lending firearms is another very important issue for the northern and aboriginal communities across this country. Under Bill C-68 there is the provision for lending a firearm as long as the person involved lends the borrower the registration certificate for the firearm. Through consultations it is hoped that alternatives to this option can be sought. In many communities firearms are seen as a collective instrument for hunting passed on to those who need them.

Hunting rifles are commonly loaned to relatives and friends in aboriginal communities on a regular basis. Through consultation I hope that the registration program will be flexible enough to allow this practice to continue without undue and unnecessary hardship.

We understand that in the context of harvesting and hunting it is very difficult in isolated and remote communities to acquire registration and firearms acquisition certificates. When you are in a boat and you see a caribou it is very difficult to resist the opportunity to get the kill for the community or for the family, relatives or the elders. There is a general lending of firearms. It is a very big issue in the communities in terms of their traditional harvesting and hunting rights.

The transfer of ownership is another area which is of much concern. The gift of a firearm is very common in the north. Under Bill C-68 a gift of firearms can only be given once all the necessary papers are filled out and both the recipient and the donor have licences and neither one is a safety risk. Again, through detailed consultations provisions should be made to reflect the culture of First Nations, Metis and Inuit where the gift of a firearm is considered a great honour, especially when given to a youth for his or her first hunt. It is an honour and it is something that is protected, keeping in mind all the issues about safety that go along with the responsibility of owning that gun. It also entails using it safely and bearing in mind the safety of others.

On penal sanctions for people who accidentally find themselves on the other side of the law, through consultation I hope that alternatives can also be found to some of the penal sanctions for offenders who have committed an offence out of ignorance. Summary convictions are available in Bill C-68 to first time offenders which would not require that a person develop a criminal record on a first time offence.

I am also encouraged by the partial prohibition provision in this legislation. A sustenance hunter who has been charged with an offence involving a firearm may apply to a competent authority to allow for the hunter to use his or her firearms for sustenance as long as the hunter returned it to the authority, which could be the chief on returning from hunting. A great deal of trust and a great deal of respect would have to be in place and a great sense of responsibility under those conditions.

Another aspect is the purchase of ammunition. I am amazed that I have not run out of time yet because this a very emotional, very complicated and a very important matter. I do not think I can undersell the importance of this legislation to people across this country, not just in my own riding but in other parts of the provinces and territories.

(1340)

In many communities those who cannot hunt will provide ammunition to hunters as a gift in hope of meat and other kinds of game when the hunters return. That is a common occurrence. I hope through consultation with aboriginal groups an amendment can be entertained allowing aboriginal people to purchase ammunition when they do not have a licence to give as a gift.

It is not uncommon for a senior citizen on pension who cannot go hunting, who does not have a skidoo, who does not have the physical stamina to go on the hunt anymore, to give to a younger person the gift of ammunition for the sake of a hunt. It is very reasonable and it is good economics for the people in the community.

These are only some of the concerns about how Bill C-68 would impact the aboriginal way of life. I am encouraged by the

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minister that these and other concerns will be dealt with through consultations with aboriginal people.

Northerners have also brought several questions to my attention which have either been addressed in Bill C-68 or the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs has been mandated to review. I would also like to outline their concerns here.

First of all, there is always the question about why the government is attacking law-abiding gun owners. Many legal owners feel that the government is attacking law-abiding gun owners with this new legislation. However, Bill C-68 creates a new act for firearms. This new statute, the Firearms Act, removes legal gun owners from the Criminal Code. This consideration to gun owners demonstrates the government's intention not to treat legal gun owners as criminals. This new act will create a licensing system for the ownership and use of firearms and a national registration system for all firearms. As I mentioned before, special provisions have been made for first time offenders who have not used a non-registered firearm in a criminal offence.

The next concern is equipment outlawed from the Canadian Olympic shooting team. Others have asked why equipment used by the Canadian Olympic shooting team has been prohibited. The minister has acknowledged that amendments or exceptions should be made for certain handguns in the prohibited class which are used and recognized in target shooting competitions. The minister has specifically requested that the standing committee on justice deliberate on possible solutions to this current problem.

Restriction to non-residents is another major one. There are many hunting, outfitting and tourist businesses in the north and other parts of Canada that depend on hunters from other countries for their business. They have voiced several concerns that Bill C-68 will impose further restrictions on the entry of those foreign hunters and are concerned that they will choose to go to another country to hunt where the laws are not so restricting.

I have reviewed the requirements of the entry of any foreign hunter into Canada and I do not see a problem as such. A person coming from another country must declare their firearm at customs. They will be required to complete a temporary firearms licence and a registration certificate to bring the firearm into Canada.

A customs firearm declaration will act as a 60-day licence and certificate and will be validated at the border. The Minister of Justice and his departmental officials assure me that these forms will be as simple as possible. These declarations will be readily available to visitors through Canadian tourism offices abroad, outfitters, shooting clubs and hunting organizations.

There will be opportunities for non-residents to apply in advance to speed up the process at the border.

In the case of sporting clubs, as has always been the case the requirements can be met before crossing the border through Canadian clubs and associations. An authorization to transport will be issued at the same time. Should a hunter lose his ammunition he will be able to present his customs firearms declaration which will act as a temporary license, enabling the hunter to purchase ammunition.

I suppose I could go on but I must be close to being out of time. Within two minutes I will attempt to deal with this really important issue.

I am going to deal with people's concern about prohibited antique gun collection. A common question is how to pass on or sell an antique gun collection. Individuals who now have a grandfathered firearm which falls into a specific prohibited category will be able to buy from and sell to individuals with firearms in the same category.

(1345)

Also, the minister has asked the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs to deliberate on the special significance possession of firearms as relics or heirlooms may have on a family and what opportunities there will be for owners to leave such firearms to their children as part of their estate.

In conclusion, I would like to take the opportunity to thank the numerous members of shooting clubs, such as Barry Taylor from my riding, who have devoted thousands of hours to teaching firearms safety. Their work in the north ensures the safe handling of many guns.

I would also like to thank all of those people who have brought their concerns on gun control to my attention. We have the minister's assurance that there will be special efforts to look at these concerns. I encourage all aboriginal people and northern people to participate in the consultations to ensure the protection of their rights. It is my hope that through these consultations a mutual respect and understanding can be forged between the consultation team and aboriginal people.

I also encourage all northerners to participate in the deliberation of the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs and to write to the chair of the committee, the hon. member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, or myself with their opinions on how to improve the current piece of legislation.

I would like to thank the House and you, Mr. Speaker, for giving me an opportunity to speak to the very special, emotional and complicated matter of Bill C-68.

**Mr. Jay Hill (Prince George—Peace River, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I listened attentively to the hon. member's speech on Bill C-68. I share some of her concerns about northerners, how they will react to increased regulation, universal registration,

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and in particular her comments on how aboriginal hunters will view the added regulations and restrictions being placed upon them.

My question for the hon. member deals with Bill C-34, the Yukon self-government bill, which was passed in this House last June. It was my understanding that Bill C-34 gave control and prohibition over firearms and explosive devices to the new levels of native governments in the Yukon.

Has the hon. member researched that at all? If so, does it mean they are in effect exempt from the new regulations in Bill C-68 once it is passed? If they are exempt because of the clauses in Bill C-34 which give control over firearms to the native governments, does she feel it right that some Canadian citizens should be exempt from Canada's laws based strictly on race?

**Ms. Blondin-Andrew:** Mr. Speaker, the unique legal and constitutional rights of aboriginal people have nothing to do with race. They have to do with a legally and constitutionally binding arrangement between the Government of Canada and those said peoples.

As for the Yukon legislation, I am not a lawyer nor am I a self-government specialist. I have raised a number of issues today regarding rights and I do not think they have anything to do with any kind of racial overtones. They have to do very specifically with the traditional way of life which has been exercised and practised for hundreds of years. Perhaps the instruments to exercise those rights have changed. In contemporary terms we are talking about firearms.

I resent what the hon. member across the way is alleging. He is insinuating that aboriginal people have something which is exempt, unique and special and which nobody else can have. That is not the case. It is unique to aboriginal populations.

I am aware of the position the Council of Yukon Indians has taken and it can speak best for itself. I cannot speak for the aboriginal people of the Yukon, except that I know they have a grave concern. They will have the opportunity to speak to Michell Adkins and also present their concerns to the standing committee. They can adequately speak to that. I would probably under-represent their views.

(1350)

**Mr. Lee Morrison (Swift Current—Maple Creek—Assiniboia, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, many of the concerns expressed by the hon. member apply not only to aboriginal people but to rural people in general.

For example, she spoke of that first rifle. One of the proudest days of my life was my 11th birthday when I received my first

firearm. Like the hon. member I was a sustenance hunter for a period of time. We were hard up. We ate the meat we killed.

These laws that are going to come in will be just as restrictive, just as oppressive on non-native rural people as they will be on the people who live for example in the Northwest Territories. I would hope that rather than taking up the cudgels against the rest of us who oppose this bill that she would join with us on behalf of the people of the north, on behalf of aboriginal people and realize that we are all in this together. We are all facing unreasonable restrictions in legislation here. It is not just the natives.

**Ms. Blondin-Andrew:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to make the same offer to the members of the Reform Party. Instead of just beating their breasts about their own rights and how hard done by they are, perhaps they would take up the issue of aboriginal rights and for a change support aboriginal people on the question of their rights which they know are legitimate and legally and constitutionally binding.

I make this offer because since I have been in this House I have never on any occasion, not on land claims, on services for aboriginal people, on programs for aboriginal people and never on self-government have I heard an expression of support for aboriginal people by that group. I am making them the offer to come and support the aboriginal people as well.

**Mr. Ovid L. Jackson (Bruce—Grey, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to compliment the hon. secretary of state on her eloquent representation of her people. I have two native reserves in my riding of Bruce—Grey, the Saugeen and Cape Croker. The member quite eloquently represented the position they find themselves in.

As a rural member I must also speak on behalf of the hunters, trappers, farmers and other rural people whose lives are different from most people. They have needs. In this case they are a minority. If we took a poll perhaps the majority of people would be against guns, but rural people have a different orientation, a different history, a real need. This bill in its current state could constitute some hardships for them.

I must compliment the minister on the smuggling penalties and the penalties for the use of a firearm in the commission of a crime. I hope that somehow the concerns of rural people can be accommodated in this bill.

Does the hon. member not feel that rural people do have similar needs to aboriginal people, particularly in ridings such as Bruce—Grey?



*S. O. 31*

**Ms. Blondin—Andrew:** Mr. Speaker, I never disallowed the fact that members opposite or my hon. colleague here have legitimate concerns on behalf of their rural constituents or those people who hunt for sustenance and are non-aboriginal. I never disallowed that fact.

When I speak, the perspective I am speaking from is one I am very familiar and intimate with. It is one that I know inside out. I know the living situation, the personal experiences and human struggles of these people. I want to speak from that experience. I cannot speak as well for other groups. I can go out there to represent them if they ask me.

These are very specific issues, specific to a number of northern constituents. It could be northern provinces. It could be aboriginal people across the country. I can speak most expertly about what I know. That is the perspective I am speaking from, not to the prejudice of other groups.

(1355)

**Mr. Grant Hill (Macleod, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the member spoke quite eloquently about hope for change in this legislation. I too hope for change in this legislation, but I listened to the justice minister make a very specific comment when he presented this legislation. That comment was that the consultation was literally over.

Does the member know something that I do not about the consultation process? Is it wide open? Are we in fact subject to significant change in this legislation? I would be very interested in knowing that.

**Ms. Blondin—Andrew:** Mr. Speaker, I wish the hon. member would not be so suspicious and so cynical. It does not help the whole issue of national unity or anything else for that matter.

The hon. member knows, as all members know, that there is a standing committee. The chairman is sitting in this House today as he well can see. Also, Michell Adkins and a group of officials are travelling across the country. Perhaps the members of the Reform Party will take it upon themselves to ensure that the groups in their ridings have access to both the standing committee as well as to the special group of officials travelling across the country.

**Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the member has raised a couple of interesting points that I would like to address very briefly.

First, there are two groups of aboriginal people in my constituency and I work very closely with them. My most recent meeting with the chief was on Thursday night. I object to the innuendo that we are not working with these people and that we do not treat them as equals. I take exception to that.

In terms of consultations, I do have a letter from the minister in response to my request to come to my riding for further consultation. Thousands of people would have attended. Of course I was turned down because the consultations are over.

Also you mention in your speech about rights—

**Mr. Speaker:** I am sure the hon. member was referring to me but I did not make the speech. He must refer to the Chair. My colleagues, I am going to give the hon. member for Red Deer the floor right after question period. However, it being 2 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 30(5), the House will now proceed to statements by members pursuant to Standing Order 31.

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## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*English*]

### CARBON DIOXIDE EMISSIONS

**Hon. Charles Caccia (Davenport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, scientists have predicted that global temperatures could increase 1.5 to 4.5 degrees Celsius over the next century. The cause is greenhouse gases from human activities and in particular, increasing concentrations of carbon dioxide. Greenhouse gases produce shifts in climate, in forest growth and agricultural patterns.

Led by Alberta, Canada is among the highest per capita producer of carbon dioxide emissions. Yet ignoring the large problems coastal provinces would face because of rising sea levels and the further disruption of fisheries, the province of Alberta is adamantly opposed to comprehensive carbon dioxide reductions.

The federal government repeatedly asked the provinces to co-operate and introduce mandatory carbon dioxide reductions. So far however, Alberta's inflexible position makes any meaningful reduction impossible and weakens our international reputation.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

### FRENCH-LANGUAGE SCHOOL BOARDS

**Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, last Friday, instead of announcing the creation of homogeneous French-language school boards in Ontario, the provincial education minister once again chose to put off that decision. In fact, he created a committee mandated to rationalize the governance of education in Ontario. This committee is to deliver its report next December, that is after the Ontario provincial elections. Moreover, this committee with a majority of anglophones has been made responsible for the future of French-language school boards.

Instead of taking action, Ontario goes on violating the Canadian Charter, which it signed of course, a charter which grants francophones the right to manage their schools.

Instead of taking action, Ontario is letting the situation deteriorate; consider the 31 per cent illiteracy rate and 38 per cent rate of assimilation among Franco-Ontarians.

During the next referendum, Quebecers will remember that those who speak about a renewed federalism are merely playing with smoke and mirrors.

\* \* \*

[English]

### PROVINCE OF QUEBEC

**Mr. Jim Gouk (Kootenay West—Revelstoke, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, government officials, whether municipal, provincial or federal, are elected to represent their constituents. Both the Parti Québécois and Bloc Québécois do not seem to agree with this. Their idea of a referendum is not to find out what the people of Quebec want but rather how to force them into accepting separation.

Now the PQ and BQ want to water down the question so the issue remains unsettled. This presents a problem for all Canadians, including those in Quebec. Uncertainty is causing interest rates to rise, the dollar to fall and international credit to be re-examined. It is also likely to be partly responsible for the Liberal's failure to properly deal with the deficit for fear of upsetting Quebec.

If the Parti Québécois does not call the referendum with a clear question on separation within its own 1995 timetable, I call on the Prime Minister to hold a federal referendum in Quebec to settle this issue by year's end. This uncertainty must not continue.

\* \* \*

### JUSTICE

**Ms. Beth Phinney (Hamilton Mountain, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend the Minister of Justice for his speed in tabling a bill on the subject of intoxication as a defence.

All Canadians were outraged last autumn when a man convicted of rape had his conviction overturned by the Supreme Court on the grounds of extreme drunkenness. Many residents of my riding were concerned that this decision would be seen by some as a licence to commit offences while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

Allowing individuals to justify their acts of violence by blaming intoxication will hamper efforts to end violence in our society and cause further victimization.

I am sure that all members of the House will join me in supporting the efforts of the Minister of Justice to eliminate this loophole in the criminal justice system.

S. O. 31

[Translation]

### REFERENDUM DEBATE

**Mr. Raymond Lavigne (Verdun—Saint-Paul, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on March 31, 1993, the leader of the Bloc Québécois declared in *La Presse* that all those who live in Quebec are Quebecers.

The fine words of the leader of the official opposition do not seem to have been heard by his peers, since, in recent weeks, racist remarks by Quebec separatists have been on the increase.

This weekend, Pierre Bourgault accused anglophones in Quebec of wanting to exercise a blatantly racist vote, while the Bloc Québécois member for Louis-Hébert wanted ethnocultural communities to withdraw from the referendum debate and let old stock Quebecers decide the province's future.

These statements are unacceptable in a democratic society such as ours, and we invite all Quebecers to refuse to participate in a sovereignty debate that is based on intolerance and racism.

\* \* \*

[English]

### NORTHERN IRELAND

**Ms. Mary Clancy (Halifax, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as many know, Northern Ireland is moving forward in pursuit of peace.

In the past few months, Irish and British officials have been negotiating a framework that will ultimately make the tyranny of violence in Ulster a thing of the past. Many Canadians, particularly those of Irish descent, wish the people of Northern Ireland well in this crucial transition period.

Years ago when my ancestors left that beautiful country, like all immigrants to Canada they also left behind the ancestral feuds for a more peaceful new world.

We all hope that we can soon see an emerald isle where the peace and tranquillity of the people reflect the beauty of the landscape.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### MICHEL BÉLANGER

**Mr. Pierre de Savoye (Portneuf, BQ):** Clearly, Mr. Speaker, there are two Michel Bélangers.

There is one Michel Bélanger, a true statesman, a man of imposing presence and influence, who can inspire in Quebecers a healthy confidence in themselves.

At the time he co-chaired the commission on the political and constitutional future of Quebec he was impervious to the exaggerations and arguments of fear still being brandished by a few federalists who lacked the fine words of terror that were the specialty of the Prime Minister of Canada.

*S. O. 31*

Then there is the other Michel Bélanger. A man who heads the NO camp, whose imposing presence is withering away inside the ideological straitjacket put on him by the federalists. These days, Michel Bélanger has become the bogeyman.

