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OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Wednesday, November 8, 1995

Speaker: The Honourable Gilbert Parent

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, November 8, 1995

The House met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

we do not put justice back in the justice system and make Canadians feel safe on their streets and in their homes again, the efforts of those valiant Canadians will have been in vain.

* * *

[*Translation*]

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*English*]

TAKE OUR KIDS TO WORK DAY

Ms. Jean Augustine (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I wish to recognize Wednesday, November 8, 1995 as Take Our Kids to Work Day.

Today over 153,000 Ontario students will accompany a friend, parent or volunteer sponsor to their workplace in an effort to learn about the demands and opportunities of the working world. The program is an initiative of The Learning Partnership which provides students with an interactive hands on work experience in a field of interest to them while emphasizing community responsibility for the future of our young people.

I would like to welcome Anne McGuire, a grade nine student from Bishop Allen Academy in my riding of Etobicoke—Lakeshore. Anne is spending the day here in my office on Parliament Hill to further her interest in politics. Perhaps at some time in the future she will join us here as a colleague in the House of Commons.

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VETERANS

Mr. Dale Johnston (Wetaskiwin, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the week of November 4 to 12 has been set aside to honour those Canadians who fought and those who died in two world wars, in Korea and in peacekeeping missions.

When veterans returned home from Europe 50 years ago they were filled with hope, pride and optimism. They were ready to build a strong Canada. How disappointed these veterans must be today. The country they were willing to give their lives for is \$567 billion in debt and is in danger of breaking apart.

If action is not taken immediately to solve the debt crisis, to build a new Canada within a new federalism, to reform health care, the Canada pension plan and unemployment insurance, if

REFORM OF FEDERALISM

Mr. Gilles Bernier (Beauce, Ind.): Mr. Speaker, if our political leaders in Canada have not grasped the very clear message sent by Quebecers on October 30, they will have to live with the consequences. Quebec wishes to regain its proper place within the Canadian context. Rather than being purely symbolic, the proposed changes should respond to the legitimate and traditional demands of Quebec.

People of Canada, the steps that are taken must be in harmony with what has been said in recent weeks. Let us put an end to double talk. Federalism as we know it must be reshaped; moreover, Quebec is not the only one calling for federal withdrawal from areas of provincial jurisdiction. More than ever, we must demonstrate a desire to make the changes necessary for national unity, while respecting our differences.

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[*English*]

TAKE OUR KIDS TO WORK DAY

Mr. John Maloney (Erie, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to announce the addition of a high powered office consultant to my constituency staff for one day, Mr. Travis Dolinski, who is participating in the program called Take Our Kids to Work.

Today in Ontario over 153,000 grade nine students are at work with a parent, guardian, relative, friend or volunteer host. They are all experiencing possibly for the first time the challenges of the workplace. They will spend a day on farms, in hospitals, factories, offices, retail stores and many other places of work.

Often students do not fully understand the links between education and work and how important successful work is to their future. Through this exposure they will see the value of a good education in our rapidly changing workplace. They will begin to think about the choices they will have to make and the paths they must follow to meet their career goals. They will also better appreciate what their parents do to provide them with the necessities of life.

S. O. 31

With the co-operation of Erie riding's business and industry, our youth will have an informative, fascinating and stimulating experience. I encourage my colleagues to support this program or similar ones in their ridings.

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HEART RESEARCH

Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (St. Boniface, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remind colleagues of the leading role Canadian doctors play in the advancement of heart research.

In a report to be published in the *European Heart Journal* this November, Canada is cited as one of the top three research leaders in the field of cardiology despite ranking 13th in expenditure on research and development per capita.

[Translation]

This year, Canadian physicians again made an enormous contribution at the congress of the International Society for Heart Research, held in Prague.

[English]

I was especially delighted to note the achievement of Dr. Naranjan Dhalla of Winnipeg who has served as president of that body for the past 25 years. Dr. Dhalla was identified at the congress as "the person primarily responsible for the remarkable development of the International Society for Heart Research". In fact, with the assistance of others he was also able to bring the 17th congress of this prestigious association to Winnipeg for the year 2001.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, the impressive—

The Speaker: I am sorry, your time is up.

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[English]

CANADA REMEMBERS

Mr. Harold Culbert (Carleton—Charlotte, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this Saturday, November 11, communities across Canada will be holding special commemorative ceremonies in honour of Canadian veterans to let them know Canada remembers their valiant deeds.

In this century alone, over 100,000 Canadians have given their lives in the service of their country. Some remember these Canadians as friends of their youth, as comrades in arms in the service, some as mothers and fathers, or brothers and sisters, or spouses.

It is also a time for all Canadians to remember and pay tribute to those who purchased peace and freedom for us through their sacrifices, their suffering and with their lives.

We are what we are today, we have what we have today because of the people we honour on Remembrance Day. Throughout Carleton—Charlotte and indeed across Canada we will always remember them and their deeds.

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[Translation]

MINISTER OF NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. Réjean Lefebvre (Champlain, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in response to a question on the unacceptable actions of certain soldiers at Petawawa in celebrating, on at least two occasions, the terrible events at the Ecole Polytechnique, the minister of defence made remarks that were insulting, degrading and unworthy of his position.

Rather than condemning his soldiers' actions unequivocally, the minister unleashed his full contempt upon the Bloc, accusing its members and all sovereignists of racism.

● (1405)

In so doing the minister is insulting the half of the population of Quebec which voted yes in the referendum, continuing the mudslinging campaign begun by the Deputy Prime Minister last week. These statements are disgusting and demonstrate the minister's insensitivity toward the murder of young women in an incident which outraged all Canadians.

The minister must stop making statements which are unacceptable from a representative of the people, and must provide serious responses to the legitimate questions asked by the official opposition.

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[English]

JUSTICE

Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians have continually asked how bad can it get. Now they are asking how much worse will it get. They are talking about violence and the fact this justice minister fiddles while Canadians burn.

Two teens club to death a retired senior couple. The justice minister cancels a meeting in their riding and continues to fiddle. A 10-year old girl is kidnapped and murdered by a known dangerous offender. The justice minister plays the same tune. Now in our nation's capital youth gangs with adult leaders are gathering. They use torture chambers to kill and maim our youth. Obviously the justice minister has not the will nor the courage to get with it and do his job.

Here are some suggestions. Scrap the Young Offenders Act. The act does not provide for proper correction for young offenders. Publish the names and pictures of violent youth, especially violent gang members. Let Canadians know whom they should protect themselves from. Scrap the politically appointed parole board. Let the frontline workers decide who is ready to return to society.

This Liberal minister and his justice system have failed. Now is the time for a new Canada with new—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Beaches—Woodbine.

* * *

DENISE MEEHAN

Ms. Maria Minna (Beaches—Woodbine, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the dedication and hard work of a constituent from the riding of Beaches—Woodbine.

In mid October Ms. Denise Meehan, the founder, president and sole shareholder of Lick's Ice Cream and Burger Shops won the quality plus award in the 1995 Canadian Woman Entrepreneur of the Year awards. In winning the quality plus award Ms. Meehan has demonstrated the ability to develop and maintain excellence in every aspect of her company's offering to her customers, employees, the community and the environment.

Ms. Meehan has six Lick's locations in the Toronto area as well as six franchises in the cities of Sudbury, Ottawa and Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

Ms. Meehan constantly pays attention to staff development and customer concerns. She believes that instilling good work habits, life skills and a caring attitude toward customers and the community fosters creativity and self-confidence.

I commend Ms. Meehan for her outstanding contribution to small business development in Canada.

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THE LATE BERNIE NEWMAN

Ms. Shaughnessy Cohen (Windsor—St. Clair, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Bernie Newman, a former Liberal MPP for Windsor—Walkerville, passed away on Monday night.

Bernie was a teacher, an Olympic gymnastics coach of some renown, a great family man as well as a tremendous advocate for the city of Windsor.

Bernie believed in what he called positive representation which he defined as follows: "Positive representation is standing up on the floor of the legislature and hammering at problems others would like to ignore. It is overcoming indifference and getting action. It is the proper combination of the enterprise and energy of youth together with the weapons of experience".

S. O. 31

Throughout eight successive victories and 28 years at Queen's Park, Bernie is best known for his commitment to and his love of his constituents. They kept sending him back to represent him over all those years. I do not know very many people living in Windsor—St. Clair during the years of Bernie's tenure at Queen's Park who did not receive cards or letters from him for anniversaries, birthdays and in sympathy.

I know all members of the House will join me in offering condolences to the Newman family and in honouring the memory of Bernie Newman.

* * *

NATIONAL SPIRIT OF PEACE RUN

Mr. Fred Mifflin (Bonavista—Trinity—Conception, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to draw attention to the National Spirit of Peace Run which has been happening in cities across Canada and which will be concluded tomorrow by a commemorative ceremony here on Parliament Hill and at the peacekeeping memorial.

The peace run is an activity organized by the Canada Remembers program as part of veterans week. I am pleased to say that in every city the run has brought together Canadians of all ages in a tribute to those who served our country during wartime.

Peace torches were carried in each city. These torches have been transported to Ottawa where they will be carried by second world war veterans to the centennial flame during a very special ceremony tomorrow that will celebrate Canada's continuing commitment to peace.

The ceremony will represent the passing of responsibility for peace from the young men and women of 50 years ago who defended it to the young men and women of today who will continue to protect it in peacekeeping missions around the world.

* * *

● (1410)

[Translation]

HELICOPTER PURCHASE

Mr. Richard Bélisle (La Prairie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, today the Minister of National Defence announced his plans to rent or purchase 15 new search and rescue helicopters at a cost of approximately \$600 million.

The minister was unable to give any guarantees this morning that the new helicopters would be less expensive than those the Conservatives planned to buy.

Even worse, there will be no Canadian content requirement for bidders. When we know that the aerospace industry is based mainly in the Montreal region and that barely two months ago, the same minister awarded, without tender, a \$2 billion contract for armoured personnel carriers to Ontario, this is simply outrageous.

S. O. 31

The minister announces his expenditures on military equipment in dribs and drabs. How much will the final bill be, including on board helicopters and submarines, the next items on his shopping list?

While this government slashes social programs and unemployment insurance, the army gets the royal treatment. This says a lot about the priorities of this government.

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[English]

GOVERNMENT POLICIES

Mr. Herb Grubel (Capilano—Howe Sound, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, last week in Vancouver the Deputy Prime Minister attacked my suggestion that the prompt and unconditional devolution of some government functions to provincial governments would meet the aspirations of Quebec and other provinces and therefore would keep the country together.

My constituents have been irate over this attack. They feel the minister's objections reflect her party's elitist attitudes and callous disregard for the wisdom of ordinary Canadians, which have led to a near break-up of the country.

What exactly does the federal government know that the provincial governments do not know better about manpower training, cultural, medical, language and other policies for the benefit of their citizens who hold them accountable at every election?

My constituents are happy to be Canadian and have Ottawa remain responsible for the policies it can carry out best, but they are tired of having distant politicians and bureaucrats run their affairs. Pay attention, Liberals, before it is too late.

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[Translation]

CREATION OF A COMMITTEE ON CANADIAN UNITY

Mr. Philippe Paré (Louis-Hébert, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the creation yesterday of a committee on Canadian unity is typical of the makeshift policies that are bogging down the government.

During the final days of the referendum campaign, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans invited Canadians and big business to violate Quebec's referendum act by spending millions of dollars in a last ditch effort to win a victory for the no side. He is a member of this new committee.

The Minister of Indian Affairs has on several times mentioned the possibility of dividing Quebec's territory. He is on this committee.

And last week, the Minister of Justice wanted to resort to some outdated legal tricks to prevent Quebecers from voting again on their future. He is on the committee as well.

Because the government cannot keep the Prime Minister's referendum promises, it creates a committee of ministers who openly took positions that were hostile to the aspirations of Quebecers. As a result, the committee's credibility will be almost nil.

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[English]

1995 GREY CUP

Mr. John Solomon (Regina—Lumsden, NDP): Mr. Speaker, on Monday, November 6 the leader of the NDP, Alexa McDonough, and I had the honour of touring the site of the 1995 Grey Cup, Canada's national football championship. The Grey Cup is being held at Taylor Field in my constituency of Regina—Lumsden on November 19. It is already a huge success with over 52,000 tickets sold.

From November 15 to November 19 the citizens of Regina welcome all Canadians to the best Grey Cup celebration the country has ever seen. Thanks to thousands of volunteers, Grey Cup 1995 is expected to be a tremendous success. Special thanks go to the Saskatchewan Roughriders football club, the Grey Cup committee and its executive director, Ken Thomas, along with the Grey Cup board of directors and executive committee members.

The theme of this year's Grey Cup is "Huddle up in Saskatchewan". I invite all members of Parliament and all Canadians to catch the spirit of Saskatchewan and experience our famous western prairie hospitality. Join us in the huddle for one terrific celebration in Regina. If they cannot make it to the celebrations—

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[Translation]

THE MEMBER FOR FRONTENAC

Mr. Patrick Gagnon (Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, my friend the Bloc member for Frontenac again demonstrated his complete ignorance of Canada and its people.

The hon. member implied that the National Citizens Coalition speaks for the real English Canada that came to demonstrate at a rally in Montreal a few days before the referendum.

This statement shows how far removed separatists are from the real Canada. First of all, he ought to know that the vast majority of the 150,000 participants in this rally were from Quebec.

• (1415)

Second, unlike the separatists, the participants in this rally will not renege on their commitment to recognize Quebec as a distinct society.

There was no Jacques Parizeau in the crowd to say: “I could not care less about your distinct society”.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[Translation]

THE CONSTITUTION

Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ): Mr. Speaker, whereas many people, strangely enough, joined together prior to October 30 to promise Quebec constitutional changes that would satisfy it, all attempts to fulfill these promises have failed one after the other, in the days following the referendum. In desperation, the government yesterday announced the creation of a mysterious committee, but nobody yesterday knew its make-up, its mandate or the deadline it must meet.

My question is for the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs. Was the hasty set up of a committee to study the question of constitutional and administrative changes to the federation not the result of the government's inability to find a way out of the dead end it found itself in because of the commitments made by the Prime Minister and the fierce opposition by the provinces, certain ministers and certain members?

Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister responsible for Public Service Renewal, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the promises the Prime Minister made regarding changes in connection with the distinct society, in particular, are promises the Prime Minister will keep.

Obviously, the Bloc Québécois has no interest in these promises being kept, since their aim is to destroy the country. However, if we look objectively at events in recent years, we will see there have been significant changes in the federal government. We also know that the Leader of the Opposition has said he is not interested in discussing change of any sort until after a yes vote in the referendum.

Therefore, the opponents of change benefitting Quebecers are the Bloc Québécois and the Parti Québécois.

Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ): Mr. Speaker, we do not need to look too far back in the course of events to discover that those who oppose the Prime Minister's commitments are

those sitting on that side—in the caucus and in cabinet—and the provincial premiers.

Should I also remind the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs that the job of the Bloc Québécois at the moment is to ensure that Quebec is not cheated again, as it has so often been in the past?

The Deputy Prime Minister said yesterday that the federal government could move without necessarily seeking provincial approval, because, in any case, Quebec could block any initiative. Are we to understand from her remarks that the federal government has once again decided to work secretly to come up with a proposal it will then try to impose on Quebec?

Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister responsible for Public Service Renewal, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the allegations by the member for Roberval are clearly in error.

With regard to the distinct society, it was the leader of the Parti Québécois himself who said: “Stop bothering me with this idea of a distinct society”. This is a matter of public record and contradicts what the member for Roberval has just said. So, he is the one opposed to a distinct society and not our Prime Minister.

Furthermore, in talking about negotiating the best for Quebec, let me read you, Mr. Speaker, what Lucien Bouchard himself said—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

• (1420)

The Speaker: My dear minister, I would ask you to give this man's title.

Mr. Massé: Mr. Speaker, on the subject of negotiations, the Leader of the Opposition said the day they would be at a table would be the day after Quebec had voted yes in a referendum, which he hoped would be held in the very near future. This reveals very clearly that the Leader of the Opposition does not agree with 73 per cent of Quebecers, who indicated they wanted negotiations on Canada's future.

Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ): Mr. Speaker, are the accusations by the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and the government's phoney committee whose establishment was announced yesterday not simply delaying tactics aimed at keeping a lid on the profound division not only in the Liberal caucus, but in cabinet, where a number of members are still under the influence of Pierre Elliott Trudeau?

Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister responsible for Public Service Renewal, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I made no accusations and I based each of my statements on remarks made by the leader of the Parti Québécois and the leader of the Bloc Québécois.

Oral Questions

Furthermore, in the committee that was struck, we are going to try to find a solution to the problems the country is facing, one that will help Canadians, including Quebecers. And the Bloc Québécois is opposing our efforts at finding a solution to the present problems and is opposing the resolution of difficulties in jurisdictional matters, despite the fact that the majority of Quebecers indicated in a democratic decision that they did not want to leave Canada.

Mr. Michel Bellehumeur (Berthier—Montcalm, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs. All observers are still wondering what kind of logic prompted the federal government to think it might be helpful to set up a committee of ministers in charge of reviewing the possibility of making constitutional and administrative changes to the Canadian federation. Many people have questions, but few ministers can answer them.

How can we believe that this phoney committee can propose acceptable changes to Quebecers, when the real decision makers, that is, the provincial premiers, are not even on it?

Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister responsible for Public Service Renewal, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, those who want to find a real solution to the problems met to set up a working group whose mandate is to look at possible changes.

