



CANADA

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OFFICIAL REPORT  
(HANSARD)

**Thursday, November 7, 1996**

**Speaker: The Honourable Gilbert Parent**

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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, November 7, 1996

The House met at 10 a.m.

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*Prayers*

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[*English*]

## POINTS OF ORDER

STANDING COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE AND LEGAL  
AFFAIRS—SPEAKER'S RULING

**The Speaker:** I am now ready to rule on a point of order raised by the hon. member for Fraser Valley East on Monday, October 28, 1966 concerning the status of the hon. member for Wild Rose as a substitute member of the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs.

[*Translation*]

I thank the hon. member for Fraser Valley East for raising this matter and the chief government whip for his contribution to the discussion.

[*English*]

This matter was first brought to my attention on Tuesday, October 22, 1996 by the hon. member for Wild Rose. At that time he described to the Chair how he had been selected as a substitute from the Reform Party's list of associate members for the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs and in that capacity attended the meeting of the committee on Monday, October 21, 1996. The hon. member claimed that he had attempted to give notice of a motion but was ruled out of order by the chair on the basis that he was not a regular member of the committee. The member indicated that he had sought a resolution to this matter within the committee and had not been successful.

[*Translation*]

The matter was raised a second time, on October 28, by the hon. member for Fraser Valley East. In his presentation, he argued that, as a duly selected substitute pursuant to Standing Order 114, the member for Wild Rose should have been permitted to give notice of his motion notwithstanding the committee's internal rule requiring 48-hour notice for consideration of new business.

Having examined the arguments put forward, I find it appropriate in this instance to offer some clarification.

The Standing Orders provide a mechanism whereby members who are associate members of a committee can become substitutes for regular members of the committee at a particular meeting. I have looked carefully at the wording of the relevant Standing Orders and in the case before us, it is clear that the requirements were met and the member for Wild Rose was acting as a bona fide substitute member of the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs for the meeting on October 28, 1996.

[*English*]

There is no doubt in the Chair's mind that substitute members should be considered on an equal footing with permanent members for the period of substitution. This status must remain unaffected by any internal rules adopted by a committee for its own convenience, otherwise committees risk having two classes of members at the committee table.

In my ruling on June 20, 1994 at page 5,583 of the *Debates*, to which the hon. member for Fraser Valley East also made reference, I pointed out that:

While it is a tradition of this House that committees are masters of their own proceedings, they cannot establish procedures which go beyond the powers conferred upon them by the House.

Committees have found it efficient to establish their own internal procedures such as the 48-hour notice requirement concerning new items of business that was adopted by the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs at its organization meeting on March 12, 1996. I would encourage members involved in committee work to bear in mind that such internal rules and procedures should not be crafted in such a way as to diminish the role of substitute members whose ability to fully function in the committee is a status conferred on them by the House.

[*Translation*]

There have been difficulties with the understanding of rules and practices regarding substitute members of committees and this is why I found this a suitable opportunity to give my views on the matter.

• (1010)

[*English*]

In the past I have referred to the longstanding practice of the House that the Speaker will not intervene in procedural matters arising in committee. Bearing in mind what I have said, I trust that the members of the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs and the hon. member for Fraser Valley East can reach some accommodation in this particular matter. I hope that my statement

*Routine Proceedings*

today will be of assistance to members and everyone concerned with the work of committees.

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## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

### GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

**Mr. Paul Zed (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to six petitions.

\* \* \*

### COMPETITION ACT

**Hon. John Manley (Minister of Industry, Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Minister of Western Economic Diversification and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development—Quebec, Lib.)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-67, an act to amend the Competition Act and another act in consequence.

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

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### ACT TO CHANGE THE NAMES OF CERTAIN ELECTORAL DISTRICTS

**Mr. François Langlois (Bellechasse, BQ)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-347, an act to change the names of certain electoral districts.

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

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### COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

#### CODE OF CONDUCT

**Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise in my capacity of Joint Chairman of the Special Joint Committee on a Code of Conduct. Instead of a report, the committee asked me to present a motion today. I move:

That, in relation to the Orders of Reference adopted by the Senate on March 21, 1996 and on June 19, 1996, and by the House of Commons on March 12, 1996 and June 19, 1996, the reporting date of the Special Joint Committee on a Code of Conduct be extended to Friday, December 13, 1996;

[English]

That, if the House is not sitting when the final report of the committee is completed, the report be deposited with the Clerk of the House of Commons and shall thereupon be deemed to have been presented to the House of Commons; and

That a message be sent to the Senate requesting that House to unite with this House for these purposes.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Does the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands have the consent of the House for the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Deputy Speaker:** There is not unanimous consent.

**Mr. John Williams (St. Albert, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. We just received the request from the member for Kingston and the Islands regarding this motion. While unanimous consent has been denied at this point, it is so consultations with colleagues can take place. I would ask if you could seek unanimous consent to waive the usual 48 hour notice and have this motion stand under motions for tomorrow in order for me to have time to consult with my colleagues and grant the approval that the member seeks for the motion.

• (1015)

**The Deputy Speaker:** We are reverting to motions, I take it, if there is unanimous consent. Is there unanimous consent to do as he has proposed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

\* \* \*

### PETITIONS

#### MARRIAGE

**Mr. Pat O'Brien (London—Middlesex, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36 it is my duty and pleasure to present two petitions to the House today. The first is signed by a number of my constituents and also other Canadians in the region of south-western Ontario.

The petitioners call on Parliament to enact legislation to define marriage as the voluntary union between one man and one woman.

I am happy to present that petition.

#### TAXATION

**Mr. Pat O'Brien (London—Middlesex, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the second petition is signed by several hundred people in southwestern Ontario, including my own constituents of London—Middlesex. I want to put this on the record on behalf of these Canadians, although the government has acted on this matter.

The petitioners call on the government not to tax books. I am happy to present that petition.

*The Address*

## QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

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

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is it agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

## SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

## RESUMPTION OF DEBATE ON ADDRESS IN REPLY

The House resumed from November 1, 1996 consideration of the motion for an Address to His Excellency the Governor General in reply to his Speech at the opening of the session.

**Mrs. Pierrette Venne (Saint-Hubert, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, first of all I wish to inform you that I will share my time with the hon. member for Bourassa.

I welcome this opportunity today to respond to the speech from the throne pronounced by the governor general last February, on behalf of the government. How time flies: it has already been eight months since the speech was pronounced.

Nevertheless, today's debate is useful in that with the passing of time, we have a better picture of how the government has acted on its commitments.

As we read the speech from the throne, we notice, for instance, that the government officially set the scene for its post-referendum strategy in dealing with the Quebec government. This strategy, known by everyone as plan B, basically consists in a hardening of the government's position on the freedom of Quebecers to decide on their political future.

In this respect, the governor general said the following, and I quote: "But as long as the prospect of another Quebec referendum exists, the government will exercise its responsibility to ensure that the debate is conducted with all the facts on the table, that the rules of the process are fair, that the consequences are clear, and that Canadians, no matter where they live, will have their say in the future of their country".

Considering last year's quasi-victory of the sovereignists in the referendum on October 30 and the way every part of English Canada criticized the role played by the government during the referendum, the latter felt it would be politically more effective to take a hard line. But in fact, the government's strategy of resorting to plan B merely confirms the chronic inability of Canadian federalism to renew itself and to find durable solutions for dealing with Quebec's traditional demands.

A few days before the referendum, when the polls were leaning increasingly to the yes side, the Prime Minister had the fright of his life. He then shook himself out of his legendary torpor in Verdun and went so far as to promise to entrench the distinct identity of Quebec in the Constitution and to give Quebec a veto.

In an article entitled "The Secret Summit", published in the October 21 issue of *Maclean's* and excerpted from the forthcoming book *Double Vision* by two journalists, we read that a few days after the referendum, the Prime Minister had become obsessed by the promise he had made in Verdun to have Quebec recognized as a distinct society.

• (1020)

In an attempt to trap Jacques Parizeau's successor, Lucien Bouchard, the Prime Minister developed an ultimately unsuccessful scenario that would allow him to enshrine the distinct society concept in the Constitution. He needed the support of 7 provinces representing at least 50 per cent of the population. In this regard, according to the article in *Maclean's*, the Prime Minister could count on the support of the premiers of Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Manitoba and Saskatchewan, but not of course, that of the then premier of Newfoundland, Clyde Wells.

Knowing that the Prime Minister could not count either on the premiers of Alberta and British Columbia, he had to get Ontario's Mike Harris on side.

*Maclean's* also tells us that, three days after the referendum, the Prime Minister had a secret meeting with Mike Harris so he could explain to him his plan for entrenching the notion of distinct society in the Constitution.

Unfortunately for the Prime Minister, Mike Harris refused to support his post-referendum strategy. Make no mistake: the Prime Minister's main concern was to save the little credibility he had left in Quebec and force our hand so we would accept a meaningless concept.

If the Prime Minister's strategy had worked, that is to say, if Mike Harris had decided to support him, the blame would, of course, have been laid at Lucien Bouchard's door.

When his strategy failed, the Prime Minister tried to save face with regard to his last-minute referendum commitments in Verdun by passing, in December 1995, a simple parliamentary resolution stating—it was more like wishful thinking—that Quebec is a distinct society, and a bill giving Quebec and Canada's four other regions the right of veto with the effect of further reducing the likelihood that the Constitution will ever be amended.

Since then, the Prime Minister has repeated at every opportunity that he would like to enshrine these two measures in the Constitution, but is prevented from doing so by Quebec's sovereignist

*The Address*

government. We have since come to realize that the argument raised by the Prime Minister is nothing but a smoke screen.

In fact, two weeks ago, the Prime Minister, exasperated by all this, said on the French-language all-news channel that he had done enough in this area and now wanted to focus his efforts on economic issues.

After inflaming the situation, the Prime Minister would rather bury the whole constitutional issue, knowing full well that any amendment to the Constitution that would deal specifically with Quebec would not receive the necessary support from the other provinces.

Consequently, this week, the Minister of Justice told us he was contemplating asking that the Supreme Court to define what would be involved if Quebec were considered a distinct society, if the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs cannot achieve a consensus on this issue in the next few months.

It is as though this government cannot make a move without seeking the opinion of the Supreme Court. In September, the matter of the legality of Quebec's sovereignty was referred to the Supreme Court. Now, they are considering asking the Supreme Court to define the concept of distinct society.

This going to the Supreme Court all the time to settle what are essentially political issues is cause for concern. By constantly referring matters to the Supreme Court, the government is simply shirking its responsibilities.

Need I remind the House that Confederation as we know it was a compromise between two founding peoples, the French speaking one being found mainly in Quebec. These two peoples entered into a confederal agreement where the various political entities, that is to say the provinces, have delegated certain powers to the central government.

• (1025)

This solemn agreement between the two peoples has always been perceived, at least in Quebec, as something that cannot be changed without the consent of both parties. This agreement was breached at the time of the patriation of the Constitution by the federal government in 1982.

On May 15, 1980, before the Quebec referendum on sovereignty-association, the Prime Minister of the day, Pierre Elliott Trudeau, had made it clear that voting no in the referendum would be interpreted as voting yes to renewing Canadian federalism.

Instead, two years later, the Constitution was patriated and a charter of rights incorporated in the Constitution, all without the consent of Quebec. The principle whereby all Canadians from coast to coast are equal, a right guaranteed under the Canadian

Charter of Rights and Freedoms, precludes the specific recognition of Quebec as a society in the Constitution. Similarly, the principle of multiculturalism has been entrenched in the Constitution, while Canada's duality and Quebec's distinctiveness were not. The 1982 constitutional changes, which were implemented despite Quebec's persistent opposition, reflect the contempt in which the government of the day held Quebec.

It is obvious from the constitutional debates over the past three decades, and more recently, the failure of Meech and Charlottetown, that there is no hope of the renewal of federalism being in line with the best interests of Quebec. The five conditions set out in the Meech Lake accord, the least ever requested by a Quebec government, were already enough to make English Canada shudder, and there is every indication that Ottawa-Quebec City relations are going nowhere.

Whether we like it or not, Quebec is still in a catch 22 situation in the federation. Will we realize once and for all that it would be a sheer waste of time, energy and public funds to go down the road of constitutional negotiations again, when these are doomed to fail?

Under the circumstances, it is in the interests of the peoples of Quebec and Canada that all these issues be resolved once and for all. The only solution that will allow our two peoples to thrive is for Quebec to achieve independence. As equal and sovereign partners, they will be able to move on and develop side by side in the best interests of both.

**Mr. Osvaldo Nunez (Bourassa, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to reply to the throne speech by raising, among other issues, Canada's relations with Latin America and the upcoming visit of the Chilean president.

Before dealing with the main topic, I want to say that I am very sensitive to and concerned by the tragic situation and the humanitarian disaster taking place in Africa's great lakes region. The international community must immediately take action to help the more than one million refugees in Zaire.

A summit was held in Nairobi two days ago, and eight countries asked for a neutral multinational force to be sent to the region to establish temporary humanitarian corridors and safe havens for refugees. Unfortunately, Rwanda has so far opposed the idea. I urge the federal government to do its utmost to ensure that this humanitarian assistance is sent as soon as possible, and I wish the best of luck to the mission headed by Raymond Chretien.

In the speech from the throne, we are told that Canada will do everything possible to extend the scope of NAFTA, the North American treaty that includes Canada, the United States and Mexico. We are also told that Canada is committed to establishing priority relations with Latin America.

• (1030)

However, efforts to extend NAFTA have so far failed. The heads of state of our continent met in Miami, in December 1994. They decided to invite Chile to join NAFTA. This was two years ago, and no new country has acceded to the treaty.

This past January, Canada and Chile decided to begin negotiations on an interim bilateral agreement, to make it easier for Chile to join NAFTA. I expected these negotiations to be very quickly brought to a successful conclusion, but it is still not the case. Chilean president Eduardo Frei was supposed to visit Canada from October 1st to 4th, but the visit was postponed to November 17, 18 and 19, because of the failure to reach an agreement during these negotiations.

As you know, I come from Chile and I attach a great deal of importance to the visit of the Chilean president in the coming days. The president will come to Ottawa and Toronto. I must express my great regret, in this House, that he and his delegation will not be going to Quebec, in spite of the invitation sent by the Quebec premier and his government. I hope the federal government has nothing to do with this decision. At times, I have personally noticed federal interference in Quebec's relations with other countries.

I am pleased that Chile returned to democracy in 1990, after 17 years of dictatorship and systematic violations of human rights. I myself came to Quebec in 1974 because of the hard line dictatorship that had ruled in Chile for 17 years. Today, Chile is a country with a very high rate of growth and has resumed its place within the international community.

Santiago is the headquarters for ECLAC, the prestigious economic commission for Latin America. It has an annual growth of approximately 7 per cent and a population of 14 million. It is the site for an increasing number of international meetings. In the coming days, 21 countries will be meeting in Santiago for the Ibero-American Summit, which includes not just Latin American countries but also Spain and Portugal. This summit will look at economic problems, as well as social and political problems, and the issue of democracy and human rights.

In March of 1977, Chile will also host the summit of heads of state and heads of government of the Americas, which will be attended by approximately 44 countries and in which the Prime Minister of Canada will participate. Chile also belongs to APEC, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum, which will be meeting in Manila in a few weeks and in which the Prime Minister of Canada, the President of Chile and other heads of state and heads of government will take part.

I am also glad to see that relations between Chile and Canada and Quebec are very good. They are at the highest level in all areas

### *The Address*

of the economy and trade. Last year, the Prime Minister of Canada visited Chile and other Latin American countries. Fortunately, Canada finally decided to join OAS, the Organization of American States, in 1990.

Quebec has very close ties with Latin America. We share many fraternal ties of friendship based on our common Latin heritage. Relations are intensifying.

• (1035)

Former Liberal minister, Charles Caccia, went to Chile. Bernard Landry also visited that country in late August and early September. The Canadian Chilean community, which numbers 35,000 throughout the country, with concentrations in Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver, is very pleased and satisfied with this visit, a first. No Chilean head of state or head of government has visited Canada for at least 50 years.

We were expecting this bilateral trade agreement to be signed. However, all signs so far are that it will not be, because negotiations have been more difficult than foreseen. There are still a few details to be worked out. I do not think these problems will be resolved in the next ten days.

However, a social security agreement will be signed during this visit between Chile and Canada, providing benefits in the form of disability pensions for the surviving spouses of individuals who have worked in both countries, Chileans who worked in Chile and who are now here, or Canadians who are now working in Chile. This is an agreement I have been pushing for since Chile's return to democracy. It is an agreement that also, in my view, meets the aspirations of the Chilean community in Canada. I hope that Canada will sign other such agreements with other countries, such as El Salvador and Guatemala, which have sent many of their nationals here.

But I also regret that, since the president is not coming to Quebec, the social security agreement between Quebec and Chile will not be signed this time, although there are 10,000 Chileans, 10,000 Quebecers of Chilean origin, living in that province who would like to see it signed as soon as possible.

Today the exchange of goods and services is being liberalized on this continent. Canadian investments in Latin America are increasing daily, eight billion dollars in Chile alone, primarily in the area of mines, forestry and communications.

There are still problems to be resolved, however. Many Latin American countries complain about how complicated it is to get a visitor's visa to come here. This is the case for Central America. The problem is greater there because Canada does not have ambassadorial representation in some Central American countries, such as Honduras, Nicaragua and El Salvador.

*The Address*

This is a problem, because people have to travel to apply for a visa. I hope that, some day, the Canadian government will be represented by ambassadors in some Latin American countries, because there is a principle of reciprocity in international law which ought to be respected. These are countries, Bolivia for example, which have embassies in Ottawa.

I have said that I was in favour of these efforts toward continental economic integration, but I do have a couple of reservations, because a process of integration should be able to benefit all of the population in the countries concerned, which is not the case at the present time. In Latin America, there is still extreme poverty in many countries, with immense differences between social classes. The great majority of people do not have essential services, sometimes lack housing, do not have access to education, face some very serious problems.

• (1040)

What I would like to see in meetings and discussions between Latin America and Canada is for us to also be able to address the problems of poverty, unemployment, underemployment, exclusion and human rights issues. During the Chilean president's visit, I hope that the agenda will include, not only economic questions, investment, exchange of goods and services, but also social, cultural and political questions of concern to the entire Chilean and Canadian population.

I would also like to see this Parliament make more effort to link Canadian and Latin American parliamentarians. Since I was elected to Parliament in 1993, I personally, with the support of my party, the Bloc Québécois, have made every effort to intensify and strengthen parliamentary relations between Canada and Latin America. I have personally visited Chile and Argentina, Cuba and Central America. I have met many parliamentarians.

I think we have the resources, the capacity to do more. With Mexico, for instance, we have a parliamentary friendship group but we should have a recognized parliamentary association. We have other associations, especially with Europe, the United States and Japan. The parliamentary groups do not have the resources to do anything effective.

As a member of Parliament of Chilean origin, I welcome this visit by President Frei. I hope it will be a successful one. Meetings will take place here in Ottawa between the two governments. I previously noted visits by the Argentine President Carlos Menem, by President Zedillo of Mexico and Central American presidents. I hope the Canadian government will invite other heads of state and government leaders. We share the same continent. We have common problems, and we should have more extensive relations.

Here in Ottawa, I often met the ambassadors from Latin America. We speak the same language. Sometimes they do not have a very good understanding of the political, legal and constitutional structure of this country, because in Latin America, generally speaking, all states are centralized. For instance, they do not realize that if they want to conclude an agreement on social security, they also have to negotiate with Quebec, separately from Canada, because social security is a shared jurisdiction. The provinces in Canada have a great deal of autonomy. We have to make the effort, and whenever I have a chance, I try to explain the situation in Canada to them. I also explain the situation in Quebec.

I think the federal government has sent the wrong message to Latin America by saying that Canada is a united and homogeneous country. It has emphasized Canadian unity without ever informing the international community that Quebec has legitimate aspirations, that it wants to use democratic means to become a sovereign country, and that this is legitimate. The United Nations have recognized more than 25 countries during the past ten years. There is nothing anti-democratic about what Quebec and Quebecers are doing.

Again, I hope this visit by the Chilean president will help expand relations that are already very good between Canada and Chile, and between Chile and Quebec.

**Mr. Paul Crête (Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to congratulate the hon. member for Bourassa for his lesson. His presentation was very precise, and he did a very good job of explaining the new North American trade context as well as the importance of relations with Chile.