This man, who had raised the debate on the national issue to the level of pragmatism and a people's belief in itself, has been reduced to visiting homes for the aged and telling the people there that a sovereign Quebec could no longer afford to pay their pensions.

This shows how little argument the man has left.

\* \* \*

[English]

**PENSIONS**

**Mr. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the government has just introduced amendments to the MPs' pension plan but in reality has just changed troughs and given it a new look.

(1405)

This new plan is still much more lucrative than what a person in the private sector would receive. Basically it is nothing more than smoke and mirrors.

The new package is still fully indexed to inflation, something 78 per cent of the public does not enjoy. The accrual rate is twice the amount allowed for under the Income Tax Act and is therefore illegal.

How can the government in good conscience ask overtaxed Canadians to tighten their belts while doing exactly the opposite itself?

I ask every MP in the House to join hands with the rest of Canada and make a sacrifice by opting out of this hideous MP pension plan which still says to Canadians: "We will line our pockets and tough luck to you". I also applaud every MP who is opting out, especially my colleagues in the Reform Party.

When the budget is tabled later today, Canadians will not forget that less than a week ago it was the government that chose above all else to take care of its own.

\* \* \*

**GUN CONTROL**

**Mr. Chris Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it has become apparent that this Liberal government is trying hard to stifle discussion of its gun control legislation.

The interest in, and demand for, copies of Bill C-68 is overwhelming. Initially the Minister of Justice limited MPs to just 15 copies. If that was not bad enough, we now find that the chief government whip has further ordered the House distribution centre to limit that number to five copies per member. Five

copies among 75,000 or 100,000 citizens is hardly the open and honest government of the Liberal red book.

Canadians are being denied their most basic democratic right; the right to understand and discuss the laws of the land.

The last time such anti-democratic action was taken by a federal government was by the Conservative government of Brian Mulroney. The legislation—you guessed it—was gun control, Bill C-17.

I want to congratulate the Saskatchewan Association of Responsible Firearms Owners that has been making copies of this legislation available for \$5 each. Surely important issues deserve open and informed debate. Surely Canadians are entitled to access proposed legislation that affects them. Why does the Liberal government want to deprive Canadians?

\* \* \*

**ONTARIO SPECIAL OLYMPICS**

**Mr. Andrew Telegdi (Waterloo, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this last weekend Kitchener-Waterloo hosted the 1995 winter games, the Ontario Special Olympics.

The Ontario Special Olympics are part of a worldwide charitable organization that helps meet the need for sport training and competition among 300,000 children and adults who are developmentally challenged. Two hundred and ninety-five athletes competed and they were true to their Special Olympic oath: "Let me win, but if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt".

Generous donations in excess of \$156,000 and the efforts of over 700 volunteers helped to make this year's winter games a great success.

This spirit of compassion, caring and sharing was demonstrated by my community and exemplified by the 107 members of the Westvale Public School choir that sang: "Keep the Spirit Alive". This song was written especially for the opening ceremonies by their teacher Lorna Beam.

The very special athletes of the Ontario Special Olympics rose to the challenge and exemplified to all Canadians how to keep the spirit alive.

\* \* \*

**INCOME TAX**

**Mr. Dan McTeague (Ontario, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I recently attended an anti-tax rally in my riding where 2,000 people told the government they do not want tax increases in the budget.

Canadians have a right to be heard and the Minister of Finance has made it possible through an open and full budgetary process.

It is wrong however when the Reform Party, in concert with top officials in organizations such as the Canadian Taxpayers' Federation, tries to pass itself off as leading the anti-tax message in Canada.

The CTF and provincial counterparts such as the Ontario and Alberta Taxpayers' Federations are staging anti-tax rallies across the country. Unfortunately that is not the only thing they are staging.

The CTF states it is independent of all political affiliation, yet Mr. Andrew Crooks, member of the CTF board of directors and head of the Alberta Tax Federation ran for the Reform Party nomination in Calgary and contributed \$3,000 to the Reform Party in 1993. Mr. Paul Pagnuelo, executive director of the Ontario Taxpayers' Federation also sought the Reform Party nomination in the riding of Durham.

Canadians have legitimate concerns about the budget and they want to see these concerns taken into consideration. However, they do not want to be taken in by these people who are trying to further their political ambitions.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

#### REFERENDUM DEBATE

**Mrs. Eleni Bakopanos (Saint-Denis, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on behalf of all of the linguistic and cultural communities in Quebec, I would like to condemn the racist and intolerant comments made by the Bloc member for Louis-Hébert. He believes that ethnic communities should keep their noses out of the referendum debate and let Quebecers of old stock make the decision on our future.

He admitted to journalists that he deliberately used the expression "Quebecers of old stock" because he believes that anglophones and allophones have always systematically voted for the Liberal Party and that it is a given that they will vote against sovereignty.

(1410)

If the only ones in this House allowed to vote were the hon. members of old stock, then the hon. member for Louis-Hébert would have to refuse this right to many among us, including the Bloc member for Bourassa, who is from one of Quebec's cultural communities.

The Bloc member's comments are a real embarrassment, and I invite all members of this House to openly condemn such words of hate.

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#### DEFENCE SPENDING

**Mr. Jean H. Leroux (Shefford, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, a study published by an employee of the Department of National Defence found that Quebec is getting literally gypped out of \$650 million per year in regional allotment of defence spending.

*S. O. 31*

It is simply scandalous to see that, over the past 15 years, Quebec has received 27 per cent less than its fair share of defence spending. To add insult to injury, the study confirmed that francophones are under-represented in the higher ranks of the army. For example, there is only one francophone lieutenant-general out of nine and three majors-general out of 31. There has been no change on this front for at least 10 years.

This sheds some light on the government's decision to close the only francophone military college. We are tired of seeing that, year in, year out, Quebecers have remained so poorly served by the federal system in Canada.

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[English]

#### INCOME TAX

**Mr. Herb Grubel (Capilano—Howe Sound, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the finance minister has said repeatedly that he will make the taxation system fairer by increasing taxes on the rich. Here is a Canadian tale that contradicts him.

Two students did equally well in high school. One went to work at age 18. He had a good time, attended the rallies of the peace generation and spent all he earned. The other went to university and graduate school, worked during the summer, lived frugally and invested wisely. He held his first full time job as a professional at age 28.

Both men are now 50. The first makes \$30,000 and pays 14 per cent of it as income tax. The second makes over \$51,000. He belongs to the top 10 per cent of Canadians who pay 50 per cent of all income taxes.

This so-called rich person insists that fairness requires he pay less income taxes, not more as the minister suggests. I agree.

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#### CANADIAN COAST GUARD

**Mr. Ron MacDonald (Dartmouth, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this past Saturday a tragic accident occurred over the Margaree River in Nova Scotia when a coast guard helicopter carrying four people crashed. The helicopter was returning home after completing a fisheries patrol along the river.

Transport Canada pilot Stephen Hemphill of Dartmouth was killed in that crash. His daughter Lindsay was injured, as were Wes Barrington and Adrian Touseard, observers with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

Mr. Hemphill was an experienced pilot and was one of the first North Americans to fly over the north pole during the 1994 *Louis St. Laurent* mission. In addition to his outstanding service to Canada, he devoted much of his time to helping others. He received a Medal of Bravery from the Queen in 1979 after he rescued three young boys at sea. He was very active in the

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community for many years with the Dartmouth Crusaders swim team and coaching minor baseball.

I would ask that the House join with me in offering our deepest sympathies to Mr. Hemphill's wife and two children and our best wishes for a speedy recovery to those others injured in the crash.

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**BREAST CANCER**

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, a Canadian woman has a one in nine chance of getting breast cancer in her lifetime.

In fact, Canada has one of the highest rates of breast cancer in the world. Each year 16,000 women are diagnosed with breast cancer and tragically over 5,000 die each year from this disease.

In November 1993 Health Canada, in conjunction with a number of organizations, hosted a national forum on breast cancer. One of the principal recommendations was that we must develop a new sense of urgency to deal with this disease.

Specifically they recommended the need for improved research funding, coupled with a need to provide women with better access to information, effective screening and treatment programs.

We can and must do more to address this urgent and pressing need. Breast cancer can and must be beaten for the benefit of all Canadians.

\* \* \*

(1415)

**VISION AWARENESS WEEK**

**Mrs. Rose-Marie Ur (Lambton—Middlesex, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend my regards to the Canadian Association of Optometrists on the occasion of Vision Awareness Week, March 5 to 11.

For the second year in a row the CAO is focusing on its theme of vision connection to literacy. Although good vision is an essential building block for acquiring good reading skills, the linkage has not as yet been made prominent. For example, one in six children has a vision problem which makes it difficult to learn and read.

Through the events organized this week through the CAO Canadians will come to see that the attainment of full literacy skills depends not only on proper instruction but on good eyesight as well. A study has shown that 75 per cent of adults with low literacy skills also have vision problems.

On behalf of the residents of Lambton—Middlesex, I wish the Canadian Association of Optometrists every success.

**ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**

[*Translation*]

**PEACEKEEPERS IN FORMER YUGOSLAVIA**

**Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Leader of the Opposition, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, according to a spokesperson for the White House, President Clinton plans to send American soldiers to Croatia and Bosnia to protect UN peacekeepers during their withdrawal, if they are to withdraw, now that the president of Croatia has refused to extend the peacekeeping mission after March 31.

Could the Prime Minister tell us whether, when the U.S. president was in Ottawa, he discussed with the president the plan to send massive numbers of American troops to allow the withdrawal of UN peacekeepers from Bosnia and Croatia?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the answer is yes, we did discuss this problem, because I think NATO has an obligation to ensure that troops now on duty as peacekeepers in Croatia and Bosnia are able to return safe and sound. The Americans have already made a commitment to ensure secure withdrawal, and we hope they will, if Croatia asks UNPROFOR troops to withdraw from Croatian territory and such measures are necessary.

**Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Leader of the Opposition, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to know whether the Prime Minister intends to put pressure on the Croatian president and persuade him to reconsider his present position which, as the Prime Minister himself indicated, is to demand the withdrawal of UN peacekeepers from Croatia, once the deadline has expired?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, that is the option Canada has chosen, and we said so two weeks ago when a delegation of parliamentarians from Croatia came to Canada. I had the pleasure of meeting them, and I told them clearly I thought it was a mistake to ask the troops to withdraw at this point, because the risk of war was imminent once UN soldiers had left.

**Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Leader of the Opposition, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Prime Minister for clarifying his position on continuing the peace mission in Croatia.

As far as Bosnia is concerned, I would like to ask him whether he would agree that in this case as well, the mission of Canadian peacekeepers should be extended as well beyond March 31, since a withdrawal of UN peacekeepers at this time will merely allow the conflict to escalate, while the civilian population and refugees will be totally deprived of humanitarian aid?

[*English*]

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there will be a decision made about the continuation of the presence of our troops in Bosnia and Croatia. We have to

*Oral Questions*

make a decision this month and we will make it known to the House of Commons very soon.

We are of the view that it would be an error for the Croats to ask for the withdrawal of UN troops to get out of that situation but they have explained to us that they are afraid the presence of UN soldiers will create a de facto division of Croatia. They are afraid it might be another Cyprus. That seems to be their political reason to move. The danger is that if troops are out of Croatia by the end of the month there will be a direct confrontation with the Serbs which we think will cause a lot of deaths.

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[Translation]

**NATIONAL DEFENCE**

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, a study conducted by a National Defence researcher shows that Quebec and Western Canada are largely disadvantaged in the distribution of defence expenditures. In Quebec in particular, the shortfall is at least \$650 million per year.

How can the minister of defence explain that, with only 3 per cent of the population of Canada, Nova Scotia alone has more military personnel and as many civilian employees as Quebec, which is eight times bigger?

(1420)

[English]

**Hon. David M. Collette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, military installations were not built as part of some kind of infrastructure program to benefit various regions of the country. They were built to serve the real needs of the Canadian Armed Forces in two world wars. Since we fought two wars in Europe and since most of the troops left by ship it is natural that there would be a big military presence by virtue of the navy headquarters being in Halifax.

With respect to Quebec, obviously if the port closest to Europe is Halifax troops would not be dispatched from Montreal or somewhere else farther inland.

However, I should point out that later this year we will be opening the naval reserve headquarters in Quebec City. We have been opening a number of small naval operations along the St. Lawrence River and in the Gulf of St. Lawrence so that Quebec does have a naval presence.

[Translation]

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, all excuses are good to justify inequity. The strategic position of Ontario, for example, is completely different from that of Nova

Scotia; yet, Ontario receives its fair share of military investments.

Does the minister of defence not think that it would have been wise to go along with the proposal made by the official opposition last year and keep the military college in Saint-Jean open, in order to help correct the unfair treatment of Quebec with respect to the Canadian Forces?

[English]

**Hon. David M. Collette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have been through this argument a number of times before.

We felt that with the declining numbers of the armed forces we only needed one military college in Canada, located at Kingston.

This government is very eager that Royal Roads in B.C. and St-Jean in Quebec, those military colleges, have their facilities used for the ongoing betterment of the citizens in the region. It is for that reason that my colleague, the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, negotiated a very successful agreement with the local people in the St-Jean region over the objections of the Bloc Quebecois and the government in Quebec City.

\* \* \*

**MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT PENSIONS**

**Mr. Preston Manning (Calgary Southwest, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, today, budget day, represents a test of character for the government. Today we would like to find out if this government has the courage to reduce spending and the courage to hold the line on tax increases. More important, we will find out whether it has the courage to lead by example.

If the budget contains significant spending cuts it is obvious to Canadians that the first of these must be made at the top with respect to MPs' pensions.

My question is for the President of the Treasury Board. Which members of the cabinet will be setting the example of spending cuts at the top by opting out of the obscene MPs' pension plan?

**Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it has been made quite clear that when the pension bill is approved by this Parliament there will be 60 days that members will have to consider that, including hon. colleagues in the third party.

When it comes to showing leadership we have cut taxpayer contribution to this pension plan by fully one-third, \$3.3 million, and we are showing leadership in expenditure reduction.

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Preston Manning (Calgary Southwest, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the test of the courage of these remarks is not whether they make sense in this House but whether they will make sense in the constituencies.

The Canada pension plan, according to the government's own report, will be wiped out in 20 years unless there are significant increases in contributions. While Canadians' pensions are being put at risk the financial security of senior ministers and MPs is assured by this pension plan—business as usual at the MP pension trough.

How can the minister stand here today knowing that many ordinary Canadians are in danger of getting no Canada pension at all and still defend pension provisions for senior ministers like the Deputy Prime Minister who will be collecting millions in retirement?

**Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I think was pointed out in the consultant's report that was tabled last year at the Lapointe commission, when it comes to compensation levels overall, and it must be looked at in this context, members of Parliament are lower than the equivalent in the private sector.

(1425)

This particular reduction in MP pensions will make them even further down the scale in terms of that comparison. On top of that, members of Parliament contribute twice as much to the pension plan in many cases as private sector plans.

The hon. member still has his RRSPs and his clothing allowance, all of which he can—

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Preston Manning (Calgary Southwest, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, to date at least 48 of the 52 Reform MPs in this House have confirmed they will opt out of the MP pension plan.

If the minister cannot tell the House which ministers will be opting out can he at least give us an idea of the number of members of the Liberal caucus who will be opting out of this pension plan?

**Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is a personal choice and one that members will have an opportunity to make over a 60-day period once the bill has passed through Parliament.

I want to reiterate that there is a reduction in this plan. There is no retroactivity to the plan but I noticed that the head of the National Citizen's Coalition does not think that is a good idea. It is fair that members should continue to earn what they have earned up to the point where the pension bill is passed.

Overall, every member of this House, cabinet or non-cabinet, faces a reduction in the pension benefit, an overall reduction in the compensation package. I think that is showing the leadership that we need going into this budget today.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

**NATIONAL DEFENCE**

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

According to a study done for the Department of National Defence, francophones are grossly underrepresented among senior officers in the armed forces. The study shows that French-speaking officers are concentrated in nursing and chaplain services.

How can the minister explain that, in the top military ranks, francophones account for only one out of nine lieutenant-generals and three out of 31 major-generals, when his government has closed the only French-language military college in Canada?

**Hon. David M. Collenette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, first of all, I must point out that the Canadian Forces better reflect the Canadian reality of two official languages.

[*English*]

Mr. Speaker, the armed forces is probably the one institution in this country that reflects the duality of Canada's linguistic constitutional reality more than anything else. Thirty per cent of the armed forces personnel are francophones, about 25 per cent at the officer level. There is room for improvement and that is why when the postings and promotions for general officer level are made public shortly we will see francophones in very significant positions within the hierarchy of the armed forces.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Jean-Marc Jacob (Charlesbourg, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I think that the minister has just confirmed that francophones are overrepresented in the junior ranks and underrepresented in the senior ranks.

How can the minister of defence justify such underrepresentation of francophones in the Canadian Forces, where there are almost no French-speaking officers in personnel selection, security and intelligence?

[*English*]

**Hon. David M. Collenette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member really should take a stroll over to national defence headquarters one day. I think he will be amazed at the degree of bilingual discussion and personnel there. Twenty-five per cent of all the senior officers in the armed forces are francophone.

*Oral Questions*

This will be improved upon, as I said, when the postings are announced shortly.

\* \* \*

(1430)

**PENSIONS OF MEMBERS**

**Mr. Jim Silye (Calgary Centre, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberal two-tier pension reform is inadequate, unfair and in fact illegal in the private sector. The MP accrual rate of 4 per cent is double the legal limit allowed for the rest of Canadians under the Income Tax Act.

How can the President of the Treasury Board justify this blatant double standard in light of the job losses that will have to be announced this afternoon in the budget?

**Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the basic pension plan in accordance with the Income Tax Act is 2 per cent. As in the case in the private sector, there are many supplementary plans where additional moneys are put aside. It is quite common for that to happen in our community.

Let me also point out that what is not common is that in this case members of Parliament pay double what is normal in the private sector in terms of their own contributions. In spite of all that, we are reducing the amount of the taxpayers' contribution to the MP pension fund by a third, by 33 per cent.