It is clear that the official opposition—whose goal, as its leader indicated, is to break up the country—has no interest whatsoever in co-operating or in finding something positive to say about the working group we have set up. Yet, this working group is clearly needed to make a list of the changes required to reconcile all Canadians.

Mr. Michel Bellehumeur (Berthier—Montcalm, BQ): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, on Radio-Canada's *Téléjournal*, the Deputy Prime Minister made this short statement: "We are now trying to make it possible to fulfil the promises made by the Prime Minister". Let us be frank.

Is the creation of this phoney committee not simply a federal trick to allow the Prime Minister to save face, since he is unable to deliver the goods and to meet his commitments?

Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister responsible for Public Service Renewal, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, during the campaign, the Prime Minister made promises with respect to distinct society and the right of veto. The Prime Minister said he would keep these promises. Our Prime Minister is a man who has kept his promises in the past, and people believe in his integrity.

[English]

NATIONAL UNITY

Mr. Preston Manning (Calgary Southwest, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, for months before the Quebec referendum the government went to sleep on the national unity issue, failing to provide a strong federalist vision of strategy to counter the separatist dreams and strategy. Then the government got the mother of all wake up calls on October 30 and the Prime Minister belatedly decided to act on the demand for change inside and outside Quebec.

• (1425)

Now, a week later, we find the government going back to sleep. Instead of offering leadership it falls back on a tired, old precedent of appointing a top down, closed door committee to come up with some post-referendum strategy.

My question is for the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs. What on earth happened to the sense of urgency that the Prime Minister expressed on October 30? By what date will this cabinet committee have something intelligent to report to the House?

Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister responsible for Public Service Renewal, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is curious to hear the Reform Party complain about the unity task force.

Who wrote the 20 points in the Reform constitutional plan? Was it the committee or was it a submission by one of the Reform members? Did their leader agree without consultation with the party and without consultation with the people?

Mr. Preston Manning (Calgary Southwest, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the constitutional proposals in Reform's new confederation package have been under discussion with the Canadian public for five years. It came from the bottom up, not the bottom down.

The fact remains that the only government response to the Quebec referendum thus far has been to start down the same rocky road that led to the failures of the Meech Lake and Charlottetown accords by establishing a top down, closed door committee of cabinet to develop unity proposals without the involvement of Canadian people. This is the process that doomed Meech, doomed Charlottetown and will doom this post-referendum strategy unless the public is involved.

What specifically does the government intend to do to bring the Canadian people, the ones who pulled the no vote out of the fire, into the development of its post-referendum strategy?

Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister responsible for Public Service Renewal, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when we talk about the will of the people I think the

leader of the third party should remember that the Charlottetown accord passed in his riding. If he were expressing the will of the people he represents he would be in favour of these negotiations.

Mr. Preston Manning (Calgary Southwest, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the Chamber and the National Press Gallery have become dangerously complacent about the failure of government ministers, including this minister, to give direct answers to straight questions. Maybe he can do that on a thousand different subjects and it is considered clever in the Chamber although it is not considered clever outside. If the government fails to directly answer straight questions on the issue of the unity of the country, it is playing with the life of the country and it will earn the just contempt of every Canadian who cares about the unity of the country.

I will ask my question of the minister once again and I will go slowly. What specifically does the government intend to do to bring the Canadian people into the discussion of its national unity proposal?

Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister responsible for Public Service Renewal, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if we ask straight questions we get straight answers. If we ask contorted questions unfortunately we get contorted answers.

In this case if the question is what is the mandate of the committee, the mandate of the committee is very clear. The promises the Prime Minister mentioned during the campaign will be kept. At present we are looking at various ways in which governments could be made more effective. This is part of the changes we have carried through with the government in the last two years and this will continue.

* * *

[Translation]

THE CONSTITUTION

Mrs. Pierrette Venne (Saint-Hubert, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs. On the government's phoney committee, we have the Minister of Justice, who, last week, was looking for legal means to prevent Quebecers from voting again on their future, the minister of fisheries, who urged thousands of Canadians to act in violation of the Quebec referendum act, the minister of Indian affairs, who raised the possibility of dividing Quebec's territory, and the Minister of Canadian Heritage, who will not recognize that Quebecers are a people.

• (1430)

Under these circumstances, how can this committee come up with anything that would be acceptable to Quebecers?

Oral Questions

Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister responsible for Public Service Renewal, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when official opposition members refer to a phoney committee, it is clear that they are choosing words that have no connection with reality, just to discredit a tool used by the government to try to improve the situation.

Again, this comes as no surprise to me, since the self-appointed role of the official opposition is to destroy this country, which strips it of any credibility when it comes to looking after the interests of Quebecers. We are the ones looking after the interests of Quebecers by respecting the wish of the majority, which is to find, within Canada, ways of making the federation work better.

Mrs. Pierrette Venne (Saint-Hubert, BQ): This is the whole point, Mr. Speaker. Will the minister admit that, in this committee, the interests of Quebecers will be looked after only by ministers who said repeatedly over the past two years that Quebecers did not want to hear about the Constitution?

Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister responsible for Public Service Renewal, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, again, I think it is pointless to keep answering questions from the opposition, whose sole goal is to promote the destruction of this country, and not to help Quebecers.

We, on the other hand, have established a commission which has been mandated, in accordance with the wish clearly and democratically expressed by Quebecers in the referendum, to find solutions within the Canadian federation.

* * *

[English]

ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

Miss Deborah Grey (Beaver River, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, it is an understatement to say that there was a massive breakdown in security at 24 Sussex over the weekend. With every passing day the revelations get more bizarre and Canadians are rightly concerned and angered.

We have just learned that the Mounties guarding 24 Sussex that night were inexperienced, having received only a couple of months' training. At least one of them had been called from the RCMP musical ride.

I ask the Solicitor General of Canada this. What sort of training did these officers receive and who was responsible for putting these people in the position of gatekeepers at 24 Sussex?

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Solicitor General of Canada, Mr. Speaker, I have already reported to the House that a full investigation into the circumstances of the incident and what steps should be taken to make sure it is never repeated is under way.

Oral Questions

I expect this investigation will be completed and a report available to me by the end of the week. In light of that I will have a lot more to say about this incident which is certainly something that should never have happened and something I never want to see happen again.

Miss Deborah Grey (Beaver River, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, on the same night this tragedy happened, in Israel the security force resigned; its members have either been thrown out or they have resigned.

Why can that not happen here when our Prime Minister's life was in great danger that night? Why was the intruder not spotted? Why did it take seven minutes for the RCMP to respond? Why did the RCMP secure the perimeter of the place without securing the Prime Minister?

More amazingly, none of the three senior officers who are on emergency standby duty 24 hours a day with cell telephones answered when Mrs. Chrétien made the emergency call. They were not available. They did not answer their phones even though they were on 24-hour standby emergency duty.

Will these senior officers be held accountable? Can the solicitor general assure the House, without the report having even been tabled, that junior officers will not take the fall for their superiors?

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the important thing is to determine in a factual way all the circumstances and then to put steps in place to make sure the incident is never repeated.

This is what we are doing. This is what is going to happen. I hope to have the support of my hon. friend if she is serious about this.

* * *

• (1435)

[Translation]

THE CONSTITUTION

Mr. Gilbert Fillion (Chicoutimi, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs.

Yesterday, when asked about the mandate of the cabinet committee, the minister could only say that the committee was going to look at all the possibilities for constitutional and administrative changes in the Canadian federation.

I put my question to the minister in the hope that he will provide an answer. Can the minister tell us if the proposed resolution to recognize Quebec's distinct character, as well as

the bill on regional referendums, are among the options which his committee will look at?

Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister responsible for Public Service Renewal, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again, the commitments made by the Prime Minister during the campaign concerning a distinct society clause and a constitutional veto for Quebec will be fulfilled. Our committee will also look at non constitutional measures, so as to not overlook any means to make our federation more effective.

This is what we will do in the coming months. We should not pre-judge the results. We, at least, are working in the best interests of Canadians and Quebecers.

Mr. Gilbert Fillion (Chicoutimi, BQ): Mr. Speaker, will the minister admit that, if the government gave such a wide and vague mandate to its committee, it is because it wants to keep all the doors open? The government obviously does not know how to fulfill the commitments made to Quebecers by the Prime Minister during the referendum campaign?

Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister responsible for Public Service Renewal, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the answer is no. The commitments made by the Prime Minister during the campaign will be fulfilled and we will review, with dedication, the changes that could be made to improve the way Canada works.

Again, in establishing this committee, the government shows that it cares for the well-being of Canadians and Quebecers. As for the opposition, it has clearly indicated, through its leader, that it is not interested in negotiating, and that its only goal is to destroy our country.

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[English]

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. Jim Hart (Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, as usual I am asking questions concerning the Minister of National Defence's mismanagement of his portfolio.

This morning the military police revealed documents alleging fraud by the chief of the defence staff. Access to information documents show the CDS has misused public funds.

Canadians have serious problems with the defence department's continually having to investigate itself because of the minister's mismanagement.

Has the CDS offered his resignation or has the minister demanded the resignation of the CDS?

Oral Questions

Hon. David M. Collette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member goes on so many fishing expeditions that it is very difficult to keep up with him most of the time.

As everyone knows, the chief of the defence staff is a distinguished individual who has served the country well. He will be leaving at the end of December. If the hon. member has any charges to level, I hope he will do it in the appropriate place.

Mr. Jim Hart (Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, today we have strong evidence against at least two of the minister's senior officials, the chief of the defence staff and Lieutenant-General Boyle, who has denied the existence of documents which have surfaced with his signature on them.

Was the minister's helicopter press conference today a feeble attempt to divert the attention of Canadians away from yet more reports of corruption, deception and misconduct by officials surrounding the minister?

Hon. David M. Collette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I cannot believe my ears when I hear the hon. member from the Reform Party. He has been urging the government to re-equip the forces yet criticizes the making of this very key announcement of providing new search and rescue helicopters to the armed forces.

On the matter of the access to information inquiry, the hon. member knows the department came to the person who requested the information and stated there were some irregularities. An investigation was launched by the deputy minister and subsequently the military police were brought in. The information commissioner was apprised and fully concurs with the way we are handling the situation.

Here we have yet another attempt by members of the Reform Party to malign public officials who are unable to defend themselves on the floor of the House.

* * *

• (1440)

[*Translation*]

BLOOD SUPPLY SYSTEM

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

A study prepared for the Krever inquiry once again indicates significant shortcomings in Canada's blood supply system. According to this report, we are apparently not yet protected from another contamination like the one experienced in the early 1980s.

Is the minister aware that, still today, as a result of her inaction, another tragedy such as was experienced in the early 1980s remains possible?

Hon. Diane Marleau (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, that is exactly why the Government of Canada struck the Krever commission to study the 1980s tragedy and to try to ensure it does not recur.

Mr. Justice Krever has commissioned all sorts of studies to help him decide what ought to be done. We continue to await his report and in the meantime we are taking all the steps we can to ensure the safety of the blood supply.

Mrs. Pauline Picard (Drummond, BQ): Mr. Speaker, how can the minister still be hiding behind evasions, behind the skirts of the Krever commission, when it is in her power to act now and prevent another tragedy? What we expect from her is not excuses, but action.

Hon. Diane Marleau (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have not waited for Justice Krever's report before taking steps to make the system safer. We have begun by stepping up, doubling even, the resources allocated to the Bureau of Biologics. We have begun to inspect blood donor centres on an annual basis. We also have a system for making inspection findings public.

Among other things, we have set up an advisory committee to help us continue to look at what is going on in other areas, in other countries, so that we may continue to be in the forefront with all new methods for increasing the safety of the system. We shall continue to take all of the steps necessary.

* * *

[*English*]

NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Hon. Charles Caccia (Davenport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Foreign Affairs or for the parliamentary secretary.

Yesterday it was reported that Canada is withdrawing its co-sponsorship of a United Nations resolution seeking a stop to nuclear weapon tests.

Why is Canada withdrawing its sponsorship over the wording of the preamble when at the same time the Canadian delegation plans to vote for the resolution?

Mr. Jesse Flis (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the government has repeatedly stated in the House and internationally, Canada is deeply committed to early conclusion of the comprehensive test treaty which will prohibit all nuclear testing for all time.

A draft resolution dealing with the nuclear testing issue is currently being negotiated at the first committee of the United Nations. As the text now stands, Canada intends to vote in favour of the resolution.

While Canada had initially co-sponsored a draft resolution, we had made very clear that we had reservations about one of the paragraphs in the resolution that could have brought into question the commitments made by nuclear weapon states at the 1995 NPT review and expansion conference.

Oral Questions

Canada intends to vote in favour of the resolution, but it will not be co-sponsoring it.

* * *

INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. John Duncan (North Island—Powell River, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday I asked the Minister of Industry about the misappropriation of funds at the Ontario Metis and Aboriginal Association.

In 1993 the minister's department was aware that its guidelines were being seriously broken and the association was declared insolvent by BDO Dunwoody.

How can the minister continue to leave President Henry Wetelainen in charge under these circumstances, especially since the minister said, on Goldhawk in June, that he would investigate and act?

• (1445)

Hon. John Manley (Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member implies that I run the aboriginal capital corporation in question, which is not the case.

Mr. Morrison: You fund it.

Mr. Manley: Another member suggests that I fund it. The fact is that no funds have been advanced to that organization since 1991. The facts that are alleged to be improper on the part of the hon. member have been given to the RCMP for investigation.

Mr. Abbott: Why did you not say that yesterday?

Mr. Manley: I did say that yesterday. I am sorry you were not listening.

Mr. Speaker, I realize that due process is sometimes seen by the Reform Party to be a bit of an inconvenience, but in this case I suggest it let the police do their work.

Mr. John Duncan (North Island—Powell River, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I point out to the minister that this organization has had a cash flow constantly throughout the years, despite the cutting off of federal funds. There are still moneys coming in from the previous loans portfolio and they are being mismanaged, poorly managed.

I ask the minister again if he will not cease and desist with this president running this organization to the detriment of the Métis aboriginal people they are meant to benefit.

Hon. John Manley (Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with respect to the efficiency of the administration and the appropriateness of the conduct of the organization, the member is right that we have concerns about it. That is why I indicated to interviewers that we would be investigating it.

Not only has there been no additional federal money given to the organization, not only has the agreement with the organization terminated, but we are continuing to work with them to correct the administrative conduct if necessary. If necessary we will take whatever action is required to recover funds that were previously given to the organization.

There are two files at issue here. One is the allegation the member referred to earlier, which could lead to criminal charges. The other issue is with respect to the administration of the organization. He imputes to me powers I do not have, that of appointing the president of the organization.

* * *

[Translation]

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. Jean H. Leroux (Shefford, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of National Defence.

After making a big production of cancelling the huge EH-101 deal two years ago, the Minister of National Defence now goes ahead and buys 15 search and rescue helicopters, the same number the Conservatives planned to buy, without any guarantees they will be less expensive.

Since the minister refuses to say anything about purchasing combat helicopters, does this mean that, to make its policies more palatable to the taxpayers, the government is making these announcements piecemeal and plans to invest in a program as ambitious as the EH-101 deal?

[English]

Hon. David M. Collenette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member knows, there were four major crown purchases that were called for in the white paper that resulted from the special joint committee's deliberations. The hon. member's party took part in that.

We announced the contract for the APCs some weeks ago, and now we have made the announcement of a competition for the replacement of the Labrador search and rescue helicopters, which are over 30 years of age and nearing the end of their life. This will be an open competition. We hope to examine new ways of financing that particular purchase, perhaps by leasing. The bottom line will be to save the taxpayers money.

[Translation]

Mr. Jean H. Leroux (Shefford, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the minister is right when he says we were part of that committee, but the Bloc Québécois proposed far more substantial cuts.

When we realize that the aerospace industry is mainly based in the Montreal region, what explanation does the minister have for the fact that, in the case of the 15 helicopters, there is no

Canadian content requirement and that two months ago, the same minister awarded, without tender, a \$2 billion contract, for armoured personnel carriers to Ontario?

[English]

Hon. David M. Collenette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, one of the things called for in the white paper was to move to off the shelf procurements, and that means to get the best deal for Canadian taxpayers.

• (1450)

Unlike the hon. members opposite, I happen to know that Canadian industry is very competitive, especially in the areas of integrated systems and electronics. Many of those industries are in Quebec. I am sure many of those industries will have a chance to show to bidders that they are competitive and can be part of this particular contract.

With respect to the question of the absolute price, we cannot talk about an absolute price if we are to have a competition in which price is to be one of the principal determinants. However, I will guarantee that on the search and rescue helicopters it will be much cheaper than the price that was to be paid for the EH-101 for the same job. We have reviewed the specifications and have found out that what the previous government ordered was really too rich for even the application of search and rescue standards in the country.

* * *

CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, last summer the CBC was ripped by the auditor general for being bureaucratic, wasteful and inefficient. Today a leaked document suggests that the CBC will soon be put in charge of the administration of Telefilm.

Will the minister promise the House that he will not send the arsonist to put out the fire?

Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, at the time of the last budget it was announced that there would be a review of the mandates of the CBC, Telefilm Canada, and the National Film Board. We are on course. There will be a report and recommendations put on my desk at the end of this month. Only at that time will decisions be made. In the meantime, I am waiting for that report.

Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, to further make the point, in the recently released supplementary estimates the CBC helped itself to another \$56 million over and above what it was budgeted for this year. It seems it is having a little trouble with this restraint thing.

Oral Questions

How can the minister justify giving the CBC another \$56 million when it has proven so wasteful in the past?

Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our colleague does not seem to understand how downsizing works. This surprises me, coming from his party.