• (1045)

I would like to ask him a question in a different vein. According to the throne speech, which we are debating today, the Canada Labour Code was to be reviewed so as to meet the demands of Canadian workers and employers. This week, in my opinion, the Minister of Labour gave birth to a mouse when, in the document he tabled, he refused to include real antiscab regulations in the revised Canada Labour Code.

I know about the hon. member for Bourassa's past experience in the area of labour relations. I would like him to explain what was the impact in Quebec of this antiscab legislation that regularized labour relations and helped reduce the number of days lost to conflicts. Is there a way of making the federal government understand how relevant such a measure is by looking at Quebec's experience? I know there is similar legislation in British Columbia.

Are we then not justified in saying that the federal government's actions show it is not fulfilling the mandate it gave itself in the throne speech? In the final analysis, in this area as in many others, all it did was engage in wishful thinking. Could the hon. member



*The Address*

for Bourassa comment on this to try to convince the members opposite that the bill that was introduced in this House does not go far enough?

**Mr. Nunez:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question of my friend and colleague, the hon. member for Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup as it deals with an extremely important issue.

In the speech from the throne, the government promised a complete overhaul of the Canada Labour Code. It was long in coming, but just a few days ago, a bill was finally introduced. Unfortunately, it does not contain any real anti-strikebreaking provisions.

Parliament has been looking at this for many years. Across Canada, there are more than 700,000 workers under federal jurisdiction, subject to the Canada Labour Code, who are not protected by anti-strikebreaking provisions like workers in Quebec, British Columbia and, until just a few months ago, Ontario. The Conservative government of Ontario abolished this protection.

In Quebec, since the anti-strikebreaking legislation was introduced in 1977, labour disputes are no longer as violent and tend to get settled more quickly. Today, we enjoy unprecedented social peace in Quebec.

Having been involved in the labour movement for 19 years, I know this area pretty well. I even introduced a bill of my own containing very specific anti-strikebreaking provisions. I hope that, when the time comes, we can count on the support and co-operation of this government. While many Liberal members are quite sensitive to this issue, all the Minister of Labour actually told us is that anti-strikebreaking provisions may be included, but would apply only when an employer tries to break the union.

This would be extremely hard to prove. How can one tell that the employer intends to break the union? You cannot prove that. This provision will have no immediate, concrete impact on labour relations.

This is a most unfortunate shortcoming, which will hopefully be remedied through amendments to this bill, when it is considered at committee stage. I do hope the government will reconsider and include real anti-strikebreaking provisions in the Canada Labour Code.

[*English*]

**Mrs. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary North, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, for those watching the debates in the House of Commons this morning I would like to once again say that this morning we are engaging in debate and comment on the government's speech from the throne which was presented nearly a year ago but which comes up on the Order Paper from time to time.

The speech from the throne was about 13 pages and dealt with a number of areas where the government made representations to

Canadian citizens that it would deal with those areas and how it would deal, what measures it would put into place.

• (1050)

I would like to use my time this morning to address the area of justice and public safety and how it was dealt with in the speech from the throne. I would also like to make some comments where I believe and we believe this country needs to be going in this important area.

The speech from the throne dealt with the area of justice with one short paragraph of 7 lines in a 13 page document. I hope that does not indicate to Canadians the emphasis, importance and priority this government places on public safety.

However, in those seven lines we find very little substance and no specifics at all. These seven lines deal with the non-violent character of our country, stating that because our country is non-violent citizens are secure. I guess the government has not been looking at some of the recent trends in crime. In fact, violent crime has tripled since 1962. Crimes against property have skyrocketed during the same period. Violent crimes, most disturbingly, by young offenders have increased 244 per cent from 1980 to 1993 alone.

Statistics Canada, which is an arm of the government itself, estimates that fully 90 per cent of sexual assaults are not reported, that 68 per cent of other assaults are not reported and 53 per cent of robberies are not reported.

When we talk to Canadians across the country as elected representatives it becomes increasingly clear that Canadians no longer feel secure in what the government is pleased to term the non-violent character of our country.

We do need to get serious and take a serious look at measures that can provide safe homes and safe streets for the citizens of this country.

The government is trying to find ways to keep people out of prison and out of contact with the justice system. I would suggest that whatever measures are being put in place are not effective. It talks about reforming criminal procedures to better serve the victims of crimes. That is a goal I think all Canadians would agree with. Unfortunately, the Liberal record does not square with that very laudable goal.

In fact, if we look at the major bills that have been introduced by this government we see some very disturbing trends that continue to emphasize the rights and considerations being given to criminals and law breakers instead of really looking at how victims can be given a greater standing and consideration in the justice system.

If we look at five of the major bills that have been put forward in the justice area by the justice minister, I think we need to very

*The Address*

quickly assess the efficiency and effectiveness with which government has kept promises to Canadians made in the throne speech.

First there was Bill C-41 which purported to deal with hate crimes and put more emphasis on what was in the mind of the perpetrator of a crime, the criminal, rather than the effect on the victim. We say that assault is equally wrong regardless of who was assaulted or for what reason. If someone beats a person up it hurts. They need to have redress. There needs to be protection. This emphasis on what was in the mind of the criminal surely is of no comfort or help to Canadians whose rights and safety have been breached.

We then have Bill C-45 which again continued to leave in place a provision of the Criminal Code which allows a cold blooded murderer to be let back out on the streets after serving only 15 years of his or her sentence. In fact, the sentence that is handed down for premeditated, cold blooded murder is life in prison. However, after only 15 years murderers can apply to have early parole and are very often successful when they do apply. Again we see that victims of crime, their families and friends come second to the extra considerations that are given to murderers.

• (1055)

Bill C-53 dealt with temporary passes from prison. It quadrupled the time that criminals could be absent from prison. One person described the bill as giving criminals an opportunity to apply for a two month vacation from prison for whatever reason, for example shopping trips. In some cases individuals who are out of custody have committed further crimes.

Bill C-55 is the government's centrepiece legislation to deal with violent offenders and to get tougher with them. Unfortunately there are many flaws in the bill which have been debated in the House at some length. Violent offenders will still be released back into society with only minimal supervision.

In addition, Bill C-55 includes a rather bizarre and very troubling provision. Citizens who have been neither charged nor convicted of any criminal offence can be monitored electronically. Once again we have a government that shies away from strong measures to protect society while it allows for more government intrusiveness into the lives of law-abiding citizens who have not been convicted of any law breaking activities.

We had the same problem with Bill C-68, the so-called gun control bill. It controls law-abiding citizens while it does little or nothing to stem the tide and the growing use of illegally obtained firearms.

In spite of the nice words in the seven lines of the throne speech about public safety, the government's record is dismal.

It is not right to criticize measures unless good alternatives can be proposed, which is why I am pleased to put before the House the Reform Party's measures to increase public safety, to ensure the safety of our families and communities in this country.

We would first enact a victims bill of rights. We have provisions for such a bill which have already been put before the House. We have urged the government to enact those provisions. Victims, innocent citizens, law-abiding citizens of this country should get the top consideration. However, the Liberal government has quite a different philosophy on public safety.

In 1971 the Liberal solicitor general stood up in this very House and said: "We are going to put the rehabilitation of individuals ahead of the protection of society". That philosophy is continued in present Liberal bills. Victims are second and criminal rights and considerations are first. Canadians are tired of that. They want a whole shift. They want the justice system changed so that the protection of society, the protection of law-abiding innocent citizens, is number one. That is exactly what should be done.

We would repeal the universal firearms registry enacted by this government and replace it with meaningful laws to control guns and to fight the criminal use of firearms.

We would replace the Young Offenders Act. As we are all aware, in the past 20 to 25 years youth crime has skyrocketed. It is a very troubling aspect of our society. Young people themselves are the greatest victims of this increase in youth crime. Many young Canadians do not feel safe in our schools and communities. We can see examples of this over and over again. Something needs to be done about this. We need to deal with this issue seriously and the Reform Party is proposing measures to do that. We believe that young criminals must be held accountable for their actions in this society.

• (1100)

We would also reform the parole system and abolish the early release of first degree murderers. We would also pave the way for a national referendum on the return of capital punishment. Many citizens are concerned that there is not a strong enough signal being sent to law breakers in this country, particularly to cold blooded murderers, that we will not tolerate that kind of victimization of innocent members of our society.

We need to look at the specifics of how the past approaches to justice measures have been ineffective in protecting our society. In 1991 Brian Mulroney's Conservative government introduced new gun control measures. At that time the auditor general criticized those measures because they lacked the necessary background data or evaluation process to really show whether there would be any potential benefits for such legislation. In other words, when measures are put into place by governments, they should have some objective criteria to measure how effective those measures

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are going to be in light of the cost and in light of the fact that we are dealing with the lives, property and freedoms of our citizens.

To compound what was already a flawed process, in 1995 this Liberal justice minister introduced Bill C-68. This bill put into place a universal firearms registry that included shotguns and rifles. Of course the registration of handguns has been in place for over 60 years.

The majority of the federal Tory senators who had put the 1991 measures into place supported Bill C-68. Their leader, the member for Sherbrooke, did not show up for the vote on this measure in the House of Commons.

We in the Reform Party were the only ones who actively opposed the registration of shotguns and rifles. We have done so consistently. It is very clear to us that this universal firearms registry will squander already scarce law enforcement resources, time and money. Our law enforcement officers will now spend incredibly more time shuffling paper instead of fighting real crime.

Our opposition to this registry should not be interpreted as being anti-gun control. Every citizen in this country and certainly myself and other members of my caucus believe we must control the criminal use of firearms which threaten the safety of our streets and of our citizens. We have a very tough zero tolerance policy for criminal offences involving firearms.

The waste of money and resources involved in a universal registry for law-abiding citizens is something we oppose. We believe in the long term it will only hurt our goal of public safety which is the goal of our citizens. We want to see that goal reached in effective ways, not in the ways this government has brought in.

The prison system as well needs to be looked at. We have some proposals to make it a more effective instrument of both rehabilitation and deterrence. In most Canadian prisons for example inmates are not required to work. They are also provided with taxpayer funded amenities which many of our citizens cannot hope to enjoy.

This week my colleague from Fraser Valley West mentioned an older couple in his riding. The wife is in dire need of dental treatment. They were unable to save the amount necessary for the wife to get that treatment. Yet criminals are given such treatment routinely at no cost to them. Something is wrong with that picture.

• (1105)

At some correctional facilities inmates even have access to golf courses, pool tables, cable television and extensive workout equipment. They qualify for free counselling, full medical and dental coverage, free university education and legal aid.

Many young people in our country are worried about whether they will be able to afford the necessary training and university education in order to have secure jobs and a good future. Tuition

fees are rising and student loan burdens for graduates are growing. We therefore have to look at the priorities of a government which provides those kinds of free services to law breakers.

In Canada inmates even have the right to vote. These people have flouted the law. They have victimized law-abiding innocent people in our society. They still have all the rights and privileges of citizenship. They even have amenities and services which taxpaying law-abiding citizens cannot afford. Something needs to be done about this.

With respect to the Young Offenders Act, youth account for more robberies than those in the next two older age groups. In 1991 youth were charged with a full 18,000 violent offences, twice as much as five years ago. In fact, violent crime by young offenders increased in all categories between 1986 and 1994. Homicide was up 36 per cent. Sexual assault was up 16 per cent. Aggravated assault was up 78 per cent. Robbery was up a whopping 131 per cent. We need to seriously address this problem.

The Reform Party would replace the ineffective Young Offenders Act with measures which would truly hold young people accountable for crime. It is a small minority of youth. Most of the youth are upstanding citizens working hard to build a future for themselves and to gain the skills necessary to have a strong future. They should not be put to shame by the small minority which flouts the law virtually without consequence.

The key to crime prevention is to strengthen families and communities rather than to rely exclusively on the judicial, parole and prison systems. When it comes to young offenders this means supporting the introduction of programs for the early detection and prevention of youth crime and the introduction of more effective rehabilitation measures and measures to support education and literacy, skills training, discipline and community service.

We would also shift the balance from the rights of the accused to the rights of the victim and law-abiding citizens. As I said, we would replace the Young Offenders Act. We would redefine young offenders as 10 to 15 years of age. We would also permit the publication of names of all convicted violent young offenders. Serious offenders 14 to 15 years of age or any offender over 16 would be tried in adult court.

A Reform government would repeal section 745 of the Criminal Code which allows for the early release of first degree murderers. We would also ensure that violent offenders served their entire sentence, that repeat violent offenders would be declared dangerous offenders and that all parole would be tightly monitored and earned.

These are measures which Canadians are asking for. They are common sense measures. They are designed to send a clear signal to law breakers that we will not tolerate the violation of the rights of innocent citizens. I urge the government to replace the vague

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seven line paragraph in the throne speech with some of these real effective measures which the Reform Party is proposing.

[Translation]

**Mr. Pierre de Savoye (Portneuf, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comments made by the hon. member from the Reform Party. A debate on the throne speech provides ample opportunity to find flaws in the way the government is following up on the concerns of Canadians.

• (1110)

The Reform member spoke at length about crime-related issues. However, two things must be considered when dealing with the issue of crime. It seems to me that the hon. member overlooked one of these aspects, and I am going to ask her, in a few minutes, to give me her thoughts and beliefs regarding this aspect.

The hon. member focused primarily on what happens once a crime has been committed, including the resulting problems for victims. However, she was silent on how to ensure that some crimes are not committed, and thus avoid having victims. As you know, for some time now and increasingly so, the federal government has been withdrawing its financial support to the provinces in the fields of education, health and welfare, with the result that some young people no longer have the support they need to start off on the right foot in life.

It goes without saying that, later on, if these young people turn to crime, and some may even commit sordid acts, there are going to be victims. These victims deserve our compassion, and so do their families and friends.

However, it would have been better to prevent the offender from turning to crime and thus avoid having victims. Until recently, the federal government assumed major responsibilities in terms of financial support to the provinces in the areas of education, health and welfare. By withdrawing its support, it has left the provinces in a tight situation and some are hard hit. Think of Ontario. And these provinces must now make major cuts, leaving segments of the population disadvantaged or in need of assistance. However, there will no longer be any help for these people.

We know that, in certain cases, not all, most of the poor are honest folk, but this does not help young people get off to a good start, and the statistics are there to prove it. In certain cases, unfortunately, these people are drawn into a life of crime. The federal government therefore has a role to play here when taxpayers' money is involved. We are talking about prevention. The federal government no longer assumes this role, or is doing so less and less, to the great detriment of the provinces.

Would not my hon. colleague from the Reform Party agree with me that this federal disinvestment also impacts on the crime rate,

and that the federal government should therefore not focus solely on resolving problems after the fact, but should take greater action before the fact, which would be much safer for the people of Canada?

[English]

**Mrs. Ablonczy:** Mr. Speaker, I noticed that my colleague was actually listening to my speech, which was very pleasing to me. I appreciate that. I know how busy members are sometimes and we are not able to pay attention to every intervention, but I appreciate the fact that you did and you raise excellent points.

In my speech I did touch on the whole area of prevention. I agree with you that it is something we need to look at.

• (1115)

**The Deputy Speaker:** Would the hon. member please pretend the remarks are going through the Chair?

**Mrs. Ablonczy:** I apologize, Mr. Speaker. I do not know how I could have left you out of this equation, it was most improper. Please accept my apologies.

Mr. Speaker, I did touch in my intervention on the whole matter of prevention. I agree with my colleague that it is most important. I had a discussion with some police officers in Calgary a few months ago and they told me they can tell as early as five years of age if an individual may be predisposed to a life of crime and law breaking. I found that very interesting. When my colleague suggests there can be early detection and prevention of a tendency toward criminal activity, that is borne out by some of the things I have heard and read.

Reform members believe there should be support for the introduction of programs for the early detection and prevention of youth crime. There needs to be more effective rehabilitation programs, not just to put people away or put them in a closed facility for a period of time, but to have that time spent in activities that emphasize education, literacy and skills training. These people would then have a better opportunity to become productive members of society rather than otherwise. There should be an emphasis on discipline and community service.

Reform believes that the key to crime prevention is to strengthen families and communities rather just relying exclusively on the judicial parole and prison systems.

I would say two things in reply to my colleague's concern with regard to the decreased funding for the support of these kinds of activities. The Reform Party opposes such measures as a universal registry of every law-abiding citizen's firearms. This is a very ineffective deployment of scarce resources when every dollar is

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needed for the kinds of programs that will help to give us safety. However, those dollars are going to activities that simply cause problems for law-abiding citizens and take away law prevention and enforcement time. Reform opposes that.

Second, this is why the Reform Party has kept saying that governments cannot continue to borrow. The government's interest bill when it took office three years ago was only \$38 billion—I should not say only, that is a lot of money—and today it is \$48 billion. In three short years we have lost \$10 billion to interest to lenders. That could have gone toward the kinds of programs that my colleague and I have been speaking about: to prevent crime, to detect crime early and to seriously assist people to become law-abiding citizens rather than lawbreakers. We have to get government spending under control so we do not continually have the resources that we need for these important programs eroded.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. de Savoye:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the enlightened words of my colleague on helping get young people off on the right track and on prevention. This is a topic dear to my own heart as well.

For every dollar we invest, the government invests, in prevention, scores of dollars would not have to be invested in the administration of justice, and in incarceration, further down the road.

It costs about \$100,000 a year to keep someone in a federal penitentiary—an astronomical sum. Helping a young person in difficulty, however, costs only a few thousand. What extraordinary savings could be realized, then, by putting our money in the right place.

I would like to know whether my colleague from the Reform Party shares my point of view.

• (1120)

[*English*]

**Mrs. Ablonczy:** Mr. Speaker, the member makes a very important point, a point to which we need to listen. We talk a lot about dealing with crime after the fact. We do not talk enough about prevention and assistance to our young people especially. I am in complete agreement with the hon. member.

We need to more seriously focus on that area of the justice system. I thank him for bringing forward those points.

**Mr. Derek Lee (Scarborough—Rouge River, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to continue the debate today on the subject of the government's throne speech some months ago. I can tell from the enthusiasm in the House today that it is still a topic of interest and that members are looking at lots of issues.

I would like to touch on four separate elements of the throne speech and the government's current program that arose from or were referred to in the throne speech.

The first area is that of economic opportunity and jobs. This has been a theme of governments for many years and it will probably always be so. The government had mapped out a game plan on being elected in 1993 and the economic opportunity program continued with this throne speech.

Everyone in the House will agree that the issue of jobs is a function of economics. Governments simply cannot go out with a bucket of money, pour it into a particular city or region and hope that jobs will accrue. That is not what happens. The creation of jobs is something that happens when the rubber hits the road, when the business person decides to hire, decides to invest in a new production facility and sells more product. Where all of those business functions are positive that is when jobs are created.

What is the government doing to foster the economic conditions that give rise to those jobs? There are several indicators. In fact there are hundreds of indicators. Of the most important ones I have selected four where the indicators are showing very positive economic progress, the kind that gives rise to job creation. They are not in any particular order.

Canada's current account, the balance of moneys moving in and out of the country, has entered positive territory for the first time in many years. That was tough to turn around. When the government was elected in 1993 there were many who thought the circumstance was desperate. I am very pleased to see that we now have current account surpluses in existence. In the most recent quarter and in future economic quarters and years we project a continuing current account surplus.

This of course has a very positive effect on the Canadian dollar which has moved recently over the 75 cent U.S. mark and which economists predict is going to continue to appreciate. While that sounds great, I know there are exporters in Canada who are not always comfortable as the dollar appreciates because that means their Canadian goods and services are more expensive for outside Canadian purchasers.

The second area is a prominent one. It is the battle to eliminate the deficit. I do not think there is anyone in the House who could deny the substantial progress that the government under the leadership of the finance minister has made toward the elimination of the deficit. We are now in 2 per cent of GDP territory. The objective for the following fiscal period is now targeted at 1 per cent of GDP.

In approximately the second quarter of 1998 the government will have zero cash borrowing requirements. We simply will not have any new borrowing needs for current operations. We will have to continue to recycle the government debt, but that is a very significant point. Perhaps I should not be projecting, but the economic models are showing no new borrowing in approximately the second quarter of 1998.

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• (1125)

If we were in one of the other G7 countries, France, U.S.A., Germany and Great Britain, the government accounts are measured differently from the way we do it in Canada. If we measured our public accounts the way they measure theirs I could stand here and say we would have no deficit in the second quarter of 1998. However, we measure our government finances differently.

We cannot change it now because we will all get the sense that we are cooking the books and changing the rules. Therefore, we will keep our unique Canadian way and aim for the elimination of the deficit based on the Canadian measuring sticks. I think we are headed toward approximately 1999 or 2000. These issues are up to Canadians who spend money, Canadians who pay taxes and the finance minister who has his hands on the purse strings.