**Mr. Jim Silye (Calgary Centre, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the solution to a fair and proper pension plan is simple: Pass a bill in the House that would make MPs subject to the same laws as all other Canadians. That way an MP pension plan would be no better than that of any other Canadian or as good as any plan that is out there in the real world.

Why will the minister not consider abolishing his ill fated, inadequate, still gold plated, two-tier pension plan and make it the same as those in the private sector?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I can understand that members of the Reform Party are taking aim at the cheapest thing they can find. Members of Parliament are terribly underpaid in this nation. At this time they are trying to undermine the institution.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Chrétien (Saint-Maurice):** When a member of Parliament is making less money than the worst hockey player in the NHL, half of what a hockey player makes, I think I understand the problem of Reform Party members. They know they are not

very good and they know they will not benefit from the plan because they will be defeated in the next election.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**BLOOD SUPPLY**

**Mrs. Pauline Picard (Drummond, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health.

Last Friday, the minister told the media that she still had not read in detail the interim report of the Krever commission, which was submitted to cabinet ten days before.

How can the Minister of Health, who said on several occasions in this House that she was anxiously waiting for the Krever report to take action regarding the tainted blood issue, justify that on Friday, ten days after the tabling of that report, she still had not read it in detail, considering that the health and lives of thousands of people are at stake?

**Hon. Diane Marleau (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I said that we were thoroughly reviewing judge Krever's interim report and that we would provide a detailed answer as possible.

**Mrs. Pauline Picard (Drummond, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, will the minister at least tell us that she made the necessary representations to the Minister of Finance, so that he does not cut into the funds allocated to the federal agencies responsible for the safety of our blood supply, since these agencies already lack the financial resources necessary to fulfil their mandate?

[English]

**Hon. Diane Marleau (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have taken my position as Minister of Health very seriously. We at Health Canada and I as Minister of Health have not waited for the recommendations of Justice Krever. We have doubled the resources of the Bureau of Biologics within the past year.

We will continue to ensure that there are adequate resources to enforce the regulatory powers of Health Canada.

\* \* \*

**PENSIONS OF MEMBERS**

**Mrs. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary North, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, this afternoon in his budget speech the finance minister is sure to ask that we all make sacrifices for the good of the country. He will lecture Canadians on the need to make tough choices. Yet Liberals are providing themselves with pensions twice as rich as the best in the private sector. They will get their pensions at age 55 even though they want to raise the age limit to receive the Canada pension plan from 65 to 67.



*Oral Questions*

(1435)

Is the Prime Minister telling Canadians to do as I say and not as I do?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, everybody knows in Canada that to be a member of Parliament is a very unusual occupation. We do not come to Parliament to be here for 50 years. That is very rare. There are only two of us who have been here pretty long: the Solicitor General and myself. The average stay in the House is less than six years. That is a reality people understand.

We have said to the Canadian people very clearly in the red book what we were to do. We went even further than that and we campaigned on that.

I understand members of the Reform Party tried to present a budget last week and it was a complete flop because they were not competent enough to prepare a competent budget. Being so incompetent they know their value is not very good and they do not want to be overcompensated.

**Mrs. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary North, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, we hear a lot of rhetoric from the competent members opposite about fairness and equity.

Will the Prime Minister explain to Canadians why there is one standard of fairness for Liberal members of Parliament and another for the rest of Canadians?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I think members of Parliament who were elected previously have acquired some rights. There is a rule in democracy that we do not pass retroactive legislation. When people have acquired some rights we respect the rights that have been acquired.

I know that members of the Reform Party are desperate. Since they have no policy except the same rhetoric all the time, they now choose to go for the cheap shot. You know the people who have no generosity, but the Canadian people understand that we have good members of Parliament who work very hard, are underpaid and deserve every penny we are paying for them as taxpayers of Canada.

\* \* \*

*[Translation]***THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Mrs. Monique Guay (Laurentides, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, on February 21, the Quebec court of appeal declared the federal regulations on PCBs unconstitutional. This decision puts an abrupt end to double regulation of PCBs and leaves the field open for Quebec, whose standards are much stricter than Ottawa's.

Does the minister agree that this recognition by the courts of provincial jurisdiction in the area of toxic products invalidates a

significant part of federal environmental legislation on the control of toxic products?

**Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is true that the court of appeal dismissed the interim order issued by the Minister of the Environment, the hon. member for Lac-Saint-Jean.

The court decided that the interim order he issued following the incident in Saint-Basile-le-Grand was improper. The court decided not to rule on specific sections of the Canadian Environmental Protection Act. The interim order issued by the hon. member for Lac-Saint-Jean was declared unconstitutional.

**Mrs. Monique Guay (Laurentides, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, even though the decision ends double regulation of toxic products, will the minister confirm the statement by her parliamentary secretary for the environment that the federal government will study the possibility of appealing this decision to the Supreme Court?

*[English]*

**Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, to clarify, the Court of Appeal ruled that the interim order put in place by the then Minister of the Environment, the hon. member for Lac-Saint-Jean, was unconstitutional.

It ruled on the PCB interim order that has subsequently been replaced by chlorobiphenyl regulations. It specifically did not rule on the constitutionality of the application of CEPA. It protected the integrity of CEPA.

(1440)

I think the majority of Canadians would support the notion that the federal government has a very specific role to play in the cross-border transportation of toxic materials. It did, however, rule that the interim order put in place by the then Minister of the Environment was unconstitutional.

**Mr. Guy H. Arseneault (Restigouche—Chaleur, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, global warming is a problem that threatens the survival of the earth—

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Restigouche—Chaleur has the floor.

**Mr. Arseneault:** I guess I have a fan club in the Reform Party. They may not take global warming seriously but we do on this side of the House. We know that it threatens the environment and that inefficient use of energy is a contributing factor.

Could the Minister of Natural Resources inform the House about the federal buildings initiative and what it is doing to reduce expenditures and at the same time get our house in order environmentally?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member has indicated, the federal government has initiated a very important program called the federal buildings initiative, or otherwise known as the FBI program, that operates throughout the federal government in all departments. It is fully operational now. It speaks to increased energy efficiency through the retrofitting of all federal government buildings and installations.

Let me update the House on the success of the program to date.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh.

**Ms. McLellan:** As the hon. member for Restigouche—Chaleur has indicated, while the hon members of the third party may not be interested in energy efficiency and climate change we on the government side are.

Let me say very briefly that we have initiated 80 projects involving over 2,400 federal government buildings.

**The Speaker:** I am always reluctant to intervene either in a question or an answer, but probably two kicks at the can is as far as we go.

\* \* \*

**CANADA PENSION PLAN**

**Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, you are doing a good job. The Superintendent of Financial Institutions reported that the Canada pension plan fund would be broke in 20 years and the projected premiums paid by workers and employers would have to more than double to keep the fund afloat. The contingent liability in the plan is estimated at \$500 billion, about as big as our whole government debt.

I did not give you a compliment, Mr. Speaker, just so that I could ask a long one. Could the Minister of Human Resources Development—

**The Speaker:** I am always flattered by these comments and I know the hon. member will want to do as good a job as I do by putting his question.

**Mr. Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville):** Mr. Speaker, I was asking my question.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville):** My apologies. Could the Minister of Human Resources Development tell us why his review of social security programs did not deal with this looming crisis?

**Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Human Resources Development and Minister of Western Economic Diversification, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am very glad the hon. member got to put his question, but it is a question that does not make an awful lot of sense or have relevance.

He should know that the Canada pension plan is subject to the five-year annual review of federal-provincial finance ministers as part of the statutes or the legislation itself. That review will take place this fall.

One thing we have to look at, because it is a matter of some concern, is that over the past year or two there has been a substantial rise not in the income security portion but in the disability portion of the Canada pension plan, which is one of the fundamental causes for the increased outflow during the past year and a half.

(1445)

We have to look at this matter. It is a consequence of other jurisdictions taking decisions on things like workers' compensation that as a result people become part of the CPP regime. We will be looking at this. It will be part of the review. I can assure the minister that once again, the government is in good hands.

**Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I am not a minister yet.

The Liberal Party looks after its own pensions. I wish it would do this with as much enthusiasm for the rest of Canadians. Not only will this rate increase force an increase in payroll taxes that will kill jobs, but younger Canadians will also question whether CPP is even a good investment.

MPs will be given a choice to opt out of the MPs pension plan. Will younger Canadians be given the same opportunity to opt out of this bankrupt pension plan?

**Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Human Resources Development and Minister of Western Economic Diversification, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is a very strange and curious question. It comes from a member of a party which just a week ago tabled its own so-called budget proposal.

That proposal recommended the total abolition of all parental or maternity benefits. This would have totally denied any kind of fiscal support for close to 200,000 mothers in this country. It would have denied and abolished disability benefits for close to 200,000 Canadians. It would have taken over \$3 million out of the OAS.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**SOCIAL HOUSING**

**Mr. Jean-Paul Marchand (Québec—Est, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, last Friday the Quebec minister of municipal affairs and housing rejected the federal government's proposal to increase the amount individuals must pay for social housing from 25 to 30 per cent of their income.

My question is for the minister of public works. Since the Quebec government has decided not to increase the amount to be paid for social housing, can the minister tell us whether he

*Oral Questions*

intends to reverse his position and maintain at the current level the amount to be paid for social housing?

[English]

**Hon. David Dingwall (Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I suggest that the hon. member be somewhat patient. The Minister of Finance has the representations and has had them for quite some time.

[Translation]

**Mr. Jean-Paul Marchand (Québec-Est, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would have expected a better answer from the minister who has nevertheless found \$600,000 to build a brick wall in his honour in his riding.

Are we to understand that, by virtue of this measure which serves to increase requirements made of individuals in social housing, the federal government would once again download the burden of its deficit onto the backs of the most destitute and that the 110,000 affected households in Quebec can expect nothing further from this federal government?

[English]

**Hon. David Dingwall (Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in terms of the premise of the hon. member's question, I disagree totally. Perhaps he could be a little more patient. His answer will come later this afternoon.

\* \* \*

**HEALTH**

**Mr. Grant Hill (Macleod, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the Krever inquiry has just tabled its interim report. It has some very specific recommendations on how to decrease the amount of AIDS in our country. Since lives could be saved, will the health minister move quickly to implement those recommendations?

**Hon. Diane Marleau (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member will understand that we have made the report public. We are funding the Krever commission. We are very interested in taking whatever actions are necessary. The member must remember that there are other players in the blood supply system, including the provincial governments, the Canadian Red Cross, and other partners. They are also taking this very seriously.

**Mr. Grant Hill (Macleod, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, there is some degree of inconsistency in this minister's response. On the issue of testing for AIDS for immigrants, the minister said no. Since this particular issue will save lives, I simply ask: Will the minister take haste to look after these recommendations?

(1450)

**Hon. Diane Marleau (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have taken haste and we have not waited for the recommendations to take action. Many of the recommendations have already been acted on. We will take action on any others that are within our responsibilities.

\* \* \*

**HUMAN RIGHTS**

**Mr. Sarkis Assadourian (Don Valley North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Secretary of State for Latin America and Africa.

In Pakistan, Salam Masih, 14, and his uncle Rehmat were convicted to die for writing anti-Islamic slogans on a mosque wall. I am pleased to hear that the conviction was overturned by the high court.

What action has the secretary of state taken on behalf of the Government of Canada to ensure that human rights of minorities are protected in Pakistan?

**Hon. Christine Stewart (Secretary of State (Latin America and Africa), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada is very pleased, as is my colleague, that the appeal court overturned the conviction and execution of Salam Masih and his uncle in Pakistan. We believe it was in part due to our government's representations to the Government of Pakistan, along with representations by other members of the international community.

We remain very concerned about the human rights abuses particularly as they are brought against religious minorities in Pakistan. We will continue to work with the Government of Pakistan along with the NGO community to correct this.

\* \* \*

**TRADE**

**Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, PC):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister.

As part of the Prime Minister's promise on February 14 to this House, would the Prime Minister please inform Parliament as to the outcome of his discussions with President Clinton regarding the American restrictions on Canadian sugar and products containing sugar?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I was asked by many members on this side to raise that question with the President of the United States. I mentioned it to him and made it very clear that in our view there was no problem at all. It is an area where there is a perfect balance of trade. There is no surplus on either side. Therefore, we do not understand why the United States would like to undo what is working very well at this moment.

*Oral Questions***FORESTRY**

**Hon. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the parliamentary secretary for northern affairs.

Today, budget day, we are expecting to see cuts for every Canadian. I would like to suggest that the government is overlooking a source of revenue because of its inability to act on stumpage fees in the Yukon. It would be environmentally sustainable and would in fact generate revenue.

Right now stumpage fees are 20 cents as compared to \$60 in northern B.C. That is one-third of 1 per cent of what the northern B.C. stumpage fees are. The federal government could raise \$19 million a year on stumpage fees. Why is the government not acting now?

**Mr. Jack Iyerak Anawak (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Lib.):**

*[Editor's Note: Member spoke in Inuktitut.]*

*[English]*

Mr. Speaker, the minister is personally interested in this. The department has put aside some time to study this area. As the hon. member mentioned, stumpage fees in the Yukon are only 20 cents per cubic metre and \$30 per cubic metre elsewhere. Indian affairs is now looking at the whole issue in order to ensure that the Yukon people benefit from the stumpage fees as well as to make sure environmental measures are put in place so that the Yukon forest is not decimated.

\* \* \*

*[Translation]*

**FISHERY RESOURCES**

**Mr. Yvan Bernier (Gaspé, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans.

The European Union does not accept NAFO's decision regarding turbot quota allocation between NAFO member countries. If no agreement is reached, turbot stocks could be decimated, like other overfished species in the past.

(1455)

Does the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans see that urgent measures are needed to protect fishery resources in the Atlantic and does he intend to do all in his power to have the Minister of Foreign Affairs convince the European Community that protecting this resource makes good sense? What does he intend to do?

*[English]*

**Hon. Brian Tobin (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I welcome the member here today and thank him for his excellent question. I know he has been busy with the hearings in the province of Quebec. Obviously he has been listening and that is why he is having trouble speaking. He has come to the conclusion that the future is here in a united

federation and it is where we solve our problems. We are delighted to have him back.

We had a very good decision.

*[Translation]*

At the NAFO conference in Brussels, we made good decisions for the fishermen of Quebec and Canada. We gave Quebec fishermen new opportunities.

*[English]*

I assure the member that we are not going to throw away that opportunity. We are going to preserve the stock because we have the united will of all of the fishermen, tous les pêcheurs du Canada, behind the government to solve this problem.

\* \* \*

**IMMIGRATION**

**Mr. Art Hanger (Calgary Northeast, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the youngest minister eligible for the full, unreduced pension.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh.

**The Speaker:** My colleagues, usually when we put questions we address the minister by his or her correct title. I know the hon. member will want to do that as he puts his question now.

**Mr. Hanger:** Mr. Speaker, late Friday a press release was circulated which announced officially that the minister for immigration intended to sign a treaty with the United States that would allow Canada to share responsibilities for refugee claimants with the U.S.

I ask the minister of immigration, what exactly will the terms of this treaty be and why did he refuse to sign the treaty one year ago?

**Hon. Sergio Marchi (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.):** I did not know he was addressing it to me, Mr. Speaker.

We should look at what the Prime Minister of Canada and the President of the United States did over the two days. Much was accomplished. There was a good mood among Americans and Canadians in the type of relationship we have.

The President and the Prime Minister have mandated their respective ministers to report back in six months with respect to negotiating a memorandum of understanding on asylum seekers. It will not only be on the basis of the integrity of the system so that refugee claimants can take one good kick at the can either in the United States or in Canada, but also with the view to better protecting those refugee claimants.

*Routine Proceedings*

It is a positive undertaking. The Americans were not ready one year ago. I am confident that after six months of discussions we will be able to have an agreement that not only protects the North American context but leads the way for good agreements based on integrity and protection.

\* \* \*

**JUSTICE**

**Hon. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice.

Recently the government announced that the war crimes unit in the justice department would be cut from 24 to 11 employees. In January the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration and the Minister of Justice announced a strategy to deport war criminals currently in Canada. The minister stated that Canada would not become a safe haven for such criminals.

Would the minister say how the government can maintain these policy goals when the war crimes unit will be so drastically reduced?

(1500)

**Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we can achieve those goals by taking action. That is exactly what we have done in the case of suspected war criminals.

Working closely with my colleague, the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, we have identified a number of cases involving persons from the second world war in respect of whom we have instituted or will institute civil proceedings for their denaturalization and deportation.

Second, in relation to more modern wars and conflicts, we have already instituted a proceeding in respect of a suspect from the conflict in Rwanda.

We are committed to the principle that Canada will not become a haven for those suspected of war crimes abroad. We are keeping resources, both in justice and in immigration and citizenship, sufficient to allow us to achieve that objective.

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS***[English]***COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE**

## GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

**Mr. John Harvard (Winnipeg St. James, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the report of the Standing Committee on Government Operations on Bill C-58, an act to amend the Public Service Staff Relations

Act and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act, without amendment.

\* \* \*

**PETITIONS**

## JUSTICE

**Mrs. Jan Brown (Calgary Southeast, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise before the House once again to present the 16th petition in this course of action undertaken on behalf of constituents who wish to halt the early release from prison of Robert Paul Thompson. April 11, 1995 is the date set for the parole hearing.

The petitioners I represent are concerned about making the 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.

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

## HUMAN RIGHTS

**Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I rise today to present a petition on behalf of 30 individuals, nine of whom are from the constituency of Wild Rose. The 21 remaining individuals come from throughout Alberta.

The petition states: "Your petitioners call upon Parliament to act quickly to amend the Canadian Human Rights Act to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and to adopt all necessary measures to recognize the fully equality of same sex relationships in federal law."

I present this today on their behalf. I am opposed to this idea.

## INCOME TAX

**Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I have several petitions to present today, two of which relate to tax increases and the opposition of my constituents to any move by the government to increase taxes.

Altogether I have 48 sheets of names opposing tax increases. I heartily concur.