The CBC is downsizing and there is a cost to downsizing. The economies will show this in the next few years. That is the way it works.

* * *

FISHERIES AND OCEANS

Ms. Paddy Torsney (Burlington, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans is fully aware, women are making a significant contribution to the work carried out by his department. DFO is currently integrating the fleets of scientific research, fisheries patrol and coast guard vessels.

Can the minister tell us what steps he is taking to promote a safe and healthy working environment on board DFO vessels?

Hon. Brian Tobin (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for her very thoughtful question, which I know my colleagues in the Reform Party are interested in. Her question acknowledged the contribution of women in the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and the contribution of women on shipboard platforms in both DFO and the coast guard.

In response to the question about a safe and healthy working environment for women within the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, we have recently taken steps to improve the environment, including the removal of alcohol from research vessels in the maritime region, sensitivity training for DFO vessel crew members, and leadership training for senior officials, promoting a safe and healthy working environment for all our employees. Harassment will not be tolerated in 1995. We are taking steps to ensure that the full contribution of women can be made in a safe, healthy and secure environment.

* * *

[Translation]

CANADIAN ARMED FORCES

Mrs. Christiane Gagnon (Quebec, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Defence.

Members of the former airborne regiment held celebrations in honour of Marc Lépine, who killed 14 young women at the École polytechnique in Montreal. Members of this group were even promoted by the Canadian Forces but, despite our questions on this matter, the minister of defence still refuses to suspend these promotions.

Oral Questions

Does the minister not agree that common decency requires him to suspend immediately the promotions given to those involved in the dinners honouring Marc Lépine?

• (1455)

Hon. David M. Collenette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I answered those questions two days ago. This incident has not been confirmed but if it did occur, it is, of course, deplorable and unacceptable. Canadian Forces do not condone such activities. An investigation is under way and I hope that Lieutenant-General Baril, the commander of the army, will submit his report in the near future.

Mrs. Christiane Gagnon (Quebec, BQ): Mr. Speaker, since the minister stubbornly refuses to suspend the promotions given to the soldiers involved in the dinners honouring Marc Lépine and shows little sensitivity in this matter, I will put my question to the Deputy Prime Minister.

How can the government tolerate the fact that soldiers who took part in celebrations in honour of someone who killed 14 young women were promoted by the Canadian Forces and that these promotions were not suspended, even after these events were brought to the defence minister's attention?

[English]

Hon. David M. Collenette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I find it offensive that people would make judgment on people and convict them without the evidence. Let us wait for General Baril's report before we make any judgment.

* * *

IMMIGRATION

Ms. Val Meredith (Surrey—White Rock—South Langley, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday a federal court judge struck down a section of the Immigration Act that was used to keep members of terrorist groups and criminal organizations out of the country. In the court's questionable wisdom, the judge felt that to deny entry to members of terrorist organizations is a violation of their charter of rights and freedoms guarantee to freedom of association.

I ask the minister of immigration to confirm that it is the intention of the government to appeal this decision and to advise the House on what steps it plans on taking in the meantime to keep members of criminal organizations and terrorist groups out of the country.

Hon. Sergio Marchi (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for her question.

First, it would be advisable to understand this is one section in the Immigration Act, which has probably been used twice in the last 10 years.

Second, the judgment just came down yesterday. It is some 70 pages. Our officials and officials from the justice department and the solicitor general's department are considering an appeal.

Third, it would be unfair to give the impression to Canadians that because there may be a question on section 39 of the act the department and the act are powerless with respect to those who come to this country and are deemed to be undesirable. The power of certificates in section 40 is still there. The power to detain is still there. The power to deport and move to inquiry is still there. The powers obtained under Bill C-44 that allow inquiries to stop refugee claims if there is a threat to Canada are still there.

We are discussing one tool in a toolbox that gives plenty of options to the Government of Canada.

Ms. Val Meredith (Surrey—White Rock—South Langley, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, what we are talking about is a court of Canada saying it is okay for criminals and terrorists to enter our country.

Canadians want to know if the government is prepared to use the notwithstanding clause in the charter of rights and freedoms to keep terrorists and criminals out of the country.

Hon. Sergio Marchi (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member should stop fear-mongering and begin to deal with decisions in a calm, fair, and rational manner. I realize that is a bit much to ask of the Reform Party.

The federal court said no such thing. The federal court made a decision based on section 39 with respect to simple association with various memberships of organizations. It did not say it was okay for terrorists or others to come into the country.

• (1500)

We are saying that this is one section of the Immigration Act. We may indeed appeal this decision. It was only handed down yesterday. Let us reflect on what the court took months to deliberate on and let us do the right thing rather than jump into scare mongering that does no one any good anywhere.

* * *

INCOME TAX

Mrs. Dianne Brushett (Cumberland—Colchester, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as we approach the end of the calendar year many Canadians focus their attention on the dreaded task of filing their income tax returns. The Department of National Revenue sends out millions of tax packages to individual Canadians each year.

Given the budget restraints this year, could the Minister of National Revenue tell the House what his department has done to streamline the tax filing operation and to save money?

Hon. David Anderson (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for her continuing interest in government efficiency and saving taxpayers' money. We appreciate it very much.

The department introduced a number of changes to the 1995 income tax packages for individuals. This will save approximately \$3 million annually. It translates into an environmental saving of some 320 million pages or, if we want to look at it somewhat differently, 13,600 trees.

This is part of a continuing process in the department on which we have embarked over the last few years and which will with the \$3 million save a total \$9 million. It has been done through cost efficiencies and savings rather than any cut in service. It is eliminating duplication of information. It is simplifying the tax filing of individuals and, as I mentioned, it is substantially helping the environment.

* * *

NUCLEAR TESTING

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Kingsway, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and follows up on the question of the member for Davenport.

Every party in the House except the Bloc Québécois has condemned French nuclear tests in the South Pacific. Does the parliamentary secretary not recognize that French nuclear tests in the South Pacific clearly violate the undertaking that France gave at the special conference in May of this year?

Will the parliamentary secretary make it very clear to the House that Canada accepts the undertaking made by France was violated, and will Canada do the right thing and restore its co-sponsorship of this important resolution?

Mr. Jesse Flis (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the international community and the hon. member should know Canada's position on extending indefinitely the ban on nuclear testing. He heard the explanation of why Canada is supporting the resolution while withdrawing its co-sponsorship.

Canada felt the wording was not strong enough. Canada registered its objections at the time when France was intending to set off another nuclear test. That is well known. The hon. member is trying to score political points over nothing.

Oral Questions

PRESENCE IN GALLERY

The Speaker: I draw the attention of hon. members to the presence in the gallery of His Excellency Samak Sundaravej, Deputy Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand, and his group from Thailand.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

The Speaker: Also I draw attention to the presence in the gallery of the Earl of Lindsay, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and the Environment for the Scottish Office.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

* * *

• (1505)

CLASS OF 1965

The Speaker: It is not often we in the House of Commons celebrate a day such as today. However it is very special for two members of the House.

The member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce and the member for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke belong to the class of 1965. They were first elected to this place in a general election held on this day 30 years ago. I should like to salute them in the name of the Parliament of Canada.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

The Speaker: Some members want to make interventions and I recognize the hon. House leader of the government.

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to associate myself as do all members of the House with your words of congratulation.

I believe it is time that I personally stopped thinking of the hon. members for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce and Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke as those two new guys around here. Not many members have had the privilege of serving 30 consecutive years in the House. I am happy to note that the active membership in this special club has just tripled. I assure new members and the House that I could not have chosen any better company.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Gray: The hon. member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce came here as a passionately committed champion of the less fortunate and the dispossessed, a relentless crusader for justice and equity, and a forceful advocate of international understanding. He has served in many capacities, including as a minister of the crown. He has taken on every challenge with energy and persistence.

Oral Questions

If there are some newer members who marvel at his vigour, they should take note that there are even hockey players only one third his age who have trouble skating with him for an entire game.

The hon. member for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke has distinguished himself as a real tribune of his people. An educator by profession, he has continually demonstrated the effectiveness of speaking sometimes in soft tones but always in very plain language.

He too has served in many capacities, earning a well justified reputation in matters concerning defence and public administration. When he speaks we all recognize that he is accurately reflecting what his people are saying. He has often proven the value of persistence and honest hard work.

A decade ago he had a close electoral call, being returned by only 38 votes. This earned him the nickname of Landslide Len. He rolled up his sleeves and in the next election proved his nickname well earned. He won the next time by more than 10,000 votes.

To conclude, anyone who has been to the district of Notre-Dame-de-Grâce in Montreal or who has visited the upper Ottawa valley can soon learn how it came about that these areas have returned the same members in nine consecutive elections. In both cases one finds that almost everyone knows their member of Parliament, and even if not a partisan supporter everyone can tell about the personal service that each of these members has provided. Of course these members probably do so as Liberals, as members of our Liberal caucus.

These are two honourable and decent people who have served Canada well for 30 years. May they both serve for many more.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ): Mr. Speaker, allow me to join my hon. colleague to convey, on behalf of my caucus, our heartfelt congratulations to our two colleagues, the hon. members for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce and Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, on 30 years of parliamentary activity. That is unusual and, party politics aside, we all have to respect such tenacity and commitment to serving one's fellow citizens.

• (1510)

All too often, the members of this House have to sacrifice their health or families to uphold democracy, which makes those being honoured today all the more deserving. I would therefore ask them, on behalf of the members of the Bloc Québécois, to accept our sincerest congratulations.

[*English*]

Miss Deborah Grey (Beaver River, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I too should like to pay tribute to these two long serving members. I think after having won two elections I am a veteran at this but in

fact I am just a kid. The hon. member for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke and the hon. member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce have had incredible careers here.

With respect to the hon. member for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, in the 30 years he has served there has often been a cold and cynical environment in this place, sad to say, but he has contributed immeasurably to making members of the House remember that their purpose in Ottawa is to serve those who elected them back home. There are no votes to gain in the Chamber.

While in government he served as acting speaker of the House and parliamentary secretary to the ministers of national defence and energy, mines and resources. In opposition he served as official opposition critic for national defence, financial management and regional development. Yet, when asked about his great achievements as a member of this place, the hon. member often mentions funding for the Ottawa Heart Institute.

He has found an enviable role in Parliament that does not include the high and mighty stature of being a minister. Funding for the Ottawa Heart Institute was very important to him. I remember the time he went in for heart surgery. We were grateful that our prayers were answered and he was able to return here. We are glad he is in good health and feeling well enough to keep up a rigorous schedule.

Regarding the hon. member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, again he is somebody who has served here for 30 years. I was 13 years old when these two men were elected. It gives me a sense of history. The hon. member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce has also had a wide and varied career. He has served in a variety of capacities as Solicitor General, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, and Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. The titles go on and on. They show the wide diversity of knowledge he has gained from this place.

He has worked in many areas, but it is amazing that he has demonstrated his tenacious commitment to the convictions and principles on which he has staked his political career, I am sure more than once. In a firm commitment to the principles in which he believes and on which he has been re-elected on eight successive occasions, which truly distinguishes the hon. member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, his unwavering belief in the principles in which he believes so firmly and for which he stands has seen him stand to be counted many times, including a recent personal and difficult decision for him to oppose his own party.

The hallmark of that successful politician, someone who is willing to stand to be counted, is that he is able to balance the realities of the party system with the wishes of his constituents while remaining true to his own beliefs. The hon. member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce retains the respect and support of his constituents. I know my party especially has appreciated him as chairman of the justice committee on which he served.

I wish both gentlemen well and a happy anniversary. I wish God's richest blessing on them as they continue in this place.

Mr. Leonard Hopkins (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I very sincerely thank the government House leader and all my colleagues, the House leader for the official opposition and its members, and the House leader of the Reform Party and its members for their good wishes. If it were 30 years ago today I would do it all over again.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Hopkins: There is no greater calling in Canada than that of a member of Parliament representing constituents and the nation and participating with the nation in international affairs. Some of the great things done by people in this place are the small things they do for their constituents. It has always been rewarding for me to travel through villages, towns, cities and communities and be called by my first name and taken into confidence. The people of Canada respect those who treat them with decency; I would say today that a sense of decency toward our fellow citizens and to be credible in their presence is one thing MPs should always bear in mind.

• (1515)

I have seen, met and befriended some wonderful people who have passed through this great institution, people who have made a fantastic contribution to Canada. Quite frankly, I can say at this stage in my life on behalf of those people whom I have known and many who are in the House today, I do not think that this country's elected people get half the credit they deserve for the wonderful job they are doing.

I say to all members, good luck and all the best to you as you go on in your careers. Thank you very much for your friendship.

There is one thing that cannot go unmentioned here today. Whenever there is a party for Len Hopkins, I do not want it to be a party for Len Hopkins; I want it to be a party for my good wife Lois who is in the gallery today—

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Hopkins: —and for the members of my family, Doug and Sherri, who have tolerated me over these 30 years. There are many in the House who know what it is all about.

The best thing for people in public life today is to be decent to people, respect them and listen to them. Enjoy your career here by doing useful things for those people and for the country. Remember that this is a great institution through which many wonderful people have passed in bygone years. It is up to those of us here today to make certain that people in the years to come look back and say that we respected the system and looked up to the Canadian people and did the best we could for this great nation of ours.

Routine Proceedings

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

The Speaker: My colleagues, the last word always falls to the Speaker. Len and Warren, my words are also meant for you.

In the name of your colleagues here in the House and for those of us who have served by your side over the decades, it is good to know there are people like the two of you, fighters fighting quietly at times and at other times more vociferously.

This House is an honourable place. The two of you, Warren and Len, have brought greater honour to the House by being part of it. Thank you for serving Canada.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*Translation*]

ORDER IN COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS

Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table in both official languages a number of order in council appointments which were recently made by the government.

Pursuant to the provisions of Standing Order 110(1), these are deemed referred to the appropriate standing committees, a list of which is attached.

* * *

[*English*]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table, in both official languages, the government's response to two petitions.

* * *

[*Translation*]

ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment, Lib.): Today, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table before the House the *OECD's Environmental Performance Review of Canada*. The review was conducted over the last 18 months by a team of international environmental policy experts. It looks at how Canada is doing in meeting the goals we have set domestically and internationally.

Routine Proceedings

• (1520)

[*English*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, having tabled the document, how did Canada do?

Overall the OECD report is positive for Canada. It points to areas where we are doing well. Equally important, it points to areas where we must do better. The report credits co-operation among various levels of government as a key reason for effective environmental protection in Canada. It recognizes that Canadian governments have embraced the concept of sustainable development.

[*Translation*]

But Canada—like most OECD countries—continues to struggle with turning the concept of sustainable development in reality. The report says we have to do better—and we are. Over the past year, we have taken significant steps to address this problem. Bill C-83, which amends the Auditor General Act, is an example.

It requires that government departments prepare sustainable development strategies and integrate sustainable development into departmental policies, programs and operations. This means giving the federal government the tools to start making the shift to sustainable development.

[*English*]

The OECD report also has a lot to say about the way we are bringing environmental policy to life in Canada. While the report compliments the way we use voluntary agreements, it says that we need to increase the use of economic instruments. The report is right. We should use economic instruments in more cases to achieve our environmental goals. However, the government also believes there is a definite role for good legislation and good regulation and a definite need for legislation to be vigorously enforced.

The federal government's flagship environmental legislation is the Canadian Environmental Protection Act. It is here that good regulation can shift society and industry to cleaner commercial practices. As members of the House know, this legislation is currently under the mandatory five year review. The government will be tabling its response to the standing committee report very soon.

[*Translation*]

In terms of wildlife and species protection, the OECD report makes it clear that we still have a lot of work ahead. While we can be pleased that population levels for many vulnerable species are going up, the report points to many cases where the laws are weak. It suggests that Canada give special consider-

ation to protecting wildlife in areas where there are severe pressures from human activities.

The government recognizes this need. Last May, I released a proposal for a new Canadian Endangered Species Protection Act. This is the first time a federal government has moved to create a co-ordinated and co-operative national approach to protect the 244 species of wild plants and animals that are endangered, threatened or vulnerable.

[*English*]

On air pollution, the OECD report is positive about the effectiveness of Canada's federal-provincial partnership in reducing air pollution. We have met our goals for emissions of many air pollutants, including sulphur dioxide, lead and carbon monoxide causing acid rain. It also points to areas where air quality is inadequate for human health and ecosystems.

In parts of Canada there are consistent breaches of national and provincial ambient air quality standards for ground level ozone, what we call smog. Environment ministers across Canada are strongly aware of the need to take action to reduce pollution from cars and from industry. We have begun to take action in concert to address this problem.

Last month in Whitehorse, Yukon my provincial colleagues and I endorsed a report calling for the tightening of regulations under the federal Motor Vehicle Safety Act. Our report also calls for actions to improve fuel efficiency and to promote advanced technology and alternatively fuelled vehicles.

There will be new standards for cleaner gasoline and diesel fuel. All in all, we believe these changes will significantly reduce the level of smog in Canada. That means cleaner air and healthier Canadians, which means Canadians will live longer.

The most sobering element of the OECD environmental performance review report is that we are told we need to do more to meet our climate change goals. The report says that Canada will have a tough time meeting its climate change goals with our current plans. Nor does it believe that our national action program will allow Canada to meet its international commitment to stabilize carbon dioxide emissions by the year 2000 at 1990 levels. Clearly, tougher measures must be taken.