The last indicator of economic prosperity has to be interest rates. It was only yesterday that I noted that mortgage interest rates were publicly advertised now at 5.4 per cent. We have not seen interest rates like that since roughly the end of the last war.

I can recall in my previous incarnation, prior to being an elected member of the House, meeting people who had one of these old 30-year, CMHC mortgages with interest rates of around 5 per cent, 6 per cent and 7 per cent. Those mortgages would have been amortized and maturing approximately at the end of the 1970s and beginning of the 1980s. I remember people saying: "We will never see those kinds of interest rates again, never. Those are part of history". Here we are in 1996 looking at those kinds of interest rates again.

The point I would make is that, as Canadians, we can be seen to actually be in control of interest rates. We are able to do things in government that directly affect interest rates. Maybe we never believed we could do that before but now we see that we can do it because we did it. I think we can take credit for all that we have done. It was not just a decision of the finance minister. It was not just a decision of a bank. It was a whole constellation of political decisions and acceptance by Canadians of a fiscal program that would enable these interest rates to reduce.

I want to leave economics now and go into the area of trust of government. I served in the 34th Parliament and I know that my first two weeks in this place the House had to deal with a matter involving trust. It was my first intervention in this place in 1989. I think it is fair to say that in the last two, three or four years there has been a lot fewer incidents where material issues of public trust have been taken up in this House. I do not want to suggest that there are never any. There are always some.

However, in terms of material issues of public trust, I am very confident that the Prime Minister has shown us a standard which

we can comfortably follow, hopefully for many years. I know I am proud to follow that standard and I think Canadians believe that.

I think public polls, where various types of questions are asked, indicate that Canadians are beginning to have a sense of trust in government, not in the sense that government can do everything, it never could and just cannot, but in their sense of confidence in the integrity at least of this Prime Minister and this government's high standards. I know, the cabinet knows and I think members opposite know what those standards are. I think we are doing a much better job of meeting those standards.

• (1130)

One way which we show that we are meeting the standards falls under the rubric of accountability. Journalists write about, politicians speak about, Canadians ask about it. This government has made a very real attempt to be directly accountable. It is a very big manifestation.

When I sought election to the House as a Liberal member I ran on the policies in the red book. I used it in my campaign and in much of what I do and what I vote on here and sometimes what I speak about. The Prime Minister and the cabinet are following what is in the red book and proof of that was the decision of the Prime Minister a couple of week ago to publish what he and his cabinet and the government have accomplished in delivering on the red book promises.

Some people viewed that as political grandstanding. To be sure, it was political. However, it was an attempt to account to Canadians for what the government had accomplished vis-a-vis the red book. Individuals may disagree with the score card and may say we have done 8 out of the 10 things but there are still two remaining. That is fair. This was intended to say that by our account we have fulfilled 78 per cent of the commitments of the red book and we still have approximately another year left in our mandate. Every week, every month there are announcements and decisions by the government which continue to improve the record of accountability. I am proud of that.

I realize that at some time I will have to account to my electors in Scarborough—Rouge River for only scoring 86 per cent of 87 per cent. In this modern complex world I challenge any institution, any government or corporation, whether it be a hospital, a school or a commercial entity, to deliver 100 per cent on anything as the years unfold. Do not forget, we are dealing with government which is very complex and very broad. I am very comfortable with the process of accounting.

Another little element of this, one little snapshot of where I believe the Prime Minister and the government have shown they are more accountable is in the innovation of the government's decision to put in place a commissioner to oversee the activities of the Communications Security Establishment, a signals intelligence agency with a high degree of capability of eavesdropping. This agencies has carried on since the second world war with out any

legislative mandate and without any accountability mechanism, as far as I have been able to determine. There certainly was a minister in the House, but rarely if ever were there any question put in the House on this subject. Even more rarely were answers given.

Now a former judge has been appointed, and the accountability mechanism there to assist Parliament, sharing accountability, was an innovation which was not there before. I am very proud to be part of a government that was bold enough to address that issue.

• (1135)

Third, what has happened in the region I represent in terms of the throne speech? What has the government delivered? What has the throne speech done? My riding of Scarborough—Rouge River is part of the greater Toronto area. It is difficult to look at a particular riding in that area in isolation.

However, I know that the financial community on Bay Street likes what this government has done, what it has delivered. I know that for the second year in a row, Canada's exports are hitting record highs. Never before have we exported as much as we have recently, which means jobs for Canadians.

Never before have I as a Canadian felt so plugged into the world. From my riding and from the GTA I see goods and services being exported from Canada to all parts of the world. Now there is no part of the world in which Canadians are not marketing, selling, building, advising. It is really a treat to see this happening. We have a lot of Canadians with a lot of abilities who are working in that area.

Rouge Valley Park is a unique 5,000 acre green preserve within metropolitan Toronto. The federal government has done its part. It has delivered on its funding commitment. We are very proud that the Rouge Valley Park alliance is moving ahead with the co-operation of all the other levels of government, provincial, municipal, metro and the regional conservation authority, to accomplish its objectives.

The Prime Minister, the Minister of National Defence and the GTA caucus are dedicated to taking a piece of the Downsview air base and turning it into green space and other positive infrastructure for the GTA.

The commercialization of the Toronto airport is now proceeding. The carpet has been ripped up; the doors at the entrance to terminal II, which never worked, have finally been replaced; a new tower is being constructed; a new runway is being constructed; the other runways have been repaired. Millions of dollars in investment are going into the Pearson airport which is a huge economic entity. It

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is the gateway to central Canada and for many people around the world it is the gateway to Canada.

One of the things visitors to Toronto will see is the new trade centre which is being constructed on the Canadian National Exhibition grounds. The centre is a product of the federal-provincial infrastructure program, a federal program contained in the red book. This huge attractive trade centre will be open shortly. Canadians will market our goods and services to the entire world through this trade centre. We will compete with trade centres globally. There are some great centres out there, just as the GTA trade centre will be.

I cannot talk about the throne speech without mentioning national unity. The government has a program which has been debated in the House. We want to modernize the federation in little bites because we have found the big bite is too much for Canadians, too much for this House. We have not been able to do it in big chunks. We are working on that in many areas, co-operation federally and provincially, avoiding duplication, job training, environmental protection, a national securities commission, which I think is an excellent objective, and dealing with partitionists in Quebec who would partition Canada. Some are called separatists, some are called secessionists.

• (1140)

This is a matter that has to be addressed and will continue to be addressed maybe for another 100 years. However, I believe that Canadians and Quebecers are going to be able to deal with this issue, as tough as it is. We have to give a lot of elbow room to all the provinces, including Quebec, so that each of the groupings across the country can achieve their goals as a region or as a province. I am confident that this government, under this Prime Minister, will be able to accomplish this objective and all others.

**Mr. Jim Silye (Calgary Centre, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I do not know where to begin. We are having a lively debate on the throne speech which was presented nine months ago. The government must have pretty thin legislation to offer this up for debate today. It should be an embarrassment to the government.

The hon. member painted a rosy picture about all the great and wonderful things that are happening in this country. He tied them into trust. I would like to talk about trust a bit. I believe that looking at some of the truths is also important.

It is true that when the Liberals were in opposition they opposed the NAFTA and free trade itself. In fact they had a leader who ran on a platform against free trade. There was a red book promise that the NAFTA would not be approved until the dispute settlement mechanism was revisited. That would have avoided the unneces-

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sary nasty deal that was recently negotiated on softwood lumber. That is not good news.

In opposition the Liberals complained incessantly about the philosophy of the governor of the Bank of Canada, Crow, and his anti-inflation policy. When the Liberals were in opposition they were against that. Now they are taking the credit. It was that policy of the Bank of Canada which toed the tough line when it was necessary and it was the right thing to do. Canadians knew it, but the Liberals did not know it in opposition. They were against it.

Now they are taking credit for low interest rates. Now they are taking credit for the expansion of exports. That is what is expanding the economy. Domestic growth is nil. When interest rates are really low, that is a sign of failure. That means that the economy has stalled. They should not be patting themselves on their backs.

The banks and all lenders want to lower their rates to induce people to borrow. Why? Because they are not borrowing. We should talk about the other side of the story.

The Liberals are saying that in two years from now, when our deficit is only \$9 billion, there will be no new borrowing. We will have a balanced budget because of the way in which the countries which belong to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development measure their deficits.

Consider this logic. We will have a \$9 billion deficit. The hon. member said that when we hit that single digit level we will have a balanced budget. There will be no new borrowing. Where are they going to get \$9 billion? They are going to borrow it from the civil service pension fund. That is a loan. That is a debt. They should not be telling Canadians that there will no longer be deficit financing or borrowing. That is a distortion of the truth. I am embarrassed that the finance minister is talking that way and letting the Prime Minister get away with things like that. It is cooking the books. It is saying that they broke the back of the deficit when they are not coming clean with the Canadian public.

Let us do that. Let us say that we have a \$9 billion deficit. We are going to borrow it from the civil service pension fund, but we will have a balanced budget. That is not true.

This government brags about the steps it took and the spending cuts it made. It will be sad when the member goes back to his riding to seek re-election. I am going to submit that it is his government which is responsible for the nurses who are losing their jobs and for the teachers who are losing their jobs. Who reduced spending for education and health care by \$7 billion? The government. Who has to live with it? The provincial governments, and these guys are patting themselves on the back and blaming the provinces for doing a poor job. Excuse me. That is a sorry way to run a country. It is a poor excuse for taking responsibility and telling the truth to Canadians.

• (1145)

Spending to the provinces by this government has been reduced by 42 per cent. Spending on its own federal administrative costs is only about 1.3 per cent. Tell me how all these spending reductions were made. On the backs of the provinces and the government is bragging about it.

I just wanted to comment for about five minutes. I will allow an equal five minutes for the hon. member to comment. But that is the other side of the story. It is the complete picture. That is what we have to look at here: both sides of the story. The hon. member can comment.

**Mr. Lee:** Mr. Speaker, I am disappointed to hear all the doom and gloom from the other side. Things are not nearly as bad as the hon. member makes them out to be.

His comment that low interest rates signal a collapsed economy is laughable. Perhaps the member would have visited Japan a couple of years ago and said: "My goodness, you only have a 6 per cent interest rate. Your economy must be collapsed". This is a joke. The member does not understand what a low interest rate means. But let us leave that and move on.

The member has suggested that the Liberals did not agree with the Bank of Canada monetary policy in the last decade. There were times when we did not, that is very true. The Bank of Canada policy in targeting an excessively low inflation rate in the range of 1 to 2 per cent, which it was, underbid what the economy was capable of doing. Consequently it caused a prolonged recession.

People are not going to be told that, but that is what happened. The policy chosen by the bank and adopted by the government prolonged and exacerbated the recession of 1991-92. Liberals would have done it another way, just like we found other ways to make cuts in government spending. There is more than one way to skin a cat.

The member thinks that because we thought we could have done a better job with the free trade agreement with the United States of America and with Mexico, that it is a reason for giving up on trading. Canada does not trade just with the United States or just with Mexico; we trade with the world. Our trade with the rest of the world is expanding.

It is simply inappropriate and silly for the member to focus on the free trade agreement as being the function, the common denominator of the current government policy to foster trade with the rest of the world. The free trade agreement simply does not apply to that type of trade. The World Trade Organization rules do and that is where we are putting our money.

The member suggested that it has been a long time since the throne speech, that we must not have very much going on now that is important if we have started discussing a speech that happened nine months ago. I am sure the hon. member will agree with me



that we have been so darn busy dealing with important legislation that we have not had the time or ability to get back to the throne speech, which was a very good throne speech.

Some day the hon. member and his party will thank the Prime Minister and his government for delivering us through, no matter how they count the deficit, to a stable economy.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Paul Crête (Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the Liberal member who happens to be the only Liberal who dared to speak in the House this morning to defend the speech from the throne. None of the others did. He is the first one we have heard from. We have not heard from any members from Quebec.

I would like to ask him whether we, members of the official opposition, are not clear proof that this government has done absolutely nothing about the main problem it is facing. It was elected, and now it has across the way, as the official opposition, a sovereigntist party that wants to make Quebec a sovereign state. In the past three and one half years, the government has done absolutely nothing to deal with this question.

• (1150)

When you say that you will be glad to go back to your constituents and tell them you got a score of 86 per cent, what are you going to tell them when they say you have done nothing to diminish the impact in Parliament of opposition members who want to completely transform the Canadian entity by turning it into two distinct countries? Do you think Canadians will be proud of the Liberal government's score?

Here is the other question I wanted to ask, very briefly. It is true that interest rates have gone down, but to buy a house today, you need a job. What have you done to ensure that Canadians have jobs?

**The Deputy Speaker:** Hon. members will please direct their comments to the Chair.

[*English*]

**Mr. Lee:** Mr. Speaker, I know where the hon. member is coming from and we all do. He has a role to play in opposition. He is critical of the government because it has not been able to help the opposition in its objectives.

There is no way in the world that this government is going to assist the official opposition in its number one goal of partitioning Canada. I am sorry, I regret that we cannot do that. I am not even sure we could do it legally if we wanted to. I hope he will forgive the government for that.

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In terms of modernizing the federation, we have gone some distance. After the referendum last year, the government committed to three separate things and we have delivered or gone down the road to delivering on all three. I know the member opposite will agree that the government has done it. It may not accomplish his list. It may not get Canada dissolved. It may not partition Canada but it does deal with the issue of modernizing the federation.

This government is going to continue to work on that agenda using small bites. If the province of British Columbia has a problem with item X and the province of Quebec has a problem with item Y, the federal government is going to work on it. The federal government always has, provided the provinces communicate and the federal government communicates back. We have seen a lot of progress and I think we will see more.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Paul Crête (Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity today to speak in this debate on the address in reply to the speech from the throne—although this particular speech from the throne goes back to last February—because we now have a better perspective on what the federal government has done in the past six months since it made those promises in the speech from the throne. Today, we are in a better position to evaluate the results.

Last week in committee, I had before me the President of the Treasury Board, who said more or less that the role of government was to meet the expectations of its citizens.

I suggest we evaluate on those terms the government's record on what it promised in the speech from the throne. Did it meet the expectations of its citizens during the past year? Did it meet its objectives, deal with political situations and take corrective action when necessary?

The first item is fighting the deficit. One could say that yes, on the whole they managed to reduce the deficit, at least on the face of it, but in fact, and the hon. member for the Reform Party hit the nail on the head earlier, 42 per cent of the cuts were made in transfer payments to the provinces. This means that today, when we see 50,000 or 60,000 people demonstrating against the provincial government in Ontario, it is largely as a result of these cuts.

Twenty CEGEPs in Quebec are on strike as a result of these federal cuts. The federal government decided to reduce funding in this area because it was easier to cut at the expense of the provinces than to cut closer to home. The most obvious example of this is that this week, the Liberal majority voted against a motion to abolish the Senate.

We spend \$43 million a year on the unelected Senate, whose members are appointed for purely partisan reasons. The govern-

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ment decided to turn a blind eye to this and continue paying this \$43 million but, at the same time, it did not hesitate to cut \$1.2 billion from transfer payments to the provinces. Let the provinces deal with their own problems.

That is what the government has done to fight the deficit. So it did not get a passing mark. Clearly, the people of Quebec and Canada are not happy with the results, especially in ridings like mine, where people realize how they hid the fight against the deficit behind UI benefits.

They changed the law, and we will see the results in the coming months. The federal government's day of reckoning has yet to come. It will come when people receive their last UI cheques in February, March or April 1997. They will realize that the reform cut 10, 12, 15 weeks and that they will have to go on social assistance while the UI fund boasts a \$5 billion surplus.

• (1155)

This is unacceptable. I almost feel like saying it is practically immoral to let people starve while the UI fund is growing. That is the result of the deficit-fighting measures planned in the Liberal government's throne speech.

As for employment, did this government deliver the goods? Two and a half years ago, it campaigned on the following theme: we will create jobs, we will put people back to work. It did create some jobs, but there are still 800,000 fewer jobs than before the 1990 recession.

Above all, the government did not solve the problem of finding jobs for those who are now unemployed. We can put in place every possible measure to improve Canada's competitiveness in technology, and ensure that engineers and technicians have jobs. Fine, that is great. That is the way to go. But the problem today is that, while technologies are being developed, we have all these people with no technical training who are systematically being put out of work, people whom we are unable to retrain so that they can find another job to support themselves and be proud of it. That is the challenge the Liberal government has failed to take on in any way, shape or form. It is riding the wave of economic recovery. The interest rates have gone down. Great, but that does little to improve the situation of those who cannot afford to invest in the economy. When you are 25 years old and jobless, you do not start a family, buy a house and contribute to society, and that does not make you happy.

The federal government should take a lesson from the Quebec economic summit, where, in a show of solidarity, unions, employers, the government and community organizations all agreed on one thing: there must be a clear and precise job creation target. When did this government agree to set a job creation target like the deficit reduction it had set for itself? It would be a good objective

for this government to tell us what it is prepared to do, so that in one, two or three years, the unemployment rate in the country would go down by 2, 3 or 4 per cent, and so that we could see the impacts on quality of life and social expenditures. It would be interesting for Canadians to see their Prime Minister rise in this House and say: "Our challenge will be to ensure that Canada's unemployment rate goes down by 2 per cent over the next two years". This is in fact what labour federations are asking of the Prime Minister. To then see the whole government administration work toward this objective would be of significance.

This is the type of concrete measure that is required, not a speech from the throne in which there is nothing to really change the situation, and in which the government relies on market forces. The result is that those who are solid enough to survive, which is fine, but those who are less gifted and who had less opportunities through their education do not. This government evaluates its performance on how it provides an opportunity to the strongest ones. However, a society or a government should assess its record based on the opportunities it provides to each and everyone to make a contribution.

Society should be evaluated on how it uses its human potential. There are people who have not managed to complete their high school, who do not have a job and who have not been retrained. This government will be a good government the day it will make sure everyone is used to his or her full potential and is given an opportunity to make a proper contribution to society.

The speech from the throne alluded to this issue, but these were only words. There is no concrete action or result, and this is very unsatisfactory. As autumn ends and winter begins, a tour through our ridings will bring home the insecurity people feel about jobs and the problems experienced by seasonal workers in particular when they think of what they are facing next February and March with the unemployment insurance reform.

They called it employment insurance. What a terrible piece of marketing. Employment insurance should mean a system that makes it possible to guarantee employment to somebody who has potential and can achieve it. They change the name and the packaging, but the product is even worse than before. It is unacceptable, and the government will certainly be judged on it by the people. I urge the government, if it dares, to go before the public today on this issue. You can count on a very clear and very direct message from Quebecers.

There is another point I wish to raise, which involves something even more basic. It is the issue of this government's leadership. This is a government whose management style is short-sighted. Three years ago, the public elected 54 members of the Bloc Québécois, a secessionist party, a sovereigntist party that wants to create two countries within Canada. The message was not clear enough.

*The Address*

• (1200)

The Prime Minister said that Quebec's problem was an economic one, that the government was going to create jobs and reduce the deficit and the problem would go away. Except that there was the surprise of October 30, 1995, when they realized that, despite everything, 49.4 per cent of Quebecers had voted for sovereignty. That shook them to their short-sighted roots. For almost a month, they had been saying: "This time it is really serious. We had better make promises, something must be done".

The morning after the results were in, they started to say that the only thing the federal government could do was to table a little resolution in the House about distinct society, thinking that then the effort would have been made.

I was never an admirer of Mr. Mulroney, but compare the effort he made in the past to unite Canada with this lack of response to the emergency situation created by the referendum. There is a world of difference. The present government lacks leadership with respect to the situation in Quebec. It is not surprising that Quebecers are the only ones in Canada seriously dissatisfied with the federal government at this time: 68 per cent of them are dissatisfied with the performance of the federal government.

Despite a period of economic growth, despite the fact that there has been at least some progress in the battle against the deficit, is there not a message here which the federal government ought to receive, to which it ought to adjust, on which it ought to make some proposals? Yet nothing is forthcoming. There are no proposals, and they are saying that they will react only once they have come up against a wall. This strikes me as a truly aberrant situation. People are waiting for concrete actions from this government, proof that it is going to react.

To give another example, in the throne speech, reference was made to the pertinence of reforming the way shipping is managed in Canada. The diagnosis is fairly obvious, in my opinion. The federal government has been letting its facilities deteriorate for the past 30 years. The proof of this is that, today, 80 per cent of facilities are more or less useless, because they have never been properly developed. They have just been patched up here and there, over and over.