## HUMAN RIGHTS

**Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I am also pleased to present a petition on behalf of constituents who are opposed to the extension of same-sex benefits. I am pleased to offer the petition with my complete support.

(1505)

*[Translation]*

## RETIREMENT AGE

**Mr. Osvaldo Nunez (Bourassa, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to present a first petition on behalf of 262 residents of my

riding of Bourassa and the greater Montreal area who object to retirement age being moved from 65 to 67.

This petition was signed by many seniors from Montréal–Nord and a large number of FTQ workers. These petitioners argue that every Canadian citizen contributes to superannuation and therefore has a legitimate claim to a pension upon reaching 65 years of age, which is already a lot.

## REGISTERED RETIREMENT SAVINGS PLANS

**Mr. Osvaldo Nunez (Bourassa, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would also like to present a second petition. It concerns registered retirement savings plans. The 126 petitioners object to the proposed new tax on RRSPs, as such plans are the only way for Canadians to secure a comfortable retirement. Just hours before the Minister of Finance tables his budget, this proposed tax could jeopardize the financial security of thousands of Canadians and Quebecers. Needless to say I strongly support both petitions.

[English]

## THE FAMILY

**Mr. Jay Hill (Prince George—Peace River, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I am presenting several petitions today on behalf of my constituents of Prince George—Peace River.

The first petition requests that Parliament oppose any legislation that would directly or indirectly redefine family, including the provision of marriage and family benefits to those who are not family as defined in the petition.

## JUSTICE

**Mr. Jay Hill (Prince George—Peace River, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the second petition requests that Parliament provide a remedy, to intervene and bring forward a national public registry of past and present sexual offenders to better protect the children of our communities.

## RIGHTS OF THE UNBORN

**Mr. Jay Hill (Prince George—Peace River, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the third petition prays that Parliament amend the Criminal Code to extend the same protection enjoyed by born human beings to unborn human beings.

## ASSISTED SUICIDE

**Mr. Jay Hill (Prince George—Peace River, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the next petition requests that current laws regarding assisted suicide be enforced and no changes be made to the law which would sanction or allow suicide or euthanasia.

## HUMAN RIGHTS

**Mr. Jay Hill (Prince George—Peace River, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the last petition I have to present today asks Parliament not to indicate societal approval of same sex relationships or of

## Routine Proceedings

homosexuality by amending legislation to include the undefined phrase sexual orientation.

## INCOME TAX

**Mr. Jag Bhaduria (Markham—Whitchurch—Stouffville, Ind. Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to table two petitions signed by the constituents of Markham—Whitchurch—Stouffville.

The petitioners call on the government to declare 1995 as a tax freeze year to show leadership to all Canadians, not to increase the tax burden on middle and low income working Canadians and to reduce the deficit by cutting wastage and by reducing the overall expenses of every government department by at least 5 per cent.

## HUMAN RIGHTS

**Mr. Jim Jordan (Leeds—Grenville, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have three petitions. Two are on the same topic, asking that the privileges which society accords to heterosexual couples not be extended to same sex relationships.

I personally am pleased to support those petitioners.

## JUSTICE

**Mr. Jim Jordan (Leeds—Grenville, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the next petition may be a little redundant, but perhaps the minister can accept it as encouragement to move on. Its petitioners express concern at the recent court decision allowing extreme drunkenness as a defence against serious crime.

I also support that petition and support the minister in his efforts to look after that major problem in our legal system.

## HUMAN RIGHTS

**Mr. Jack Frazer (Saanich—Gulf Islands, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, it is my duty and honour to rise in the House to present a petition, duly certified by the clerk of petitions, on behalf of 50 constituents of Saanich—Gulf Islands and surrounding area.

The petitioners call on Parliament to oppose any amendments to the Canadian Human Rights Act or the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms which provide for the inclusion of the phrase sexual orientation.

## FIREARMS

**Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions that are identical. The petitioners ask that Parliament support laws that will severely punish all violent criminals who use weapons in the commission of a crime.

Second, the petitioners support new Criminal Code firearms control provisions which recognize and protect the right of law-abiding citizens to own and use recreational firearms.

Last, the petitioners support legislation which will repeal and modify existing gun control laws which have not improved public safety or have not proven to be cost effective or have

*Routine Proceedings*

proven to be overly complex so as to be ineffective and/or unenforceable.

(1510)

I concur with and support these petitioners.

## INCOME TAX

**Mr. Jim Hart (Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I have three petitions today. A total of 436 petitioners from the riding of Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt call on Parliament to reduce government spending instead of increasing taxes and implement a taxpayer protection act to limit federal spending.

I concur with my petitioners.

**Mr. Paul E. Forseth (New Westminster—Burnaby, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition today from my constituents in New Westminster—Burnaby.

The petitioners wish to inform the government that they are already overburdened with taxation due to high government spending. They feel that the government will increase taxes in this afternoon's budget.

Therefore they pray and request that Parliament reduce government spending instead of increasing taxes and implement a taxpayer protection act to limit federal spending.

## HUMAN RIGHTS

**Mr. Paul E. Forseth (New Westminster—Burnaby, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I also present two other petitions on behalf of those in my riding and in the general area.

These petitioners request that Parliament amend the Canadian Human Rights Act to include sexual orientation as a basis for protection against discrimination and to fully recognize relationships based on financial and emotional dependency and same sex relationships.

## INCOME TAXES

**Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions today.

The first one is signed by over 2,500 people. The citizens express concern that they are overburdened with taxation due to high government spending and that the federal government is considering tax increases in the next federal budget.

Therefore the petitioners humbly pray and request that Parliament reduce government spending instead of increasing taxes.

## FIREARMS

**Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, my second petition is signed by 4,888 people from my riding.

The petitioners say that the control of law-abiding citizens and responsible gun owners is more than enough to ensure public safety, and the current and proposed laws criminalizing certain firearm activities are not necessary.

The petitioners humbly pray and request that Parliament support laws that will severely punish all violent criminals who use weapons in the commission of a crime, that Parliament support new Criminal Code firearms control provisions which recognize and protect the right of law-abiding citizens to own and use recreational firearms.

Finally, they request that Parliament support legislation that will repeal and modify existing gun control laws which have not improved public safety or have not proven to be cost effective.

\* \* \*

## QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

**Mrs. Jan Brown (Calgary Southeast, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. On February 20, 1995 I brought a point of order pursuant to Standing Order 39 regarding a question that I placed on the Order Paper on September 30, 1994.

The hon. member for Kingston and the Islands was gracious enough to respond to my request. He indicated that I would have the answer to my question by the end of last week. It is 150 days now since I have placed my question on the order paper with no result.

Also, with all due respect to the member for Kingston and the Islands who chastised me for not going to the Library of Parliament for the information, may I tell the hon. member that the annual reports to which he referred me are bordering on useless they are so vague.

Once again I would like to place these questions on the Order Paper for 1992 and 1993: What was the total amount of funds received by individuals and groups from the Canada Council? Who were these individuals? For what specific projects did they receive funding? How much did they receive?

[Translation]

**Mr. Jean-Paul Marchand (Québec—Est, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I have a serious problem. I also placed a question on the Order Paper on October 19, 130 days ago. This question had two parts: a) and b). Finally, last Friday, after a little more than a hundred days, I received an answer to the first half of my question. You can see my problem.

I wonder if there is any hope of getting the second part of my question answered. I find this somewhat unfortunate because, frankly, the information requested in that part is simpler, shorter, yet more important to me. Can I appeal to someone to ask for some justice and get this answer?

*Routine Proceedings*

(1515)

Would the hon. member be so kind as to answer the question regarding federal government properties in Quebec?

**The Deputy Speaker:** I will recognize the hon. parliamentary secretary first on the two points of order just raised, and then to answer questions on the Order Paper.

[*English*]

**Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with respect to the first point of order that was raised by the hon. member for Calgary Southeast, I indicated last week that I hoped I would have an answer by the end of the week and I am still optimistic. It obviously was not last week, but as soon as an answer is available I will provide the hon. member with an answer.

As to her allegation that reports to the Canada Council are vague, I have had occasion to look at the reports and have read them from time to time. My recollection is that there are substantial lists and no vagueness about them. They simply say who got grants. Perhaps the hon. member regards that as vague. Her question does ask who received grants. I would have thought that there was a pretty good source in those annual reports. I urge her to have a second look.

In any event, I will do my best to provide an answer for her at an early date.

With respect to the hon. member for Québec—Est, my recommendation is that he go through that box of materials I tabled in the House on Friday in response to his question.

I cannot say that I looked at all 1,200 pages before I tabled the documents, but I think he will find the answer in there. If he does not, I will take his representation as one I am prepared to raise with the minister involved. I will see if the additional information can be provided to the hon. member with dispatch.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I wonder if the parliamentary secretary might also make the usual observation that he does on these occasions.

**Mr. Milliken:** Mr. Speaker, I was so put off by all these points of order that I forgot that I do have a question to answer today. Question No. 115 will be answered today.

[*Text*]

Question No. 115—**Mr. Hermanson:**

With respect to the \$4.8 million grant to build a museum of industry in the riding of Saint-Maurice, (a) under what program was this grant awarded, (b) what guidelines were followed to the awarding of such a grant, (c) how many permanent and part time jobs were created and (d) how many contracts have been awarded and to what companies and/or individuals?

**Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** I am informed by the department of human Resources and the Federal Office of Regional Development—Quebec, FORD-Q, as follows:

In so far as Human Resources Development Canada, HRDC, is concerned:

a) b) and c) The Centre de l'interprétation de l'industrie de Shawinigan Inc., CII, is administered by a council of community workers, comprised of a variety of citizens. The building it is operating in at the moment is owned by Hydro-Quebec. Presently funding for this building is provided by five groups: ALCAN, Stone Console-Division Belgo, pulp and paper mill, Hydro-Quebec, the city of Shawinigan and the city of Shawinigan-South.

In the last four years HRDC has been providing the centre with local employment development projects, indirect funding. The centre acts as the sponsor for these training programs.

To date Human Resources Development Canada has committed a total of \$1,212,359 toward the Centre de l'interprétation de l'industrie de Shawinigan Inc.

| Program               | Fiscal Year | Participants | Amount      |
|-----------------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| challenge             | 1992-1993   | 4            | \$10,152    |
|                       | 1993-1994   | 4            | \$10,152    |
|                       | 1994-1995   | 5            | \$16,086    |
| job development       | 1991-1992   | 4            | \$44,206    |
|                       | 1992-1993   | 4            | \$52,489    |
|                       | 1993-1994   | 4            | \$42,900    |
| UI section 25         | 1992-1993   | 2            | \$10,874    |
|                       | 1994-1995   | 2            | \$25,500    |
| community development | 1994-1995   | *            | \$1,000,000 |
|                       | 1995-1996   |              |             |
|                       | 1996-1997   |              |             |

\*The program is just beginning and at this time it is too early to estimate the number of people who will be employed during the next three operating years.

The guidelines followed can be found in the ED component of the employment manual, which includes several volumes. However, all Canada employment centres are equipped with these manuals.

In so far as the Federal Office of Regional Development—Quebec, (FORD-Q), is concerned:

a) b) and c) FORD-Q has awarded a contribution of \$3.5 million to the Centre de l'interprétation de l'industrie de Shawinigan Inc., CII, under the regional development program, RDP. This CII project is eligible for assistance as a facility that will foster regional economic development and should create 300 jobs during the construction phase.

In addition, the centre will generate 40 direct jobs for its operations and 200 indirect jobs among concession holders, subcontractors and other firms in the region once it is up and running.



*Government Orders*

In the short term the centre will stimulate a variety of other tourism investments, particularly in the accommodation sector, in addition to helping to consolidate regional economic infrastructure. As well, it will contribute to preserving regional industrial heritage.

d) The responsibility for the different contracts lies with CII.  
[English]

**The Deputy Speaker:** The questions as enumerated by the parliamentary secretary have been answered.

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

**The Deputy Speaker:** Shall the remaining questions stand?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

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## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

### FIREARMS ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-68, an act respecting firearms and other weapons, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

**Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I thought they were going to continue with questions from before question period. Is that correct?

**The Deputy Speaker:** I am sorry, I missed the question because I was speaking with the clerk.

**Mr. Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville):** Mr. Speaker, I was referring to the procedure in which we were going to complete the questions that occurred before question period, before debate ceased. Are we going to continue with debate?

**The Deputy Speaker:** This is continuing with debate because the secretary of state has not returned to the Chamber.

**Mr. Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville):** Mr. Speaker, a little over a year ago the Minister of Justice was quoted in a number of newspapers as saying that he believed that only the police and military should have guns.

We have been through Bill C-68 and it is clear to me and will soon be clear to all Canadians that the minister has taken the first step toward achieving this personal objective.

After reading this legislation it is also clear that the Minister of Justice and his cabinet colleagues have confused gun control with crime control. Anyone who studies this issue for more than a couple of hours will realize that there is no connection between controlling the legal use of guns by law-abiding gun owners and reducing crime.

The Minister of Justice cannot tell us specifically how controlling guns and registering guns will reduce crime, and the Bloc has made that similar observation.

The minister keeps saying that chiefs of police have asked for it. The minister cannot hide behind that answer forever. Sooner or later he has to be responsible for answering his own questions. He has to defend his legislation with reasoned arguments and not expect others outside this House to come to his rescue.

(1520)

If I start to sound angry during my remarks it is because not only am I expressing my own dissatisfaction, disappointment and disgust with the Liberal government's costly, intrusive, bureaucratic and ineffective legislation, but I am also expressing the outrage I read in the more than 1,000 letters I have received and the outrage that I hear in the hundreds of phone calls we receive, and the outrage I hear when I walk the streets of the communities in my constituency, and the absolute outrage I hear when I attend rally after rally of responsible, law-abiding citizens, whether in Saskatchewan, Newfoundland, Alberta or Nova Scotia. The outrage that these people express to me wherever I go is something this government must consider.

I support some of the provisions in the government's proposals calling for tougher sanctions for violent criminals and its proposed attempts to control the smuggling of firearms. I support some of these measures because they will really help control crime. Laws do not make people good but they do help to restrain evil.

On the other hand, because there is no evidence or convincing argument to show that public safety will be improved I will oppose ineffective proposals to register rifles and shotguns and the banning of firearms or any measures which would further restrict the ownership of handguns, scary looking guns, semi-automatic rifles, crossbows, and the banning of firearms or any measures which would further restrict the ownership of these, even replica toy guns.

If the Liberal Party can demonstrate how registration of all firearms is the most cost effective way of improving public safety, reducing violent crime and saving the most lives I and most Canadians will support the minister's proposals if he can show that they are the most cost effective method. This he has not done. He fails to answer this challenge and therefore we must oppose this legislation.

I repeat my personal position. I support cost effective gun controls which improve public safety and reduce the criminal use of firearms and if elected I will work to repeal ineffective gun controls which do not meet these objectives.

Another Reform principle from our party constitution says that it is the duty of all members of Parliament to their constituents that should supersede their obligation to their political parties. Reform MPs are duty bound to represent their constituents' wishes on this issue. I only hope that the Liberal government has the courage to let their members of Parliament do the same.

*Government Orders*

If the Liberal Party would allow a free vote on this bill I think we would really see whether there is broad public support for this. We would see whether that is true, as the minister claims.

I think it would prove that the Liberal Party believes in true democracy between elections as well as during them. I wish it would come clean on this issue and allow that free vote to take place.

Whether a Canadian is a gun owner or not here are some principles on which this legislation should be judged. I encourage every voter to inform themselves, to judge this legislation against their own personal beliefs, not what the government, not what the media, not what the politicians are telling them. This is one nasty piece of legislation. It will affect not only our lives but also the lives of our children and our grandchildren.

The Minister of Justice is right, the legislation is about the kind of country we want to live in. Canadians owe it to themselves and the next generation to get it right. Their safety, the safety of their families, their friends, their homes and their properties is at stake.

If Canadians believe in less government and less bureaucracy then they will not support this gun control bill. If Canadians believe in less government spending then they will not support this bill. If Canadians believe in lower taxes, they will not support this gun control bill. If Canadians believe in personal freedom and personal responsibility, then they will not support this gun control legislation. If Canadians believe in every citizen's right to private property, then they will definitely not support this gun control legislation.

(1525)

If Canadians believe in true equality and that the law should be applied equally regardless of their race or where they live, then they will not like what they read in this gun control bill. If Canadians believe in every citizen's constitutional right to life, liberty and security of the person, then they will oppose this gun control bill with every ounce of energy they have.

If Canadians believe in everyone's right and responsibility to defend themselves, their family, their property and their home, as described in the Criminal Code of Canada, then they will not like what they read in this gun control bill. If Canadians believe the federal government should not interfere in areas of provincial jurisdiction, then they will not support this gun control bill.

A recent survey conducted by Simon Fraser University learned that support for the Liberal Party's firearm registration system drops significantly as the respondents' knowledge of existing gun control laws increases and the full cost of the measures is understood.

In his attempts to confuse the issue of gun control with the issue of crime control, the minister has included some things in

his legislation which I support. I maintain that if the Minister of Justice is really interested in public safety he will divide this bill into two parts. Part one would be crime control and part two would be gun control. Even though there are some monumental flaws with the crime control provisions of the bill, I think we could fix those and ensure easy passage through the House so that the police could use these tools to put real criminals behind bars where they should be.

Here is a list of measures in the bill which I think could be modified and amended and which I could support because they truly concern crime. I would support the four-year mandatory minimum sentence for the 10 violent offences committed with a firearm as long as the word firearm was replaced with the word weapon. More people are murdered with knives and other weapons than with guns. I think any criminal who uses a weapon in the commission of a crime should be subject to the same mandatory jail term.

I support using section 85 of the Criminal Code effectively, but again this mandatory sentencing provision should be extended to any weapon used in a crime, not just firearms.

I support the lifetime prohibition from possessing a restricted weapon for the conviction of violent crimes. I also support the inclusion of replica or imitation firearms under section 85 of the Criminal Code. I support the new offences for large scale smuggling and trafficking of firearms. I support the new offences for possessing stolen or smuggled firearms of a one-year minimum jail sentence. I support adding firearms trafficking to the list of enterprise crime offences.