• (1525)

The report encourages us to be more aggressive and to consider the use of all instruments available to reduce our emissions of carbon dioxide, instruments including charges, regulations and indeed taxes. The world's leading scientists have confirmed that if human beings do not reduce and eliminate their impact on the world's climate, the repercussions for Canada and the planet earth will be severe, crippling and irreversible. Aggressive actions must be taken now. They must be taken if we are to fulfil our responsibility to protect the health and future of our children and grandchildren.

Routine Proceedings

[Translation]

And so, what messages can we take from the OECD Environmental Performance Review of Canada? Yes, our efforts to protect the environment are bearing fruit. But we cannot be complacent. There are important environmental issues that we have not resolved. And there are goals and commitments that we have not successfully met.

In Canada, we have a record of working together to solve problems. This is something we can be proud of. The OECD has recognized this, but we must continue.

Mrs. Monique Guay (Laurentides, BQ): Mr. Speaker, today, the Minister of the Environment is tabling the OECD's report on Canada's environmental performance.

This report also recognizes the efforts made by the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment, which proved itself to be a useful instrument in several respects. The report highlights the environmental strengths and weaknesses of the federal and provincial governments, which made sustainable development a central theoretical concept but with few concrete applications.

The minister states that, contrary to what the report says, her government was able to translate the concept of sustainable development into a reality. To prove her assertion, she used the example of Bill C-83, which creates the position of commissioner of the environment.

I simply want to point out to her that creating the position of commissioner of the environment is no guarantee of sustainable development for the federal government, let alone for Canadian and Quebec society. On October 3, the auditor general admitted before the Standing Committee on the Environment and Sustainable Development that he would have no control over the scope of departmental action plans. The departments themselves will be responsible for setting objectives, which cannot be questioned by anyone. In simple terms, nothing can prevent a minister from setting meaningless or superficial objectives.

More importantly, the auditor general questioned the departments' ability and willingness to find ways to assess the effectiveness of their action plans. On this subject, he said, and I quote: "In an era of downsizing and restructuring, I fear that the challenge will not be taken up. In our experience, in order to take positive action, departments need leadership, support and direction", something that is obviously lacking.

How can the minister come here to brag, when she knows full well that her government was unable to force her colleagues to develop meaningful action plans that could set an example for the private sector?

At report stage and third reading of Bill C-83, I will be pleased to analyze more thoroughly the amendments put forward by the committee, which open the door once again to federal meddling in areas of provincial jurisdiction.

The minister admitted today that there is a real need for environmental legislation to be vigorously enforced. I fully agree with her. In this regard, she should be reminded again that Canada is still acting illegally by exporting toxic waste to the third world and that her officials simply cannot afford to put an end to this practice.

● (1530)

The minister is quite right. It is not enough to sign international arrangements such as the Basel convention; we must also enforce them. In that sense, instead of interfering in areas that are no concern of hers, as she keeps doing, the minister should ensure that those acts which are clearly under her responsibility are properly enforced.

Moreover, the minister should also be reminded that, since her government came to office, the number of proceedings under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act has clearly dropped compared to previous years.

Similarly, the minister mentioned the CEPA regulations. The report in which the standing committee criticized the fact that there are hardly any regulations respecting the CEPA must have escaped the minister's attention.

The minister also announced that the government's response to the standing committee's report on the CEPA would follow shortly. The minister might be tempted to table a bill reflecting the centralizing designs of the Liberal members of the committee, but I would caution her against it.

In the last referendum, the people of Quebec have clearly indicated that they will no longer tolerate the federal government's highhanded and centralizing approach. The Bloc Québécois and myself are anxious to see if the minister got the message and acted on it.

I wish to stress the fact that this government's attitude since coming to office and the episode of the Environmental Assessment Act, which raised an outcry, have left a bad taste in the mouth of provincial governments. Co-operation between the various levels of government must not be taken for granted, and the minister has already gone beyond the limit of what can be tolerated in many respects.

As far as air pollution is concerned, it is obvious that the minister is walking on eggs. According to the OECD, Canada's performance is far from enviable. While, clearly, some provinces have simply not taken their responsibilities, the minister can hardly brag about her own performance.

Routine Proceedings

The minister's proposal at the recent summit in Berlin to literally deliver permits to pollute, as well as her bill on MMT, which could result in a significant increase in greenhouse gas emissions, are evidence of her poor performance.

I also note that Bill S-7, which seeks to introduce the use of more environment friendly fuels for the federal fleet of vehicles, is not an initiative of this government, but of Senator Colin Kenney.

Finally, I want to point out that the OECD report presented to us today concerns the provincial governments just as much, if not more. Indeed, in its report, the OECD recognizes that the provinces assume most of the responsibilities related to management of the environment. Canada still has a long way to go before it can claim to be a leader in environmental issues.

The OECD's criticisms primarily concern provincial governments. It is up to them to take the initiative and to reduce pollution, improve management of our natural resources, and improve integration of the economy and the environment.

I also think that it would be in the best interests of the provinces to take a direct part in signing international agreements. That way, they would have no excuse for not reaching objectives they themselves have set.

[*English*]

Mr. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the OECD report shows that we are doing fairly well, but there is more that we can do. We have embraced the concept of sustainable development, but like many countries we have had trouble in translating this into reality. Encouragingly the minister agreed with this.

In the face of this admission the government has produced a pea soup agenda with respect to the environment, this even after a superb report by the committee on the environment that was completed earlier this year and was lauded in many quarters.

I ask the Minister of the Environment why is she putting bills such as the environmental auditor general forward when the functions of the environmental auditor general can be co-opted by existing structures?

• (1535)

Why are we talking in the House about banning MMT and spending enormous amounts of money and time on this issue when there is no reason to ban it for reasons of health? There is a lot of evidence to show that MMT does not damage onboard devices, the basis on which the Deputy Prime Minister is trying to ban it.

The government is taking up these issues when there are other larger, pressing, persistent and dangerous issues affecting Canada's environment as we speak.

First, the OECD report states that Canada has not been exporting toxic materials to other countries since we signed the Basel convention in 1992. The investigative unit of the minister's department shows that Canada is exporting highly toxic materials to non-OECD developing nations such as Hong Kong, China, India, Thailand and South Korea. The toxic substances being exported to these countries cannot meet the environmental standards we have in our country. These countries are taking toxic materials, stripping parts away, and burning them or dumping them in a fashion that is highly damaging to the environment.

Second, there are 26 sites in this country that pose a high degree of hazard to people, flora and fauna. There is absolutely no plan to address these toxic sites within our own border.

Third, the OECD analysis also showed that on a per capita basis we emit the highest levels of such damaging agents as nitrous oxide, carbon dioxide and sulphur dioxide. Yet in the face of this the minister wants to ban MMT which will greatly increase nitrous oxide emissions, which is a very important component of the smog that exacerbates respiratory problems.

Fourth, Canada refused to agree to be a signatory of an important section of the UN convention on the prevention of pollution from ships. As a result, one-third of the garbage on some of the most pristine and protected beaches in the British Isles comes from Canada. I would ask the hon. minister to please look at that.

I agree with the minister's statement about working with industry to try and develop economic ways to help them become more sensitive to the environment, and in developing ways to use industry in a sustainable fashion. We would be happy to work with the minister on that.

I also applaud her statement on trying to protect our flora and fauna. It is a heritage that the people of the country have been given and in turn, we are obligated to give to future generations.

Our problems demand immediate action, not only for the benefit of all Canadians but for the benefit of people around the world. Our environment is not only shared with those within our country, it is shared by all people on the planet. We have only one planet, only one environment and only one opportunity to make sure our environment will be sustainable and sound for coming generations.

We are at a watershed on the planet right now. If we choose to put forward sound plans for sustainable utilization of the environment, then we will have a world worth living in. But if we choose not to take this course of action, then the planet we know will not be what we were born into. It will be a very sorry place to live.

In southeast Asia a number of countries have gone full bore into developing their nations with very little respect for the environment. As a result great numbers of children are being born with genetic defects which are directly due to the polluted environment into which they are born. We must take heed of this and develop our country for the future in a way that we will not fall into this trap, for us and for the coming generations.

* * *

● (1540)

PETITIONS

YOUNG OFFENDERS ACT

Mr. Ed Harper (Simcoe Centre, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, it is my honour to rise in the House today and present a petition on behalf of 2,500 constituents of my riding of Simcoe Centre. The signatures were collected after the beating of a young girl by a gang of girls in the city of Barrie.

The petitioners request that Parliament pass legislation to strengthen the Young Offenders Act, including publishing the names of young offenders, lowering the age of application and transferring serious offenders to adult court. I support these petitioners.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. David Chatters (Athabasca, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to present two petitions under Standing Order 36. The first petition is from residents in the communities of Athabasca and Smith in my riding.

The petitioners request that Parliament not amend the Canadian Human Rights Act or the charter of rights and freedoms in any way which would tend to indicate societal approval of same sex relationships or of homosexuality, including the amending of the Canadian Human Rights Act to include in the prohibited grounds of discrimination the undefined phrase sexual orientation.

GUN CONTROL

Mr. David Chatters (Athabasca, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the second petition is from residents from the High Prairie area of my constituency.

The petitioners request that Parliament support the laws which would severely punish all violent criminals who use weapons in the commission of a crime; to support new Criminal Code firearms control provisions which recognize and protect the right of law-abiding citizens to own and use recreational firearms; and to support legislation which will repeal and modify existing gun control laws which have not improved public safety or have proven not to be cost effective or have proven to be overly complex as to be inefficient and/or unenforceable.

Royal Assent

[Translation]

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

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

The Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

MOTIONS FOR PAPERS

Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I ask that all notices of motions for the production of papers also be allowed to stand.

The Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

The Deputy Speaker: I have the honour to inform the House that a message has been received from the Senate informing this House that the Senate has passed the following bills: Bill C-90, an act to amend the Excise Tax Act and the Excise Act; and Bill C-105, an act to implement a convention between Canada and the Republic of Latvia, a convention between Canada and the Republic of Estonia, a convention between Canada and the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and a protocol between Canada and the Republic of Hungary, for the avoidance of double taxation and the prevention of fiscal evasion with respect to taxes on income.

THE ROYAL ASSENT

[English]

The Deputy Speaker: Order. I have the honour to inform the House that a communication has been received as follows:

Government House
Ottawa

November 8, 1995

Mr. Speaker,

I have the honour to inform you that the Honourable Peter de C. Cory, Puisne Judge of the Supreme Court of Canada, in his capacity as Deputy Governor General, will proceed to the Senate Chamber today, the 8th day of November, 1995, at 4.00 p.m., for the purpose of giving royal assent to certain bills.

Yours sincerely,

Anthony P. Smyth
Deputy Secretary
Policy, Program and Protocol

Government Orders

Pursuant to our standing orders, I wish to inform the House that because of the ministerial statement, Government Orders will be extended today by 19 minutes.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

MANGANESE BASED FUEL ADDITIVES ACT

The House resumed from November 7 consideration of the motion that Bill C-94, an act to regulate interprovincial trade in and the importation for commercial purposes of certain manganese based substances, be read the third time and passed.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Bruce—Grey has the floor. Our hon. colleague still has 11 minutes remaining in his intervention.

• (1545)

Mr. Ovid L. Jackson (Bruce—Grey, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am glad to be here today to speak to Bill C-94, the manganese based fuel additives act.

Yesterday I made the case for the onboard diagnostic equipment. I spoke of the process in an engine during the four-stroke cycle and the fact that when the fuel is burned in such a rapid sequence it exits the tailpipe and how it affects the onboard diagnostic equipment.

I will conclude my remarks by talking about the fuel as it comes out of the exhaust pipe and enters into the catalytic converter. A catalyst is a device that causes something to happen that would not have happened without this device. It basically changes the substance without changing itself.

I talked about what happens with regard to rhodium and platinum and palladium used in this device and how it affects adding or subtracting oxygen and the fact that we added or subtracted oxygen by triggering certain devices by computer controlled mechanisms.

In the House we talk about problems in Canada. We have interprovincial problems. Sometimes because we do not have natural enemies we spend a lot of time navel gazing or talking about other things. It is important, particularly when it comes to the environment, that we act collaboratively and work hard to try to do the best for our country.

The environment is quite fragile. It is quite integrated. As we get more and more knowledgeable about it, we understand how important it is and how important it is to interact with it and when we do the right things what the environment can do for us in terms of giving us healthy lifestyles. Given the fact that air will migrate across states and across provinces, it is very important that we have collaborative action to look after that. It

does not matter how small those applications are in terms of looking after the environment. We have to act.

I am reminded of the fellow who said if you think cleaning up the environment is hard, trying cleaning out your garage.

As the House gives final consideration to Bill C-94, I would like to explain the background to this legislation and what it seeks to accomplish.

MMT is the commonly used acronym for a more tongue twisting name: methylcyclopentadienyl manganese tricarbonyl. This is a manganese based fuel additive used to increase the octane rating of gasoline.

MMT was first viewed as a replacement for lead in gasoline. In Canada it has been used since 1977. As all members are aware, lead was phased out of virtually all Canadian gasoline by 1990. The phase-out has brought considerable improvement to urban air quality.

If I may compare MMT to lead, heaven forbid—I think lead was probably more dastardly and more harmful—we would notice that when we try to fill our car up the nozzles for the new gasolines are smaller and the hole is smaller so we cannot use the old nozzles in cases where they have lead.

Lead had its positive points. It was an octane additive. It was used to increase the combustion chamber pressures. If you increase the compression ratio you get higher initial pressure, higher final pressure, and more power. Older cars went up to something like 11:1 compression ratio.

The lead itself actually stops the gasoline from blowing up. Gasoline becomes unpredictable. For those who drive their vehicles very hard, especially some of the older model cars, and turn the ignition switch off with their foot on the accelerator pedal and the car runs on, it is called dieseling or after-running. It is sometimes caused by a hot carbon particle setting the gasoline on fire, although it is not electronically triggered by the sparkplug. It is just the heat that is left in the residual amount of carbon left in the combustion chamber that actually sets the gasoline on fire.

These octane enhancers try to predict or control this explosiveness or the volatility of the gasoline so that it works under controlled processes. When it is controlled it burns a little better and you get better reaction from it and you can control the work it is doing. You are changing heat energy to mechanical work in an engine.

• (1550)

Today almost every Canadian motorist uses MMT, simply because Canadian refineries use it. The exact amount of MMT may vary from one batch of gasoline to another. In general, premium grade gasoline contains a higher MMT level than regular grade gasoline.

MMT has always been controversial. In 1978 it was prohibited for use in unleaded gasoline in the United States because it

was suspected that the substance could damage emission control equipment. Despite recent moves to reverse the U.S. prohibition, MMT is certain to have no place in the high tech cleaner fuels for the future.

Hon. members from the opposition party and the Reform Party have made the case that there is not enough evidence. I have seen films from the automotive manufacturers, and they have said categorically and have shown that the catalysts in the converters are coated at a faster rate. The person who will lose in this case is the consumer.

If Ethyl Corporation and the automotive manufacturers want to work something out, we do not want to be the referee. The federal government has spent a lot of money because members of the opposition and sometimes our own members have asked the government to do certain things. We end up spending a lot of money and sometimes the resultant solutions are not that good.

Look at the Krever report on blood contaminants concerning things that have happened in the past. Those proceedings are going on and on; it is going to cost us millions of dollars and will probably result in a lot of lawsuits from people about things that have happened in the past. It seems the only people who get a lot of jobs are lawyers. I am sure my lawyer friends are going to be mad at me, but that is a problem with some of the things that happen here.

In this case, the federal government should not intervene in a dispute between the Ethyl Corporation and the automotive manufacturers. It has to make a decision on behalf of Canadians and the environment. That is what this decision is all about.

Canada is being forced to confront the downside of MMT not because a new environmental threat has emerged but because we are getting better at countering those threats.

Cleaner air involves using cleaner fuels as well as cleaner cars and trucks. While research has continued on the product we put into our gas tanks, it has also continued on our hardware, the engine that burns the fuel and the control equipment that lowers emissions. Technological advances have steadily cut the harmful emissions coming out of tailpipes.

Now we have taken another major step toward the introduction of sophisticated onboard diagnostic systems, which are known as OBDs. These systems are extremely valuable for the environment. They are responsible for the monitoring of the vehicle's emission controls and alerting the driver to malfunctions. They ensure the cleaner burning engines of today and tomorrow operate as designed. They ensure automobiles are properly maintained, resulting in decreased tailpipe emissions and improved fuel economy.

Government Orders

This is a very important technology, but it is even more important that it works, that it does the job properly on the new cars. This is where the problem arises.

The automobile manufacturers are convinced that gasoline containing MMT adversely affects the operation of sophisticated onboard diagnostic pieces of equipment. Accordingly, the industry has made the decision that it will not accept the risk of increased warranty repair costs caused by MMT related damage. Some companies have even indicated they will disconnect the OBD systems in whole or in part if MMT continues to be used in Canadian gasoline. That means the cost of maintaining these systems could be passed on directly to Canadian consumers and Canadian consumers would pay more to operate these new cars.

What we have here is a conflict between two key industrial sectors, the automotive manufacturers and the oil industry. The car makers insist that MMT harms their product, forcing them to adopt practices that may raise prices for consumers.

• (1555)

The oil industry claims that MMT reduces nitrogen oxide emissions by up to 20 per cent, but the figure is subject to dispute. In any case, alternatives to MMT are available. By the industry's own estimates, the cost of MMT removal translates into an increase of 0.1 to 0.24 cents per litre at the pump, which is a negligible amount, given that gasoline prices regularly fluctuate by a few cents per litre.