We are in a problematical situation. The government says that changes must be made, and the first statement made, one which we agree with, is that the job of management was done by people who were too far away from the action, who could not possibly know what the concerns were in each region, who could not do any separate marketing, who could not allow facilities to compete with each other. Solutions had to be sought across Canada before the government could finally grasp that some latitude must be given to these facilities, but there are still many aspects that have not been settled.

The address in response to the throne speech offers me the opportunity to tell the government that there will still be much to be done when the transportation bill is examined in the report or third reading stage. Since Confederation, this field has been characterized by a great deal of political partisanship. Every riding has its own story of someone who was port master because he was a Tory, another who was port master at another time because he was a Grit. These situations have never been settled.

Yesterday in committee I proposed an amendment to ensure that the people appointed are qualified, and it was turned down by the Liberal majority. I was not calling for the minister to stop making appointments, not calling for him to no longer be able to choose between candidates, but only for assurance that they were qualified. Once again, the system took too long for adjustments to be made, and for actions to be taken accordingly. This is a specific problem relating to partisan politics, and one that is important to the public. It is important for the government to show evidence of acting justly.

There is something even more fundamental involved as well. In this reform, there is a provision for the regional ports, the ones that are doing business, but not necessarily on an international scale, to be able to be turned over to local interests.

• (1205)

We have tried, and we must keep on trying to add components to the legislation that will remove the arbitrary, political element and ensure that decisions to invest in Baie-Comeau, Cacouna, New Brunswick or western Canada are not made on the basis of the political colour of their representatives but on the basis of economic interest. The government should use the economic profiles and statistics compiled by officials with the Department of Transport and interpret them intelligently.

Another important aspect is to ensure that ports without any commercial economic activity except a ferry service like Rivière-du-Loup to Saint-Siméon or Trois-Pistoles to Les Escoumins on the North Shore—can be sold at a good price without any interruption of service. This is a good example of the imperfections in our system and the need for reform. Ignoring the need for reform reflects a major lack of leadership on the part of the Canadian government.

If no guarantees are given, we may get some outlandish situations. For instance, the federal government may decide it will no longer maintain a harbour facility, it may decide to get rid of the port of Rivière-du-Loup, for instance, even if the ferry offers an essential service recognized by the Government of Quebec and there is a subsidy for this service.

The federal government, which is responsible for wharves, might decide it no longer has the money and no longer wants to

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maintain the facility. The region would then be in a totally unacceptable situation. The government has to move, to react, to implement concrete solutions.

I admit that in this particular case, Bill C-44, there was a lot of consultation. Suggestions were made which were adopted, but many aspects remain to be settled. I hope the government will find a way to do that.

To sum up, should Canadians be satisfied with what they heard in the speech from the throne and the way it has been implemented?

My answer is what people on the street, at the barbershop or the cornerstore are telling me. They ask where are the jobs all these government projects were supposed to provide. They ask me what is happening. Why do they not see any results? People no longer believe that millions of dollars have been cut and millions invested. They want to know if their neighbour will get a job, if any positive result will be achieved anywhere.

In a riding like mine, Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, it will be a few more months before we can see if the government action was successful in any real way. We will have to wait and see if the transactions which are supposed to allow the local community take charge of the port facilities in Cacouna and to ensure the future of the ferries between Rivière-du-Loup and Saint-Siméon, and between Trois-Pistoles and Les Escoumins will come through. That is what matters.

Regarding the employment insurance reform, a bill providing for the conversion of seasonal workers' contribution to the economy will have to be tabled. Seasonal workers must be able to find work during the winter. The government has increased the number of weeks required to qualify for benefits while reducing the benefit period. If only the negative aspects of the UI reform make it, we are headed for a major social crisis. I urge the federal government to find solutions and listen to those organizations that make suggestions.

In my riding, there is a coalition of forest management companies. They are developing a plan, not to artificially create employment or to pay seasonal workers to do nothing, but to provide them with an extra three or four weeks of work, either in the spring or in the fall, through solutions involving forestry, processing forestry products and developing new products in order to achieve interesting results. This is my heartfelt cry to the government in this respect.

We have fought long and hard against employment insurance reform. If the government wants to send a clear message to the regions, where there are many seasonal workers, telling them that there is not only bad news in this reform, time is running out. Act

quickly, this is your last chance. The people in my riding will judge you by your actions.

• (1210)

In reply to the speech from the throne, I think we can say, and I will conclude on this, the federal government has shown a blatant lack of leadership in terms of reducing the deficit for instance, by failing to cut back where it should have. In the area of employment, the proposed solutions are not the right ones and, on the constitutional issue, Quebec is being ignored and, to some extent, insulted. If the federal government's attitude does not change, the best solution will be to go our own way, because Quebecers are very patient.

Twice already they asked Canada to change course and come up with proposals and twice Canada declined. The third time will be the right one. The Canadian economy will be completely reorganized and the Canadian territory will be divided in two countries, so that Quebecers can finally make decisions on what is important to them and for their future.

[English]

**Mr. Jim Silye (Calgary Centre, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to compliment the hon. member from the Bloc for a very constructive critique of the government's throne speech. I would like to dwell on one item that was in that throne speech which is of particular importance to his party and his party's objectives.

There was a vague promise made by the Prime Minister months ago when the speech was given and I cannot remember the exact details, that all Canadians would have a say in the next referendum on separation. It is an issue that is very important and I would like to have the member enlighten me and clarify a few things because I am confused about two or three things that happened in the last referendum.

The hon. member indicated in his speech that 49.5 per cent of Quebecers voted yes—it was very close—and that should send a signal to Ottawa. I agree with him. The government is not listening. It is not listening to westerners or to Quebecers and I agree.

I disagree on what the solution is. I do not think it is separation. I am concerned about that. I would like to see Quebec stay in Canada. I would like to see Quebecers and the Bloc Quebecois argue for Quebec in the best interests of Quebec like an opposition party can using those tools to help it.

I found the question in the last referendum to be ambiguous and convoluted. It was not a simple, straight, direct question of the citizens of the province of Quebec. I can verify that with the surveys, the information that came to me from the people who write stories in *Le Devoir*, which said that 39 per cent, or a high percentage of Quebecers did not really understand what they were

voting on. They thought Quebec could separate and still stay in Canada and have some sort of economic association.

I do not know why there has to be another referendum. Quebecers have voted twice on this issue and twice Quebecers have said to stay in Canada. Should the people of Quebec want another referendum and the member does get another referendum, would he agree that a straight, simple, direct question would be better and clearer for everybody? There would be fewer arguments, fewer flare ups. The question would be in French and English along the lines of: Do you want to separate from Canada, yes or no?

If the answer to that simple and direct question were to be yes—which I hope it would not be—would the member explain to me what the plan is of the Bloc Québécois? How and when does it plan to negotiate the separation agreement and terms? If there is no mechanism in place, which there is not now and it is not legal now as nothing in the Constitution allows for a province to secede, when do the negotiations start? Who does the negotiations? How does the Bloc Québécois propose to settle issues, for example the size of the debt, the type of currency, access for Canadians through the province to the east coast. Issues such as those are extremely important.

Those are the questions I would like to be enlightened upon by the hon. member.

• (1215)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Crête:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the Reform member for his question. I find it very significant that this question was asked by a member of the Reform Party. In fact, the Liberals are not asking questions this morning. I wonder what is happening; they seem to be ashamed of the throne speech.

It is the kind of question Canadians should ask themselves. Such questions must be raised outside Quebec so we can search for a solution and decide how the matter should be settled.

They are asking if Canadians will have a role to play in Quebec's next referendum. I myself think Canadians have a role to play now. If you want to show the people of Quebec that this country has a future, it is up to you. It is up to the Canadians to put their proposals on the table. But without any proposals, we cannot give you any answers, or even make suggestions. There is no leadership in this government. No one has made any significant proposal. What is clearer and more shocking to Quebecers is that this government's reforms are all superficial.

Back in October 1995, things were heating up as minor proposals were being made left and right. One month later, they started to forget. And then last month, the Prime Minister repeated what he

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was saying in the fall of 1993: that Canada's problem is an economic one; that once the economy recovers, Quebecers will understand that Canada is the greatest country in the world and they will stay.

Even if Quebec and Canada's economic situation were the best in the world, the fact is that a process is taking place in Quebec. A people is moving forward. A people is slowly learning. The numbers went from 40 per cent in 1980 to 49.4 per cent last year, and if the federal government does not meet their expectations, this people will choose to become a sovereign state.

It will do so following a question whose wording will have been decided by Quebec's National Assembly, the only parliament in which Quebecers form a majority. This view is shared not only by the current premier, Mr. Bouchard, but also by the leader of the opposition, Daniel Johnson, and by the leader of Action démocratique, Mario Dumont.

All Quebecers agree as regards the question. We are mature people. We do not live in a banana republic. We put a question twice. The first time, in 1980, we asked Quebecers for a mandate to negotiate. Forty per cent of the voters were prepared to merely let us negotiate. Last year, 49 per cent of them wanted us to build a country and to offer partnership to the rest of Canada. This is a very significant progress, because had we asked the same question last year as we did in 1980, the result may have been 55 or 60 per cent. This is an assumption, but one that could well reflect reality. In any case, Quebecers are making progress and sending a clear message to the current Liberal government.

So, the question will be decided by the elected members of the Quebec Parliament. Until then, Canadians should tell us what they want. They have time to make proposals to us.

The Canadian confederation is not unchanging. Since francophones and anglophones have been present in North America, we have had three or four different forms of government: Upper and Lower Canada, the Canadian Union and the Confederation. We must find formulae that are right for this economic entity. With the new rules of the game, such as the free trade agreement, this is very obvious.

When I travelled through western Canada with the transport committee, this was brought home to me very strongly. Now, all trade runs in a North-South direction. Everyone is asking us for railway lines and highways that go south. This will bring about a fundamental transformation of Canada, independently of the options offered by politicians. This is therefore something that must be looked at. Quebecers and Canadians must behave like mature adults and tell one another that, in future, they wish to function in a different manner, work differently together.

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Therefore the question "Are we going to separate or not?" does not strike me as the right question to ask. The question Quebecers should be asked should be: "Is there a formula that you would like to see, because the present one does not suit you?" Basically, what they have always wanted is a sovereign state, with all decision-making powers in Quebec.

It must be recalled that what Quebecers agreed to in 1867 was cultural and educational security, but we continued to grow and mature and now we are prepared to take over all responsibilities. Since I have been transport critic, I realize just how much the fact that Quebecers do not have jurisdiction over transportation has created major problems for them. Not because Canadians systematically have it in for Quebec, but because decisions have been taken that favoured east-west development rather than north-south development, for example, which was devastating for Quebec's economy.

• (1220)

This is where it starts to get interesting again. Our challenge, on the eve of the twenty-first century, whatever form Canada takes, will be to develop this north-south link, but we must adapt our political institutions to this new reality.

I will conclude by saying that our greatest criticism of the present Liberal government is that it lacks the basic leadership to resolve the problems of the year 2000. Sorting out this year's problems is not too bad, but a government's responsibility extends further. It must also have a vision of the future, and this is where the Liberals do not make the grade.

**Mr. Eugène Bellemare (Carleton—Gloucester, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate this opportunity to say a few words on the government's throne speech, which I find most appropriate at this time.

When the Liberal Party formed the government in 1993, the country was, in my opinion, headed toward disaster. We were dreadfully in debt. Before our time, the whole idea had been to spend, spend, spend. The mortgage on the country, in other words the national debt, was increasing madly. Every year we had a deficit which was getting up near \$50 billion.

Suddenly, in 1993, the new Liberal government was faced with a situation calling for an economic program that held out some hope for Canadians, some hope for young people, some hope for their future and for the future of Canadian workers, and in particular some reassurance for seniors about government programs.

Yes, the government did want to make cuts.

[*English*]

The bond market had a very negative outlook for Canada in 1993. The interest rates were going up and one wondered if the international bond markets would keep on giving us a triple A

rating. We were near collapse, going in the other direction, and not even getting requests for the purchase of bonds.

A program had to be instituted to put our house in order. That is exactly what has happened. The deficit has kept going down, down, down.

The government does not create jobs. It did that in the past and it is only short term when it occurs. What we have to do is establish a climate for jobs and that climate has to be the proper economic climate.

Our program was disciplined in cutting some programs. We are downsizing government, not shutting down government. That is the difference between us and some members of the opposition. We do not want to shut down government.

We have to stop giving to everyone who thinks that all they have to do is write to the government requesting a grant. We have to do this in a reasonable fashion.

This morning the interest rates decreased again. We have not seen interest rates like these in 40 years. People can now borrow to buy a home or to invest in some other fashion. That will create jobs. That is good. People can now spend money. It is affordable to borrow money in order to invest it. It is not to borrow money to have fun, to be wasteful. It is for investment, for example, in a home. Equity will build in that home and when it is sold in the future the owner will be able to live on that equity or they will be able to leave it to their children. We have to think of leaving something to our children.

• (1225)

We had to downsize government. Government programs had to be cut. I had some concerns about that because my constituency is comprised of many public servants and people who have contracts with the federal government. As vice-chair of the government operations committee I was very diligent in ensuring there would be no abuse on anyone's part.

The program review was to cut programs in an effort to downsize the federal government. There was a question of a lump sum of money that was to be cut. Obviously some jobs had to be annihilated. We had to let go and make way for a better system. We had to improve the way in which we were working. This meant we had to abandon those activities that did not need to keep going.

We privatized in areas where the private sector could do better. For example, we privatized many activities that were once under Transport Canada. We developed Nav Canada and a great number of public servants who once worked for Transport Canada were transferred to this new private sector organization.

The media interpretation was that 45,000 jobs would be lost. I did not appreciate the fact that 45,000 employees would be laid off. Lately one newspaper reported that with the new calculations the

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number could be more like 55,000. Obviously this has a very negative impact on the community. This made people in the national capital region business community very insecure and the economy slowed down quite a bit.

However, in the downsizing process the government made sure it did not maltreat its employees. We had programs like early retirement. The early retirement program was oversubscribed to. Many public servants, those who were getting close to retirement age, thought this was a wonderful opportunity to retire.

Others accepted the early departure incentive. They were mostly public servants, managers or middle managers who were interested in going into private business. They are now the people in the national capital region who are working for the government, doing some projects, working on contracts. They are now the private contractors in the region.

We have saved a great deal of money but I do have concerns. I want to make sure the government does not save money by downsizing on the one hand while on the other hand increasing by a phenomenal amount the money spent on contracting out. This is something I am watching for very diligently at the committee on government operations.

In September 1995 the unemployment rate in the national capital region was 10.1 per cent. That percentage has now gone down to 7.4 per cent, an improvement. People in the national capital region are starting to feel secure again.

[*Translation*]

They are at ease, can see that there is some future, and the Canadian government decided that the National Capital Region would not be a "one horse town", that it would have a mixture of private industry and public industry.

As well, organizations such as Systemhouse have sprung up, where former public servants have started up in high tech, and now the National Capital Region has a burgeoning high tech industry.

The National Capital Region has, in fact, now become the major North American centre for high technology.

• (1230)

[*English*]

There is a balance between the private sector and the public sector now. I am happy to report that the public service is improving constantly in its effectiveness and efficiency. I am asking the government to make sure, though, that there is a renewal, that there is an opportunity for the young to be able to enter our reputable public service.

We have to make sure that there is an entry situation where young graduates can come to work with the federal government

and, if not the federal government, work on contracts for the federal government. That is very essential. I appreciate the opportunity to address the House on the question of the throne speech.

**Mr. Maurizio Bevilacqua (York North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I paid attention to the hon. member's speech. I can vouch for the excellent representation he gives to the people of Gloucester. He has been an excellent representative.

I would like to give him an opportunity. In the nation's capital, in the House of Commons, we often speak of billion dollar budgets. We speak about deficits in a very macro way.

We speak of the lowering of the deficit, the fact that we have not increased personal income tax, the fact that the crime rate has declined, as have interest rates. I would like the hon. member to give us a feel of what has happened in his community as a result of the policy directions that this government has undertaken in the areas I cited.

**Mr. Bellemare:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member from Toronto for his kind words.

In my riding, business is doing well. The private sector is getting contracts. There is a movement in high technology in my community. This afternoon, I will go to the opening of AMITA, a high technology group of about 50 employees that are starting a business in my community.

Almost every second week, a new business is starting, always in high tech. Because of globalization, we have to do things very differently. It is time for high technology.

We are very lucky that the national capital region a few years ago started in high tech. Now we are becoming the high tech capital above the American border. There is high tech in the United States and the other place is right here in the national capital region.

Private industry is developing. Both universities and the two colleges are producing specialists in high tech. Jobs are being developed to the point where, at this moment, we are told that thousands of jobs are available in high tech in the national capital region that have not been filled yet.

The universities and colleges are trying to produce as quickly as possible graduates to fill these jobs. This is a very big plus for our community. Things are going better and better all the time.

People feel secure. People feel a sense of hope. People feel that there is growth. By gosh, the national capital region is a heck of a nice place to grow and to have a family.

**Mr. Jim Silye (Calgary Centre, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to comment on the speech of the hon. member where he talked about the advantages of lower interest rates. There is no question that low interest rates mean significant savings for consumers and businesses. It puts more money into the marketplace.

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• (1235)

However, to only zero in on that aspect and to only point out its benefits, is wrong. That is only one sector of the population, only the borrowers of the nation. It is only people who can borrow money, qualify for loans or who already have loans in place. It is not all Canadians. It is not all good news for all Canadians. It is good news for those who have debts. It is also good news for this government because it is lowering the cost of its huge debt which does help all Canadians.

However, because it only benefits the borrowers, what message is the government giving to those who do not have loans and who do not borrow? What are in the policies of the Liberal Party for the pensioners who have had been reduced and have lost their senior age exemption? What about the students who do not have loans and cannot borrow money? What is the government—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Milliken):** Order. The hon. member has asked a question. I said it had to be very brief. This is five minutes questions and comments. Five are gone. I call on the hon. member for Carleton—Gloucester for a very short reply.

**Mr. Bellemare:** Mr. Speaker, what we are hearing is the point of view of the Reform Party, a party that wants to shut down government and government operations altogether. It does not care about people who want to invest. In order to invest they need to borrow money. They have to roll money around. For these same people for whom Reformers say they want to protect the interest rates, they seem to suggest that the interest rate should go high.

The Reform members are looking at their buddies who have lots of money and they do not care about anybody else. Perhaps on Sunday morning they give a donation to the odd person. They only care about people with money. They do not care about promoting the economy and those who want it developed.

**Mr. Tony Valeri (Lincoln, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to have the opportunity to speak this afternoon on the throne speech, a speech which reflects the real needs and concerns of Canadians.

The Liberal government's jobs and growth agenda has provided Canadians with renewed hope for the future and its agenda is focused on creating opportunity for Canadians, through a fiscal climate which encourages investment, through ensuring that our youth have the tools they require in order to fully contribute to Canada's growth and competitiveness and through strengthening our small businesses, a primary source for job creation and innovation.

Today we are faced with a markedly different fiscal situation than the one we faced when we took office. Interest rates are at the lowest point in 38 years and that means Canadians have new opportunities for investment and growth. All Canadians benefit

from lower interest rates; from home owners to small businesses in my riding of Lincoln.

Inflationary rates are also at 38-year lows. Lower inflationary rates mean that Canadians can operate in a stable economic environment. They can more confidently plan for their futures.

Nowhere has the government's success in creating a stronger fiscal environment been more evident than in its efforts to reduce the huge deficit inherited when we took office. Indeed, getting the government finances under control has been the most effective way of getting interest rates down.

After program review and rationalization, we have brought government spending under control. Today, we have not only projected that the deficit target of 3 per cent of GDP will be met but this target will be surpassed and in 1998-99 the deficit target of about 1 per cent of GDP will be met.

Clearly the approach to restoring fiscal health has been measured, deliberate and responsible. It has involved carefully reducing spending, restructuring government and strengthening the economy. This approach continues to reflect the desire of Canadians to have their government develop a more sophisticated approach to deficit reduction. It has not imposed greater costs on the greater taxpayer by raising their personal income taxes. Nor has the approach been a slash and burn attempt to get government spending under control.

Borrowing on the backs of our children and grandchildren will soon be in the past. Speaking of our youth, they have been identified as being a vital resource in the continuing effort to stay competitive. Today many young people remain unemployed. Our youth are worried that the future will not hold jobs for them. Employers are saying that there are jobs but that they are having difficulty in finding the skilled labour they need in order to grow and compete. Experts are telling us that the pursuit of education is still important to success in the job market. Far sighted Canadians everywhere argue that the country cannot afford to squander the talents and creativity of our youth. I know that all government members are aware of these concerns and are actively seeking solutions. Clearly, young people need more help in making the transition into the working world. They need more help in getting that crucial first job.