I oppose the banning of 553,000 handguns. I oppose the banning of 19,000 restricted firearms. However, I support the proposed firearms possession certificate, in principle anyway. I support the offence for failing to report a lost or stolen firearm. I support the 10-year prohibition on possession of firearms to those convicted of serious firearms offences. I support the prohibition on possession of firearms for those convicted of stalking and drug offences. I support the tighter border controls, the inspection procedures by Canada customs. Also, I support the forfeiture of vehicles used in smuggling contraband and the proceeds of smuggling activities. I support the requirement for import-export permits for firearms moving across the border for commercial use.

I also support the requirement to record the entry or exit of firearms to or from Canada by tourists and outfitters. I add that these people bring hundreds of millions of dollars into our country, creating thousands of jobs and tourists should not be needlessly harassed at our borders.

I support the provision of minor's permits for persons between 12 and 18 to acquire firearms. I support the extension of authority to approve firearm safety courses to the provinces.

*Government Orders*

I also support the creation of a separate safety course for handgun users and I support the use of valuable police time and scarce tax revenues on cost effective crime control.

(1530)

This is a list of the things I support. Because gun control measures will do next to nothing to deter real criminals from obtaining or using firearms, and because these measures are not a cost effective way of improving public safety, I will vote against the bill unless they are changed.

Here is a list of reasons why I am opposed to the gun control legislation. I oppose the mandatory registration of all rifles and shotguns and the provision that would make failing to register them a criminal offence. This will do nothing but make criminals out of law-abiding people.

Here are a few reasons why I oppose mandatory registration of all rifles and shotguns. It will cost hundreds of millions of dollars. It is not a cost effective way of improving public safety or saving lives. It will not help police investigate and prosecute violent criminals. It will not alter police procedures for dealing with domestic disputes. It will not reduce the use of firearms in violent crime.

It will keep the police off the street and in the office, not where they should be. It will require more government bureaucracy, not less. It will require an increase in taxes in the form of registration fees. It will also require other members of society to pay those taxes because the initial registration fees will be waived. It will target law-abiding responsible gun owners, not real criminals. It will help trace firearms but tracing will serve no real useful purpose.

Gun smugglers can already be identified without a registration system. Handgun registration has been in effect since 1934 and has not reduced handgun crime. Registration has been tried and failed in Australia and New Zealand. Hundreds of millions could save more lives if spent elsewhere.

It will have a negative effect on a billion dollar economy. It will undermine respect for the law. I cannot emphasize this more. There are jokes going around. There are ads in the newspapers in my province showing people how to hide their guns. They openly advocate that this law will not be complied with.

We have a huge problem when we put in place a law that everyone regards as being useless. It undermines respect for the law, and we must take that into consideration. We need to maintain that respect. People know this will do nothing to make society safer. In fact it will do the exact opposite. I do not have time today to go into them but there are very valid reasons for opposing the legislation because it will actually increase the risk for most people.

I am particularly opposed to the extreme penalties for persons failing to register their rifles and shotguns: a one-year mandatory jail term and up to 10 years in jail if one fails to fill out that little card the minister says is so easy. Denis Lortie killed three people and only spent 10 years in jail. Where is the justice in this legislation? It defies common sense.

I also oppose the added tax burden on law-abiding citizens, the responsible gun owners, through registration fees, permit fees, and renewal fees. Like I said before, I oppose the banning of legally owned handguns, scary looking semi-automatic rifles and so on, and the banning of all replica toy guns. I oppose those kinds of measures.

I oppose the restrictions on crossbows, the banning of one-hand crossbows and the additional restrictions on air guns. I oppose the prohibition and confiscation of guns without fair, just and timely compensation. I oppose the confiscation of thousands of firearms without compensation when the owner dies.

I oppose the use it or lose it provision which requires law-abiding handgun owners to re-establish their reason for owning a handgun every five years. I oppose the proposed controls on the purchase of ammunition and the additional and unnecessary controls on legitimate gun collectors. I oppose the prohibition of entire households from having firearms because of the actions of a single resident.

(1535)

I oppose the exemption of certain Canadian citizens from firearms prohibition orders. All Canadians should be treated equally under the law and in this case under this law. I oppose the requirement of an import-export permit for bringing a personal use firearm into Canada.

I oppose the expanded use of orders in council to restrict or prohibit firearms. I oppose the different application of the firearms laws for remote and aboriginal communities. Canadians should be treated equally regardless of where they live, regardless of their race, and regardless of their occupation. I oppose the waste of valuable police time and scarce tax revenue on useless, ineffective gun controls.

I have 28 amendments here. At this time I will not read them all out. I have gone through a lot of things already. I think we need to have a debate because there are many things that need to be addressed. I will hold this up at a later date.

In closing, I make five recommendations to the government. I recommend holding separate votes for crime control provisions and gun control provisions. We should separate those.

I recommend early passage of crime control provisions with consideration of Reform amendments to really get tough on violent criminals.

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I recommend a free vote on all gun control provisions in the bill, especially the sections relating to implementation of the universal registration system.

I recommend a delay in implementation of universal registration systems to see if increased sanctions and new criminal offences, that is the crime controls proposed by the Liberal government and Reform, are effective in reducing violent crime.

I recommend the inclusion of a sunset clause amendment that would automatically repeal any gun control provision that is not effective in reducing violent crime or approving public safety.

Finally, I have a message for seven million gun owners in Canada. They should not give up. The fight for the kind of Canada we all want to live in has begun in earnest. I encourage them to write letters to both federal and provincial politicians. They should send petitions to their MPs, write letters to the editor, phone in to hotline radio and television shows, get involved in a political party that best represents their views and help to organize and attend rallies. Whatever you do—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. The member may have forgotten that all his remarks are supposed to go to whoever is in the Chair. I would invite him to do so for the remainder of his talk.

**Mr. Breitzkreuz (Yorkton—Melville):** Mr. Speaker, my apologies. I get involved and forget.

My advice is not to break the law of the land but to work to change it by all legal means possible. Bad laws can be repealed if a truly democratic party is in power. If we have the support of the majority of Canadians we can do it.

I fear a government that will not listen to the people a lot more than I fear a law-abiding citizen with a gun. In conclusion I would like to move the following motion:

That all the words after the word "that" be deleted and the following substituted therefor:

This House decline to give second reading to Bill C-68, an act respecting firearms and other weapons, because the principle of establishing a system for licensing and registration of all firearms and the principle of creating a variety of offences are two unrelated issues that should be addressed separately.

I submit this motion to the House.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The Chair will reserve on the motion while it is being brought forward. We will deal with questions and comments while the motion is being looked at.

**Mr. Jack Iyerak Anawak (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Lib.):**

*[Editor's Note: Member spoke in Inuktitut.]*

*[English]*

I have a few comments before asking a question of the member opposite who just spoke. He made some reference to aboriginal people being treated exactly the same as the rest of Canadians, with which I agree on certain issues. However the hon. member will understand that the aboriginal people in the country are the only people who hunt as a way of life. They have always hunted.

(1540)

I would like to quote Voltaire who said: "Prejudice is what fools will choose for reason". That is basically what the hon. member is saying in refusing to recognize the fact that we have always been here, longer than anybody else, and we have always hunted. We still hunt to this day. When people arrived after us we helped them to settle in.

As an aboriginal person I have some very strong feelings about the issue of hunting and about the issue of gun control. I think by and large Canadian people as a whole support some form of gun control. I believe, unlike the hon. member, that the majority of Canadians support the gun control measures being put forward by the Minister of Justice.

As an aboriginal person I view guns and rifles as having one use other than military and law enforcement, that is hunting. I have absolutely no use for handguns. Nobody can convince me that we need handguns. Basically they are used to kill people. Nobody can convince me that there is a useful reason for automatics. We are not going to hunt with automatics. Some semi-automatics may be used for hunting, but by and large most semi-automatics should not be used for hunting. If persons are using semi-automatics for hunting it means they do not have enough confidence in themselves to use a bolt action rifle which shoots one bullet at a time and then they have to reload.

It has been proven through various polls that most Canadians support some form of gun control. I read in the paper some time ago that a member of the Reform Party conducted a poll and found that 67 per cent of his constituents supported the gun control measures being put forward today. However that hon. member would still vote against gun control.

Reform members have been shouting from the rooftops that theirs is a grassroots organization. They find that the grassroots support gun control but they will not listen to the grassroots; they will vote their conscience even against the grassroots people. That seems to be hypocrisy if we are talking about democracy and grassroots. The majority of the grassroots people say they want gun control measures put in place but Reform members do not think that way.

Reform Party members should come clean and decide whether they will vote in favour of what the majority of Canadians want

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or vote for their individual interests rather than the collective interests of the people of Canada.

(1545)

As an aboriginal person I have some concerns. As a member representing per capita probably the largest number of gun owners, I have some concerns. I will convey them to the Minister of Justice to ensure that they are heard.

I think the people in my riding of Nunatsiak are ready to support the Minister of Justice to ensure that Canada is a safer place to live. Canada can be made a safer place to live.

I suggest that hon. members listen to their constituents. If the majority say to support the gun control measures then they should listen to them.

**Mr. Breitzkreuz (Yorkton—Melville):** Mr. Speaker, I strongly object to the allegations made by the hon. member with regard to prejudice. I would ask that he withdraw them. Because we say all Canadians should be treated equally, I do not think that is prejudice. I would ask him to withdraw that.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member is welcome to say that as a response.

**Mr. Anawak:** Mr. Speaker, I did not say that the member was prejudiced. I said that the attitude put out by some members is prejudicial. When I quoted Voltaire that prejudice is what fools use for reason, an awful lot of things can be hidden under some words. I did not say that the member was prejudiced. If I did not say that the member was prejudiced, then I have no reason to withdraw my comments.

**Mr. Breitzkreuz (Yorkton—Melville):** Mr. Speaker, I really do not want to pursue this any further.

Is the hon. member going to vote for or against this legislation? Has he consulted his constituents as we have? We have done surveys. We found that initially, over 80 per cent of the people surveyed knew virtually nothing about this legislation. As they became more informed, opposition to this bill rose to as high as 90 per cent.

They realized how this was going to put society more at risk. They realized how this was going to give criminals access to firearms that they did not previously have. They realized how this was going to tie up the police in some useless paperwork. They realized how this was going to be a tax imposition upon them, how it would destroy more jobs and would put more young people out on the streets who probably would get into more trouble and put us more at risk.

They began to see that this was a useless bureaucratic political manoeuvre to try to put something across on the Canadian people. It would make them think the government was doing something to make society safer when in fact it is not.

As the member quotes these polls, he had better go back and find out exactly what he is doing. A very narrow view is being expressed here.

The hon. member just said that only some people of certain race subsistence hunt. That is not true. It is absolutely false. Many people in this country appreciate nature. They use handguns in many ways besides killing people. The allegation he made that guns are only for killing people is absolutely ridiculous. I do not know where this member is coming from. There are many other uses for guns. I do not accept that argument.

The member made many other statements that were not true. I ask the Canadian public to really look at this question in depth. Examine what this government has put forward. It is a convoluted complex bill and cannot be supported in its present form.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The time for questions and answers has expired. The member has not had a ruling on the validity of his motion. It will be provided as quickly as it can. It is being studied very carefully.

**Mrs. Carolyn Parrish (Mississauga West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the hon. member for Brandon—Souris.

(1550)

I rise today to speak to Bill C-68, legislation which addresses the fundamental right of all Canadians to a safe, non-violent, non-threatening society. I am speaking in support of legislative reforms carefully crafted and presented by the Minister of Justice involving amendments to the Criminal Code and the creation of a new firearms act.

For many years Canadians have watched in horror the increasing use of handguns, assault weapons and rifles in the commission of crimes. In recent years our North American society has become increasingly immune to daily doses of violence, death and injury. Television newscasts and videos feed Canadian viewers a steady stream of carnage. Some of us are shocked; many have become numb as we grow accustomed to the daily onslaught.

In the United States thousands of people are killed each year by handguns. Hundreds of thousands are injured and many are permanently disabled. Yet Americans strangely cling to the notion of a frontier mentality and the right to settle arguments with a gun. A new handgun is produced every 20 seconds in the United States to feed a voracious demand.

Our society is awash in American imagery and attitudes. The U.S. media has slowly changed our long established tradition of law, order and peaceful tolerance. The locked doors and barred windows of the United States have crept north as has the American fascination with handguns.

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Thirty years ago a domestic dispute in the city of Toronto would rarely if ever involve a handgun. Now police approach every situation as potentially lethal. Thirty years ago police officers did not need SWAT teams, bullet-proof vests or increasingly powerful service revolvers against suspects who are routinely better equipped with the latest weaponry. Just this past week metro Toronto police received permission to carry shot-guns inside their cruisers instead of in the trunks of their cars.

There is no doubt whatsoever that our society is becoming more violent than Canadians will tolerate. But how are we different from our friends to the south? What makes us want to take charge of this situation and return order to Canadian streets?

Fortunately, the vast majority of Canadians continue to abhor violence in all its forms. We are still shockable. We can still be touched. We are still willing to fight back. We are not ready to install metal detectors in our schools or huddle behind locked gates and barred windows after dark. From across Canada, this government and every member of this House has heard the message: Get the guns off the streets.

Ninety-six per cent of Canadians support increased penalties for the use of a firearm in the commission of a crime. This bill addresses those Canadians. Ninety per cent favour the registration of all firearms. This bill addresses those Canadians. Fully 70 per cent want tighter gun control laws, restricted access to ammunition and a complete ban on civilian ownership of handguns. This legislation addresses those Canadians.

The issue of violence affects each of us in a profound way. My late father, Ed Janozeski, was a sharpshooter, a gun instructor and a dedicated metro Toronto police officer for 37 years. He watched the use of firearms increase, especially in his last years on the force. He grew increasingly frustrated as legislators seemed unwilling to do anything about it.

Each member of this House knows of an instance where friends, family or acquaintances have been devastated by the misuse of firearms. Every year 1,400 Canadians die as a result of gunshot wounds and another 1,200 are injured. Sadly, the majority are suicides, impulsive acts committed by those who have easy access to guns. Fifty women are killed each year, shot in their own homes by a family member.

Surprisingly, homicide rates from firearms are 50 per cent higher in rural Canada. One hundred persons die accidentally each year while hunting or otherwise handling a firearm. Some of these people are children.

Three million Canadians own seven million firearms, 1.2 million in the restricted category. Vast numbers of illegal, smuggled and unregistered guns add to this arsenal. Between 1974 and 1993, 65,000 firearms were reported missing, lost or stolen and have never been recovered.

Even with all legal weapons registered, criminals will still find handguns. Accidents and suicides will still occur. Are these sensible, rational arguments for doing nothing?

Acceptance of the status quo is acceptance of defeat. The enormity of the task cannot freeze us into inaction. If we start today the net result over time will be significantly fewer handguns in private hands. Those handguns will be in the safer hands of legitimate sport shooters, hunters and collectors.

(1555)

A highly efficient computerized system will distinguish legal from illegal firearms and will track them. Police officers when approaching a reported domestic dispute will know if there are weapons in the house. Responsible safe storage by registered gun owners will become a necessity.

Will violent crime cease immediately? No one is foolish enough to believe that. Criminals will not register their firearms or produce a licence to purchase ammunition. But the underground market fed to a great extent by smuggled and stolen firearms will begin to dry up. Registration will permit tracking of imported guns and seizure of unregistered ones. Registration will also encourage safe storage and the availability of fewer stolen firearms.

Through a series of new hard hitting penalties this government is also saying loudly and clearly: Use a weapon and you will face the stiffest penalties in the western world, a minimum of four years in jail for the use of a firearm in any of 10 specific offences.

Police will have a law with teeth enabling them to lock up criminals in possession of stolen firearms before a crime occurs. Those attempting to use replicas to intimidate and terrorize will face a minimum one year sentence.

Our border, the longest unprotected border in the world, will no longer be an easy entry for those trafficking in firearms. Now you will face 10 years in jail and forfeit all vehicles used in the commission of this crime.

The new legislation will outlaw 60 per cent of all handguns currently available for purchase in Canada, all assault-type military and paramilitary weapons, many of which are designed for concealment and terrorist activities. They have absolutely no place in Canadian society.

To acquire and keep handguns, owners will have to provide one of only two valid reasons for doing so: to add to a legitimate collection, or to use in sport or target shooting. This would have to be justified every five years. The single most objectionable requirement in the eyes of the gun lobby is simple: all firearms and all owners of firearms will have to be registered. Contrary to popular myth, the registration of weapons is not new to Canada.

*Government Orders*

The first nationwide permit system was introduced in 1892, the registration of handguns in 1932.

Of 1.2 million handguns registered to 560,000 Canadians, only 10 per cent have applied for a permit which allows for transportation of a handgun to and from a shooting club. Canadians are apparently more interested in owning than in using these firearms.

The registration of 5.8 million firearms will be phased in over seven years. Frankly, the tired old argument that registration failed in New Zealand does not hold. Modern computer technology will make this task efficient, simple and cost effective. We routinely register automobiles, mortgages, driver's licences, building permits and dogs. To argue that a national registration system would be onerous is to ignore the electronic advancement of our generation.

Registration should not pose any threat to legitimate, responsible gun owners. In fact, they should welcome it. Only the most paranoid of individuals have expressed the fear that big brother is watching.

In reality, orderly registration will deter theft and smuggling and will assist police. Ultimately, registration will bring the responsible gun owner into a partnership with the enforcement agencies. It will be a partnership based on trust, competence, access to information and accountability.

I know much has been said of the opposition to this legislation. Change is not always easy to accept. We live in an increasingly hostile and violent society. We cannot abandon it to the spiral of violence that will fundamentally change Canada for generations to come. We must take the strongest and most effective measures possible to respond to those of us who want a peaceful, safe and tolerant society.