The Minister of the Environment urged both industries to find a voluntary resolution to the issue of MMT in Canada by the end of 1994. She said that if they did not do so the government would take action. The deadline was subsequently extended into February of this year to review automotive and petroleum industry proposals. Unfortunately, the matter was not resolved, so the federal government proceeded with Bill C-94.

Allow me briefly to explain the key provisions of the bill. The legislation will prohibit the import or interprovincial trade for a commercial purpose of MMT or unleaded gasoline containing MMT. It will give the Minister of the Environment the power to authorize exceptions for MMT, which will not be used in unleaded gasoline, subject to a monitoring requirement. Coverage of the act can be expanded by order in council to cover other manganese based substances. The act is binding on all persons and entities, including federal and provincial governments.

I believe that the initiative taken by the government is correct. I feel that the onboard diagnostic equipment malfunctions outweigh the gains we can achieve with respect to nitrous oxides. We could control the nitrous oxides. The OBD systems will give us better fuel economy and better burning engines, resulting in fewer emissions to the environment.

Government Orders

Mr. Paul E. Forseth (New Westminster—Burnaby, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak today to third reading of Bill C-94. I am pleased to speak for two reasons. First, it will give me the opportunity to show Canadians a sad example of bad legislation. Second, speaking today allows me to reveal again how the government's inability to display good judgment will cause Canadian industry, the consumer, and the overall environment to suffer.

On May 19, 1995 Bill C-94 was introduced in the House of Commons by the Minister of the Environment. After introduction the minister proceeded to hold a press conference, where she informed reporters that the reason for banning MMT was because it caused problems with onboard diagnostic systems in new automobiles. That was not the only reason the minister proceeded to ban MMT. She stated that Canada was one of the few countries in the world using MMT in unleaded gasoline and that this should change.

The minister knows very well what the best solution to the entire debate would be. She knows that a series of independent third party tests are needed, but she will not initiate this or facilitate it.

As members of the House and, more important, as representatives of all Canadians it is important we weigh and pursue every available option to come up with an appropriate conclusion before we create legislation. We should be asking ourselves: What indeed is the best science can tell us?

The Liberal government calls itself responsible. What is really meant by the term responsibility, in view of Bill C-94? On these technical matters it certainly does not hurt to demonstrate and then legislate. That is not too much to ask.

We know that at the time the bill was introduced MMT was not yet approved for use in unleaded gasoline in the United States. Since 1978 MMT has not been in U.S. fuel. In 1978 the Environmental Protection Agency did not approve MMT because it felt it might be detrimental to the health of Americans. Understanding what the Americans did with respect to MMT is very significant to what this government is trying to do with Bill C-94.

In the U.S. there was an air quality act brought forward by Congress in 1967. The act established a registration program for fuel additives. The regulations made registration a condition of sale and required that manufacturers provide information on the recommended range of concentration and use and chemical composition and structure.

• (1600)

In 1970 Congress amended the act to transfer authorization of the registration program over to the EPA. Congress required that the EPA designate fuels and fuel additives for registration. The

clean air act required that manufacturers provide information on the chemical composition to the EPA. The EPA also had the authority to judge the effects of additives on emission control performance and public health.

In 1977 Congress made more amendments to the clean air act. One amendment dealt with the emergence of catalytic converters in automobiles. I will read what the courts had to say about the new amendment and the effect it would have on MMT:

As catalytic converters could not be used with leaded fuel, their adoption had led to a sharp rise in the use of MMT as an octane booster, and Congress responded to concerns that it and other fuel additives might harm the effectiveness of these converters. Section 211(f)(3) required that manufacturers of certain existing additives, those that were "not substantially similar" to constituents of fuel used in the certification of vehicles for emission purposes for 1975 or later model years, stop distributing such additives effective September 15, 1978.

Congress directed the EPA to grant a waiver once it determined that the additive would not cause or contribute to the failure of an emission control device system. The EPA deliberately stalled on making a decision until the courts instructed it to do the testing.

On November 30, 1993 the EPA found that MMT did not cause or contribute to the failure of emission control systems. However, not wanting to be outdone by the courts, the EPA denied the waiver on the grounds that the manufacturer, Ethyl, had not yet established the absence of health effects.

The court wrangling continued until October 20, 1995 when the United States Court of Appeals, in the case of Ethyl Corporation v. Carol M. Browner, administrator of the United States Environmental Protection Agency, ruled:

We order the EPA to register MMT for use as an additive in unleaded gasoline, as of November 30, 1993.

What is significant with this ruling is not that Ethyl won and that MMT could be sold in U.S. unleaded gasoline by the end of the year, but rather it is the process that was undertaken by Congress and then the EPA not to approve MMT in unleaded fuels. Back in 1978 the EPA said that MMT might pose a health problem and cause adverse effects to catalytic converters, but through the examination of all evidence by the courts these negative concerns were put aside.

The EPA has until December 4, 1995 to appeal the decision made by the court. Considering that it did not appeal an earlier decision this year it is doubtful it will appeal the October 20 ruling. The implications of this are rather ironic. When the bill was introduced in May both the environment minister and the industry minister said that eliminating MMT from our gasoline was essential to achieve a North American harmonization of fuel. They said we should copy the Americans.

Both ministers were confident that the ban on MMT would remain in the United States. On May 5 I asked the environment minister during question period about the fact that the courts would probably rule in Ethyl's favour. In response he stated:

I advise the hon. member that last week when I had the opportunity of speaking with Carol Browner, head of the EPA, she reaffirmed the U.S. commitment not to allow MMT. She decried the fact that there is only one country, Canada, that still allows MMT. We intend to change that.

The Minister of Industry has gone further than his colleague, the Minister of the Environment. On April 25 in a question period response he told me:

Key to that is uniformity of standards between the U.S. and Canada. The member will know that MMT is not permitted in the United States by legislation. It is crucial that we have uniformity of standards. The effort we put into trying to ensure there was a voluntary agreement between the two sectors has been well placed, but finally governments have to decide.

The Ministry of Industry has clearly stated on the record that it is important U.S. and Canadian gasoline need to have the same composition harmonization. That is his position and he will no doubt vote in favour of Bill C-94. The government is confused. I thought the definition of harmonization was two sides being in harmony with each other. I guess the minister has a different definition as MMT is now going to be used in the U.S.A.

The industry minister is not the only one who has different ideas of harmonization. During the clause by clause consideration of the bill I moved the motion that we hold off on the bill until December 5, 1995, one day after the EPA's 45 allotted days to appeal the court ruling. The U.S. ruling was not only significant for Ethyl Corporation but was equally important for the Canadian consumer. I point out a statement by the member for York—Simcoe in rebuttal to my motion:

I think in terms of what's going on in the United States. The decision that was encountered recently regarding MMT was based on some technicality. We also have to give consideration to the fact that MMT is banned in California and some of the high ozone states.

• (1605)

The Deputy Speaker: I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member. He may continue his intervention after we return from the Senate.

THE ROYAL ASSENT

[English]

A message was delivered by the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod as follows:

Government Orders

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Deputy to the Governor General desires the immediate attendance of this honourable House in the chamber of the honourable the Senate.

Accordingly, the Speaker with the House went up to the Senate chamber.

• (1610)

[Translation]

And being returned:

The Deputy Speaker: I have the honour to inform the House that when the House went up to the Senate chamber, the Deputy Governor General was pleased to give, in Her Majesty's name, Royal Assent to the following bills:

Bill S-9, an act to amend the Canada-United States Tax Convention Act, 1984—Chapter 34.

Bill C-71, an act to amend the Explosives Act—Chapter 35.

Bill C-90, an act to amend the Excise Tax Act and the Excise Act—Chapter 36.

Bill C-105, an act to implement a convention between Canada and the Republic of Latvia, a convention between Canada and the Republic of Estonia, a convention between Canada and the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and a protocol between Canada and the Republic of Hungary, for the avoidance of double taxation and the prevention of fiscal evasion with respect to taxes on income—Chapter 37.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

MANGANESE BASED FUEL ADDITIVES ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-94, an act to regulate interprovincial trade in and the importation for commercial purposes of certain manganese based substances, be read the third time and passed.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby has the floor for his remaining 10 minutes.

• (1615)

Mr. Paul E. Forseth (New Westminster—Burnaby, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, before we left for the Senate I was quoting the member for York—Simcoe. She had said:

I think in terms of what's going on in the United States. The decision that was encountered recently regarding MMT was based on some technicality. We also have to give consideration to the fact that MMT is banned in California and some of the high-ozone states—So any kind of justification for the fact that 100 per cent of the United States is not going to be using MMT is simply just not acceptable because that's not true. At least 30 per cent of the country will not be having MMT usage at all.

When I was a youngster in elementary school and I thought I might be embarrassed, I would perhaps dissemble to get out of

Government Orders

trouble. The comments made by the member for York—Simcoe in the environment committee show that the government's back is up against the wall and it is now saying anything it can to save face. The policy of the government is clear: legislate how the minister feels, or wants to favour someone, rather than by what is right in view of legitimate evidence.

When MMT is reintroduced into the United States later this year probably 70 per cent of the gasoline will have MMT in it, if we use the numbers from the member for York—Simcoe. Let me also point out that the environmental restrictions in California are different from any of those used in other states. I have often heard the description that California is a country all of its own. If California lifted the ban on MMT I am certain the members of the Liberal caucus would find some other reason it is important to ban MMT.

When the EPA attempted to ban MMT it mistakenly believed it was harmful. The Liberal government wants to ban not the substance but rather the importation and interprovincial trade in the substance. This is clearly an anti-free trade bill. Some would ask the reason for doing it this way. The government has no other choice. When it is unable to do something through the proper channels, old style Liberals find other ways.

This is the government that told the Canadian electorate following the last election that it would show credibility and responsibility and be forthright with the public. Here is another example that can be added to a long list of old style governance and politics.

Every Canadian should ask the Minister of the Environment why she did not go through the proper channels and ban MMT under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act. She is the sponsor of this legislation so why did she not use her department's act, an act that was designed specifically for banning harmful substances. The answer is simple. She could not. There is not a scientific basis for it. MMT appears to be no more harmful than household dust on the furniture.

In order to add a substance to the schedule of banned substances under CEPA it must be proven by Health Canada that the substance is hazardous to the health of Canadians. Anyone who has listened to any of the debates on this bill is well aware of the December 6, 1994 Health Canada report called "Risk Assessment for the Combustion Products of MMT". It states that "all analyses indicate that the combustion products of MMT in gasoline do not represent an added health risk to the Canadian population".

On October 18 a Health Canada official appeared before the Standing Committee on the Environment and Sustainable Development and concurred that the 1994 report remains the position of the department. Therefore I urge all members of the House not to include in their speeches during this third reading stage any reference that the removal of MMT will improve

health quality. I heard several government members make a mention of this during second reading. It is a false and inaccurate assertion. A member may make an unforeseen mistake, however in this case, the evidence gives clear direction concerning what can be claimed.

From the outset Reformers have unequivocally stated that we would support the banning of MMT if the government could prove through an independent scientific test that MMT was harmful to the automakers onboard diagnostic systems or OBD-II as they are called in the industry. However the minister has only scoffed at Reform for even suggesting independent testing. The Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association has provided her with their test data and that is all the data she apparently needs or wants to see.

When the petroleum companies appeared before the committee they suggested they would have a tremendous amount to lose should MMT be removed from Canadian fuels. In their testimony it was suggested that the removal of MMT could result in an increase of manufacturing costs by as much as \$69 million per year.

● (1620)

According to the Canadian Petroleum Products Institute, the \$69 million increase would be due to the fact that refiners would have to burn more crude in order to achieve the high octane levels needed for today's automobiles. They would also have to retrofit refineries. Other expensive additives would have to be used which might eventually be revealed to be very harmful.

This bill has been through the various stages. I want to make it clear that at every stage Reform has made every attempt to put the bill on hold until conclusive proof is found. We have not been obstructionist. We have called for common sense, not unreasonably siding with any group, unlike the government.

I want to read into the record parts of three letters I have come across, all from provincial ministers of the environment and all concerning MMT. First, from the Hon. Vaughn Blaney, Minister of the Environment for the province of New Brunswick:

Given that neither the federal government nor the motor vehicle manufacturing industry have provided the information and assurances that this province and the refining industry have requested regarding the economic and environmental impacts of this bill, and given the current discussions on use of this compound in the United States, I would hereby request that this bill be set aside until the questions raised have been clearly responded to by Canada and a decision on the continued use of this additive is taken in the United States.

From the Hon. Wayne Adams, Minister of the Environment for the province of Nova Scotia:

I realize that there are conflicting reports respecting pros and cons of MMT use. However, the task force should consider the potential increase in NOx emissions, higher production costs, and higher energy demands associated with the manufacture and use of a non-MMT gasoline. I believe that it would be prudent to withhold a final decision with respect to fuel reformulation and MMT until such time as all stakeholders have had sufficient opportunity to assess the available information and the question of MMT is settled in the U.S.

Government Orders

From the Hon. Bernard H. Wiens, Minister of the Environment and Resource Management for the province of Saskatchewan:

The province understands the importance of the automobile manufacturing industry in Canada, however, our petroleum refining industry continues to be concerned that the removal of MMT would cause substantial cost increases for their industry. In addition to the cost implications, increased greenhouse gas emissions as a result of intensified refinery processes required to replace MMT, and increased vehicle tail-pipe emissions of smog forming Oxides of Nitrogen (NOx) would also occur. The data supplied to date by the automotive industry does not identify an air quality benefit and as such, we have difficulty rationalizing the cost to the refining industry or consumers.

The issue of NOx benefit is a serious one. NOx emissions are major contributors to urban smog. As well, there is no disputing that the presence of MMT in unleaded gasoline actually reduces smog as it complements complete combustion. All of the experts agree, including those from Environment Canada. The only dispute is about the appropriate amount.

Environment Canada officials claim that the amount is 5 per cent whereas Ethyl and the petroleum companies claim it is closer to 20 per cent. Whatever the number, the result is that MMT reduces NOx emissions, it certainly does not increase it.

One of the most interesting aspects of this entire debate is the absence of the Minister of Natural Resources. Within the minister's purview are the many refineries and coming from the capital of the oil industry one has to wonder what her opinions are. When asked whether or not the natural resources minister is in agreement with Bill C-94 the environment minister stood up and stated: "I would point out that any cabinet decision to move on MMT is supported by all ministers of government".

However, in the final outcome, the Minister of Natural Resources will have to explain her actions to her constituents. I doubt the scientists and technicians of her department support the bill. They have been muzzled and disallowed from expressing their own personal and professional views.

Can the Minister of Natural Resources really stand in the House and vote for such changes as proposed in Bill C-94? May I remind her that she won by one of the smallest margins in the last federal election. If I remember correctly there were several recounts. I suggest the minister make her voice known around the cabinet table instead of succumbing to the unreasonable pressure of the Minister of the Environment.

Since the very beginning Reform has pushed the environment minister to do independent testing and let the auto manufacturers and Ethyl Corporation work things out themselves. The minister could not believe that I would suggest such a thing. She was adamant that the auto manufacturers were correct and that was that.

I have some new information about a recent development. I hope each of my hon. friends across the floor, including the Minister of the Environment, will be listening very closely. The American Automobile Manufacturers Association and its members are continuing to develop an MMT vehicle test program. They expect to co-operate with the makers of MMT. The industry is talking about the pursuing a sharing of data about the effects of MMT on OBD systems. It looks like the industry can solve the problem itself without government interference.

• (1625)

It is time for the environment minister to change her headstrong approach. When industries are willing to work together to find common ground, the government should stay clear. If the Minister of the Environment is too willing to interfere, I can only ask the question, why? If the minister wants to have a credible legacy in the environment portfolio I would suggest that she put aside this bill and let it gather some household dust.

The government's lack of a meaningful legislative agenda for the country is now noticed by the political observers. The country is falling apart on the tenets of the fundamental agreements that made the Confederation of Canada, yet we are dithering over MMT in car gas. The sense of proportion for government is missing at this critical point in our history.

If we must regulate gasoline additives for the country, then let the minister come forward with a bill that deals with rules and an open process for any substance that does not come under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act. This anti-free trade bill before us today will likely be challenged on the reasonable basis under the NAFTA provisions. I think the intervenor should win on the merits against the government as everything our party has said on this matter would support such a challenge. It is my assessment that the government is in a very weak, unjustifiable position on that count but is hoping that it will slip by.

Reformers say to the Minister of the Environment give up on this misguided track and get on with saving the country.

Hon. Charles Caccia (Davenport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, seldom in recent times have I witnessed a debate into which so much misinformation has been injected and so much confusion has been put on the record in order to create a lack of confidence in the actions of the government.

With all due respect to the member for New Westminster—Burnaby, this matter is not a new one. It is not one that has prompted the Minister of the Environment and the government to make a rash decision. It has been around for some time.

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If I remember correctly, in October 1993 the Minister of the Environment announced that if the petroleum industry would not take voluntary action to resolve the issue of MMT in gasoline by the end of 1994, she would have to take action to prohibit its use. This deadline was extended to February 1995.

This decision has a long history. The government has carefully watched a dispute between two industrial sectors and despite the prompting and the time extension, a solution was not found and it was found necessary to intervene. In the face of the inability of the two major stakeholders and one proponent to meet and come to an agreement on MMT, the onus must fall on the government to determine what needs to be done in the public interest.

The most informed judgment available at the time in this case was the judgment that MMT as a fuel additive had to go. So much for the accusation that the government has not thought it over and has not given the parties sufficient time to come to a solution on their own. This matter was also pointed out when we had our hearings in committee.