• (1240)

The government has doubled its summer employment programs. It has also made a commitment to work with the provinces and with the private sector. This type of co-operation is being encouraged at all levels. Canadians want to know that all their elected officials are working together, no matter what jurisdiction they represent.

In this process, partnerships are essential. Many Canadians have expressed that only partnerships can solve the short and long term challenges of youth unemployment. More needs to be done for our



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youth and they can be assured that progress will be made because on this side of the House it has been made a priority.

Let me also address the role of small businesses in our economy and in our country. Small businesses are the backbone of the economic community of my riding of Lincoln. This fact is not unusual given that the small business sector is very important to the entire Canadian economy. Indeed, hope for our youth and for the future competitiveness of our country rests with a strong small business sector. Small businesses, including the self-employed, now account for almost two-thirds of all private sector employment and approximately 60 per cent of Canada's economic output.

As a small business owner, I know that the entrepreneurial spirit that drives the small and medium sized business sector needs to be encouraged and fostered because our economic well-being depends on it.

What is the small business community saying? It is saying that access to capital in the start-up and expansion phase is still very important. The banks have done some work in this area and they can point to areas of success where they have increased their access for small business. But the demand is still there.

Small businesses are asking for higher risk debt capital. It is a paradox that there are a number of small businesses in the community which require more funds for start up or for expansion, yet do not have the collateral to support the actual capital requirements. At the same time they have good export ideas. If the capital was available they would be able to expand their business and create employment, adding to the GDP of the country. We need more of what I will call high risk debt capital. We would look at the credit rating of a particular small business person and based on that rating the banks would provide the required capital.

As a government we need to continue to fight and to work toward eliminating the regulatory barriers and the paper burdens. We have made some progress in that area. It is still a concern of small business and the government will continue to work toward the elimination of regulatory barriers and paper burden.

As I mentioned earlier with respect to our youth, there is a need to access skilled workers. There is still a mismatch out there. The small business community requires skilled individuals. It has positions to fill and is crying out, telling us that Canada does not have the skilled workers to fill those jobs. We need to address that, in partnership with the provinces, with the educational and post-secondary institutions. Those are the partnerships that need to be forged to deal with the question of providing skilled workers.

There is also a call from the small business community for a reduction in payroll taxes, for some help in that area because they claim they will be able to create employment if payroll taxes are

reduced. There has also been a cry for some direct incentives to hire new employees and for some type of program that would help the micro businesses that may need some assistance and some type of relief. This would allow them to hire the one or two people they need in order to continue to grow, expand and contribute to the GDP of this country, to their local communities and to their local economies.

• (1245)

Those are a number of the issues and concerns brought forward by the small business community not only in my community but I am sure right across the country. This government will continue to work hand in hand with the private sector, with representatives of the small business sector to meet the needs of the small business community.

This government believes that the small business community is the engine and the backbone of the economy. We look to the small business community to assist Canada, to assist this government and to assist all Canadians in working, in being competitive, in being efficient and creating those employment opportunities and jobs. This government will continue to improve the climate for small businesses and certainly will allow them to continue to compete globally. This particular sector of our economy is crucially important.

In terms of what this government has recently done to assist in access to capital for the small business community, the Canada community investment program was announced some weeks ago. Communities from across the country are now participating in pilot projects. We in the Lincoln area were very fortunate to have had the opportunity to partner with the Hamilton, Brantford, Burlington, Haldimand—Norfolk area, along with the Six Nations in submitting an application for the Canada community investment program.

The government will go forward to provide infrastructure dollars to assist local communities in coming together to provide that increased access to capital for small business. Those in small business are the employers and they are the medium size and multinational companies of the future.

**Mr. Harold Culbert (Carleton—Charlotte, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I listened with great interest to my hon. colleague's excellent presentation. I note his tremendous interest and enthusiasm for small business and industry in his riding, but more so right across this country of ours.

Having had the opportunity to speak with many of the small business people in my constituency, they are telling me as their member of Parliament to stay the course and to encourage the Minister of Finance to stay the course, to continue to bring our financial house in order, to continue with those low interest rates,

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to continue with a low inflation under control. That is what complements small business and the jobs that will go with it.

My question is based on the projections many economists and the OECD are making that among the G-7 nations, in 1997 Canada will actually exceed all of them in economic advancement and growth. Perhaps the hon. member for Lincoln would like to comment on this and on all the actions that have been taken, but is it enough? Are there other things we should be doing to encourage small business knowing that indeed those in small business are the ones that will produce additional jobs in this country?

**Mr. Valeri:** Mr. Speaker, certainly small businesses in the constituency of Lincoln and in speaking with small businesses across the country, they want us to stay the course. They want us to continue to fight the deficit, move to a zero deficit and continue to maintain those low interest rates and the low inflationary course we are on. Certainly they are very much in support of the government's macro approach to our economy.

• (1250)

As mentioned by the hon. member, Canada will lead the G-7 in terms of economic growth in the coming years. In fact, yesterday in Toronto the Bank of Canada indicated that it expects in 1997 there will be growth in our economy because of the approach which has been taken, because of low interest rates and because of low inflationary measures.

What else needs to be done? Certainly we need to focus on the continued access to capital that small businesses need. We need to continue to focus on providing small businesses with the necessary skills and manpower which they need in order to continue to compete.

In order for small businesses to compete globally we need to assist them with the tools to export. We need to get small business into the export market in a much bigger way. This country does not have as many small businesses exporting as it should have. We will work to ensure that the small business sector has the tools which are required to penetrate those markets. We are doing some of that by using the team Canada approach. There is also information which we need to provide to the small business sector. We need to identify global markets for the small business sector. We have to do more of that at the micro level.

Those are a couple of things we need to do in support of the macro approach. We also need to take micro approaches for the small business sector.

**Mr. Jake E. Hoepfner (Lisgar—Marquette, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I listened with great interest to the comments of the hon. member.

The previous Liberal government tried to control inflation with 24 per cent interest rates. That now seems to have been the wrong approach. Has the Prime Minister drastically changed his definition of what is right and what is wrong?

I heard this morning that our gross domestic product has only increased by 1.1 per cent in the last year. With the low interest rates, how can he make the comment that the government is on the right track? To me it seems that the gross domestic product has to increase by more than 1.1 per cent.

**Mr. Valeri:** Mr. Speaker, what the hon. member fails to understand is that the approach we have taken and the reason interest rates and inflation rates are low today is that we looked at government structure, we looked at government spending, we went through the program review, we went through the restructuring of government and we reduced spending in government. We have said that we cannot be all things to all people. We have taken a targeted approach with respect to what government can do and does best. In doing so we have put in place the structural changes which have brought the lower interest rates and the lower inflation rates.

When this approach was being taken by the government a number of years ago, members opposite cried out and said that it would never work, that we needed to cut, slash and burn. That is their approach: Do it tomorrow; do it soon. They said that if we continued on the same track we would hit the wall.

We did not hit the wall. Interest rates are low. Inflation is low. We are being heralded around the world as one country which has taken the direct approach and ensured that our economic fundamentals are in place. We will continue to prosper.

**Mr. Cliff Breitzkreuz (Yellowhead, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Kootenay East.

I am pleased to rise in the House to speak on the speech from the throne, even though it has been nine months since the throne speech was first read. Instead of calling it the speech from the throne, maybe we should call it the old speech. We are here today talking about an old speech, with an old vision and old tired ideas that have not worked in the past and certainly will not work in the future. Ideas such as distinct society for Quebec. That was clearly and decisively rejected by Canadians across the country in the Charlottetown accord.

• (1255)

In the throne speech the government mentioned changing the law and making amendments to the Criminal Code. It seems that all we really got was some tinkering and not the major changes people talked about. All we got was some pretty thin soup. Canadians are asking, in fact they are demanding that government get tough on crime. For example, did we get from this government a victims bill

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of rights? No we did not. Not until my colleague from Fraser Valley West introduced his private member's bill.

Our criminal justice system is in a state of disarray. It is out of touch. It is insensitive to the victims and their families. It is bureaucratic and moves slowly. We are all familiar with the phrase "justice delayed is justice denied". I have a fistful of examples from right across the country of how inefficient and soft our criminal justice system is on criminals.

I would like to zero in on one example from my riding of Yellowhead of how our criminal justice system works. It is with regard to the experiences of Judy and Don Thwaites who live in the town of Whitecourt, Alberta. It is a story I would rather not tell but it is very explicit of how our system works, or conversely, how our system does not work; hence my relating this letter in the House.

Judy and Don had a couple of children, including daughter Norma who on January 25, 1981 was 17 years old. On the mentioned date Norma, who was doing post-secondary studies in Edmonton, was home for a visit. On the night of January 25 Norma was strangled to death. Then her lifeless body was raped by Larry Read. Norma was left in a vehicle and her frozen body was discovered by the RCMP the next morning. These are the basic facts of the case. It is not necessary for me to describe in greater detail the utterly despicable action against this young woman, a 17-year old teenager.

The letter from Mrs. Thwaites does not go into detail with respect to the murder of her daughter but rather she describes the system and her dealings with the system. Her letter is addressed to me dated March 29, 1995, re Larry Gene Read: "I am writing to you about the above person, Larry Read, and his actions against my daughter, Norma, on January 25, 1981. I would at this time like to give you a point by point account of what happened after Read was arrested for the murder of my daughter, Norma.

"Read was arrested within 24 hours of the murder of Norma in the city of Grand Prairie, Alberta approximately 170 miles northwest of Whitecourt or about 300 miles northwest of the city of Edmonton". A common thread in Judy's letter is that she has great praise for the RCMP: "We commend the RCMP for their prompt arrest and for the concern and caring they showed to our family not only at the time but in the years of agony and sorrow we suffered from that day until the present time. We were always showed consideration in every way through the arrest, preliminary hearing, two trials over a four year period and the sentencing. I would like the people concerned with the judicial system of Canada to know that about the RCMP.

"My husband and I were present at the preliminary hearing held in Whitecourt in May in 1981. It lasted approximately two and a half weeks. We were never called by any member of the court

system to brief us on what would take place at this hearing". My colleague's private member's bill remedies this complete omission of the victim.

• (1300)

"We are never called by any member of the court system to brief us on what would take place at this hearing. Once again, we were told what they were able to let us know, legally, by the RCMP". Then she asks a question: "How come there is no provision made for the victims' families to enable them to handle this agonizing and tortuous procedure? After the preliminary hearing it was determined that the courts had enough evidence to proceed to trial. The trial was held in Edmonton and started exactly one year to the date that Norma was murdered".

She goes on to say how despicable that was: "I realize that the courts are very full, but that is gross injustice to the family members. Once again, we were never informed of what would take place. Indeed, we were never informed about the trial date. This information was provided by the RCMP investigations officer who was our sole moral support through all of this affair".

Then she asks another question: "Why is there no provision by the government to provide a person who would let the family know what has taken place over the past year, while waiting for the trial, and a run down on what to expect? I can appreciate that they cannot take the time for every detail but they could surely write a letter to let the date of the trial be known a few weeks ahead". This is also a provision in the private member's bill, which is supposed to be in committee but I fear that is where it will rest for a long long time.

"During the trial we were never approached by anyone from the crown prosecutor's office to inform us what tactic it would be using to establish the guilt of the murderer. We did seek to speak to the crown prosecutor and he did reluctantly divulge a little of what he planned to use against the murderer. After the trial was over and the judge addressed the jury to let it know what constituted first degree, second degree and manslaughter he made a mistake in his address to the jury which confused it and resulted in the charge being reduced to second degree murder.

"Read was found guilty of second degree murder by the jury and it recommended that he be given the maximum sentence of 15 years in prison with no chance of early parole. The judge reduced this sentence to 13 years and we do not know why". The Thwaites do not know why.

"Because the judge confused the jury when he was explaining what constituted what for the three classifications, Read was given a hearing for a new trial and he won that. The second trial was held four years after the first trial. It started in January of 1985 and once again was a nightmare for us.

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“Some of the witnesses from the first trial could not be located. It was, to say the least, a catastrophe for us. The witnesses could no longer remember things that had happened five years before, and who could fault them?”

“Once again, we were informed by the RCMP that there was a new trial. Not once were we written or phoned by any justice system official to tell us that we had to go to hell and back again. This lack of consideration by the so-called system is about as cruel as it can get”.

She asks another question: “When are they going to quit mollicoddling these murderers? My daughter suffered amounts which I cannot bear to think about. Read has suffered nothing and is indeed protected from any pain by being placed in protective custody. When are they going to wake up to the fact that these psychopaths are of little value to society?”

“After the second trial was over and the jury found Read guilty of manslaughter, he was sentenced to seven years in prison with no chance of parole. That was a very hard blow to us, as you can well imagine. I was by this time in a terrible rage over the lack of justice by our so-called system which I had, like all other Canadians, believed in. I must admit I am a much wiser person now. There is no justice system in our country and people are beginning to conclude that what we have rather than a justice system in this country is a legal industry.

“Six years after Norma was murdered and raped by Larry Read, I finally found—my local doctor referred me because he could not help me to handle the rage I felt over all of the injustices I had suffered, and the terrible grief I felt over my girl not dying by an accident or by sickness, but because a human being had deliberately killed her for his own pleasure”.

• (1305)

A Reform government would put the rights of the victim ahead of the rights of the criminal.

Here is what she has to say about getting some assistance: “There is no one in Canada who anyone knew about at the time who had any training to help victims of this type of crime. I was indeed fortunate that I was referred to a Dr. Watson in Edmonton who was very knowledgeable about psychopaths. He told me that he was familiar with my case from discussions with his colleagues and by reading the newspaper accounts of the case. He was the first person to tell me that Read was a psychopath and that there was no cure whatsoever for these people.

“He also told me that he had never counselled anyone or had any training in counselling anyone who had suffered having a person murdered in their family. He did not know of anyone in Canada who had ever received any training, either gone to the U.S.A. or any place—”.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Milliken):** I hesitate to interrupt the hon. member but I have been trying to signal him. His time has expired. I believe he is splitting his 20 minute segment with the hon. member for Kootenay East.

Accordingly, there is now five minutes of questions or comments.

**Mr. Jake E. Hoepfner (Lisgar—Marquette, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, how did this lady respond to the help that she finally got from this medical person? Could the hon. member fill us in on that, please.

**Mr. Breitkreuz (Yellowhead):** Mr. Speaker, there just was not any help available. He could not help her.

The case does not end there. Read received a seven year sentence. He was let out after six years and only a few years later, after he was let out on early parole, which happens again and again across this country, he again committed a heinous act that is tough to describe in this House.

In British Columbia, where he ended up, he went into a house where a 9-year old girl and a 12-year old girl were sitting. He beat them up, dragged them into the basement and, with a knife, cut their vaginas to their stomachs. He did not kill them but he certainly inflicted something upon them that will follow them the rest of their lives.

At the present time there is no provision of any kind in this country to look after the victims of violence. Hence our colleague's private member's bill to deal with that. It covers the things I have related thus far.

**Mr. Jim Abbott (Kootenay East, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, it is very interesting as we are undertaking the continuation of this throne speech to take a look at the number of things that have changed and the number of things that have not changed.

Clearly the things that have not changed have been on the Liberal side. One of the most interesting things last year, when Canada came within 50,000 votes of no longer being Canada, was the reaction of the Liberals to that situation.

There is an old saying that if it ain't broke, don't fix it, but in this case it is broken and we must fix it.

There are three heads on a very bad penny here, the Progressive Conservatives, the Liberals and the NDP. None of them have any new ideas. None of them are bringing any new information. None of them are taking any role of leadership to do things differently.

My colleague mentioned that the Prime Minister, in the three days before the vote, came up with the absolutely brilliant but totally discredited idea of distinct society. He did that and then brought it into the House of Commons. He forced it through the House of Commons. He also wanted to have a veto for Quebec.

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• (1310)

Not being able to do that, we now have a veto for five regions which fundamentally gives a total constriction of any ability to ever change our country and the way we govern ourselves. That is what the Prime Minister has done. One of his more imaginative ministers, the Minister of Canadian Heritage, the Deputy Prime Minister, wants to return to 1967 to rekindle the wonderful national spirit we had. She has come out with the fly a flag program which was originally, according to an official in her department, going to be costing between \$6 million and \$7 million.

As was reported in the *Globe and Mail*, suddenly they have turned around and said that it was going to be \$23 million. We then had the brilliant news the other day that it was going to be \$8 million less than that. All we know is that we have over 600,000 flags being distributed willy-nilly all over the country.

As a matter of fact, there is an article in *Le Devoir* today that indicates that 15 of these flags were sent to people who had no interest in having the Canadian flag. The writer of the article says: "Thank you very much, but I am going to put it in my bottom drawer". My office is being inundated by people who are either indicating they have received flags, do not want them or have sent them back. In fact, my office has been receiving these flags to return to the minister.

This is the old vision. This is the cheerleader we have for a heritage minister. What of a new vision, a new vision that the Reform Party has? I quote the leader of the Reform Party:

For the past few decades, Canada has been governed by an ideology which holds that an overpowering, overspending central government is the answer to every problem, including that of national unity. The Reform Party is not afraid to fundamentally rethink the way our government works. Through decentralization and a greater emphasis on local responsibility, we believe we have a realistic plan that will build a stronger, more united Canada. It will help us achieve our common objective of keeping Quebec in the federation.

Let us take a look at what happened in the lead-up to the last referendum. In 1995, of the people who were surveyed, this from the *Globe and Mail* dated October 30, 1995, 25 per cent of the people in Quebec still believe they could elect federal members of Parliament. Almost 30 per cent believed that they would be able to keep economic ties such as they have right now and over half believed they could keep their Canadian passports.

These things are not a given. They would have to be discussed and agreed to by all the people of Canada. There was no discussion about what was going to be happening should they determine that they were going to be voting in favour of separating from Canada. There was no discussion, no contingency plan and no explanation to the people of Quebec when they voted in favour separation what their vote would actually mean.

At that time, it must be noted, if we take a slice in time leading up to the referendum, the Reform Party was being vilified by all the old-line parties because this was a new way of thinking and they could not really get their mind around a new way of thinking. We were being vilified for saying: "Just a second, why are we not having an exposure to the people of Quebec as to what the facts are? Why are we not letting the people of Quebec know that this is not a free ride?"

We are being vilified because they think we are planning for their separation. No. I and my party are committed federalists who demand that this country stay together and we will do everything we can to keep this country together. However, it will be kept together by truth, by exposure of ideas and by straight, candid discussions.

In a new Canada that the Reform Party would see, we would see a reduction in the size of tax requirements of the federal government. Right now in our nation, people through an underground economy and all sorts of devious means are walking away from their tax obligations because they believe taxes are too high and they do not want to be a part of it.

• (1315)

Let me make it clear, particularly to anybody in the revenue department, that I am in no way condoning the actions of people who walk away from their tax obligations. I am simply reporting that there is a tax fatigue within the country and people are doing everything they can to get away from it. It is becoming a serious problem in the way in which we relate to each other.

We would refocus the federal government's powers on 10 areas of national importance. We would reform federal institutions to make them more democratically accountable and sensitive to regional interests. We would introduce a triple E Senate, one that would give a counterbalance to the House of Commons, which is after all at least something of a form of representation by population. Ontario and Quebec have two-thirds of the seats concentrated in this place. A triple E Senate, through its equal representation, would give regional compensation to the power of the House of Commons. We would decentralize other governmental powers to give all provinces the freedom and resources to develop as their citizens choose.

Quebec is not the only distinct society. When we look around the country, Quebec has the distinctiveness of its language, but truly, are the Acadians not as much a distinct society? Truly, are the people who arrived in northern Alberta from Europe in the early 1900s not a distinct society? What we are talking about here is the demand, and a very worthy demand on the part of people across Canada to have more say and to get out from under the stultifying

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umbrella of the federal government. That is the positive side and the direction in which we want to go.

On the other side of the coin we would also say that secession negotiations must respect the principles of democratic legitimacy, the rule of law and the interests of Canada. The right of Canadians within a seceding province to remain part of Canada and to petition Parliament for that purpose must be respected.

I quote a gentleman, Gilles St-Laurent from Quebec City, Quebec: "I believe the people of Quebec would like to have more control over their own affairs and less influence from Ottawa. And that is why I think that Reform's plan to give more powers to the provinces is one of the most likely to keep Quebec in the federation".