My colleague from across the floor, the hon. member for Calgary Centre recently said in the House that if you identify your problem correctly, 60 per cent of your solution is before you. I believe Canadians have identified the problem. This legislation is an effective and necessary beginning, moving us well on the way to a 100 per cent solution.

It is a great honour for me to speak today. I have had a rather motley political career because I have always been labelled an idealist. Sometimes things happen in politics because it is doable rather than because it is right. I am very proud of our minister and to be part of this Liberal government because I believe today we are doing what is right.

(1600)

**Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, some moments ago the House received a motion asking that the bill not be read the second time.

I want to submit very briefly that it is my feeling, and I am sure that of many hon. members, that this motion is out of order because it does not state that it is against the principle of the bill, nor that the principle of the bill is defective. It does not address that issue.

It merely addresses the fact that because the bill deals with two separate issues we should not deal with it at that time. If the bill were dealing with two separate issues, the argument would be that the bill is omnibus or omnibus like, if you will, and that the Chair has consistently dealt with that issue in the past by agreeing that such legislation was in order. In any case, this bill would not be omnibus even if that argument were made.

The argument here has to do with two conflicting principles being in the bill and that being a justification for the substantive motion brought to the attention of the Chair. Those are not, in my submission, grounds that would enable a member to make the kind of motion which was brought to the floor of the House this afternoon.

Therefore I would ask the Chair to rule at the earliest opportunity that this particular motion is out of order.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The Chair would appreciate hearing all representations on the validity of the motion and therefore I would call on the Reform Party to make submissions on the issue.

**Mr. Elwin Hermanson (Kindersley—Lloydminster, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, it was with a great deal of thought and consideration and also with a great deal of consultation with the legal counsel of the House that we did present this amendment to the motion being debated before us today. Very simply the wording is:

That all the words after the word "that" be deleted and the following substituted therefor:

This House decline to give second reading to Bill C-68, an act respecting firearms and other weapons, because the principle of establishing a system for licensing and registration of all firearms and the principle of creating a variety of offences are two unrelated issues that should be addressed separately.

This is a reasoned amendment and we have been informed that according to the legislative counsel of this House it is in order. It is a reasoned amendment and therefore I would put to you, Mr. Speaker, that the amendment be allowed to stand.

*Government Orders*

[Translation]

**The Deputy Speaker:** Does a member of the official opposition wish to be heard. I have been given indications that no one wishes to do so. Therefore, this concludes the debate on this issue.

[English]

The Chair will reserve on that matter and will bring back a decision as quickly as a reasoned conclusion can be brought back to the House.

**Mr. Art Hanger (Calgary Northeast, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I am interested in some of the comments by the member for Mississauga West. Certainly having been raised in a family in which the father was a police officer would give her some insight into the concerns police officers express when it comes to criminal activity. Seeing if nothing else the breakdown in our laws and the effectiveness of what a police officer can or cannot do any more is a story in itself.

I am also interested in the comments relating to the smuggled weapons and the use of illegal weapons, that the illegal gun market would literally dry up once we have a good registration system in place and some supposed criminal sections that would deal with that.

I do not believe the member has ever been over to the Fort Erie border crossing to look at the extent of what we have as security at the border crossing. There is a joke among the customs officers and the people who live in that area. If a boat comes across from the American side and it rides low in the water, it is full of alcohol. If it rides halfway down in the water, then it is full of guns. If it rides high in the water, then there are drugs in that particular boat. When it gets over to the other side to the Canadian shore there is no one there to stop it to see what really is in the boat because our border security is at a minimum.

(1605)

Resources at the front line have been cut back to the nth degree. Police departments right across the country are suffering now because of a lack of being able to hire the adequate number of police officers to look at it.

How will the illegal gun market dry up through a registration system when the front line cannot even stop the smuggling problem in this country, which is way out of hand and our police departments do not even have a finger on it? Even if they did they could not do anything about it.

**Mrs. Parrish:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member opposite and I am sorry that customs officers joke about such serious things as gun smuggling, drug smuggling and alcohol smuggling.

I do not think smuggling is a joking matter and I do not wish to correct the hon. member opposite but I did not say it would dry it up literally and immediately. I think it is a step in the right direction.

I think if we do not begin somewhere we might as well all throw our hands up and say open the borders and let everybody bring whatever they want in.

The President of the United States visited here on Thursday and congratulated us on an amazing start in the direction of cleaning up illegal guns. I am very proud to be part of a team that is doing this.

My father on his deathbed talked about guns. He talked about the danger. He came home one night very sad because a rookie cop had gone up the stairs ahead of him to a domestic dispute and a shotgun blast had come through the door. It did not kill him. It knocked his eye right out. My father has always believed that if you register guns you can at least make the people who have lost them or have allowed them to be stolen out of their homes responsible for that loss.

Again, I believe this is a beginning. No one has the perfect solution. I will reiterate what I said. We cannot be frozen into inactivity by the overwhelming concern of the problem.

**Mr. Jack Ramsay (Crowfoot, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I was impressed by what the member had to say and the concerns she expressed for a safer society. I think that is what we are all looking for. I wonder if the member would address the possibility of changing existing laws that allow violent offenders to enter society after serving only two-thirds of their penalty. That is something we could do right now.

Melanie Carpenter, for all intents and purposes, was murdered by someone who was released because of a mandatory requirement included within the statute and the laws that this Parliament has created. We can change that.

I wonder if the member would be willing to support that kind of legal initiative in this house that would prevent violent offenders from being automatically released into society before they expend their full sentence within prison to at least protect society to that extent.

**Mrs. Parrish:** Mr. Speaker, I always find it amusing that Reform members opposite tend to turn the conversation away from what we are trying to deal with and into their favourite locations.

I believe that violent criminals in this society will be dealt with in a reasoned and planned fashion by the minister, as he has done with the gun legislation. I think you cannot look at one incident or one piece of legislation and keep it separate from others.

I have absolute faith in the Minister of Justice that in the course of his term he will address all of your concerns and all of my concerns.

**Mr. Glen McKinnon (Brandon—Souris, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank you and for that warm applause across the way. My friend and colleague from Crowfoot was a police officer at the time of my younger years, still living in the area where he was serving. I respect him very much since those days and even today.



*Government Orders*

It is an honour to make the point that I am speaking on this bill with the desire to pursue a fair and equitable bill that permits reasonable and equitable use of firearms in our society.

(1610)

Having said that, I do feel that the bill the minister has presented goes a long way in achieving those types of social goals. Therefore, I deem it an honour to rise to speak on this bill respecting the use of firearms and other weapons.

The extended discussions and debates have waxed and waned throughout this country. Western Canada is certainly no exception. The first meeting I attended was with the minister and the executives of most of Manitoba's firearm associations coming together in Winnipeg in July, 1994.

In a short time thereafter I had what I cannot say was necessarily a pleasure. I have never been yelled at by 2,000 people at the same time before, so it was a unique experience. There was a rally in the Keystone centre in Brandon at which time the organizations in favour of not producing any more firearm controls brought together a number of people and we heard their concerns. Fundamentally they were persons who were trap shooters, recreational pistol shooters, but in the main they were ordinary hunting members of the public just like some members in this House.

After attending these forums I visited several clubs and ranges. I continued to meet with concerned individuals on an individual basis as well as in small groups. Any new regulations concerning firearms have deep cultural implications, gender bias and some rural-urban division of support. As well, many citizens did not wish to see our nation reach a situation where they feel we must have access to a firearm in order to feel safe.

We have had some information coming forward. I will quote a couple of excerpts. One is from the *Western Producer*, January 26. It was entitled "Most women for gun control: pollster".

The Saskatchewan Women's Agricultural Network had an annual meeting on January 21 and debated a resolution to oppose gun control. The resolution was not passed. The director, Elaine Kacsmar, said they were not totally against the registration of guns but that they were against having to pay an enormous amount of money to register guns.

The second point I would like to raise is that the now famous Alberta poll done by the present Government of Alberta is registered in opposition to gun control. It in turn did not believe the federal polling that was done in that province. I am sure the member for Yorkton—Melville was possibly thinking of these results when he made his remarks earlier.

On February 2 the data seemed to indicate in Alberta that there were different pockets and regions but rural Alberta was in some regions as high as 72 per cent in favour of registry. Central Alberta was about 50 per cent; we will even drop a couple to 48 per cent. Northern Alberta was 56 per cent. Overall the data would indicate at that snapshot of time that over 65 per cent were in favour.

I have enjoyed many open and frank discussions with the Minister of Justice and my caucus colleagues as well on the entire issue of the firearms proposals. Throughout these caucus discussions, some formal, some not so formal, at no point was I ordered, threatened or instructed to vote in favour of or against this bill.

Unquestionably I will be voting in favour because I sense it does show some movement to allow for a middle of the road position for all members of society.

(1615)

I believe that our caucuses, regional and national, provided every member on our side of the House every opportunity to contribute and develop those components that were of concern to them.

Bill C-68 reflects the November 30 action plan but has been changed to accommodate some legitimate handgun owners' concerns. Like all other owners of prohibited firearms, individuals who possessed handguns on or before February 14, 1995 will be able to buy and sell in the same class those firearms which are now listed as prohibited.

Owners will be able to use the handguns for the purpose of which they were originally obtained whether target shooting or collecting. Might I comment that to the very avid target shooters in my riding that is the same as golf is to me. They fire off 300 rounds in a very controlled, safe environment. They tell me that they feel great. I wish them well and I hope it continues. I am sure it will.

The bill is the outcome of consultations with many individuals, groups, organizations across Canada. It is intensive work involving the justice department, Revenue Canada and the Department of the Solicitor General, among others.

Owning a firearm is a privilege. It is not a right. As such, it is subject to regulation by government because firearms can be dangerous and it is only sensible to have some degree of regulation. People can lose a privilege. In fact I am informed that 40,000 Canadians for sundry reasons have lost the right to own firearms, about 700 in Manitoba and about the same number in Saskatchewan. Of course, it will vary with the level of population from coast to coast.

It has been my desire to see that reasonable guidelines are put in place where hunters will continue to hunt, recreational and competitive programming will continue to produce world class

competitors and collectors will be able to trade, buy or sell with reasonable guidelines in place.

In the end the thrust of this bill is to achieve a safer Canadian society. I hope that my hon. colleagues will bear with me while I explain the background from which I speak today.

My twin brother and I, who I am sure my colleague across the way will remember, grew up on a farm in central Manitoba. For whatever the reasons my parents saw no need to own firearms.

However rummaging in the attic one day—of course it is my twin brother who did all these nasty things—we located two old firearms. One was a shotgun with absolutely no trigger action left and the other one was an old Snider rifle which was used in one of the wars, the first world war or earlier.

We played with those for a number of years. I do not know what has become of them but obviously they were relics. If we had the same rules then that we are going to have, we would be in some legal difficulty.

I do recall however that my friends purchased .22 calibre firearms for their use when they “came of age”. I would go hunting with them. The admonition from my parents at that time was to be careful.

The point that I make is that for most cases, that was enough. Most of us were. In the 1940s and 1950s, one could acquire firearms by mail order, could use them without training, could will them without any inhibiting regulation.

Those of us who survived without regulatory interference feel that we have somehow lost some freedoms and privileges in the intervening years, as we have moved into an era where because of societal difficulties we have developed a system of regulation for the training, acquisition, sale and storage of firearms.

In conclusion, I would have to say that my age group can look back to a very idyllic time where responsibility was a given, care and caution was expected. It is these memories that tend to anger the firearm owners of today.

(1620)

**Mr. Jay Hill (Prince George—Peace River, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to refer the hon. member to a number of reasons for which there is such growing opposition across the country to more regulations for law-abiding gun owners.

One reason is that it is costly. The minister indicated that it would cost \$85 million to implement this legislation. Other estimates reach into the hundreds of millions of dollars. People on this side of the House, certainly at this time of budgetary constraint, would question why we are spending this money on the registration of firearms. The money would be better spent on health care or other social programs.

### *Government Orders*

The second reason is that it is a non-secure system. If a hacker can break into the Pentagon's computer list, it will certainly make a shopping list for criminals once the information is out.

The third reason—and members opposite will say that only those who are paranoid will say this—is that this is another step toward confiscation. The minister has repeatedly said that he believes only law enforcement officers and armed forces personnel should have firearms. When he makes those statements is it any wonder that Canadians are paranoid that this is another step toward confiscation of their legally acquired firearms?

**Mr. McKinnon:** Mr. Speaker, I did not really hear a question, so I will comment on his comments.

At the present time we do have a registration system. A firearm can be tracked: where it was manufactured, through the distributor, wholesaler, retailer, to the end purchaser. However, to do that requires hundreds of hours to go through the ledgers of various organizations.

The kind of system that I envision would be almost like a charge card. All the rifles would be shown in black print. We would instantly be able to locate a rifle by running it through the network, which would reduce the cost and time which is now required.

**Mr. Grant Hill (Macleod, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I have always found the hon. member to be very reasonable.

Has he done a poll in his constituency? If he has not, will he, and will he follow his constituents' advice on this issue?

**Mr. McKinnon:** Mr. Speaker, no, I have not. Yes, I am reasonable. I will pursue the same privileges as the hon. member from Edmonton; I will follow my conscience.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. André Caron (Jonquière, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak on Bill C-68 respecting firearms. I am somewhat surprised with what I heard in this debate, which I have been following from the beginning. I noticed antagonistic positions. I noticed, coming perhaps a little more often from our colleagues from the Reform Party, arguments that seem disproportionate and highly questionable to me. I will get back to this in my remarks.

Let me tell you right away that I agree with the principle of the bill introduced by the Minister of Justice. I will start with a brief outline of the bill, and then move to the basis for my supporting it.

Bill C-68 establishes a licensing system for the carrying and use of firearms.

This bill also establishes a Canada-wide firearms registration system. I raise these two points immediately because, from what

*The Budget*

I could see in the debate so far, these are two aspects of the bill that prompt people to oppose it, often fiercely.

Moreover, the bill calls for stricter controls on the import, trafficking and smuggling of firearms in Canada. It provides for stiffer sentences of imprisonment for individuals who commit serious crimes with firearms. The current minimum sentence of one year, under section 85 of the Criminal Code, would be increased to four years with this bill.

At last, certain types of handguns would now be prohibited in Canada. The bill prohibits the import or sale of handguns using .25 or .32 cartridges as well as handguns with a barrel equal or less than four inches in length. This provision applies to approximately 85 per cent of handguns in Canada.

Finally, the bill makes any violation of the provisions regarding licensing and registration a criminal offence.

There are perhaps seven million firearms in Canada today. This is an estimate, as any round figure, because no one knows for sure. Some people have had firearms for many, many years in their closets or basements. I personally have two: a small .22 calibre rifle and a 12 gauge shotgun. They are in a closet. I have not used either of these firearms in over ten years, but I think I have owned them for 20 years. No one knew that I owned firearms. Like many other Canadians, I fall in that statistical category.

It is also a fact that Canadians are in favour of firearms control. I will continue next time, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** You will have a lot of time to do so then, dear colleague.

SITTING SUSPENDED

**The Speaker:** We will suspend the sitting of the House for a few minutes.

(The sitting of the House was suspended at 4.27 p.m.)

SITTING RESUMED

The House resumed at 4.30 p.m.

**The Speaker:** Order. It being 4.30 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 83(2), the House will now proceed to the consideration of Ways and Means Motion No. 20 for the budget statement.

\* \* \*

[English]

**THE BUDGET**

FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF MINISTER OF FINANCE

**Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development—Quebec, Lib.)** moved:

That this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am tabling the budget documents, including the notices of ways and means motions. The details of the measures are included in the documents.

(1635)

Pursuant to an order of this House, I will introduce today a bill seeking borrowing authority for the 1995–96 fiscal year. I am asking that an order of the day be designated for consideration of these motions.

**The Speaker:** Is there unanimous consent?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard):** Mr. Speaker, a lot of people think I should sit down now.

Mr. Speaker, there are times in the progress of a people when fundamental challenges must be faced, when fundamental choices must be made, and a new course charted. For Canada, this is one of those times. Our resolve, our values, our very way of life as Canadians are being tested.

The choice is clear. We can take the path, too well trodden, of minimal change, of least resistance, of leadership lost. Or we can set out on a new road of fundamental reform, of renewal, of hope restored. Today we have made our choice. Today we take action.

[Translation]

This is a window of extraordinary opportunity. Thanks to the hard work of millions upon millions of Canadians, our economy is now stronger than it has been for years.

Last year, economic growth in Canada was the highest of any G-7 country. We are projected to lead again this year. In the past year, 433,000 jobs have been created, and Canada's exports have never been higher. As a result, our balance of payments has improved dramatically.

Productivity has surged. Our cost competitiveness is at its highest level in more than 40 years. Canada remains one of the lowest inflation countries in the world.

Canadians want to keep it that way, and so does this government. The targets that we set with the Bank of Canada will make sure that happens.

These statistics tell a story of an economy in bloom; an economy of growth and new jobs. However, there are two clouds that loom over our country's horizon.

The first is the uncertainty that some would create over the future of Quebec. Let there be no doubt—that challenge will be met. Quebecers do not want Canada, their country, torn apart. The second cloud is the debt and deficit. Dealing with that challenge is our purpose today.

*The Budget**[English]*

This government came into office because it believes that the nation's priority must be jobs and growth. And it is because of that, not in spite of that, that we must act now to restore the nation's finances to health.

As the Prime Minister has said: "The time to reduce deficits is when the economy is growing. So now is the time". Not to act now to put our fiscal house in order would be to abandon the purposes for which our party exists and this government stands: competence, compassion, reform and hope.

(1640)

The debt and the deficit are not inventions of ideology. They are facts of arithmetic. The quicksand of compound interest is real. The last thing Canadians need is another lecture on the dangers of the deficit. The only thing Canadians want is clear action. Therefore let me go directly to the bottom line.

Last year, in our first budget, we laid out a firm course of action. We said that we would reduce the deficit in this fiscal year, 1994-95 to no more than \$39.7 billion. We now estimate that the underlying deficit for the current fiscal year will be about \$35.3 billion, or \$4.4 billion below our target.