A number of issues are at stake. One issue is the question that emission systems would fail prematurely because of the presence of MMT in gasoline. There is the issue of unnecessary repair costs when these emission systems are not plugged in. Millions of motorists would be affected by the presence of MMT in the new model cars. Data and analyses only come from companies that make MMT or from automakers and the government as an independent agency has to judge both and decide which way to go. There is the risk of increased warranty repair costs to the consumer and the possible reduction of the warranty coverage for Canadian motorists.

• (1630)

An overall encompassing issue and a matter I would like to bring to the attention of those who oppose this bill is that technological progress is pushing legislative changes. That is what it boils down to. This is technology which is moving ahead and is impossible to ignore. We must take that fact into account and find ways of protecting the consumer. I am sure the constituents in Athabasca, the constituents in New Westminster—Burnaby and the constituents of that great Canadian patriot from Laurentides will all benefit from this measure.

Cars coming onstream into the marketplace have OBDs, the onboard diagnostic systems, which will ensure that the mix of emissions produced are under control in the most advanced levels that technology has reached. If we do not remove MMT from gasoline, this technology cannot be utilized by the consumer. The manufacturer of the car, as we were told in commit-

tee, will simply disconnect the diagnostic system from the engine.

Initially I had some difficulty understanding what manganese does. I found it very helpful to hear the explanation given to us by people in the know who made two points.

The exhaust of an engine passes over the specially coated surface of a catalytic converter, which we all know is that little box under the car which was installed some time ago in order to reduce car emissions. When the exhaust gas passes over it, certain pollutants are removed. Manganese is produced by virtue of the consumption of gasoline in the engine. If the manganese covers the surface of the catalytic converter, then this type of catalytic converter cannot function properly. As a result, vehicles will pollute more over time. Here is the link between the effect of manganese and the catalytic converter in a very linear form.

Engines in recent times have adopted the technology of oxygen sensors. They determine how much oxygen goes into the air and fuel mixture in the engine. If manganese is used in gasoline, over time the manganese will coat the sensors. When it coats the sensors, the sensors give a false signal that air must be injected into the mixture. As a result the engine consumes more fuel because the air-fuel mixture becomes too rich.

• (1635)

The cars built for the North American market are equipped with onboard diagnostic systems. The system tells the motorist when the emission equipment must be looked at. Unlike the emission inspection systems of the past, the onboard diagnostic system identifies the first moment the vehicle begins to pollute excessively. That is important to remember because unlike what we were told by the hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby, there are health implications. There is no need, thanks to the onboard diagnostic system, to have inspection stations, to wait in line ups, to pay inspection fees, and the like.

The majority of motorists whose vehicles are not polluting excessively need not be inconvenienced. All they need is the onboard diagnostic system. It helps the motorist and the environment. It improves the control of the emission of various gases produced in the combustion engine.

The oxygen sensors are important. We must keep that in mind. The catalytic converter is important. The removal of manganese is a function of the performance of these two items, the catalytic converter and the sensors.

We want to achieve something which is good for the consumer and which is also good for the quality of the air we breathe, particularly in densely populated urban centres from Vancouver to Halifax.

A number of red herrings have been brought forward during the debate. I will not spend too much time speaking on the comments which were made the other day by the great patriot from Laurentides when she had to drag in and quote Terence Corcoran of the *Globe and Mail* who was criticizing the Minister of the Environment in a rather pathetic way. If it were up to Mr. Corcoran, our environmental standards would quickly return to the middle ages. The criticism was that the removal of MMT would produce more pollution. The theme of the hon. member for Laurentides was also picked up quite extensively by the hon. member for Athabasca. He was very strong in committee on that.

In committee we heard the views of Ethyl Corporation, which is opposed to the bill, as it was opposed to the removal of lead in gasoline 10 years ago, and quite adamantly so. We also heard views from the car manufacturing industry. We had to conclude that the claims about increased pollution as advanced by Ethyl Corporation were seriously exaggerated. They were based on data collected by Ethyl from test cars and not on data from a Canadian fleet. I am told there is a big difference between the two.

The Canadian fleet tests took into account world operating conditions and concluded that the NOx reduction was more in the order of 5 per cent than the 20 per cent claimed by Ethyl. The claim that removing MMT will lead to a higher production of NOx is one that has not been sufficiently and clearly substantiated in our committee hearings. Actually, the matter was put to rest quite effectively when we heard that the operation of the diagnostic system permits a control of all polluting gases produced during the combustion process. This is important. The overall impact of the diagnostic controlling system is that it will reduce the overall engine pollution in all of its components, namely carbon monoxides, NOx and hydrocarbons.

• (1640)

With respect to the lack of provincial support, a letter was read from the New Brunswick minister of the environment. I believe we also received a letter from the Saskatchewan minister, but we certainly have not received a letter from the minister of the environment for British Columbia. We understand that British Columbia is very much in favour of this legislation. We have not heard from the province of Ontario, which I suspect is also very much in favour. I suspect the same for the province of Quebec. I believe that the provinces, by and large, have expressed either directly or indirectly considerable support.

I submit with all due respect to my knowledgeable and esteemed colleague from New Westminster—Burnaby, it is hard to believe that this matter could be put into the category of being an anti-free trade measure. This measure really does not have to do with free trade.

Government Orders

The NAFTA agreement gives much relevance to matters related to labour and the environment. This comes clearly under the environmental heading. It is a very legitimate initiative and it is certainly not motivated by anti-free trade reasons.

I dealt with interference by the minister earlier. This is an intervention by the government by two ministers who, after having exhausted all alternative avenues, had to conclude there was no other course of action relevant than to proceed and provide the necessary protection for the consumer.

The technology is inexorably moving ahead. We have reached a new plateau in the knowledge of how to control and reduce pollution emitted by motor cars. We have to move with the technology. We have very little alternative other than to allow the disconnecting of the onboard diagnostic system by the car manufacturer if manganese is not removed. Surely that measure would be reminiscent of another era when we pretended that certain evidence was not staring at us and we looked the other way because we did not like the evidence.

We have to take the evidence into account. We would be seriously criticized and quite rightly so by members of the opposition if we were inactive on this matter. In the end this measure will lead to a reduction in air pollution in highly populated areas. The performance of the engines will be improved. There will be an improvement in mileage with the same consumption of fuel, and there will be an improvement in terms of reduced emissions.

• (1645)

We all know from studies conducted by a number of esteemed medical doctors that there is a connection between air pollution and hospital admissions, particularly in connection with asthmatics. These have been measured in the past. They have been scientifically supported by way of printouts of admissions to various hospitals in the province of Ontario. This fact cannot be denied.

It seems to me that for all these reasons we are moving on the right track. If we did not do that we would be in the same league as countries like Bulgaria, Argentina or perhaps Taiwan. Let me see what other countries are still using manganese in gasoline: Russia, the Ukraine. I am sure that sooner or later, if their automotive technology will allow, they will be glad to also move away from the use of MMT.

We are moving from one stage of improvement in technology to the next. In the 1980s we were concerned with lead. In the 1990s we are concerned with MMT. In another decade we will be concerned with some other aspect of this technology. But it is quite clear that as the number of vehicles on the roads increases and as the population increases and as the number of people who want the freedom of movement a car allows increases, we will have to tighten up the system and find ways to reduce the pollution that accompanies the operation of a car.

Government Orders

In that context, this measure makes sense and fits into the progression. It is not the first step of this nature, because we already took an important step in the 1980s by removing lead from gasoline, and it will not be the last. There will be other measures following in the years to come.

Mr. David Chatters (Athabasca, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I have a couple of questions concerning the member's presentation.

He stated that this issue has gone on for some time. I would accept that. I heard the suggestion that the two sides were unable to reach a conclusion. I would ask him how he could realistically expect the two sides to ever come to any agreement after the minister made this statement, prior to October 1993, that she was prepared to ban the use of MMT. How can he realistically expect the Motor Vehicle Manufacturing Association to continue to bargain in good faith after that statement was made and it was clear what would happen if no agreement was achieved?

This member in committee clearly stated that he was no expert in these matters. We heard evidence presented before the EPA and two court challenges in the U.S. that there has been significant failure of OBD technology in the U.S. There is just as high a failure rate there without MMT as there is in Canada. This evidence was presented by experts in the court as well as before the EPA. Even his own members on the committee expressed serious doubts as to the validity of the evidence. Why does he then as a layman accept unquestionably the evidence provided by MMT as to catalytic converter problems and all the rest of it?

• (1650)

Why does the member insist that this has no implications on trade or that it is not a trade matter when clearly section 1209 of the energy chapter of the draft agreement on internal trade reached with the provinces states that no party shall prohibit or hinder access to its petroleum markets or its petroleum product markets? How then can this bill not affect trade?

Mr. Caccia: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of the Environment became a minister after the election in 1993. She made the statement after being appointed in October. I am not aware of any other statement she made before that.

In the red book there was a commitment to sustainable development. There was a commitment to a number of pollution prevention measures. This fits perfectly within the general principle of pollution prevention, I submit to the hon. member.

There was a valid question on how can the two parties come to a realistic agreement. They can if they are given the time. Since a year and a half as of last June has elapsed, one can conclude that the two parties are unable to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion. There is a point when that institution called government, to which the public entrusts its interests, has to move. One could argue that it should have been done sooner. Some people would argue that it should have been done at a later date. That is question of judgment and a question of policy.

The other question had to do with trade and section 1209. The NAFTA agreement states that matters that are related to environmental policies would have to be taken into account before this particular section 1209 is invoked and put into effect. In other words, when Canada signed the NAFTA agreement in December 1993 it was done with a mutual understanding, and I think reinforced by the Americans as well, that there would always have to be consideration given to modifying the agreement either in the field of labour or in the field of the environment. This is a classic example that has been invoked.

As to the OBD systems in the U.S., I have been told that waivers have been provided to automotive manufacturers because of the complexity of the systems and not because they have failed in the field. This is in answer to the third question.

Mr. Philip Mayfield (Cariboo—Chilcotin, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the member for Davenport began his speech by talking about red herrings. I think it is appropriate, because he seems to be a master at this.

The first red herring is the bill itself. At a time when our nation is facing a debt increasing by \$100 million a day, at a time when we have a stalker who has killed and is taunting the police and our justice system needs repair, at a time when we have a gaggle of cabinet ministers huddling about what the meaning of national unity is, we are here debating Bill C-94 about manganese additives.

The member has some of his own red herrings, like the red herring of comparing manganese additives to lead based additives. The health officials say that this additive has no bearing on health and that it is not a harmful emission.

• (1655)

I would like to ask the member for Davenport why he would compare in such a way the manganese additives with lead based additives when the government itself has said there is no comparison.

Mr. Caccia: Mr. Speaker, I do not know whether I should be flattered or offended by being called a master of red herrings. I will leave it to my colleagues to judge me in that respect. Maybe I am more effective on that front than I ever thought.

The member from Chilotin is very kind in drawing to my attention that manganese has no health effects, according to health authorities. He is correct. We were told that in committee. It is the effect on the diagnostic system on board that reduces the totality of the gas emissions that is the important factor. If that diagnostic system is not functioning properly, you have poor performance and more pollution. You do not want to have more pollution because that has an effect on health. It is in that context that I made that statement.

Why compare manganese to lead? It is not a question of comparing it. All I am saying is there is a progression. First we fought the battle of removing lead in gasoline, which today everybody accepts, but boy was it ever controversial 10 years ago: the sky would fall, jobs would be lost, refineries would go out of business—all things we were told in 1983. Perhaps I should also offer the information that at that time I was environment minister and this was part of my task. It was pretty dramatic as to the consequences of removing lead in gasoline, believe me.

In any event, it was done gradually. Today we consider that as a normal fact of life. There are positive effects in the health of children, the ones who suffer from exposure to lead when it is contained in gasoline. It is one of the reasons it was done.

It is part of a progression. First it was lead, now it is manganese. Ten years from now perhaps it will be another substance, because technology is moving ahead and legislators have to move as well. If we do not move with technology we will lose relevance. The public will justly think that the political institutions are no longer performing the job they are supposed to. I think that is the last thing we collectively would like to see.

Mr. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the hon. member for Davenport why we even have this bill, when MMT is proven by the Department of Health not to be a health hazard to Canadians and there is ample evidence demonstrating that MMT does not affect on-board devices at all. I wonder why we are trying to ban this substance.

Mr. Caccia: Mr. Speaker, we have discussed this a few times. The Department of Health is saying that there is no proof that manganese is damaging to health. That is how it is being put. Nobody has said that manganese is a healthy thing. Nobody is saying that manganese is good for the environment.

Manganese is a heavy metal. Anyone who knows about heavy metals knows what that means and the importance of dealing with this substance in a proper manner.

Government Orders

[Translation]

NATIONAL HOUSING ACT

The House resumed from November 7, consideration of the motion that Bill C-108, an act to amend the National Housing Act, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Deputy Speaker: It being five o'clock, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred division at second reading of Bill C-108, an act to amend the National Housing Act.

Call in the members.

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

(Division No. 368)

YEAS

Members

Adams	Alcock
Althouse	Anawak
Anderson	Arseneault
Assadourian	Asselin
Augustine	Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing)
Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre/Sud-Centre)	Bachand
Barnes	Beaumier
Bélar	Bélangier
Bélisle	Bellehumeur
Bellemare	Bernier (Beauce)
Bernier (Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead)	Bertrand
Bethel	Bevilacqua
Bhaduria	Blaikie
Blondin—Andrew	Bodnar
Bonin	Boudria
Brien	Brown (Oakville—Milton)
Brushett	Bryden
Caccia	Calder
Campbell	Caron
Catterall	Cauchon
Chrétien (Frontenac)	Clancy
Cohen	Collenette
Comuzzi	Cowling
Crête	Culbert
Dalphond—Guiral	de Jong
Debien	Deshaies
DeVillers	Dhaliwal
Dingwall	Discepola
Dromisky	Dubé
Duceppe	Duhamel
Dumas	Dupuy
Easter	Eggleton
English	Fewchuk
Fillion	Flis
Fontana	Fry
Gaffney	Gagnon (Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine)
Gagnon (Québec)	Galloway
Gauthier	Gerrard
Godfrey	Godin
Graham	Guarnieri
Harper (Churchill)	Harvard
Hopkins	Hubbard
Ianno	Iftody
Jackson	Keys
Knutson	Kraft Sloan
Lalonde	Landry
Langlois	Lastewka
Laurin	Lavigne (Beauharnois—Salaberry)
LeBlanc (Cape/Cap-Breton Highlands—Canso)	LeBlanc (Longueuil)
Lee	Lefebvre
Leroux (Shefford)	Loney
Loubier	MacAulay
MacDonald	Malhi
Maloney	Manley
Marchand	Marleau
Massé	McCormick

Government Orders

McGuire	McKinnon
McLellan (Edmonton Northwest/Nord-Ouest)	McTeague
McWhinney	Ménard
Mercier	Mifflin
Milliken	Mills (Broadview—Greenwood)
Minna	Murphy
Murray	Nault
Nunez	Nunziata
O'Brien	O'Reilly
Pagtakhan	Paré
Parrish	Patry
Payne	Peric
Peters	Peterson
Phinney	Picard (Drummond)
Pillitteri	Plamondon
Pomerleau	Proud
Reed	Regan
Richardson	Rideout
Ringuette—Maltais	Robichaud
Robinson	Rocheleau
Rock	Scott (Fredericton—York—Sunbury)
Serré	Shepherd
Sheridan	Simmons
Skoke	Solomon
Speller	St. Denis
Steckle	Szabo
Telegdi	Terrana
Tobin	Torsney
Ur	Valeri
Vanclief	Venne
Volpe	Walker
Wappel	Wayne
Wells	Whelan
Young	Zed—180

NAYS

Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Benoit	Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville)
Bridgman	Chatters
Cummins	Duncan
Epp	Forsyth
Frazer	Gilmour
Gouk	Grey (Beaver River)
Grubel	Hanger
Hanrahan	Harper (Calgary West/Ouest)
Harper (Simcoe Centre)	Hart
Hayes	Hill (Macleod)
Hill (Prince George—Peace River)	Manning
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)	Mayfield
McClelland (Edmonton Southwest/Sud-Ouest)	Meredith
Mills (Red Deer)	Morrison
Penson	Ramsay
Ringma	Schmidt
Scott (Skeena)	Silye
Solberg	Speaker
Stinson	Strahl
White (Fraser Valley West/Ouest)—41	

PAIRED MEMBERS

Bakopoulos	Bergeron
Bernier (Gaspé)	Bouchard
Canuel	Chan
Crawford	de Savoye
Gagliano	Grose
Guay	Guimond
Harb	Jacob
Jordan	Lebel
Leroux (Richmond—Wolfe)	Lincoln
Maclaren	MacLellan (Cape/Cap-Breton—The Sydneys)
Nunez	Paradis
Pickard (Essex—Kent)	Sauvageau
St-Laurent	Stewart (Northumberland)
Thalheimer	Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata)

● (1725)

[English]

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): I declare the motion carried.

(Bill read the second time and referred to a committee.)

* * *

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH ACT

The House resumed from November 7 consideration of the motion that Bill C-95, an act to establish the Department of Health and to amend and repeal certain acts, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): Pursuant to Standing Order 45, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred division on second reading of Bill C-95.

[Translation]

Mr. Boudria: Madam Speaker, if you were to seek it, I believe there would be unanimous consent for applying the vote on the previous motion to the motion now before the House, and Liberal members will be recorded as voting yes to this motion.

Mr. Duceppe: Madam Speaker, members of the Bloc Québécois will vote no.