[Translation]

**Mrs. Francine Lalonde (Mercier, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his remarks, but does he agree that the recognition of Quebec as a distinct society was not requested by the Bloc Quebecois nor by the Government of Quebec. This was a promise made by the Prime Minister, who also promised to entrench the concept of distinct society in the Constitution, but has been unable to keep his promise.

Quebec is a people and a nation, not a province like any other. This is the basis for any discussion and, as far as we can see, only a referendum on sovereignty will provide the necessary basis for future discussions from people to people.

[English]

**Mr. Abbott:** Mr. Speaker, I disagree on one point and I fully agree on another.

When the member suggests that Quebec is a nation of people not like any other province, with respect I disagree. The reason I disagree is that undoubtedly there are a lot of people who come from families in Quebec whose ancestry has been in Quebec for a long time. Canada is made up of a society that to a greater or lesser extent is like that but of the 29 million to 30 million people in Canada about nine million people are recent immigrants. To suggest that the province is a nation because of there being a certain number of people who come from families who have been in that province for a long time, I cannot agree with the member.

• (1320)

However I do agree that neither the Bloc nor the Parti Quebecois are asking for distinct society. It is very clear that what is going on here is the Prime Minister is attempting to fulfil a promise that is hollow and which has absolutely no value.

If we want to deal in reality, Quebec is a distinct society in many of its characteristics, in many of the ways in which people relate to each other and certainly in their joie de vivre, their joy of life. It is that joy of life in Quebec which I think adds to Canada's culture in

a very wonderful way. Quebecers have a distinct society in that reality.

Here is the problem. The minute that we turn commonly used English words into law, those two words, distinct society, suddenly can become a club, a tool that can be used in ways we could never imagine. Because we put this into law in goodwill all of a sudden we might find that we are constrained.

For example if the CBC wanted to make cutbacks in programming, the CBC could be constrained. If distinct society was in the Constitution and was recognized legally, all of a sudden it could be argued that because the French programming was in support of distinct society and because that was constitutionalized, any cuts that were going to be made at the CBC could only be made in English services but not in French services in Quebec. I just cite that as one example.

The unintended consequences of the inclusion of the term distinct society in law is completely unknown. As a consequence it is a concept that should never ever be enshrined.

**Mr. John Richardson (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to participate in this debate and to outline and expand on the speech from the throne.

The Liberal Party is proud of its record over the past three years since it assumed its role as the government. Most of the commitments outlined in both the red book and in the first throne speech have been fulfilled or are in the process of being fulfilled.

The throne speech outlines our plan for action for the second half of the mandate. Yet it is not as much a new direction for the government to follow as it is an effort to build upon the accomplishments which we have achieved to date. In the first mandate the government laid the foundation for renewed prosperity. The throne speech contains the blocks on which we have continued to build. The speech from the throne concentrates on three main areas: security for Canadians; modernizing the federation; and jobs and growth. Without question each of these areas is of vital importance.

Security for Canadians addresses concerns which we all have about the future of our social programs. A secure safety net is of great importance to all citizens. When we ask Canadians what makes our country unique, they always point to the social safety net. Today programs such as medicare are part of the Canadian fabric and represent a fundamental value that Canadians cherish.

The Liberal Party understands the importance of the Canadian place in the future of these programs. It understands that for good reason it was the Liberal Party that brought these programs to life. As we all know, times have changed since their inception. As the throne speech rightly spells out, changes are necessary to ensure the continuing health of our social safety net. However, in the end

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our reformed social programs must still protect those most in need and we will make sure of that.

• (1325)

The second major thrust of the throne speech deals with national unity. The memory of last October's referendum remains strong in the minds of all Canadians. Canada must never again be placed in the position in which it found itself last October 30. However, the referendum results reflected a clear message. It was a message for change and this desire for change is shared in all parts of the country. The federal government agrees that fresh approaches are necessary and it will work with the provinces to ensure that the federation is modernized.

The government proposes to work with all its partners to explore new options. The Prime Minister has called on all Canadians to demonstrate openness and to be a part of these changes. The federal government has already made substantial changes over the past two years. It will continue to do everything necessary to modernize the Canadian federation further. In the end it is important to remember that what unites us as Canadians is far greater than what divides us. The values which we share are as relevant as ever.

While the referendum served to raise many eyebrows, the current trend toward nationalism is not a feature unique in our country. History has shown that many countries have successfully dealt with similar circumstances. While the tide of nationalism was high last October, the separatist threat will recede and the waters will calm once again.

Jobs and growth was the final theme of the throne speech. It is the area I would like to talk about in some detail.

Since the Liberal Party took office in November 1993, over 600,000 jobs have been created. The unemployment rate has declined. I can speak for my own riding where the unemployment rate was at 7 per cent or 8 per cent. Presently the riding which I represent has an unemployment rate of 4.7 per cent. I know it is not the same across the country but it shows that the trend is getting better with the downward spiral of unemployment figures.

The government is not about to sit back and rest on its laurels. More work needs to be done. That is why the speech from the throne targeted three main areas: youth, science and technology, and trade. Those are the key elements for the continued success of jobs and growth in the future.

It does not take a genius to realize that youth unemployment is far too high. While it has been said before, it simply cannot be overstated: The skills of our young people are Canada's greatest resource of the future. Young Canadians need more help to make

the transition into the working world and more help to get that crucial first job.

To address this problem, the federal government will work in conjunction with the provinces and the private sector to create new jobs and new opportunities for youth. The throne speech outlined plans to double the size of the federal programs aimed at creating summer jobs in the past summer as it will in the future. The government has also challenged the business community to create jobs for youth.

In partnership with the provinces, the private sector and young people themselves, we will work to create job opportunities for young Canadians. By working together, the youth unemployment problem can be tackled.

The second element of the jobs and growth theme outlined in the throne speech is science and technology. Canada has the distinction of being a leader in the field of innovative technology. In today's global marketplace, that means more jobs, sustainable jobs and quality jobs for Canadians. However, strong leadership is necessary to ensure that Canada remains a leader in this field.

To ensure ongoing success in the growth area, the government will continue to support development in aerospace technologies, environmental technologies and enabling technologies, such as biotechnology.

The government will honour its red book commitment to launch a Canadian technology network to support technology diffusion. Just recently the Minister of Industry made that announcement. We will see these new high technology features being set up on the information highway. They will reach into areas of Canada which have never been able to access the information highway. The government has worked to improve access to the information highway in northern and rural areas. By providing support and leadership in these areas Canada will continue to enjoy its competitive edge in the world's technology marketplace.

• (1330)

Another key element of the government's jobs and growth agenda is trade. In the last two years Canada's exports have soared. Month after month Statistics Canada has reported a substantial increase in our exports, but these good news stories have become commonplace in the business pages of our newspapers. If the figures are added up they reveal a true economic phenomenon.

In 1995 Canada's merchandise exports grew by over 20 per cent and its trade surplus by a dramatic 63 per cent over 1994. Adding to the good news is the fact that this rapid growth is diversified and is taking place in all major world markets. As a result of this robust expansion trade has become the single most important factor in creating jobs and growth in the past two years. We must now capitalize on our accomplishments and build on these successes. That is why the throne speech detailed a continuation of Team

*The Address*

Canada missions which to date have brought home more than \$20 billion in new deals and as recent as yesterday this figure is continuing to climb in the billions.

As long as there are untapped markets Canada must be ever vigilant to seek new buyers for their goods and services. The government will also announce new measures to support export development in financing.

Finally, the government will continue to work to expand the NAFTA and work toward more world trade liberalization. More markets mean more sales and that means more jobs for Canadians. By taking a proactive role in creating markets for our goods, assisting growth sectors in the science and technology field and giving our youth the skills necessary to succeed we are ensuring the continued prosperity of our nation. That is what the speech from the throne is all about, continued prosperity. Each element of the throne speech deals with prosperity, and the success of each hinges on the others.

A modern and united Canada promotes stability. Stability enhances our potential for more jobs and growth. This continued prosperity allows Canadians to keep enjoying their cherished social programs and Canada as the envy of the world. By providing sound leadership and good government, as outlined in the throne speech, the Liberal Party is charting the course toward prosperity as we head into the 21st century.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Maurice Godin (Châteauguay, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I listened to the speech given by my colleague. I can assure you I do not fully share his satisfaction with the throne speech. If I may, I would like to recap in my own words the points he made and show the other side of the coin.

He spoke about safety, about modernizing the Constitution, about employment. He talked about social security in Canada, but he forgot to tell us whether social programs will remain unchanged despite all the federal cuts in transfer payments to the provinces.

On the subject of modernizing the Constitution, he spoke about national unity. He told us that, since the referendum, the government understands the desire for change. Not only has the government failed to table anything to meet Quebecers' demands, but the Prime Minister refuses to talk about the Constitution. He recently said he had done enough but, in our eyes, all he did was table a meaningless motion on distinct society.

As for employment, the government's record is not much better. They claim to have created 600,000 jobs, but the hon. member forgot to tell us that 800,000 have since been lost. And the unemployment rate proves it, averaging between 9.4 and 10 per cent.

• (1335)

The hon. member admits that many young people are unemployed but that they will create summer jobs. In fact, summer jobs simply enable young people to earn the money they need to pursue their studies. It is mainly young graduates who are unemployed. That is where the future starts for young people. There is absolutely nothing for them in this.

We are told exports have gone up. Many of these exports are natural resources. In fact, it is the value added to natural resources that will create jobs for young people. The hon. member speaks about prosperity but forgets to mention the debt. What is slowing the economy down? Why is our unemployment rate so high? Simply because of the debt. I would like the hon. member to talk about the debt and how it could be reduced in the near future.

[*English*]

**Mr. Richardson:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member makes a number of points, but on two of them I would like to send him back to a couple of classes for his addition and subtraction. Certainly when one comes from double digits in unemployment down to single digits there is a significant increase in employment in the country.

One of the things that is causing the lack of direct input into some sections of our country is the feeling of instability. The destabilizing effect of referendums takes its toll on certain areas of the country. I believe those who are part of that destabilizing effect have to take some of the blame for that.

The member mentions some other features. When one looks at our export markets and what we are exporting, take a very good look and see how much of that really is value added. I think the member will be very surprised to see how much of that component is truly value added. In his own province in particular, some of the things that have been going out of the province are valued added products that are sold well on the foreign markets, such as the aerospace industry, the making of engines for the aerospace industry.

There are many good stories about Canada. It is a slow spin-out. As recently as the past two weeks the Bank of Canada and other major banks have had a surge of money coming into Canada to invest and there is also the driving up of our dollar. These are all good signs that the Canadian economy has turned the corner. It is predicted that we will lead the G-7 in the next year in growth.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Francine Lalonde (Mercier, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, it is so interesting today, on November 7, to be discussing the throne speech delivered on February 27, 1996. While we suspected that what the government was announcing was mostly window dressing, we are now certain of that.



*The Address*

Let me briefly remind you that the throne speech delivered by the governor general, on behalf of the government, had three major themes: a strong economy, the security of Canadians, and a modern and united country. One might say that it was wishful thinking on the part of the Prime Minister.

• (1340)

We were just told again how strong the economy is. A major problem in this country, and not only in Quebec, is that a very large number—in fact an increasing number—of citizens do not think the recession is over, do not think Canada is the best country in the world, because life for them has become harder and their hopes have been diminishing.

What about the security of Canadians and Quebecers? This government managed to reduce its deficit, but who paid, who is paying and who will continue to pay? It is those who could least afford to do so, and it will continue to be these people. We can never say it enough: had it not made substantial cuts to unemployment insurance and social transfers, the performance of this government would not be the same, because this is where it took most of the money used to reduce the deficit.

Let me also remind you that we had two successive UI reforms, and that the government was elected by promising “jobs, jobs, jobs”. But what did the government actually do? Its main initiative was to cut unemployment insurance and social transfers.

As for jobs, over 870,000 jobs would be needed to now have the equivalent of the number of people employed in 1990. A drop in the participation rate is a major reason for the lower unemployment rate. This is nothing to be proud of, since it not only means there are fewer people working, but there are also fewer people looking for work. These people did not all go back to school.

The result of these successive cuts to unemployment insurance is, and this bears pointing out, that in 2001 unemployment insurance benefits will drop by \$1.2 billion in Quebec alone. These are official figures from Employment and Immigration, which has now become Human Resources Development, and the way it looked to me yesterday will become the Social Union Department. This means that those who are unemployed, in regions where unemployment is high, are helping to reduce the deficit. The regions and the people least able are contributing the greatest share.

What about the Canada social transfer? I would remind viewers that for years now we have been saying that we have seen fewer concrete investments, fewer research and development investments and less routine spending by the federal government in Quebec. Since the Conservatives dared to give the CF-18 contract to Canadair, the only other investment we have seen, accompanied by much fanfare, was an \$87 million loan, which our colleagues beside us are still going on about.

• (1345)

They say we are irritated because we have more than our share of people on unemployment and welfare and what we want are concrete investments. But they cannot even say that any more because the more cuts we see to unemployment insurance and welfare, the less so-called interregional subsidization there is. This is true for Quebec and also for the Maritimes, and I have never been afraid to say so. The Maritimes voted largely Liberal. The first reaction was deep cuts, followed by more cuts.

If there are members here who think that people must not be helped out of dependence, I am certainly not one of them. But if dependency is going to be reduced, communities must have something concrete.

The Canada health and social transfer is replacing what for years had been a kind of redistribution among poor and rich provinces in order to provide minimum living standards in all regions. It does not give them all the same resources with regard to education, health or welfare. Since their inception, these subsidies have been steadily declining. However, since the 1995 announcement, they have dropped substantially: seven billion dollars over two years. Of this seven billion cut, Quebec is absorbing more than a quarter because it has more than its share of people on welfare.

The worst part about this so-called social union is that from now on whenever there is an increase in the number on the welfare roll, which is bound to happen, there will be no increase in financial assistance. The average citizen believes that the recession is not over and that another one is lurking on the horizon. It might not happen next year, but it will one day.

In spite of all the rosy forecasts that the Canadian economy is on the upswing, our growth rate is only 1 per cent. A one per cent growth rate is not very far from zero growth. We are bound to enter another recessionary period, maybe in two years, and more people will be on welfare again. Who will pay for the increased numbers on the welfare roll? Quebec will, because it will receive no special assistance, and the other poor provinces.

When we hear the federal government talk about social union and preserving the social safety net, and in the same breath, congratulating itself on the success of its deficit reduction program, we cannot help but feel extremely angry. In fact, in the current context, the cuts in the unemployment insurance and the Canada health and social transfer make life harder for the unemployed, who depend on government assistance. This is even more shocking and frustrating as these cuts caused directly by the Canada health and social transfer and indirectly by the cuts to unemployment insurance must be made by the provinces.

• (1350)

The cuts that are caused directly by the Canada health and social transfer, and indirectly by cuts to unemployment insurance, must be implemented by the Quebec government. Whether it is in the

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area of education, health or welfare, putting an end to these subsidies will have serious effects.

The third part of the throne speech speaks about a modern and united country, but since social conditions have seriously deteriorated and nothing has been done for the recognition of the people of Quebec, of the nation of Quebec, I feel the speech from the throne is, at best, an exercise in fantasy.

I know that what I am saying might seem outrageous, but if some members here think that the situation we have had to put up with in Quebec is not extremely outrageous, they should think again. Since January, since the Liberal caucus, instead of a government which would make a place, a real place for Quebec and not merely enshrine a phoney distinct society in the Constitution when it cannot even be enshrined at present, a distinct society which we do not want and which is irrelevant to us, what did we get? We had to put up with a series of hidden, open, direct and indirect threats.

The only purpose of plan B, which we could say is called plan B after the billy club or the baseball bat, is to frighten us, to try to convince Quebecers they should not seek to become sovereign. The intent is not to make them feel better, to make a place for them, to give them some dignity in this country, but rather to frighten them. We know that, throughout history, this tactic has never worked.

Recently, probably because there is an election coming, they came up with plan A—"A" as in "attract"—a plan with little or no substance really. What is it all about? About entrenching the concept of distinct society in the Constitution and, to use the new terminology, creating a Canadian social union.

The Minister of Human Resources Development spoke in generous terms in his speech yesterday, but did not include Quebec in any way. Like the initiative taken by Ontario at the Jasper conference, this shows that Canadians, Quebecers excluded, want to renew Canada. I think it is great that Canadians discuss between themselves how their country could be run better and how social policies are managed. But one thing is clear: there is nothing in there for Quebec. Not only is there nothing for Quebec, but the two movements that have been developing for years: a movement for Canada's renewal by the provinces and a movement, which is getting stronger and stronger, of Quebecers that recognize themselves and want to be recognized as a people and a nation. These two movements are going in opposite directions.

• (1355)

But every basis for recognition is there. It is all there, except for one thing: recognizing Quebec as a people and a nation, so that the Canadian provinces looking to reorganize their country to their liking—and this is both desirable and necessary—can do so without Quebec getting in the way, while Quebec gets reorganized

on its own terms, with full powers, without Canada getting in the way, and that both countries can share the same economic space as well as other aspects, if they so agree.

Therein lies the real future, beyond the speeches made here. The truth, even when hard to take, must help us understand each other. It must prevail and allow us to create conditions whereby all of us will work at what is essential and urgent, at what our young people want, whether in Canada or in Quebec.

We will soon no doubt hear another speech from the throne. How soon? I do not know. Certainly before the next election. One thing is certain though: we will keep a close eye, as you know, on what the government does about the needs of Quebecers. We will continue to say, not only for the good of Quebec but also, and we are convinced of that, for the good of Canada, that there is only one way to finally build a future that will allow us, in Canada and in Quebec, to respect and to help each other, and that is through Quebec's sovereignty.

**The Speaker:** Dear colleagues, as it is almost 2 p.m., the House will now proceed to statements by members.

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## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

### NATIONAL 4-H WEEK

**Mr. Lyle Vanclief (Prince Edward—Hastings, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this is National 4-H Week. As a former 4-H club member and leader, I want to again remind Canadians that our young people are one of this country's most important assets. Today's youth are tomorrow's farmers, business people, scientists and political leaders. But they can only reach their great potential if they have the opportunity to learn the skills they need as adults.

More than 42,000 young women and men are learning those essential skills by participating in 4-H clubs in rural communities across the country. As we celebrate National 4-H Week from November 4 to 10, we salute not only those young people but the 12,000 adult volunteers who are the backbone of 4-H.

"Learn to do by doing" has been the 4-H model for more than 80 years. Through 4-H activities, our rural youth are building skills such as leadership, independence, co-operation and responsibility.

As a member of the Canadian 4-H Council, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada is contributing to this effort. It will provide \$300,000 over three years in support of national and provincial 4-H activities so our youth will get the chance to try new things, learn new skills and make lifelong friends.

[Translation]

### INVESTMENT

**Mr. Nic Leblanc (Longueuil, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister and Liberal members keep saying that an end must be put to the political uncertainty created by separatist threats.

The reality is that they are entirely responsible for the political uncertainty, with their federalist threats, such as changing the rules of democracy to suit them, preventing Quebecers from deciding on their own future and encouraging the partition of Quebec in the event of sovereignty. Furthermore, political uncertainty exists only in the discourse of hard-core federalists.

For proof, we have this morning's announcement in the newspapers that Astra, a pharmaceutical company, has selected Montreal as the site for its first research centre outside Sweden. This project represents an investment of over \$300 million over ten years.

• (1400)

Fortunately, foreign investors do not allow themselves to be influenced by the dire warnings of federalists. They know good places to invest and both Quebec and Montreal are excellent choices. They have our thanks.

\* \* \*

[English]

### AGRICULTURE

**Mr. Dale Johnston (Wetaskiwin, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, like school yard bullies, the government likes to start fights with those it knows it can threaten and beat.

First it was the gun owners, ordinary citizens who will now have to pay to register their firearms or face criminal conviction for non-compliance.

Then the government, intent on its own version of crime control, turned its attention to grain farmers. A Manitoba farmer was sent to jail and about 150 others face charges for selling their grain in the United States.

Is it illegal for farmers to sell their crops? The courts said it was okay, but the agriculture minister, intent on protecting the wheat board's monopoly, secured an order in council to make it illegal.

This Liberal government will leave no stone unturned to stop farmers from getting a better price for their grain. Customs inspectors and RCMP officers have strict orders to apprehend these people. Meanwhile, the flow of contraband continues north and south across the 49th parallel.

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### NATIONAL DIABETES MONTH

**Mr. Robert D. Nault (Kenora—Rainy River, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as many members are aware, November is national diabetes month. We are all familiar with this disease and the impact it has on Canadians and their families. What many people are not aware of, though, is the alarming prevalence of diabetes in First Nations' communities.