*[Translation]*

We will still be well under the target, even after booking certain one-time charges related to some of the major reforms contained in this budget.

Looking ahead, we pledged in our last budget that the deficit in 1995-96 would not exceed \$32.7 billion and would be reduced to 3 per cent of GDP—now estimated to be \$24.3 billion—by 1996-97. It is now evident that unless we take further direct action, those deficit targets will not be met.

*[English]*

This is because interest rates are higher today than anyone thought they would be. Therefore based on prudent economic assumptions and with very sizeable contingency reserves in place, we could face shortfalls of \$5 billion from our deficit target in 1995-96 and \$10.6 billion the year after. Those gaps must be closed. With this budget, we are closing them.

We will hit our deficit target for 1995-96. We will hit our target for 1996-97. And of equal importance, the downward track established by the actions taken in this budget will continue in the years thereafter.

Taking the next two fiscal years together, this budget delivers cumulative savings of \$15.6 billion, with spending cuts for \$13.4 billion. Going beyond to 1997-98, the reforms we are introducing today will continue to pay off with further savings totalling \$13.3 billion.

Over the next three years, the actions in this budget deliver almost seven dollars of spending cuts for every one dollar of new tax revenue. This budget will deliver cumulative savings of \$29 billion over the next three years, of which \$25.3 billion are expenditure cuts. This is by far the largest set of actions in any Canadian budget since demobilization after World War II.

These measures will have a very significant impact on the level of government spending in the future.

By 1996-97 we will have reduced program spending from \$120 billion in 1993-94 to under \$108 billion. Relative to the size of our economy, program spending will be lower in 1996-97 than at any time since 1951. The impact of these measures on the fiscal health of this country will be significant and substantial.

By 1996-97, our financial requirements, that is, what we actually have to borrow from the markets, will be down from \$30 billion last year to \$13.7 billion, or 1.7 per cent of GDP. That percentage is lower than what is projected for the United States, for Germany, for Japan. In fact, it is lower than what is projected for all of the national governments of every country of the G-7.

(1645)

Perhaps most importantly, in that same year the debt will no longer be growing faster than the economy. The debt to GDP ratio will have begun to decline and we are committed to keeping this ratio on a permanent downward track.

We face a historic challenge in this country and this is a historic response. We have always said that meeting our targets was the least we could do, not the best we would do. That is why it is so important that this year we will have beaten our deficit target by a substantial amount. And looking ahead, building on the advice of the finance committee of this House, for which I am very grateful, we have deliberately chosen economic assumptions that are once again more cautious than those of most private sector forecasters. Once again, we are backing up our assumptions with substantial contingency reserves of \$2.5 billion in 1995-96 and \$3 billion the year after.

This means that even if interest rates go up next year by almost one and one-half percentage points, more than our already cautious assumption, our fiscal position will be fully protected. But it means something else which is very important. If we do not need our contingency reserve, it will not be spent. It will go to reducing the deficit further. This is what happened in 1994-95. And because of our prudent economic assumptions, one should not be surprised if it happens in 1995-96 and 1996-97 as well.

If interest rates and income growth conform to the average private sector forecast, the deficit in 1996-97 could be brought down below \$19 billion, in fact some \$5.5 billion less than this budget projects.

*The Budget*

We have always said that our 3 per cent interim target was a station on the way, not our ultimate destination. Interim means interim. Canadians want more than temporary fiscal remission. They want full fiscal health. It is absolutely essential that once we meet our interim target we do not stall. We will continue to set firm, short term deficit goals, rolling two-year targets until the deficit is erased.

The Prime Minister said two days ago that balancing the books is our goal. In government short term targets are the surest way to zero. They are the most effective spending control anyone could impose on a government. They keep our feet to the fire. They make it impossible to postpone needed action and they prevent fanciful, foolish forecasts.

The government wants Canadians to be able to judge it not on its rhetoric but on its results.

[*Translation*]

The targets we set are crucial. But how we get to our targets is every bit as important. Because the fact is that if we are to ensure durable fiscal progress, building towards budget balance—that can only happen if we redesign the very role and structure of government itself.

If we secure that reform, it will continue to pay off in 1997–98 and every year thereafter. Indeed, as far as we are concerned, it is this reform in the structure of government spending—in the very redefinition of government itself—that is the main achievement of this budget.

(1650)

[*English*]

After extensive review this budget overhauls not only how government works but what government does. We are acting on a new vision of the role of government in the economy. In many cases this means smaller government; in all cases it means smarter government.

We are dramatically reducing subsidies to business. We are changing our support systems for agriculture. We will be putting government activities on a commercial basis wherever that is practical and productive.

[*Translation*]

We will be overhauling the unemployment insurance system as part of our social security reform, and reforming the system of transfers to the provinces—putting it on a basis that is more in line with the actual responsibilities of the two levels of government.

[*English*]

It is essential that our effort be guided by clear principles and values. First, we believe it is crucial that the government get its

own house in order. Our budget must focus on cutting spending, not raising taxes.

Second, government must define its role in a way that mirrors our priorities as a people. Blind cuts are bad cuts. Canadians need a budget designed to promote growth and jobs.

The third principle is frugality. Governments do not have money. They are given money, money from the pockets of Canadians from coast to coast to coast, and so government must behave as if every dollar counts because every dollar does.

Finally, we must never, ever lose sight of the need to be fair, fair among our regions and fair among individual Canadians.

[*Translation*]

If our purpose is to get the economy right, we need to redesign the role of the government in the economy to fit the size of our pocketbook and the priorities of our people. What is that role? It is to provide a framework for the private sector to create jobs, to see an aggressive trade strategy as central to Canada's industrial strategy. And it is initiatives such as the Prime Minister's, in Asia and Latin America, that will create opportunity for thousands of Canadians here at home.

[*English*]

What is the role of government in the economy? It is to ensure that the nation's finances are healthy. It is to do what only government can do best and leave the rest for those who can do better, whether they are in business, labour or in the voluntary sector.

This budget puts our priorities into action. It does so after a top to bottom review of all departments of government led by the Minister responsible for Public Service Renewal. As a result we will be able to reduce departmental spending dramatically over the next three years while maintaining the services that are truly needed by Canadians.

[*Translation*]

For example, between this fiscal year and 1997–98, annual spending will go down by \$1.6 billion at Defence, \$550 million for international assistance, \$1.4 billion at Transport.

[*English*]

Over the next three years spending will be cut by more than \$600 million at natural resources, almost \$900 million at HRD, over \$200 million at fisheries, almost \$900 million in the industry portfolio, more than \$550 million in the regional agencies, nearly \$450 million at agriculture. In short, overall departmental spending will be cut by almost 19 per cent in just three years.

Let me emphasize, this is not a slowdown in the increase of spending max as cuts. These are not the cuts of yesteryear. These are real cuts in real dollars.

*The Budget*

(1655)

In the last recession every household, every business, every volunteer group in this country was forced to face up to hard choices and real change, but the Government of Canada did not. In this budget we are bringing government size and its structure into line with what we can afford.

*[Translation]*

As a result of the cut-back and reform of programs, the President of the Treasury Board has announced that the public service will be reduced by some 45,000 positions over three years, with 20,000 being eliminated by the summer of next year.

Because so many of those affected have given so many years of valuable services to Canadians, we are committed to downsizing the public service as fairly as possible.

In some departments the scope for savings has been less than in others. For example, we are responding to Canadians' concern about public safety in their communities by strengthening gun control and largely maintaining existing levels of support for law enforcement, the justice system and correctional services.

*[English]*

As a second example, the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration has made clear our commitment to a fair, affordable and well-enforced immigration policy. Therefore, a form of financial guarantee will ensure that sponsors of immigrants meet their obligations.

In addition, a \$975 fee will be charged all adults immigrating to Canada to offset the costs of immigrant services.

*[Translation]*

The measures in this budget share a common foundation and philosophy. For example, across government, we are taking major action in this budget to substantially reduce subsidies to business. These subsidies do not create long-lasting jobs. Nobody has made that case more strongly than business itself. In this budget, total spending on business subsidies will decline from \$3.8 billion in this fiscal year to \$1.5 billion by 1997-98. That is a reduction of 60 per cent in three years. Remaining industrial assistance will be targeted on the key engines of economic growth—trade development, science and technology and small and medium size business.

*[English]*

Transportation and direct agricultural production subsidies are being eliminated or substantially reduced. This is historic

change. Decades ago, even into the last century, those subsidies were put in place to respond to Canada's transportation and agricultural needs then existing. As time has passed, those needs have evolved but the subsidy structure has not. For years governments have known about the need for change but they have hesitated to act. But we cannot postpone action any longer.

To that end, subsidies under the Western Grain Transportation Act are eliminated effective 1995-96, resulting in savings of \$2.6 billion over the next five years. This subsidy evolved from the Crow rate established in 1897. It has played a pivotal role in the development of the prairie economy, but in more recent years it has come to restrict the ability of prairie farmers and their industry to adapt and to compete.

(1700)

To facilitate this change we will make a one time payment of \$1.6 billion to prairie farm land owners to be provided for in this fiscal year 1994-95.

We will invest a further \$300 million over several years to facilitate a more efficient grain handling and transportation system. We will provide new credit guarantees to help Canadian farmers sell to non-sovereign buyers abroad.

Next, the Atlantic freight subsidies are also being eliminated, effective in the upcoming fiscal year. This will result in savings of \$500 million over the next five years alone.

The elimination of this subsidy will contribute to a better transportation system. To help ensure this, the government will set up a five-year, \$326 million transportation adjustment program that among other things will help modernize the highway system in Atlantic Canada and eastern Quebec.

*[Translation]*

Consistent with the recent decision of federal and provincial ministers of agriculture, a core national "whole farm" stabilization program will be developed, together with crop insurance and province-specific programs.

The costs of these initiatives will be shared between the federal government, the provinces and farmers themselves. This will replace current programs based on individual agricultural commodities. It will therefore encourage innovation and diversification, as well as resulting in a 30-per-cent reduction in federal contributions to agricultural safety nets. Next, the subsidy paid to industrial milk producers will be reduced by 15 per cent in 1995-96 and by a further 15 per cent the following year. The future of this program will be reviewed, in consultation with industry.

*The Budget*

Finally, the feed-freight assistance subsidies are being discontinued and the Livestock Feed Bureau will be wound up. A portion of the resulting savings will be redirected on a transitional basis to help adjustment in the livestock industry.

[English]

Financial support to business should only be provided if there is no alternative and a valid national need clearly exists. That is why we have made a clear public commitment that new funding for mega projects will not take place.

In the last year I have had numerous requests for the funding of such projects cross my desk and every one of these has been turned down.

In addition, with this budget we are eliminating the Public Utilities Income Tax Transfer Act. It can no longer be justified in today's fiscal circumstances.

Small businesses are the primary creators of new jobs in this country. Removing barriers to their success is a core priority for the government and for Canadians, as is providing practical assistance for them to survive and to grow.

Last year we announced that we would review the \$500,000 lifetime capital gains tax exemption for small business and for farmers. As a result of that review, we are announcing that no changes to it will be made.

We see our regional agencies as playing an important role in the creation of opportunity and long lasting jobs. However, we do not believe that handouts are the way to do it. Therefore, consistent with our new policy to sharply reduce business subsidies, assistance to firms will be provided primarily through repayable loans on terms tailored to foster genuine opportunity.

(1705)

This government is determined that small businesses will have access to the financing they need to continue being our number one creator of jobs. While some progress has been made there continue to be very large gaps in the system. We believe that Canada's banks have a special obligation to help close those gaps. That is why between now and the fall we have told the banks that we will be working with them to hammer out meaningful performance benchmarks for small business financing. Progress during the following year will be monitored against those benchmarks.

[Translation]

It is ideas today that will generate the products and the jobs of tomorrow. That is why science and technology will become a predominant focus for our business support. In the future, our science and technology efforts will be concentrated more strategically on activities that foster innovation, rapid commercialization and value-added production.

As only one example, the Medical Research Council has mounted a promising initiative to bring together private sector capital and leading academic research efforts. That is the kind

of imagination we will encourage as a government in order to stretch government's science dollars further and more effectively, so that Canada's new economy may prosper.

[English]

The government is committed to privatizing and commercializing government operations wherever feasible and appropriate. Our view is straightforward. If government does not need to run something it should not, and in the future it will not.

Today we are announcing that the Minister of Transport will initiate steps this year to sell CN. He will also commercialize the air navigation system. When market conditions are favourable the Minister of Natural Resources will sell our remaining 70 per cent interest in Petro-Canada. The Minister of Public Works and Government Services will examine divesting all or parts of the Canada Communications Group.

Let me be clear. This is not a one shot exercise. Our effort to identify other candidates for privatization will continue. This is not ideology, it is simple common sense.

Let me say one thing before leaving program review. We have accomplished a great deal over the last year. We have also confirmed something. Getting government right does not end with this budget or any other, for the essence of good government is in fact permanent ongoing program review, and we are going to provide good government.

[Translation]

Canadians make ends meet by watching their dollars every day. It is time government did the same. Last month, the government introduced a new and much tighter system to manage its spending. Departments will have to find the money for their new initiatives from existing budgets.

[English]

As another example of new and better management, in the future for the first time government departments will have to prepare three-year business plans. These plans will be subject to parliamentary and therefore public scrutiny.

Our approach to interest group funding will change as well. Some groups will continue to be funded as is. For others in a position to secure financial support from outside government, we will move toward a system based on the provision of matching funds. For still other groups, continued funding will not be possible due to our financial situation.

(1710)

[Translation]

There is no more important task than to do everything we can to help Canadians get jobs, keep jobs or find better jobs. But the fact is that the existing structure of programs does not do that nearly well enough. That is why the Minister of Human Resources Development will be announcing the details of a new human resources investment fund. Many of the department's existing programs that foster employability will be combined under the umbrella of that new fund. A sharper focus on

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priorities, together with more efficient, streamlined services will yield substantial permanent savings.

[*English*]

We must also continue to improve the unemployment insurance program, building on the substantial reforms that were introduced in last year's budget.

As has been emphasized so often by the minister of HRD, we need to move away from passive support, away from dependence, toward active assistance, toward independence. In essence, a key job for UI in the future must be to help Canadians stay off UI.

Later this year the minister intends to table legislation that will build on the best elements of unemployment insurance to create a fundamentally reformed program that addresses the needs of our population. It is Canada's workers and Canada's businesses that pay for UI. The program of the future must be one they can afford.

Canada's strong economic performance and the UI reform which the government intends to have in place no later than July 1, 1996 will reduce the overall size of the UI program by a minimum of 10 per cent.

This overall reform combined with improvements in the administration of the UI program will secure savings for taxpayers of \$700 million in 1996-97.

[*Translation*]

Improved employment conditions are rapidly eliminating the deficit in the unemployment insurance account which had reached almost \$6 billion in 1993. With no increase in premium rates, the surplus in the account will be allowed to rise above \$5 billion through to the end of 1996. This surplus will be maintained and used as a buffer to mitigate unemployment insurance premium rate increases during periods of slow economic growth. The result of these measures will be an unemployment insurance program that does much better at investing in people, and will lead to lower, more stable unemployment insurance premium rates that will encourage the creation of jobs.

[*English*]

We will never secure the kind of structural change that we need without reforming the system of transfers to the provinces.

This budget sets out some key parameters. Let me be very clear. As we go forward, we are unequivocally committed to a co-operative approach. That is why, to provide predictability, we said in last year's budget that we would not change the system of major transfers before 1996-97. That is a commitment this budget maintains.

It is also why in March of last year, as one of the first acts of this government, we renewed the equalization program for five years. We are not changing it now.

(1715)

However, some changes in other transfers are needed, changes that will address two fundamental requirements. The first is a system of transfers that is more effective in meeting contemporary needs. The second is a system that is financially sustainable.

[*Translation*]

Concerning the first requirement, we believe that the restrictions attached by the federal government to transfer payments in areas of clear provincial responsibility should be minimized.

At present, transfers under the Canada assistance plan come with a lot of unnecessary strings attached. The provinces are clearly responsible for designing and delivering social assistance programs. The current cost sharing method no longer helps us to implement these programs as effectively as possible and in tune with local needs.

So we are prepared to address those issues by funding CAP in a similar way as we fund the existing EPF transfers for health and post-secondary education.

As a result, the core rationale for the present segregation of the three transfers into separate categories disappears. Therefore, we are combining all three into a single consolidated block transfer, called the Canadian social transfer, beginning in 1996-97.

Provinces will now be able to design more innovative social programs—programs that respond to the needs of people today rather than to inflexible rules.

[*English*]

However, flexibility does not mean a free for all.

There are national goals and principles we believe must still apply and which the vast majority of Canadians support. Our goal must be to combine greater flexibility with continued fidelity to these principles.

The conditions of the Canada Health Act will be maintained: universality, comprehensiveness, accessibility, portability and public administration. For this government, those are fundamental.

In addition, we will maintain the existing principle that provinces must provide social assistance to applicants without minimum residency requirements.

Furthermore, the Minister of Human Resources Development will be inviting all provincial governments to work together on developing, through mutual consent, a set of shared principles and objectives that could underlie the Canada social transfer.



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This reform deals with the requirement for a better functioning system of transfers. But equally we need a system that can be financially sustained.

Our major transfers to the provinces currently amount to \$37 billion in cash and tax points. The cash portion alone represents about 21 per cent of our total program spending.

Addressing our fiscal challenge simply does not allow us to leave that spending untouched. We must establish the fiscal parameters of a new system. However, as a matter of fairness and balance, we believe that the provinces should not be expected to bear more of the fiscal burden than we are prepared to impose on ourselves. This budget meets that test.

As we have said, no changes in major transfers are being made for next year, 1995–96, even though we are taking substantial action that year to reduce our own spending.

(1720)

For the following year the new Canada social transfer will be \$26.9 billion, cash and tax points combined. This will be about \$2.5 billion less than the projected transfer would be under the present system.