[English]

Mr. Ringma: Madam Speaker, Reform members will vote for the motion, except those who might choose to vote otherwise.

Mr. Blaikie: Madam Speaker, New Democrats vote no on this motion.

Mrs. Wayne: Madam Speaker, I am voting yes on this motion.

[Translation]

Mr. Bernier (Beauce): Madam Speaker, I will vote for the motion.

[English]

Mr. Marchi: Madam Speaker, I was unable to be here for the first vote but I would like to be counted with the government on the second vote.

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

(Division No. 369)

YEAS

Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Adams	Alcock
Anawak	Anderson
Arseneault	Assadourian
Augustine	Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre/Sud-Centre)
Barnes	Beaumier

Bélaire
Bellemare
Bernier (Beauce)
Bethel
Bhaduria
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Bridgman
Brushett
Caccia
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Collenette
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Cummins
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Discepolo
Duhamel
Dupuy
Eggleton
Epp
Flis
Forseth
Fry
Gagnon (Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine)
Gerrard
Godfrey
Graham
Grubel
Hanger
Harper (Calgary West/Ouest)
Harper (Simcoe Centre)
Harvard
Hill (Macleod)
Hopkins
Ianno
Jackson
Knutson
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Rock
Scott (Fredericton—York—Sunbury)
Serré
Sheridan
Simmons
Solberg
Speller
Steckle
Strahl
Telegdi
Tobin
Ur
Vanclief
Walker
Wayne
Whelan
Young

Bélangier
Benoit
Bertrand
Bevilacqua
Blondin—Andrew
Bonin
Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville)
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Easter
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Fewchuk
Fontana
Frazier
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Galloway
Gilmour
Gouk
Grey (Beaver River)
Guarnieri
Hanrahan
Harper (Churchill)
Hart
Hayes
Hill (Prince George—Peace River)
Hubbard
Hfoty
Keyes
Kraft Sloan
LeBlanc (Cape/Cap—Breton Highlands—Canso)
Loney
MacDonald
Maloney
Manning
Marleau
Massé
McClelland (Edmonton Southwest/Sud—Ouest)
McGuire
McLellan (Edmonton Northwest/Nord—Ouest)
McWhinney
Mifflin
Mills (Broadview—Greenwood)
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Scott (Skeena)
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Thalheimer

Bergeron
Bouchard
Chan
de Savoye
Grose
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Paradis
Sauvageau
Stewart (Northumberland)
Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata)

[Translation]

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): I declare the motion carried. Consequently, the bill is referred to the Standing Committee on Health.

(Bill read the second time and referred to a committee.)

[English]

Mr. Boudria: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I know the House is scheduled to terminate Government Orders at 5.49 p.m. If you were to seek it I think the House would give its consent to call it 5.49 p.m. and to proceed immediately with private members' hour.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[Translation]

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): The House will now proceed to consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on today's Order Paper.

*Private Members' Business***PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

• (1730)

[English]

AUDITOR GENERAL FOR THE FAMILY ACT

Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley East, Ref.) moved that Bill C-322, an act to respecting the office of the auditor general for the family, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Madam Speaker, I count it a real privilege to rise this afternoon to lend my support to the Canadian family. I can think of few things in our country as important as the topic I am addressing this afternoon. In fact, if I raise my sights just a little higher, it is fair to say that worldwide few topics are as unifying as people's desire to look after their families.

The UN declaration that 1994 be the year of the family means that all of us, worldwide, need to care to preserve the family each and every year.

We have just gone through a distressing period in our nation and there may be more difficult times ahead before we are through. However, if strong families make a strong nation then today, more than ever before, we need strong families in Canada. I am proud to say that strengthening the family is the purpose of Bill C-322. Allow me to describe how this will happen by first describing the role of a familiar Canadian institution, the Auditor General of Canada.

As members know, Canada's auditor general does his excellent work by choosing perhaps a dozen government programs and departments every year and investigates them. He then reports any waste or inefficiency to Parliament. That is all he does. However, it seems to generate action in government. That is all the auditor general for the family would do too, except that it would investigate and report on behalf of the nuclear family in Canada.

The auditor general for the family would be a small, inexpensive office set up by Parliament. The legislation restricts it to just 20 people. By contrast, the current auditor general employs 600 people. Even the Status of Women Canada has 93 employees.

Many positive and important legislative changes over the years have been brought about by policy groups funded by the federal government to examine government programs as they affect that group. The government creates them when it perceives that a group is at risk in society and needs some help.

I mentioned the Status of Women Canada a moment ago because the secretaries of state also perform much the same function as would the auditor general for the family. We have secretaries of state for women, for youth, for veterans, for multiculturalism and science, among others. We have an auditor general for the environment. We have the National Council on

Aging and the National Council on Welfare. We have advisory councils on forestry, on business, on libraries, on gender integration in the Canadian Armed Forces, on native peoples, on racial equality in the arts. I could go on and on.

What is there for the family? Precious little in the way of recognition by governments.

The kinds of advisory groups, or think tanks, I just mentioned are established when there is a broad public perception that a group is at risk. They have a definite policy focus and have a real effect on public policy.

Let us take the last annual report for the Canadian Council on the Status of Women as an example. That report is now two years old but it contains recommendations that sound very much like the government's agenda today. There were recommendations on a stalking bill, on female genital mutilation and on child custody, all issues that are understandably high on the government's list of priorities. In other words, by bringing these to the attention of the government they eventually became government policy and a government priority. I would like to see the family take a higher priority too.

If we wanted to create a group that would speak for the family, it begs an important question: Is the nuclear family in Canada really at risk? Polls reveal a broad public perception that the family is in trouble, but the federal government has not reacted to it. Perhaps it is because the Canadian family, at least in times past, has not been as politically correct an issue as hundreds of others that I could name.

A poll done by the Angus Reid Group for the International Year of the Family in 1994 told us that the public perceives the family as a group in crisis. Sixty-three per cent of all respondents to the survey agreed that the family is in crisis and 40 per cent agreed strongly. The poll told us more. Even more Canadians, 68 per cent, including single parents, agreed that the traditional two-parent family is the best type of family in which to raise children. There is certainly a clear, broad public consensus in Canada on the need to help the family, even the so-called traditional family.

• (1735)

There might be a broad public perception of need but are there other more objective indicators of need to which we can point? You bet there are. This year the Department of Human Resources Development, a government department, wrote a report called "A Social Outlook" that paints a picture of the family in crisis.

Family incomes are dropping. The poverty rate among two-parent families has risen from 9 per cent to 12 per cent in the last two decades. Families that would prefer the option to choose whether parents work outside the home find that they are forced into the workplace whether they like it or not. Those that would

like to choose to stay at home to look after the kids find that they cannot.

The study also shows that between 1960 and 1986 the time parents had to spend with their kids, that important bonding time with their own family, has fallen by 10 hours a week.

Families also suffer a discriminatory tax regime in Canada. Often it is cheaper to live together than it is to get married. The tax system also discriminates against homemakers.

A chartered accountant from New Brunswick has calculated that a single income family in which one parent chooses to stay at home will pay 36.2 per cent more in tax than a dual income family earning the same gross amount. The tax system clearly discriminates against those who choose to live in a more traditional arrangement, the kind of arrangement that most people in Canada, according to the Angus Reid poll, think is the best one to raise their children, especially at a young age.

Without tax reform, at the very least, we risk losing that vital middle class which forms the backbone of our nation. Unfair tax policy harming the family is the kind of policy that the auditor general for the family could investigate and expose, bring into the light so the government could deal with it.

There is much more evidence. A U.S.-wide study called the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth followed 14,000 people since 1979 and found that the children of single parents are almost three times as likely to be single moms and drop out of high school. They are less likely to graduate from college or university. One out of four babies in the States are born to single moms and this adds up to a cycle of continuing poverty, continuing lack of opportunity and obviously something that we would not hope for those families and those children.

The U.S. *News and World Report* ran its cover story on the family in February this year. This is how its story began: "Dad is destiny. More than virtually any other factor, a biological father's presence in the family will determine a child's success and happiness, rich or poor, white or black. The children of divorce and those born outside of marriage struggle through life at a measurable disadvantage, according to a growing chorus of social thinkers".

The article goes on to describe the various attempts in the States to reconnect fathers to their families. Fortunately we are not yet as bad off in Canada, but the operative word there is yet. We may trail behind the States in our social trends, but we are on the same road.

For instance, the Vanier Institute for the Family tells us that Canada's divorce rate has jumped from being one of the lowest in the world in 1965 to being one of the highest in the world in 1988. It is about one-third higher than in Sweden and France.

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We are second only to the United States of America. The problem of family break-up will have and is having measurable negative effects on our economy, on our justice system and on government spending.

If the family is under threat in Canada, then our future is also threatened. This bill recognizes that the family is important, that it is suffering, that children are suffering because families are suffering. Families deserve a voice, a place of priority in the House of Commons and in the legislation dealt with.

Some may think this bill is a fringe idea coming from a Reformer. This is far from the case. The Canada Committee for the International Year of the Family was struck by the federal government to examine federal family policy during that year, 1994. In January 1995 it presented its recommendations. The Canada committee recommended the creation of a permanent federal secretariat for the family within the Government of Canada. Its mandate would almost be the same as that in my bill: "To serve as a catalyst, to initiate research and education on the changing structure and status of the Canadian family and the impact of federal policies and programs on the Canadian family; secondly, to work as a broker to develop tools and resources to aid in the development of harmonized policies and programs which support and strengthen families; and third, to prepare a family impact assessment statement on all significant new federal laws, policies and program initiatives".

• (1740)

These three functions correspond directly to the auditor general for the family's three main functions that I have in my bill: "To examine government programs, to propose changes to them if necessary, and to report to Parliament on all of its deliberations". This is a mainstream idea whose time has come. The government needs to act now to preserve, enhance and support the nuclear family in Canada.

I want to answer those who might say that the focus of this bill is too narrow, that it touches on the nuclear family as opposed to another more inclusive definition of the family. I have used the term nuclear family in the bill to designate what is commonly understood as a family in Canada.

This is in no way meant to be a pejorative statement or a condemnation of the numerous social arrangements which society accepts. There are many other acts of Parliament, for instance, that target particular groups for assistance and help without any pejorative connotation. For example, we have an act of Parliament granting benefits for unemployed workers, but this is not a jab at those who have jobs. It simply targets one of the many groups in society with which Parliament needs to concern itself.

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It is the same for the auditor general for the family. Society accepts many diverse living arrangements, as it should, but those arrangements are simply not the focus of this particular bill. The bill merely recognizes the importance of one needy group in our society, the nuclear family, and it attempts to enhance its well-being.

I have chosen the definition for the family found in the *Dictionary of Canadian Law*: "The family includes a man and a woman living together as husband and wife, whether or not married, in a permanent relationship, or the survivor of either, and includes the children of both or either, natural or adopted, and any person lawfully related to any of the aforementioned persons".

This is similar to the definition used by other dictionaries and also the federal government and the governments of all 10 provinces. I realize that it is never a perfect definition but we do have to try to do something and certainly this is the standard definition found in the dictionary.

The nuclear family is hardly a narrow or isolated group. In the enormous study done by Murdock some years ago in which he studied 250 societies around the world, he found that "the nuclear family is a universal human social grouping. It exists as a distinct and strongly functional group in every known society".

Does this mean that all government programs must be focused only on the family or only on married folk or only on their children? Of course not. This bill merely recognizes the importance of the family in our society and it attempts to enhance its well-being.

I was reminded of the centrality of the family in Canada when I attended a wedding just a few weeks ago. The bride was beautiful. The husband to be was very nervous. He was determined to go through with his decision and his promise to stick to his wife for life. The father of the bride was pretty close to tears giving away his little girl, but he was also pretty close to shedding a few tears of joy as well. I should know because the father was myself and Karina is and always will be my not so little girl anymore.

Even though there were a couple of hundred people there, there was something very private, something very personal about that ceremony, and that was the transmission of values from me to my child, from the parents of the groom to him and the fusion of those values into what was really a new family. We watched the creation in a sense of another new family unit.

It is almost like running a race in which one runner passes the torch on to the next one and together each runner helps run the race for the whole team. If the torch is dropped, the race can still be finished but it is not the same. In fact, the race cannot be won.

• (1745)

The torch in this analogy is the invaluable inheritance of secure, committed families. The race is the life of every Canadian. Canadian families are too often too easily dropping the torch during the race. As a result, individuals within families are suffering and the whole country is suffering because our families are suffering.

In Canada 13 per cent of all families are single parent families. That is one million families. Nearly 30 per cent of all Canadian marriages end in divorce. Even if we lay aside the arguments for the family that are based on the emotional hardships suffered by broken families, we can point to strong economic arguments of why we want to promote and encourage the family.

Surely it is in the interests of all political parties, our government, our nation, to find ways to promote the family unit, where a loving, committed husband and wife nurture healthy, happy children. Within that unit they pass on the values of commitment and faithfulness and stability and responsibility to their own children, who will in turn carry the torch in their generation and will pass it on to the next.

Families are the root of a prosperous and peaceful nation. If Parliament is to cultivate the ground from which strong families grow, it must now begin to study the social environment for the family and begin to change its policies to provide a more favourable environment for families.

If the government for whatever reason finds that this auditor general for the family is unacceptable, that this idea just does not carry the day, I appeal to government members to create their own body that would perform a similar function. Listen perhaps to the recommendations of the commission which asked for a permanent secretariat on behalf of the family, but find some ways to encourage and enhance that important institution.

The family in Canada is in crisis. The time to act on its behalf is now. I hope all members will lend their support to the principle of an auditor general for the family.

Mr. Maurizio Bevilacqua (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.): Madam Speaker, if there is one thing we have in common as members of the House, it is our shared belief in the value of family life and the central role the family unit has within our society. Families are at the very core of our social fabric.

[Translation]

That is why I congratulate my hon. colleague across the way for introducing this bill for the creation of an auditor general for the family.

[English]

I congratulate the hon. member. By bringing the bill forward he provides those of us on this side with an opportunity to comment constructively on this area of social policy. It also

allows us to review the many ways this government is already working to support individual Canadians in the pursuit of their social and economic objectives, including in meeting the commitments to their families.

[Translation]

Right at the start, I must express my disagreement with the importance attached to the nuclear family in Bill C-322. This term seems to define what constitutes today's Canadian family in too narrow terms.

[English]

It may be that a generation or two ago the traditional family structure was that of a male breadwinner and a stay at home mother who looked after the house and their children and all lived under the same roof. That may have represented a typical Canadian family but that situation has changed dramatically.

[Translation]

The nuclear family is no longer the dominant model in Canadian society. Now we have many different models: single parent families, blended families, extended families and so on.

[English]

The two parent with children household now comprises less than half the families in Canada. Our lifestyles have changed over the years since the nuclear family defined society and the direction of our social policy and any related legislation must reflect those changes.

• (1750)

[Translation]

It is our duty as legislators to base ourselves on today's realities and not yesterday's ideals. Deciding a certain model merits our attention more than another is tantamount to thumbing our noses at all those Canadians whose family structure does not fit within the model of the typical nuclear family.

[English]

I emphasize that our government is not against the nuclear family. We agree with the preamble of the bill which says that the nuclear family is one of the foundations of Canadian society.

[Translation]

It is true that the nuclear family is one of the foundations of our society, but it is our opinion that the foundation of society is the family unit, and family units may take different forms. We agree that the nuclear family constitutes an important element in Canadian society, but we contest the fact that it is the only family structure that counts.

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[English]

To this government all Canadians are important, whether they are members of a nuclear family or not.

[Translation]

Finally, as we have stated in the red book, the Liberal government's policy is to aim at greater equality of social conditions for all Canadians. We wish to broaden the outlook, not make it narrower.

[English]

As hon. members know, it is the Liberal Party which has been responsible for the major social policy initiatives of this country over the years. It is Liberal governments, including this government, which have confirmed time and time again our belief in the value of the family as the basic unit of society. We have signalled the commitment through many of our programs in support of family members.

This is an important concept. Whereas my hon. colleagues opposite would single out members of only one type of family unit for attention, our government believes in looking at the needs of all Canadians and all types of family structures and in doing that, looking within a broad economic and social context and not within a narrowly cast definition of family.

It is our belief that if we want to assist Canadians to meet their family obligations, we must look at the overall environment within which people live and work. We must look at and respond to needs within the social, economic, technological and cultural environments in which individual Canadians as family members find themselves.

[Translation]

We do not feel that we must evaluate Canadians, or the effect of federal programs and institutions, in terms of the needs of this or that family model. If our goal is to improve the quality of life of all Canadians, we shall improve the quality of life of the members of all Canadian families.

[English]

Thus, we have programs designed to provide income assistance to families with children. That means all families with children are eligible, not just one kind of family. Income assistance to families with children is one of the oldest parts of Canada's social security system, dating back to 1918.

[Translation]

One of the most important elements is the child tax benefit, a non taxable income-related benefit for those with children under the age of eighteen years. It comprises a basic benefit, a supplemental benefit for children under the age of seven years, and a work income supplement.

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[English]

One of the best ways we can help Canadian families is to enhance the ability of individual Canadians to find a job and keep that job. This is a central objective of our economic and social policy.

[Translation]

The objective is to help not only those Canadians who are part of one type of family or another, but all Canadians.

• (1755)

Very often, helping a Canadian to find and keep a job also means helping him or her balance work and family responsibilities. In today's world, increasing numbers of Canadians have to strike a balance between responsibilities toward their employers and family responsibilities. This is also a reflection of the changing structure of the Canadian family.