A recent study of the Sioux Lookout zone population in my riding showed that the incidence of diabetes among aboriginal Canadians is far higher than the general population. Even more alarming is that over the five-year period there was a 45 per cent increase in diagnosed cases and that aboriginal people are affected at a much younger age than the general population.

Current efforts are proving inefficient to deal with the problem and the potential human and health care costs are staggering. In the light of this, I urge the Minister of Health and the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development to step up their efforts to combat diabetes in the aboriginal population.

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### GASOLINE PRICES

**Mr. John Cannis (Scarborough Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in the past I have made statements in the House pertaining to the gasoline and banking industries. Today again I wish to speak on the gasoline gouging that is presently going on at the pumps.

Many people are calling to express their disgust and dismay toward the gasoline companies and their unjustified and unacceptable increases.

Every time we confront the gasoline companies their rebuttal is: "Well, it is competition". I thought competition meant pricing the product downward to stay competitive. It would seem that with the gouging that is going on, the gasoline companies are indeed competing: competing to see which company can jack up the prices more.

I say get with it. Come into line with what is happening out there. Listen to what the people have to say for a change. The government has worked hard to bring interest rates down and have succeeded. They should do their share and bring the prices at the gas pumps down. The public is asking for it. The economy needs it. Just do it.

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### REMEMBRANCE DAY

**Mrs. Bonnie Hickey (St. John's East, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, each year on November 11 when the veterans march past the memorials across the country, it becomes more apparent that the events they

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have experienced by serving Canada are receding more and more into the past.

Our veterans are getting older and each year fewer are able to participate. Our veterans have much to teach the younger generation about the values that went into building this country and preserving democracy. We must encourage our veterans to tell their stories and to give our young people the occasion to listen.

As a step in the right direction, the Prime Minister has declared November 3 to 11 as veterans' week. I invite all Canadians, but especially the younger generation, to take time to listen to the stories of Canada's veterans of the first and second world wars and the Korean war. I hope that all Canadians will make an effort to record these stories on paper, video, audio tape and now the Internet so that they may not be lost to future generations.

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[Translation]

**RWANDA**

**Mr. Jean H. Leroux (Shefford, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the genocide that took place in Rwanda two years ago was one of the most tragic chapters in modern history. The International Court of Justice of The Hague is now putting together a multidisciplinary team whose mandate will be to hold an investigation and submit evidence against those responsible for the slaughter of thousands of Rwandans.

A team of 21 special investigators is set to depart shortly for Rwanda for a period of six months. Nine officers from the Montreal Urban Community police force have been selected for the team, including Denis Bergeron, a resident of Saint-Césaire in the beautiful riding of Shefford.

● (1405)

If there is to be lasting peace in this area of the world, justice must be done. I am therefore pleased to wish Mr. Bergeron and his colleagues all the best and good luck.

Such a tragedy must never happen again.

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[English]

**CANADIAN AIRLINES**

**Mr. Jim Silye (Calgary Centre, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, recent announcements that Canadian Airlines is having financial trouble should be of concern to all of us.

At a time when the Liberal job creation strategy has failed and unemployment is hovering close to the 10 per cent mark, we certainly do not want to see 16,000 airline jobs disappear.

Certain steps now need to be taken by Canadian Airlines. It is acting very responsibly in taking those steps. Once the steps have been taken we can then look at what other action is required.

A government bailout does not appear to be a viable solution. It has been done before and obviously did not provide a real remedy. What is needed this time is an effective plan that will work over the longer term.

The Reform Party is meeting with officials from Canadian, Air Canada and American Airlines to discuss possible solutions and to work toward protecting Canadian jobs, Canadian investment and the Canadian travelling public.

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**CANADIAN AIRLINES**

**Mr. Nelson Riis (Kamloops, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, if we listen carefully we can hear thousands of voices, primarily from western Canada, telling the federal government that it is now their turn.

We just heard that Canadian Airlines is in a very serious financial situation and 16,400 jobs are immediately at stake and thousands of related jobs are at risk. Many western and northern communities depend to a large extent on maintaining their connection with Canadian Airlines.

The National Transportation Act provides an opportunity for the Minister of Transport, giving him extraordinary powers to intervene to resolve the situation. Two or three suggestions would be to provide bridge financing for Canadian to allow it to restructure properly, involving all of those who are stakeholders in the airline.

May I suggest that with \$87 million going to help Bombardier, it is now time for \$70 million of bridge financing to help this western based airline.

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**REMEMBRANCE DAY**

**Mr. Ivan Grose (Oshawa, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this coming Monday at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, Canadians across the country will pause to remember the sacrifice of Canada's soldiers, sailors, airmen and merchant mariners who died for them in the cause of world peace.

While the deaths of our friends and family members are very real and personal to those of us who have experienced them first hand, to most Canadians alive today this is simply a matter of history.

I want to remind all Canadians, especially the young who are our future, of the sacrifices made on their behalf so that they might

enjoy the freedom that was a gift to them from Canadian patriots. We must all work to ensure that their gift to us is not forgotten. We must and we will remember them.

\* \* \*

#### REMEMBRANCE DAY

**Ms. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Remembrance Day is a solemn occasion when we recall the sacrifices of the many Canadians who fought for the cause of freedom.

This month *Legion* magazine pays special tribute to the contribution of Canada's servicewomen of World War II. In all three forces, nurses faced the same risks, hardships, burdens of command and front line service as other personnel. But in all three forces women also served in a variety of functions, both in Canada and overseas as enlisted personnel, NCOs and commissioned officers.

It was the Royal Canadian Air Force, however, that provided a stellar example of allowing both men and women to contribute fully to the war effort. Although women did not serve in combat, they fulfilled duties in over half of the 102 RCAF trades.

From 1942 until the end of the war more than 17,000 women served in the women's division of the RCAF, including some 600 officers.

During veterans week and on November 11, let us remember the significant contribution of the thousands of Canadian men and women who toiled and sacrificed in the name of freedom for all Canadians and humanity.

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#### SILVER CROSS MOTHER

**Ms. Roseanne Skoke (Central Nova, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Margaret Langille, a life-long resident of River John, Nova Scotia and a constituent of my riding of Central Nova, has been chosen to be this year's 1996 silver (memorial) cross mother by the Dominion Command of the Royal Canadian Legion.

As this year's silver cross mother, Mrs. Langille is privileged to represent all the mothers across Canada who have sacrificed their beloved sons in the war for our peace and freedom.

Mrs. Langille lost her only son Lawrence in World War II when he died during an assault in Falaise, France on August 16, 1944.

• (1410)

At 95 years of age, Mrs. Langille will make her first ever trip to Ottawa where she will take part in the national Remembrance Day ceremony.

I ask this hon. House to join with me in extending congratulations to Mrs. Langille for being chosen as this year's silver cross

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mother and a special thanks to our veterans for their sacrifices which have secured for us our current freedoms.

May God bless Mrs. Langille and all the mothers who have lost their sons in war.

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[*Translation*]

#### SEMAINE INTERCULTURELLE NATIONALE 1996

**Mr. Osvaldo Nunez (Bourassa, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, tomorrow, November 8, will mark the beginning of La Semaine interculturelle nationale in Quebec, around the theme "Gens d'ici, Québec 96: un avenir commun". This week will demonstrate the solidarity between Quebecers of all origins, and will foster understanding, dialogue and rapprochement.

The focus of this week will be what unifies all of the people of Quebec, what makes the people of Quebec open, democratic and respectful of the rights of everyone.

Hundreds of activities will be organized throughout Quebec, with a view to a greater understanding of cultural diversity, as they were last year.

Because this week contributes to strengthening the solidarity within our community, the Bloc Québécois members wish this event focussing on rapprochement unqualified success.

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[*English*]

#### SOMALIA

**Mr. Jim Hart (Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of the constituents of Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt to honour the Canadians who made the ultimate sacrifice serving our country.

Last year I was proud to attend the 50th anniversary of the end of the second world war in the Netherlands. I accompanied the veterans of the second world war. We experienced the tremendous affection of the Dutch people who were grateful for the efforts of our troops. They will never forget.

In contrast, members of the Canadian Armed Forces who served in Somali operated in a nightmare of violence, heat, disease and conflict. They secured and supported all relief operations, organized local police, rebuilt schools and medical clinics and negotiated ceasefires.

We urge the Liberal government to recognize the Canadian Armed Forces personnel who served in Somalia by announcing the awarding of the Somalia medal during veterans week.

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The government has already said it would issue a medal for Somalia. Canadians want the medal awarded now, lest the Liberals forget.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**THE CANADA LABOUR CODE**

**Mr. Bernard Patry (Pierrefonds—Dollard, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Bill C-66 tabled by the Minister of Labour guarantees the impartiality of federal labour legislation governing union-management relations, in order to ensure that they favour neither union nor management, but rather the process of collective bargaining.

Henceforth, in areas coming under federal jurisdiction, people working off the work site may take part in collective bargaining if they so desire. The employer will, moreover, not be allowed to use replacement workers in order to get rid of a union.

Thanks to the proposed amendments, any deadlock in negotiations will not have repercussions on the public to such an extent as to make them withdraw support of the collective bargaining process. As well, union and management representation on the Canadian Industrial Relations Board will increase the credibility and legitimacy of that board's decisions.

It is to the advantage of all Canadians to increase the efficiency of the collective bargaining process, not just for today, but for the coming century. This is the reason we have acted, and this is what the outcome of the amendments presented will be.

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**JACQUES PARIZEAU**

**Mr. Nick Discepola (Parliamentary Secretary to Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, last Monday, Jacques Parizeau indicated that his government had built a \$19 billion reserve to prepare for a victory of the yes side in the October 1995 referendum.

Why would the Quebec government set up an emergency fund that is equivalent to the Bank of Canada reserve if, as the Parti Quebecois and the Bloc Quebecois have been claiming, sovereignty is not a source of concern for the financial markets?

Why did separatists choose not to tell Quebecers that they were ready to play Russian roulette with their savings?

How can Lucien Bouchard claim that he was not informed of the building of this reserve since he was the one designated by Jacques Parizeau to prepare the negotiations with Canada in the event of a victory of the yes side?

All these questions deserve an answer, and I address them directly to the BQ member for Roberval.

\* \* \*

● (1415)

[English]

**TOP GUN COMPETITION**

**Mr. Jack Frazer (Saanich—Gulf Islands, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, last week the Canadian air force team from Canadian Forces Base Cold Lake, Alberta participated in a William Tell air to air combat competition in Florida with Captains Steve Nierlich, Ross Granley, Brian Murray and Dave Mercer as the air crew competitors.

Competing against the best from NATO and the United States our team emerged with Captain Steve Nierlich winning top gun honours.

Canada has done well in William Tell in the past but this is the first time in the history of the 42-year-old competition that a Canadian has been the top gun and the Canadian team has placed first overall.

Aeroplanes do not fly well nor do weapons hit their targets without excellent maintenance by the support crews. This win for Canada is a true example of a dedicated team effort. I am sure that all members of this House join me in congratulating these fine representatives of Canada on a job well done. You have brought great honour to Canada and we are proud of you.

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

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**PRESENCE IN GALLERY**

**The Speaker:** My colleagues, we have in our gallery today, as distinguished guests, the Canadian forces team which did us proud at a prestigious international air to air combat competition.

[English]

Canadians beat out all other teams to win top honours in the William Tell fighter pilot competition. Based in Cold Lake, Alberta, Canada's fighter force is a symbol of excellence in our armed forces, a reminder that Canadians can and will compete with the best in the world, and win.

The 58 team members are with us today. My colleagues, please welcome Canada's 58 top guns.

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

*Oral Questions***ORAL QUESTION PERIOD***[Translation]***AIR TRANSPORTATION**

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Leader of the Opposition, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, Canadian is facing insurmountable difficulties and calling, once again, for federal help.

In response, the Minister of Transport stated that the government would not get involved for the time being. The Liberal member for Vancouver Quadra now says the government must step in. The pressures are growing and might even pay off.

My question is for the Prime Minister. The government's policy has always been to let our air carriers play by market rules, which means allowing free competition with all the risks it entails. My question to the Prime Minister is this: Is government policy still the same and is he still ruling out any injection of public funds into the bottomless pit that is Canadian?

*[English]*

**Hon. David Anderson (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his question, but there is no change in the government's position in this regard.

We do not believe that putting money into a company that has not requested it, to deal with a problem that is essentially a restructuring problem to deal with long term deficits would not have any purpose whatsoever.

*[Translation]*

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Leader of the Opposition, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Minister of Transport ruled out any regulatory changes that would allow American Airlines to acquire a bigger share of Canadian.

Can the Prime Minister, or the Minister of Transport, assure us that his government will not now or later change regulations so that Canadian cannot be taken over by American?

**Hon. David Anderson (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, no application was received from either Canadian International or American Airlines to increase American's share of Canadian.

• (1420)

As no application was made, we did not review this matter and there is no reason to make a decision.

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Leader of the Opposition, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, does the Minister of Transport not think that, in the final analysis, there is only enough room for one national air carrier in Canada, as the Bloc Québécois has always maintained, and that the

government's policy of encouraging and supporting two carriers can hardly work?

Should the government not revise its policy before injecting taxpayers' money into the financial sinkhole that is Canadian?

**Hon. David Anderson (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the government's policy is to favour competition among several airlines. It is not a matter of having only two airlines; there are several others involved. We want a system that will help increase the number of flights while reducing fares.

**Mr. André Caron (Jonquière, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister.

Canadian is about to come back and pass the hat for more taxpayers' money to deal with its financial problems, but year after year, the same company continues to pay a very expensive \$150 million annually for its service contract with American Airlines, and will do so for 20 years.

Before even considering the possibility of injecting one cent of federal money into Canadian, could the minister give taxpayers the assurance that he will make sure that Canadian's contracts with American Airlines have been revised to make them much fairer to Canadian?

**Hon. David Anderson (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member's position is based on an erroneous premise. There has been no request from Canadian International for government funds, there has been no request for money from the government. We are not going to force a company to take our money. That will not happen.

**Mr. André Caron (Jonquière, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, there may be no request, but in January something is going to happen. We know that Canadian announced last week that the company will have a liquidity problem starting next January.

Does the minister still intend to demand that Canadian continue to pay back the remainder of its \$120 million loan from the government, as agreed, and will he refuse to delay the payback so as not to give Canadian special treatment?

*[English]*

**Hon. David Anderson (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** First, Mr. Speaker, the loan of \$120 million was from three governments, not one. Second, three-quarters of that loan has in fact already been repaid.

With respect to the overall issue of the position of Canadian, we believe it is really important for this restructuring to succeed. A company which has a structural problem and consistently loses money year after a year is not in a position to continue for many years in operation. Therefore we want to make sure the restructuring process succeeds.

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The issue of a loan or of changing ownership simply does not enter into the fundamental question which is a restructuring of its systems so that it becomes a profitable company and can continue to employ 17,000 Canadians

\* \* \*

**ETHICS**

**Miss Deborah Grey (Beaver River, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has said repeatedly that he holds his cabinet ministers to a higher ethical standard. However, in the past three years Canadians have seen little evidence of these higher standards. Minister after minister in the Liberal government has broken the code of conduct for even public office holders. Some are forced to resign while others are staunchly defended by the Prime Minister. Canadians deserve to know why this double standard.

Will the Prime Minister clear up this confusion by simply releasing the secret ethical guideline he has for his cabinet ministers?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on June 16, 1996 we published the "Conflict of Interest and Post-Employment Code for Public Office Holders". We have issued the Lobbyists' Administration Act. We have other provisions in legislation to guide everybody in public office.

• (1425)

As far as communications by the Prime Minister to ministers, they are communications within the privy council. I do not release them but it is not very complicated.

I have said to ministers that they must adhere to the highest standards of conflict of interest that they can find. I am very proud to say that despite the member's innuendo there is only one minister who has given me his resignation. The reason he resigned was that he had written a letter to a tribunal to help a poor lady who wanted her husband to come to Canada.

There was no other resignation, and the member cannot say what she said because it is not the truth. There was only one, and everyone in Canada knows why the former minister of defence resigned.

**Miss Deborah Grey (Beaver River, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has bragged repeatedly over the years that he has ethical guidelines for cabinet ministers that go well beyond this code of conduct for public office holders, and now he says they have just mentioned it and had a chat about it.

Nobody seems to know what these guidelines are, where they are or whether they exist at all. If the Prime Minister does have these

ethical guidelines that he talks about, there is no good reason why they should not be made public.

Again, does the Prime Minister have a set of guidelines for his cabinet ministers who have higher ethical standards than even the code for public officers which he has talked about? And if so, why in the world will he not release them to the public?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I repeat they are communications between me and my ministers, and we have the result today.

In three years there was only one incident that has caused the resignation of one minister. One of the complaints in letters I received was that they were too strict for the former minister of defence to resign.

Look at the conduct. For the last three years this government has had no serious accusations of misconduct because the ministers have accepted the highest standards seen for a long time in the Canadian Parliament.

**Miss Deborah Grey (Beaver River, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, all the bluster and bragging in the world will not solve the problem. Ethics are a public matter and Canadians deserve to know what the Prime Minister's so-called higher standards are.

In the last election the Liberals promised to restore integrity to our parliamentary institutions and make government open and transparent. I think I heard those words several times during the campaign.

It is very difficult to see how secret ethical guidelines square with the Prime Minister's red book promises. Will the Prime Minister live up to his red book promise and release the guidelines for these higher standards for Liberal cabinet ministers?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, no wonder they are losing a member a week. They have nothing to contribute to this Parliament. They go on about this problem, which we have already explained.

The secretary of state got up in the House and explained herself. It is the tradition of the House of Commons that if a member does not accept the word of a minister, they should make a charge, an accusation.

They have nothing but innuendo. For example, yesterday one of the members linked this operation that was done in good faith to that of a bank robber. He did not apologize.

When I see political people operating at that level of innuendo I do not want to spend too much time on them but I know they cannot find anything to talk about. When they cannot talk about the real problems of the nation we know they are politically bankrupt.



[Translation]

### THE FILM INDUSTRY

**Mr. Gaston Leroux (Richmond—Wolfe, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Canadian Heritage is convinced that Polygram's entry on the Canadian film distribution market will be detrimental to the industry. Her colleague at the Department of Industry seems to take an entirely different view of the matter and would be inclined to let Polygram enter the Canadian market. However, the decision on this issue is up to the Minister of Industry, who will have to abide by the policies established by the Minister of Canadian Heritage. It is indeed very disturbing.

• (1430)

How will the Minister of Canadian Heritage make her colleague understand that, as shown in a recent study by Heritage Canada, it is imperative for the film industry that no exception be made for Polygram?

**Hon. John Manley (Minister of Industry, Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Minister of Western Economic Diversification and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development—Quebec, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have listened to the hon. member's proposal. As soon as the decision is, I will let him know. Right now, a request has been made. According to law I am obliged to keep that information confidential. And I have nothing to say to him about the Polygram case.

**Mr. Gaston Leroux (Richmond—Wolfe, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the problem in this case is that the decision is up to a body with two heads. The head of the Minister of Canadian Heritage, which wants to protect the cultural industry, and the head of the Minister of Industry, which wants to circumvent the cultural industry. Cabinet will be meeting in two days time and Polygram may be on the agenda at this meeting.

I would like to know, then, what guarantees can the Minister of Canadian Heritage give us to show she is in a position to ensure compliance with Canadian policies?

[English]

**Hon. John Manley (Minister of Industry, Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Minister of Western Economic Diversification and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development—Quebec, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there is an application under the Investment Canada Act under review.

The provisions of the law prevent us from discussing the contents of that application and I will not do so.

### Oral Questions

#### ETHICS

**Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is again for the Prime Minister regarding the ministerial use of government credit cards.

Canadian taxpayers have the right to full disclosure and therefore have the right to see complete copies of credit card statements and supporting documents.

In the interest of openness and accountability, will the Prime Minister direct that these documents be tabled in their entirety?

**Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.):** No, Mr. Speaker. The House or the members do not have access to personal information of a confidential nature. This is a right of individuals that is protected in our laws and that we will continue to protect.

So that members will know exactly the source, it is under section 19 of the Access to Information Act: "A government institution shall not disclose personal information". That includes Parliament.

The Access to Information Act goes on to say: "The definition of personal information stated under the Privacy Act applies". Personal financial transactions are clearly included under personal information.

The member should apply his time to other types of questions rather than hitting a wall that protects the privacy of personal information.

**Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, clearly when a minister puts personal expenses on a government card, that individual has moved it from the private to the public domain. That is the issue here.