This means that the total of all major federal transfers to the provinces in 1996–97 will be 4.4 per cent lower than they are today. That compares favourably with the reduction in spending in our own backyard, that is to say, everything except transfers to the provinces which will be down 7.3 per cent by that same year.

In 1997–98 the Canada social transfer will be \$25.1 billion or about \$4.5 billion less than what would have been transferred under the existing system. To keep that in perspective, such a reduction in transfers would equal about 3 per cent of aggregate provincial revenues.

To ensure that everyone shares in fiscal restraint it will also be necessary to subject territorial financing to reduced limits.

[*Translation*]

We believe these measures respond to the need for a more affordable and effective system of transfers. But our challenge and our commitment do not end here. With this budget, we are saying yes to the provinces' desire to sit down for a bottom-up review of the financing of both levels of government. If there are ideas to make the fiscal side of federalism more efficient, let's hear them. And if there are ways to make this federation function better, then by all means let's do it.

One of the greatest reforms ever introduced by a Canadian government has been the provision of decent support for elderly Canadians—who have given, and continue to give—so much to their families and to their country.

In recent weeks and months, there is probably no member of this House who has not received letters or had conversations with elderly Canadians who are worried that the protection their country has provided them will be eaten away.

Because of that, this government is absolutely committed to providing a fair and *sustainable* system of protection for Canada's seniors.

[*English*]

There are two pillars of the public pension system. One is the Canada and Quebec pension plans. The other is the old age security and the guaranteed income supplement.

Canadian seniors deserve to know that those public pensions will be there for them. That in turn requires reform to ensure that the pension system is sustainable in the long term.

Concerning the CPP the most recent actuarial report was released last week and it leaves no doubt that we will have to take steps to ensure that the plan continues to be sustainable. This we will do when we sit down this fall with the provinces to review the CPP.

Let me now turn to the second pillar, the OAS and the GIS. Clearly it is necessary to make these pensions sustainable as well.

To ensure that our approach to the public pension system is comprehensive, the Minister of Human Resources Development and I will be releasing later this year a paper on the changes required in both pillars of the public pension system to ensure its affordability. The focus will be on fairness and sustainability. Consultations will take place once the paper is released. It is our intention that the reforms be legislated to take effect in 1997.

(1725)

In the meantime, we are announcing today a change in the method of payment of the OAS to high income seniors who are subject to the so-called clawback rules.

Beginning July 1996, monthly OAS payments will be calculated and paid with the clawback amount subtracted, based on the prior year's tax return. This will yield one-time savings of about \$300 million.

Finally, to ensure fairness, we will be requiring Canadians who are non-residents of this country to file a statement of their worldwide income in order to continue to receive OAS benefits.

Let me turn now to the question of revenues. There is not one solitary Canadian who likes taxes. As we speak millions of Canadians pay their fair share of taxes and do so on time. However there are those who do not.

*The Budget*

[Translation]

On a priority basis, the Minister of National Revenue will be taking the following measures to step up his department's efforts with regard to taxes that are owed. For example, the interest rate charged on over-due taxes will be increased by 2 percentage points.

[English]

Next, we are announcing steps to make the tax system more fair.

The tax deferral advantages for investment income earned by private holding companies will be taken away.

The current film incentive will be changed. Rather than being a tax shelter for high income investors, a new refundable credit will be provided directly to producers of Canadian films.

Those who earn business or professional income have a tax advantage over many other Canadians. Because of special rules that allow them to select their own year end for tax purposes, those individuals are given an ongoing tax deferral. That advantage is being eliminated subject to a 10-year transition period.

We are concerned that the rules regarding the resource allowance for the mining and petroleum industries are not working as originally intended. We will be meeting with the provinces and both industries on possible improvements to or replacement of this allowance.

We will be evaluating the entire R and D tax incentive program to ensure its effectiveness.

While this review is under way no bank or other financial institution will be eligible for these incentives related to information technology.

[Translation]

Concern has been expressed about tax advantages that may exist as a result of the establishment of trusts, trusts which largely benefit high-income Canadians.

Therefore, for foreign trusts—and indeed for taxpayers who invest in foreign holdings generally—we are introducing more stringent reporting requirements.

Second, this budget eliminates all tax advantages that flow from the establishment of family trusts. That involves eliminating the potentially unfair income splitting advantages that exist. And we are repealing the previous government's amendment that allowed deferral of the 21-year rule.

[English]

Providing tax assistance to encourage Canadians to save is an essential part of our retirement income security system. We are not prepared to compromise the integrity or the purpose of that system. But equally, we must ensure that the benefits of tax assistance are shared fairly in these times of restraint, while also adhering to the key principles and purposes of pension reform.

(1730)

One of those principles is that tax assistance should be provided for contributions to registered saving plans based on earnings up to two and one-half times the average wage and no more. Therefore, we will be reducing the upper limit on deductible RRSP contributions to \$13,500 for 1996 and 1997. That limit will then be allowed to progressively increase to \$15,500 by 1999. The maximum pension limit for registered defined benefit plans will be frozen at its current level through 1998.

We are also introducing measures to improve the overall fairness of this system by tightening some existing provisions. For example, beginning in 1996, the over contribution allowance for RRSPs will be reduced from its current \$8,000 to \$2,000.

[Translation]

Our effort to ensure an effective and fair system of taxation does not begin—or end—with this budget.

We want to make absolutely clear our ongoing commitment to tax-reform.

If we must constantly scrutinize government spending—as we must—then let it be clear we must also constantly scrutinize the fairness and effectiveness of the tax system.

[English]

Despite the size of the savings we must secure, this budget focuses almost entirely on reducing the spending of government, not increasing taxes for Canadians. That being said, spending cuts themselves get us very near to our targets, but there is a small gap we must close. Therefore, we have found it necessary to do four things.

First, the existing large corporations tax will be increased by 12.5 per cent effective immediately in order that big companies contribute more to help bring the deficit down.

Second, we are raising the existing corporate surtax from 3 per cent to 4 per cent.

Third, effective midnight tonight, the federal excise tax on gasoline will be increased by 1.5 cents per litre, raising \$500 million annually. This will restore total revenue from all federal excise taxes to approximately the level they were in 1993–94.

Finally, we are announcing today a temporary tax on the capital of large, deposit-taking institutions, including the banks. That tax will be in effect until October 31, 1996 and will raise about \$100 million.

Taken together, the revenue measures in this budget are far overshadowed by the size of the spending cuts we have made. For every \$1 raised in new tax revenue over the next three years, there are almost \$7 in spending cuts. Furthermore, in this budget, like last year's, we are not increasing personal income tax rates one iota.

*The Budget*

(1735)

This budget sets this country on a sure course of fiscal responsibility and government renewal. Our task is not over and our efforts will not cease. Those who believe that the government will inevitably let up in its effort to cut costs as the next election approaches simply do not understand the conviction of the Canadian people that a deteriorating national balance sheet is no longer acceptable.

*[Translation]*

Constant renewal is what this country is all about. Indeed, it is the essential ingredient of a dynamic federalism.

There are those who would argue that this country, this federation, cannot change—that Canada is about the status quo. That is nonsense.

None of us is here to defend the status quo. We are here to change it. And with this budget we are.

Providing new fiscal leadership. Reducing overlap and duplication. Giving the provinces greater freedom to design and deliver services. These changes respond to positive pressures for change from across the country.

They mark a recognition on the part of us all that in this tough, competitive world, despite the differences we have, we all have so much to gain by working together—productively, rather than standing apart—destructively.

This budget faces difficult choices for all Canadians. But this year, in Quebec, some of us are also being asked to choose a country. To choose to remain proud partners in a large, reforming country. Or to become something else—smaller and alone. To embrace real change and improvement, or to join those who pretend that the road to a better future lies through fracture.

The separatist view has always been the same—its own status quo. Ignoring reform that has happened. Denying reform when it is occurring. Refusing reform when it is offered.

That is not our position. By definition, Canadian federalism is change—always improving, always progressing and today, with this budget, reaching ahead to a new phase of renewal.

*[English]*

It is customary at this time, when closing the presentation of a government's budget, to claim that the measures being taken have solved every problem, responded to every expectation and addressed every need. That is something we will not say today.

The fact is there is so much more that we would like to be able to do for the millions of Canadians who care little about the

world of dividends and derivatives and simply worry about making ends meet. That being said, if we believed that dealing with the deficit would do nothing to protect what we value, if we believed that it would do nothing to offer hope to ordinary Canadians, we would not be acting now because it is they who suffer when government must focus its precious resources on satisfying lenders abroad rather than real needs at home.

(1740)

For all of us who care for the social fabric of this country, who seek a better future for our children, who are committed to the protection of our seniors and to the independence of our country, the state of the nation's finances simply has to be addressed.

*[Translation]*

The choice is ours. We can either dwell on our imperfections—or work together towards real improvement.

We can leave the field to those who have given up on Canada—or we can demonstrate trust in ourselves.

*[English]*

We believe this is the year we can turn the corner and turn the page. It may seem like a long struggle, but the light at the end of this tunnel is much nearer than any of us might think.

Canadians can have confidence now in a government that has put the era of band-aid budgets behind it.

Canadians can have confidence now that their social programs will be there for those who need them.

Canadians can have confidence now in their country being one of the most attractive places in the world to invest, creating jobs.

For too long, governments have known the need for reform and renewal; known the need, but not the will. That has been the problem with the governments of this country. This government has made its choice and it is against the status quo and in favour of a stronger country.

Let me close by quoting from another Canadian in an earlier time, a member of a previous government who, as I remember, did not particularly like finance ministers:

Government must not live in the past—Every day there are new needs to be met. If inflation is to be fought, unemployment countered and something done, and soon, to get Canadian prosperity back into its stride, the government must begin to plan ahead—not timidly, not tentatively—but boldly, imaginatively and courageously.

Mr. Speaker, those words were spoken by my father in 1957—for his time. That is what I believe we have done today, for ours.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

*The Budget***BORROWING AUTHORITY ACT, 1995-96**

**Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development—Quebec, Lib.)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-73, an act to provide borrowing authority for the fiscal year beginning on April 1, 1995.

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

(1745)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yvan Loubier (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the only thing the finance minister is decentralizing to the provinces in this budget is the deficit, and nothing else.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Loubier:** He is decentralizing the deficit while making cuts, as we have been seeing since last year, at the expense of the most destitute, that is to social programs, unemployment insurance and everywhere except where cuts should be made.

After the finance minister's usual generalized downloading since bringing down his budget in February 1994, we are now to witness a major downloading of the deficit and of his responsibilities onto the provinces.

The cuts in federal transfer payments to the provinces, specifically transfers for postsecondary education, health and the Canada assistance plan will not be made right away this year. That would be far too much courage to expect from this government during this referendum year. But they will be made, the axe will fall in 1996-97, eliminating \$2.5 billion in federal transfers for postsecondary education, health and the Canada assistance plan.

Not satisfied with axing social programs and transfers to the provinces, in 1997-98 the federal government will cut a further \$4.5 billion from transfers to the provinces, all of this under the guise of alleged decentralization, a masquerade of decentralization which is really just the finance minister downloading his responsibilities.

These cuts of \$4.5 billion to social programs in 1997-98 will of course have to be negotiated after the referendum. That shows how much the government cares about clarity, honesty and being compassionate about education, health and poverty. Not only does this government show a lack of courage by downloading its problems onto the provinces, it has been so hateful as to do it on the backs of the most destitute.

As for the unemployment insurance fund, already drastically cut by \$300 million last year, the minister is proposing \$2.4 billion in cuts this year and another \$2.4 billion next year while at the same time considering a 10 per cent cut in contributions to the UI fund. The finance minister is hateful and arrogant enough

to present these deficit objectives, these deficit results for 1994-95, saying that he has reduced his objective from \$41 billion to \$39 billion. But he has pulled this off by taking the \$2 billion surplus from the unemployment insurance plan and deducting it from his forecasts. That explains his outstanding accomplishment; he did not in any sense reduce the deficit for this year, he simply took the surplus from the unemployment insurance program to make himself look good as a public sector manager.

This is unacceptable. While \$7.5 billion were already to have been cut from social programs and unemployment insurance over the next two or three years, the finance minister presents in this budget a 60 per cent cut in business subsidies over the next three years. Sixty per cent over three years, although the Bloc Québécois and even the Conseil du patronat du Québec had suggested eliminating these business subsidies over the coming years, subsidies which most often give rise to patronage, inefficiency and unfair competition. Not only does the finance minister tell us that the \$3.8 billion in subsidies will be reduced by only 60 per cent over three years—there will still be \$1.5 billion in business subsidies in 1997—he is cutting more than \$300 million from CMHC for social housing. That is this government's concept of social justice.

(1750)

Where is the reform of the tax system? Where is this so long-awaited reform? Where? The minister has been heralding it with great pomp since he assumed the position. He did not deliver. He never had any intention of reforming the tax system.

What did he do about the taxation of businesses? What did he do to prevent a recurrence of the recent fact that over 70,000 profitable Canadian businesses did not pay a cent of tax to Ottawa? With what has he plugged this tax loophole? Nothing. He took no steps to collect this money that profitable businesses owe to federal coffers. He has slightly raised corporate taxes, about 1.5 per cent over three years.

What did he do about those tax agreements signed with countries considered to be tax havens? Nothing. The Auditor General said himself that hundreds of millions of dollars are being transferred through bogus Canadian subsidiaries to foreign tax havens. What did he do about this? Once again, nothing.

What did the Minister of Finance do in this budget to cut the tax breaks offered to extremely rich Canadian families through family trusts? By the way, I do thank the minister for getting rid of these tax breaks, but he should have cut them immediately, not in 1999, as is provided for in the budget. Doing it in 1999, what a sham.

By then, extremely rich Canadian families will have had the time to dismantle their family trusts and to transfer their hundreds of millions of dollars to other tax shelters to avoid paying tax on capital gains year after year. And they dare say

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that they met the demands of the official opposition. The Minister of Finance must be joking.

What did the Minister of Finance do in this budget to reduce duplication and waste? As the champion of restructuring, of flexible federalism, of the progressive backward status quo, the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, said himself, the federal government will continue to be active in areas of provincial jurisdiction. He made this comment while referring to forestry and health services.

The budget itself tends to download deficit problems while keeping a firm central rein on areas of provincial jurisdiction. Be they known as Canada-wide standards, guiding principles or by any other name, the budget's bottom line is that over the next few years, there will be no decrease in overlap, duplication and waste in the management of public funds. We are certain that this overlap and wastage will persist because the federal government will not withdraw from areas falling under provincial jurisdiction.

This budget talks of an increase in taxes on gasoline but pays only lip service to the issue of collecting the some \$6.6 billion in unpaid taxes payable to the federal government.

If we compare last year's budget to this year's, we see it contains no concrete measure regarding the collection of these unpaid federal revenues. Instead of recovering these \$6.6 billion in unpaid taxes, the minister has created new taxes, new needs and imposed cuts on the most needy.

Earlier, I heard the minister talk about agriculture. It is disgusting what is happening with agriculture. To compensate the prairie provinces for the loss of the famous Crow's nest rate and of subsidies for the transportation of grain and for the drop in land values, this new budget will give western producers \$1.6 billion to start. They will also receive \$1 billion in loan guarantees.

To that, we can add \$300 million for the transition. Close to \$3 billion will be invested in Western Canada following the elimination of the Crow's Nest subsidy, while there is nothing in the budget for Quebec. On the contrary, the budget cuts the dairy subsidy by 30 per cent, which will have a major impact in Quebec since 50 per cent of dairy production comes from that province.

While giving \$3 billion to Western Canada, they are cutting by 30 per cent the dairy subsidy to Quebec farmers, which amounts to between \$30 million and \$40 million, in addition to reducing their income security. That is a disgrace! They are perpetuating all that has been denounced for 30 years about a system that does not treat Western and Eastern Canada equally in various regards, particularly in the agricultural sector.

I could have mentioned the blind cuts affecting cultural institutions, like the CBC, and regional development, but I will not go any further since we will have the opportunity in the coming days to discuss in more detail this budget, this crock supposedly aimed at restoring some confidence among Canadian taxpayers.

Today's budget does not tackle the real problems. In fact, the Minister of Finance is not credible when he expresses his intention to eliminate the deficit, because he does not address our serious structural unemployment problem nor acknowledge the fact that there are too many levels of government in this country. Finally, he says he wants to eliminate the deficit without explaining when or how; in particular, he did not outline budgetary appropriations for 1997-98. We do not know where we are going after 1997-98. We do not know where this disgraceful reform to be achieved at the expense of the most disadvantaged and the provinces is leading us.

To deal with both duplication and unemployment, the federal government should have included in its budget a proposal to withdraw immediately from all areas of provincial jurisdiction in return for the corresponding share of our federal taxes. That would be a real reform. That was what we were expecting. As far as restructuring is concerned, that is what we were expecting on this side of the House.

In conclusion, the minister said at the beginning of his budget speech that there were two clouds looming over the horizon. Quebec nationalists are crying out that they want more power, particularly the sovereignists. The second cloud is the debt and deficit. The minister is deliberately looking for a scapegoat for his laxness. He has been lax for the past year, and all Canadians paid for it barely one month after his first budget in the form of increased mortgage or other interest rates.

We are paying for this laxness. If a cloud is looming over the horizon, the minister should have added two more to replace the constitutional cloud. His government is the looming cloud. His government has had a year and a half, but has not made the right decisions, leaving us facing huge cuts this year. And they will carry over into the coming years as well. Because the government is lax, we have this enormous problem of the federal debt before us. Another cloud looming over the Canadian horizon is unemployment.

There should have been talk of tackling unemployment, but no mention was made, because it is not a priority for the minister. It is not a cloud looming over this government, despite the fact that 1.2 million people are out of work in Canada, and people are waiting for training, who have not had it because of the government's inertia.

I therefore move:

That the debate be now adjourned.

*The Budget*

**The Speaker:** In accordance with Standing Order 83(2), the motion is deemed adopted.  
(Motion agreed to.)

Therefore, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 83(2).  
(The House adjourned at 5.59 p.m.)

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