[English]

For example, over the past few decades an increasing percentage of women have remained in or re-entered the workforce while raising young children. At the same time there have been increasing demands for support for older relatives and friends leading to the creation of the so-called sandwich generation.

[Translation]

Under these circumstances, a good child care system becomes a vital necessity, and the possibility of assistance may have a considerable impact on the family.

[English]

Nuclear family or not, many Canadians are feeling these pressures. Governments need to be responsive to these developments in the workplace and their impact on families as well.

[Translation]

One of the ways our government is responding to those needs is the "child care visions" research and development program announced earlier this year by the Minister of Human Resources Development.

[English]

The child care visions program will lead to a better understanding of emerging child care issues as well as increased knowledge about the needs of Canadian families. One of the objectives of this program is to encourage greater involvement by all sectors of society in meeting child care needs.

Once again, we view these issues in the broad context of economic and social policy needs and not in the narrower context of a family definition. There are other programs in place and under development to support workers to meet their family responsibilities.

In the very near future, the Minister of Human Resources Development will be meeting with his provincial counterparts to discuss the best possible ways to take care of our children. This will be a very important initiative for this government to help the family.

[Translation]

Mr. André Caron (Jonquière, BQ): Madam Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to speak to the bill standing in the name of the hon. member for Fraser Valley East and entitled, an act respecting the office of the Auditor General for the Family. The hon. member made an excellent presentation and explained very clearly his reasons for proposing this legislation.

The purpose of this bill, after a preamble that stresses the importance of the nuclear family and states that Canada should encourage, support and protect it, is basically to appoint an Auditor General for the Family who would examine federal policies and make recommendations to ensure that the federal government encourages the development of the nuclear family.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources Development made it very clear that this bill is well intentioned. No one in this House wants to diminish the role of the family in our society, and everyone wants children to have a family in which they can develop their potential. The bill would, however, create a number of problems.

First, there is the definition of family. The bill refers to the nuclear family, the traditional family that is still very important. This is the family where there is a father, mother and children. However, for the past 20 or 30 years at least, we have seen changes in the family structure in Canada and Quebec.

• (1800)

We see families with only a father, or only a mother. We see families made up of individuals who previously belonged to other families. If we adopt the bill as presented by the hon. member for Fraser Valley East, this would mean ignoring a number of families that play just as important a role in bringing up their children as the nuclear family. These families would, to a certain extent, be discriminated against or overlooked.

My colleague, the member for Fraser Valley East, said this would not preclude steps being taken to foster the development of other kinds of families, but the fact remains that if we take the trouble to appoint an Auditor General for the Family who will be dedicated to the well-being of nuclear families, as it says in the bill, we are excluding a certain number of families. As many as 20 per cent of the families in this country do not correspond to the description of a nuclear family.

Yet it is in these families that children are often likely to need special programs. Not because their families are less competent than other families, but because the responsibilities of a single father or a single mother are tremendous. I think there is a case

here for government support. We see no indication in the bill of how these families would be helped by adopting this legislation.

The real problem, and the hon. member made this very clear, is the children. We want children to develop in a satisfactory family environment. I think that a satisfactory family environment, at least for many people like me, in the Bloc Québécois, is first of all an environment in which there are sufficient resources to provide for the children's development, to clothe them, feed them and educate them. That is the kind of family environment in which a child has a chance to develop its potential.

I think that any steps we would want the Canadian government to take should be based on fighting poverty and maintaining social programs, if we want to support children who live in a family environment. It is vital to be clear on the problem: child poverty and family poverty cause young people to have health, social development and education problems. Therefore, I do not think the bill before us, despite the hon. member's good intentions, will contribute to improving the quality of children's lives in Canadian families.

Another problem I notice in reading the bill—and I apologize, Madam Speaker, perhaps many members in this House have heard this argument, these remarks, too often for their liking—is that we are again looking at a jurisdictional conflict between the provincial and federal governments.

In my opinion and in the opinion of many of the Bloc members, matters to do with family, marriage and families' private lives are more matters of provincial jurisdiction. So, once again, there would be a degree of conflict between an organization, an office of the auditor general, at the federal level and provincial institutions. Some provinces have family secretariats.

So again, we have not progressed from the stage where the federal and provincial governments often take contradictory or parallel measures, to the detriment of families and children needing care and support.

• (1805)

Even my colleague from the government said in his speech that daycare services should be set up. This would perhaps be more important at that point for the well-being of children living in a family setting. Daycare services, however, come under provincial jurisdiction. So we face the same dilemma, we are in stuck in this situation. I think there comes a time to put a stop to it.

Finally, and my colleague for Fraser Valley East mentioned it as well, there is the matter of taxation, a problem that can be detrimental to family life. Every year, in Quebec, as in Canada,

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there are reports and studies which tend to demonstrate that people with families are disadvantaged from the taxation point of view.

This leads us to again bring up the question of tax reform in Canada. Every year we hear the Minister of Finance, people from the health department and human resources development, government members saying that, yes, we will have to address the taxation issue in order to help families and to ensure greater equity, greater fiscal justice, in Canada. Good intentions still and again, but we have seen nothing concrete in the two years that we in the Bloc have been here.

We will vote against a measure such as this. The first reason, as I said at the start, is that it is aimed at the nuclear family and we believe, in light of recent changes—in the past ten, fifteen, twenty years in Canada we have seen major changes—we must not give preference to the nuclear family, despite all of its merits over the centuries, which it continues to have.

Second, this is an area where overlap with provincial jurisdictions is such that, in the long run, it would only fuel further argumentation and might cancel out certain pro-family clauses in provincial legislation.

Let me state once again that I am very much aware of the good intentions of the hon. member for Fraser Valley East. However, for the reasons I have just set out in my address, I personally, and the members of the Bloc Québécois, will oppose such a measure.

[*English*]

Ms. Roseanne Skoke (Central Nova, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is a privilege to rise today in the House in support of private member's Bill C-322, an act respecting the auditor general for the family.

The bill would establish the position of the auditor general for the family, tasked with identifying and examining federal programs, exposing programs and policies detrimental to the well-being of the nuclear family in Canada, and recommending changes through an annual report to Parliament. The office would be analogous to the auditor general's office, serving the same function on behalf of the nuclear family in Canada. Unfortunately, this bill is non-votable.

I congratulate the hon. member for Fraser Valley East for taking the initiative to advance this private member's bill in defence of the rights of the traditional family.

On many occasions I have spoken both in the House and in public forums across the nation in defence of the rights of the traditional family. Unfortunately, it is not enough to just speak about family, family life, and family values issues. It is time the House gave formal recognition to the rights of the traditional family.

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The family unit is the basic institution in life and the solid foundation upon which our forefathers have built this great nation. The protection of families, family life, and family values must be a priority with the government.

The conventional terms of debate in matters of political, social, economic, and legal issues tend to focus on individual rights and the rights of the state and not the rights of the family. This is unfortunate and must change, for the family is the most important reality in our lives.

• (1810)

The rights of the family are being seriously undermined and eroded. Families have inherent rights. Families have inviolable rights. Families existed before the church. Families existed before the state.

Parliament has no jurisdiction to redefine traditional family or to enter into the realm of sanctity of marriage or sanctity of life. It is important to be reminded that family is the basic institution of life. Life begins from the moment of conception and continues until natural death. The inherent and inviolable rights of family must be protected, defended and safeguarded by Parliament.

Bill C-322 is offering the government a mechanism to identify, examine, expose, and amend policies and legislation that encroach on the rights of the traditional family.

Parents are the primary educators of their children and are solely and fundamentally responsible for the emotional, psychological, physical, social, spiritual and moral development of their children. It is time the government funded the family and stopped funding agendas designed to undermine and destroy traditional family values.

For the government to promote and encourage institutionalized child care by providing tax benefits is both inequitable and unjust. It is removing the economic freedom and flexibility of families to make a conscious choice of what is in the best interest of their children and their family by imposing an economic hardship on single income families.

The traditional two parent family is under relentless attack from special interest groups and others who regard the traditional family as an impediment to their goals. For example, the feminist agenda requires careful scrutiny, as the continuous quest to conquer the alleged male oppression of women has placed pressure on society to move the focus from family rights to individual rights and rights of special interest groups. The advancement of the feminist agenda in government policies has advanced an ideology predicated upon equality of women that is more concerned with achieving formal equity and has forsaken substantive equity. By doing so, the feminist movement has done a great disservice to women, motherhood, to our children, and to the traditional family.

The Canadian position advanced at the Beijing conference appeared to be advancing and protecting the equality of women. However, the Canadian position that was advanced called for gender, not the family, to be the most important criterion for determining government policies.

It is the feminist position that family is the initiator and cause of the inequity between men and women, together with their failure to recognize the importance of the role of women and motherhood within the traditional family unit. It is against this relentless attack upon the traditional family that government must protect and safeguard.

In conclusion, the family is the basic institution of life and the solid foundation upon which our forefathers built this great nation. The protection of family, family life, and family values must be a priority with the government.

Mrs. Sharon Hayes (Port Moody—Coquitlam, Ref.): Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak to Bill C-322, an act respecting the office of the auditor general for the family, developed and sponsored by my colleague from Fraser Valley East.

The Reform Party has long recognized the importance and value of the Canadian family through our policies and actions, such as we see here today in Bill C-322. As my colleague earlier so well stated, few topics are as important to this nation at this time.

This bill seeks to establish the office of the auditor general for the family. The mandate of the auditor general is based on the premise of evaluating and assessing the impact, performance, and effectiveness of government policy, programs and administration.

Clause 4 of this bill outlines this proposed auditor general's duties. The auditor general for the family shall examine federal programs and institutions to determine their impact on the nuclear family in Canada; expose programs and policies that are detrimental to the well-being of the nuclear family; and recommend through his annual report to Parliament changes to federal government programs and policies that would enhance the well-being of the Canadian nuclear family.

• (1815)

Like the Auditor General of Canada, the auditor general of the family would be an official officer of Parliament and would report to the House on an annual basis. The auditor general of the family would also be empowered to make special reports to Parliament on "any matter of pressing importance or urgency" as outlined in clause 5 of the bill.

As I alluded to in my opening remarks, the family is the most fundamental institution in society. The family nurtures its members and provides for the security and needs of its members. The family provides for the transfer and protection of our values, our heritage and our culture. The family provides the stability and the prosperity of society. It is most appropriate to

think in terms of an auditor general in assessing the well-being of Canadian families.

Over the past decade the Canadian family has been under increasing social, political and economic pressures. These pressures originate from many facets of government policy direction. For example, the mismanagement of our nation's finances has created tremendous pressure both on the earning power and even the job availability of Canadians and their families.

The average family income in 1984 was \$43,204. In 1993 it was \$43,225. After tax income has actually fallen 6.5 per cent from 1989 to today. The tax bite out of money earned is over 30 cents on the dollar. The facts indicate that it requires almost double the paid working hours to support a family as it did 20 years ago. Translated into action that means two income earners in a family as opposed to one simply to survive.

Sixty-two per cent of mothers with children below the age of three are now in the workforce compared to thirty-nine per cent in 1981. Economic pressures can be devastating to family stability.

A recent study has found that two-thirds of parents presently experience moderate to severe levels of tension in balancing work and family commitments. According to a recent study teen suicide rates for young men has quadrupled since 1960. According to UNICEF in 1995 we now have one of the highest rates of teen suicide in the world after New Zealand and Finland.

Violent youth crime has been shown to have doubled since 1986. Meanwhile our divorce rates have risen tenfold to where Canada is second only to the United States with one divorce for every 2.4 marriages. Statistics such as these reveal what can only be described as a social revolution taking place in the heart of our homes. We as legislators in the House must do what we can to strengthen and improve the condition of Canadian families.

What concrete measures has the government taken to improve the state of families in Canada? Where are the legislation, the tax relief, constructive and effective programs? Where is the sincere commitment or are mere platitudes enough?

The Liberal government has been tragically absent and worse yet in some cases culpable in this crisis. Citing facts as we heard a few minutes ago that less than half of Canadian families are dual parent with children is grossly misleading, or saying that we must face reality and do nothing about ailing families.

Ms. Clancy: Why is it misleading? Finish the clause. Why is it misleading?

Private Members' Business

Mrs. Hayes: To answer my colleague's question, two parent families with children now compose approximately 80 per cent of families in Canada. That will answer my colleague's question.

Ms. Clancy: According to whose statistics?

Mrs. Hayes: I ask my Liberal colleagues if they walk into a village that has been ravaged by some disease whether they would simply walk away from those who are suffering while muttering something like reality must be faced.

I shall highlight two specific and current examples of some issues that the auditor general of the family could examine.

• (1820)

I recently attended the world conference in Beijing. I was there to ensure that the views of the family and of family life were represented within the Canadian delegation and the conference itself. At the conference our government committed to the Beijing platform for action which requires that the government implement over 500 actions in the next five years. Although the conference was supposedly about women, the document introduced barely mentions family and when it does it is often depicted as a place of oppression and violence.

One of the actions discussed deals with children's rights. The document elevates children's rights above those of parents, including unrestricted access to "reproductive health services and education" and confers upon our children so-called sexual rights. Parental prerogatives and authority are replaced routinely with government and bureaucratic intrusion. The document ignores the value of family relationships, seeking to use words such as caretaker or girl child in place of beautiful words like mother and daughter.

This platform for action has not been tabled in the House. It has not been debated and it has not been examined by members of the House. In short, it has simply not received the scrutiny that it deserves. It is a Liberal government endorsed product without any reference to the Canadian people that will have and has a profound effect and impact on the Canadian family in society.

A second example is also related to the Beijing conference. Before the conference started the Secretary of State for the Status of Women publicly released a document entitled "Setting the stage for the next century, the federal plan for gender equality". The plan was released as the government's position on the objective of the conference while it simultaneously instituted gender equality and gender based analysis throughout the 24 departments and agencies of the government. I quote the plan from page 17:

Private Members' Business

A gender based approach ensures the development, analysis and implementation of legislation and policies with an appreciation of gender differences.

It makes gender, not family, a priority in all policy development and seeks to deconstruct "stereotypical roles" and replace them with a social revolution that shakes the very foundation of the traditional family. In dismantling barriers that supposedly impede the progress and equality of women, it denies the value of women and families anywhere outside the workplace.

The plan and its implementation would have far reaching consequences for families and society. That is what the minister intended when she wrote that "every aspect of our lives is being reshaped" by the plan. It is sad but true.

If there were an auditor general of the family he would be able to assess the impact of programs like the platform for action, report his or her findings to the House, make recommendations to the government and the House, and raise the profile of these issues. This Reform bill would do much toward attaining that goal in terms of providing information about the family and introducing greater accountability to the system.

Reports on the family would generate interest in family issues. They would cultivate a culture of respect for the Canadian family that is sorely lacking in federal legislation and throughout the federal government.

These are basic, fundamental and significant accountability measures that I believe will expose an anti-family agenda endorsed by the Liberal government. An auditor general would strengthen and improve the condition of the Canadian family.

Let me conclude by stating that Bill C-322 will do much to establish a family first philosophy that will establish a culture of recognition and respect for the Canadian family within government and here in Ottawa.

Moreover, by establishing an auditor general of the family it will do much to ensure that family friendly policies are developed and implemented. Current policies and programs would be examined from the perspective of benefit or harm to the family and not for special interest groups.

It is with these considerations that I urge the House to support the bill developed wisely by my colleague from Fraser Valley East.

• (1825)

Ms. Mary Clancy (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to speak however briefly on the bill which I do not support.

I am a feminist. I am a very proud feminist. I am very proud of the government's record, particularly at the recent Beijing

conference, particularly on supporting the plan of action, and most particularly on the matters mentioned by my hon. colleague with respect to setting the stage for Beijing and gender analysis, a policy which is long overdue.

I do not say that just to be combative. I do not say it just to disagree with my hon. colleague over there, or indeed with my hon. colleague from Central Nova. I say it because I think there is a deep misunderstanding in certain segments of society.

Before I became a feminist and before I became a parliamentarian I was a woman, a daughter and a granddaughter. I am still all those things. I come from an amazingly wonderful family. I was brought up by a single parent. My father died at the age of 39, leaving mother with heavy burdens because there was no medicare. My mother educated herself and she educated me. She brought me up to believe in tolerance and equality for all. She also brought me up within the context of a larger extended family, those aforementioned grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins to the third and fourth degree. It was a typical Nova Scotia and Cape Breton family.

On behalf of feminists across the country I resent the insinuation that we are not family oriented. Because we believe in gender equality, because we believe in freedom from fear and freedom from violence, because we believe in pay equity and employment equity, because we believe women hold up half the sky, I resent the theory that we should be told we are anti-family. We are not anti-family. We are the people who hold the flame every bit as much as my hon. colleague across the floor or my hon. colleague from Central Nova.

On this side of the House there are mothers, grandmothers, married women, single women and divorced women who have children of their own or who are loving godparents, aunts or whatever to many children. We care and we care deeply. No one has the right to equate feminism with an anti-family stand. No one has the right to question the way we feel about our families.

I love my family as much as I love my country and the two are interchangeable. It is shameful for anyone to suggest otherwise.

Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Ref.): Madam Speaker, I am very proud to be part of a political party, an organization which stands unashamedly for the family.

As the hon. member opposite just said, family is very important. There is no doubt in anyone's mind in the event a father is taken away by death or even by divorce that there are many additional hardships on the mother who is left to raise the family as a single parent. I cannot help but say that we are not in any way desirous of adding any more hardships to the person who already has so many.

Private Members' Business

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

It being 6.30 p.m., the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 6.30 p.m.)

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