What we want are the facts that are missing. In just the six months for which we currently have some information, at least \$9,300 is unaccounted for. We have no documentation for the other two and a half years. This could be cleared up very simply by the tabling of complete, un-whited documents.

Will the Prime Minister direct this openness, that these documents be tabled?

**Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member is simply and clearly inviting me to break the law. I think this is unethical behaviour.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

#### TOBACCO

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

We know that the health minister is so anxious to table a bill governing the use of tobacco that he has urged the public not to

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vote Liberal if the bill is not passed before the next election. But we also know that there is another group within the Liberal caucus vigorously opposed to tobacco control legislation.

• (1435)

Can the Prime Minister, who has surely discussed this issue with his minister at the special meeting of cabinet, tell us whether his government will be going ahead with this bill?

[English]

**Mr. Joseph Volpe (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member is right about one thing and that is the minister has made an unequivocal statement that there will be legislation and that it will follow all the parameters that he has indicated up to this point: the Supreme Court decision, the priority of the health of Canadians, and all the consultations that have followed as a result of the blueprint document.

As to everything else, because we live in a democratic society, people are welcome to present their views, but there is no deviation from the issue that the minister has put forward. The legislation will come and it will be definitive.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Pauline Picard (Drummond, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, while I am all for tobacco control legislation, the major problem of sponsorship of sports and cultural events has yet to be resolved.

Is the Prime Minister aware of this problem and will he undertake to find a solution before the next election?

**Mr. Joseph Volpe (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Health, Lib.):** But the solution is already there, madam.

Mr. Speaker, pardon me.

[English]

The solution is already there. The legislation will follow the indications that I offered to the House a moment ago and it will in no way inhibit any Canadian, whether they be individual or corporate, from making decisions about how they will contribute to and fund any cultural, sporting or recreational activities that contribute to the common good. There will be no indication that anyone will be impeded from so doing.

I ask the member and all members of the House to be patient and wait until the legislation comes forward. Then she and others will see the details.

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**EXPORTS**

**Mr. Charlie Penson (Peace River, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister for International Trade.

Canada has been one of the main proponents in establishing the World Trade Organization and the rules based dispute settlement that goes along with it. This last year the Liberal government could have taken the dispute with the United States on softwood lumber to the World Trade Organization. Instead it has caved in to the Americans and accepted export quotas.

Thousands of jobs in the forest industry will be lost because of this government's misguided, bureaucratic and unworkable quota system. What is the minister going to do about it?

**Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (Minister for International Trade, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we went the route of an agreement with the United States because that is what the industry wanted in all provinces. That is what the provincial governments wanted as well. They knew that, in fact, our chances of success at the WTO were very iffy and that we would have years and years of legal wrangling. They wanted stability and certainty.

On top of that, in terms of the formula as to how the allocations were made, it was the industry that brought forward the suggestions on which the allocations were made with the concurrence of the provinces.

**Mr. Charlie Penson (Peace River, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, it seems ironic that after only six days of this quota system we are getting a flood of mail from mills that are going to be out of business. If all the stakeholders put together such a good deal, why are all these companies going to be put out of business? What went wrong?

**Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (Minister for International Trade, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the price of lumber went up substantially in the United States and, seeing a good business proposition, these companies decided to rush the border with lots of lumber, knowing full well that the quota was going to be based on their past experience. They put themselves in the position they are in. They created their own misfortune and put their employees in jeopardy with that kind of action.

Notwithstanding that, we have established a quota bank to give the lumber companies that have used up all their quota an opportunity to draw on it in terms of next year's allocations so they can continue to do business and provide jobs in the lumber industry.

\* \* \*

• (1440)

[Translation]

**IMMIGRATION**

**Mr. Osvaldo Nunez (Bourassa, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Solicitor General.

Although the Minister of Justice stated in this House last October 7 that some real progress was being made in the battle against the smuggling of illegal immigrants, we learned again this morning that the Canadian borders seem to have become a real

sieve, and that our country is being used as a means of transit for illegal immigrants from Asia headed for the United States.

In light of the intensification of this problem, can the minister tell us what additional efforts his government is bringing to bear on controlling the Canadian borders more effectively?

[English]

**Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thought the hon. member was going to get up to congratulate the RCMP, the immigration department and the various other police forces for their recent success in smashing a major international ring which was smuggling immigrants.

This success is an indication of what the federal government is doing, which is to work jointly with other federal departments and police forces to break up the rings which smuggle people and goods. We are working to deal with this serious situation in a way that protects our traditional open borders which are important to the vast majority of people in this country and in our neighbouring countries.

[Translation]

**Mr. Osvaldo Nunez (Bourassa, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I have no congratulations to offer to either the minister or the RCMP. In early October, one woman died as a result of this smuggling.

In order to put an end to this unacceptable smuggling of people, which may involve accomplices in high places in Hong Kong, can the minister inform us of the steps that have been taken, and the agreements there have been, if any, with authorities in the countries of origin of these illegal immigrants?

[English]

**Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I can only repeat that the federal government treats this matter very seriously. It has been intensifying its efforts through joint forces activities involving our national police force, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, our immigration department, and police forces of other countries.

I repeat that I think the hon. member has disappointed millions of Canadians including his own constituents for not congratulating the RCMP and their colleagues for their success in breaking up a major immigrant smuggling ring.

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#### EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

**Mr. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Human Resources Development.

#### Oral Questions

Over the past few weeks the leader of the Conservative Party in Prince Edward Island has promised that if elected, he would out of the EI act obtain an interest free \$75 million loan from the Government of Canada to establish a venture capital fund. In my view, this would be highly illegal under the act and Mr. Binns knows better.

Could the minister clarify specifically, can funds be taken from the employment insurance account and given to a provincial government for such a purpose?

**Hon. Pierre S. Pettigrew (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Employment Insurance Act makes it absolutely clear that the employment insurance fund is not a slush fund for the use of this government or any provincial government in the land. The employment insurance fund is there to help Canadians get back to work. It is there to finance active measures such as wage subsidies, earning supplements, self-employment assistance, job creation partnerships and skills loans and grants.

Our government will be working with the Government of Prince Edward Island. Right now we are working on a transitional job fund of about \$10 million. However it is not a solution to go to the employment insurance account for such a thing.

\* \* \*

#### LUMBER INDUSTRY

**Mr. Bill Gilmour (Comox—Alberni, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the government has once again caved in to the American lumber lobby and it is costing Canadians thousands of jobs in our lumber industry.

I am a professional forester and I have spent 25 years in the forestry industry. Never before have I witnessed such secrecy surrounding the allocation of quotas to individual lumber mills; quotas that are far below expected levels and are forcing mills to severely downsize or shut down altogether. What I find most disturbing is that producers have been instructed by the minister not to divulge their individual quotas.

• (1445)

My question is for the minister of trade. To clear this veil of secrecy regarding quotas, will the minister table in the House a full list of quota allocations showing all lumber producers in all provinces?

**Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (Minister for International Trade, Lib.):** No, Mr. Speaker, but if the individual companies want to divulge their own quotas they can do so. If they have no problem

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with that in terms of competition and commercial confidentiality, they are quite free to do that but certainly it is not my intention.

The hon. member may have been in the forestry industry for a long period of time, but I do not think he ever got out of the woods or he would soon know that in fact the industry wanted this deal.

We got the industry something that was unprecedented. We got five years of trade peace with the United States in terms of lumber. The problem is that a few of the companies thought this was such a great deal that even though they knew there were quotas, and they wanted quotas, they were still going to rush that border and make as much money as they possibly could. Now of course they are asking what happened. What has happened is there is no more quota.

The companies knew that the quota was going to be based on their traditional exports. They knew what the rules were because their industry gave us their suggestions for the rules. By and large we adopted them and with provincial government concurrence.

**Mr. Bill Gilmour (Comox—Alberni, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, when the minister ran on a platform of jobs, he forgot to tell Canadians that they were American jobs at the expense of Canadian jobs.

Many lumber mills, particularly the smaller ones, are laying off staff or closing down altogether because their quotas did not materialize or they came in far below the expectations. A number of companies in B.C., Alberta, Ontario and Quebec are desperate for help.

This government ran on a platform of creating jobs yet in this case thousands of jobs and livelihoods are being lost.

My question for the minister of trade is plain and direct. What is the minister going to do for the families that he has now put out of work?

**Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (Minister for International Trade, Lib.):** This government, Mr. Speaker, has put nobody out of work. This government has bent over backward to try to make sure that the system which the industry wanted—the industry wanted this protection—is fair and balanced. We have talked with all 600 of those companies that are getting lumber quotas to make sure that we are in fact fair.

If some of them have gone overboard and have used their quota, we are still providing a quota bank to help them in terms of bridging over this period of time so that they can keep the jobs. We also know they can go ahead at the existing prices and even pay these fees which are staying in Canada. They can pay the \$100 fee and the \$50 fee and still make some money on it.

[Translation]

**CANADA INFORMATION OFFICE**

**Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Canadian Heritage.

In the last supplementary estimates, we learned that the Canada Information Office has a funding budget of \$4.9 million, out of its total \$20 million budget.

Can the Minister of Canadian Heritage give us the criteria which the Canada Information Office will use to allocate its funding?

**Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, for information on the CIO, I would invite the hon. member across the way to start by going to the World Wide Web site on the Internet, where she will find everything there is available, not only on InfoCan, but also on other components of the department, whose mandate it is to focus on Canadian identity throughout the country.

**Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, since the Minister of Canadian Heritage is acknowledging that the Information Canada Office does allocate funding, can she explain to us why her department's reply to an access to information request indicates that the ICO does not have such programs?

**Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** What I am saying, Mr. Speaker, is that if she wants to know everything that is going on at the Information Canada Office, she has only to drop a line to InfoCan and she will find that there are all manner of programs. The ICO, however, does not give out grants.

\* \* \*

• (1450)

[English]

**PEST MANAGEMENT REGULATORY AGENCY**

**Mr. Elwin Hermanson (Kindersley—Lloydminster, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the minister of agriculture on an issue impacting agriculture.

The Pest Management Regulatory Agency is a prime example of the Liberals' infatuation with big government. The number of bureaucrats in this empire in comparison to the number of pesticides registered is astronomical. Apparently it takes 213 bureaucrats to register 19 new products. That 11:1 ratio beats the proverbial light bulb jokes.

The Pest Management Regulatory Agency is inefficient, bureaucratic and costly. The minister is receiving calls and letters from all across the country complaining about it. Will the minister take

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responsibility and act to correct the nightmare his government has created?

**Hon. Ralph E. Goodale (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, among the commitments we made at the time of the 1993 election was a commitment to act upon the recommendations of the pest management regulatory report which was published under the previous government.

We have made considerable progress in implementing the principle recommendations in that report, including the establishment of the Pest Management Regulatory Agency. That agency brings together authorities that were previously in four departments to streamline the process. It has two principal objectives: to ensure the health and safety of Canadians and the environment; and to be fully cognizant of the competitive requirements of Canadian farmers to have a level playing field nationally and internationally.

The Pest Management Regulatory Agency is working diligently toward that direction. We are in the process of establishing a stakeholders consultative committee to make sure that the agency has the necessary input from the private sector.

I would point out for the hon. member's information that the legal responsibility for the Pest Management Regulatory Agency is in fact vested in the department of health, not the department of agriculture.

**Mr. Elwin Hermanson (Kindersley—Lloydminster, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the agriculture community is finding that the Minister of Health is not listening.

I have to commend the hon. minister for living up to his reputation recently described as having the conversational knack to circle the earth without ever landing.

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

**The Speaker:** I am going to ask the member to put his question now.

**Mr. Hermanson:** Will the minister please come down to earth and realize that his disregard for the bloated Pest Management Regulatory Agency, one that pushes cost recovery rather than reducing farmers' input costs, has ended up costing farmers a lot of money and that his bureaucratic mess is making Canadian agriculture less competitive? Will the minister admit that?

**Hon. Ralph E. Goodale (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, speaking of landing, I would be delighted to land splat on the hon. member in the next election which I intend to do.

In terms of the Pest Management Regulatory Agency, I think the hon. member should know that the agency is in the process of getting up and running. It is in the process of soliciting all the necessary input from all of the relevant stakeholders. I am confi-

dent the agency and the responsible minister will take all of that into account.

It would appear that we have a series of new pests to deal with in the Reform Party.

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**FOOD INSPECTION AGENCY**

**Mr. Derek Wells (South Shore, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food.

The seafood industry is concerned that the consolidation of food inspection services into a single food inspection agency could lead to a serious loss of expertise and advocacy for seafood at the federal level.

Will the minister explain how the seafood industry will fit into the new agency structure? Will there be a dedicated seafood inspection branch staffed by former fisheries and oceans inspection personnel?

**Hon. Ralph E. Goodale (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am happy to say that this regulatory process does fall under the jurisdiction of the minister of agriculture.

● (1455)

I am happy to assure my hon. friend and the seafood industry that there will be no loss of expertise in the new Canadian food inspection agency. The current Department of Fisheries and Oceans inspection staff and all of their professional experience and expertise will be transferred to the agency to ensure that there are no gaps in service and no gaps in the quality of service.

The seafood industry will benefit from this process, from a broader base of support to food inspection in general and by better co-ordination of all of the government's inspection resources. We will of course have new flexibilities under the legislation in terms of financial and human resources to make the system better than it is today.

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[Translation]

**THE SINGER COMPANY**

**Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Human Resources Development.

It is now two years since I asked the two previous ministers of Human Resources Development about the Singer case. A month ago, I brought this case to the attention of the present minister. Last week, the minister said he had taken note of the question and would look into it.

Has the minister looked into this case and what does he have to say today to retired Singer employees who are still waiting for justice to be done?

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**Hon. Pierre Pettigrew (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, yes, of course I looked into the case. I know the hon. member is very concerned, because he asked the same question last week.

We are looking into this case. I believe there is a problem due to the fact that the pension fund belonged to the Singer company which was transferred to the United States, it closed its doors here and has declared bankruptcy in the U.S. As far as the Canadian government is concerned, the circumstances make taking any kind of action rather difficult.

\* \* \*

[English]

**STREET PROSTITUTION**

**Mr. Paul Forseth (New Westminster—Burnaby, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice.

In my riding and in the general suburban area of Vancouver, street prostitution is a serious problem which the community wants dealt with. We had hoped for some action in 1994 yet still we have nothing from the government.

At some point the government must gather itself, find a moral compass and act in a way that is right. The legal door for kids to get hooked into street prostitution has been left wide open by the justice minister.

Will the minister act now to make street level prostitution an indictable offence or at least a hybrid offence? Will he act now on this important change to protect our children? Will he himself take action instead of continuing to blame his inaction on the provinces or those pressure groups that represent prostitutes?

**Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am sure the hon. member knows that the issue of street prostitution involves more than simply changing the words in the Criminal Code of Canada. If we are going to resolve the question of people working the streets and selling their bodies for money, we are going to have to do more than simply amend the Criminal Code of Canada.

There are some things that can be done effectively through the criminal law. Through Bill C-27, which is now before a committee, we have proposed tough mandatory minimum penitentiary terms for people who would use violence to coerce children into prostitution. That is going to be an effective measure.

Let me say to the hon. member that two years ago, governments at all levels began looking at a short list of steps that could be taken not only through the Criminal Code but through other strategies to bring down the incidence of street prostitution and all the difficulties it causes for neighbourhoods, for families and for children.

Consultation documents have been circulated in all the provinces. That process is almost finished. In fact, all but two of the

provinces have now returned with conclusions from the consultation process. When that process is completed, and Manitoba and Ontario have yet to complete it, we will look carefully at the short list of possible steps that all levels of government could take and we will decide on an appropriate course of action.

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**CANADIAN AIRLINES**

**Mr. Nelson Riis (Kamloops, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport. He will know that a political fire storm is developing in western Canada over the financial crisis faced by an airline based in western Canada. The minister knows that nearly 70,000 jobs are at risk and thousands more related jobs are at risk. He said that he has not been asked to do anything.

Has the minister considered being proactive and providing leadership in finding a solution to this problem by suggesting actions that the federal government could take to help this troubled airline?

**Hon. David Anderson (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his question.

• (1500)

The point I would like to make to him and to everybody in this House is that we must keep our eye on the actual problem of Canadian International Airlines.

Anyone who thinks some government bailout can be a substitute for the restructuring plan of Canadian is simply dreaming. There is no point in coming forward with financial assistance to handle the losses of a period if there are no structural changes made that will prevent those losses from reoccurring in the future.

That is why I can say to him—I appreciate his question—that we strongly support the proposals for restructuring Canadian airlines which have been put forward. I recognize this will be a very difficult decision for the employees and I am extremely sympathetic to them as they consider this plan.

Without a plan within the company which deals with the structural chronic losses that it has had, we will not be able to have that company providing employment in the future as we would like.

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**RWANDA**

**Mr. Janko Perić (Cambridge, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister for International Co-operation.

Given the recent media reports and concerns raised about human rights, can the minister explain whether Canada is contributing money to the Government of Rwanda, yes or no?

*Privilege*

**Hon. Don Boudria (Minister for International Cooperation and Minister responsible for Francophonie, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to inform the House that, notwithstanding the allegation made in the media last weekend, which was false, the government is not making contributions to the Rwandan government.

The funds are provided through Canadian NGOs, through universities and so on. They are to help the victims of the genocide in trying to repair the broken legal system and the broken society in Rwanda.

One quarter of the funds are to assist in the area of human rights. The rest is to provide for basic human needs, particularly to help the poor, women, youth and mostly abandoned children.

**The Speaker:** Colleagues, I invite you to come to Room 216 to meet Canada's top guns who were introduced to this House earlier. They will be there from three until about four o'clock.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the government what will be on the agenda in the days to come, and I am referring to tomorrow and ten days from now, when the House resumes sitting.

**Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it will be a pleasure to make a statement on the business of the House.

[English]

If the address debate should finish before the end of this afternoon, we will return to consideration of the child support bill, Bill C-41. In any case, this will be our first item of business tomorrow.

When the House returns on November 18 we will resume the list if necessary with Bill C-41, followed by Bill C-66, the labour code amendments presented by my distinguished colleague, the Minister of Labour and deputy House leader. Then we will have Bill C-62, the fisheries legislation; Bill C-59, the transport bill; Bill C-49, the tribunals legislation; Bill C-34, the agricultural penalties bill; Bill C-39 and Bill C-40, the flooding agreements legislation.

This should take us into the middle of the week in question. I will have met with members opposite by that point to arrange subsequent business.

**The Speaker:** Colleagues, as you know, a question of privilege always takes precedence over a point of order. I would ask the hon. member for Calgary Southeast if she would permit me to hear a very short point of order so that she is not disturbed.

• (1505)

**POINT OF ORDER**

## COMMENTS DURING QUESTION PERIOD

**Mr. Ray Speaker (Lethbridge, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask you to review the blues today relative to question period. In terms of the first question that was asked by my hon. colleague from Beaver River to the Prime Minister, in the Prime Minister's remarks I thought I heard the Prime Minister say to my hon. colleague that she did not tell the truth. I would like the Speaker to review the blues. I do not have access to them right now, but I would appreciate if you would do that. I am raising it at the first possible moment.

**The Speaker:** I did not hear that statement, but I will review the blues and if necessary I will come back to the House.

[Translation]

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** On the same point of order, Mr. Speaker, if he actually said that, I would like to know whether it would be judged unacceptable. This week, we saw not only in the blues but also in *Hansard* that the Prime Minister said the leader of the opposition had made false statements. I want to know whether that is acceptable.

**The Speaker:** If a member is not directly accused of having used the word "lied" or something like that. Usually, when someone says that, according to a newspaper, a statement was made in which someone said etc., in that case, it is not always necessary for me to intervene.

I will go back and check the blues and check what was said. If necessary, I will come back to the House to provide clarification.

\* \* \*

[English]

**PRIVILEGE**

## NON-PARTY STATUS MEMBERS

**Mrs. Jan Brown (Calgary Southeast, Ind.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege pursuant to Standing Order 48(1). The privilege in question is one that is both the least questioned and the most fundamental right of any member of Parliament, freedom of speech.

The breach of freedom of speech, as I will state, involves the inability of me as a member of Parliament and others to participate in debate on government legislation or to be an active member of House committees.

I am aware that we as parliamentarians are bound by the rules and orders of the House with respect to participation in debate. However, as we have seen in the past, the status quo regarding parliamentary reform has been challenged. It is my intention today

*Privilege*

to stand to challenge the status quo respecting the freedom of speech of individual members of Parliament.

The question I raise asks for the Speaker to give additional recognition to the members of Parliament who do not have party status in matters of debate and committee representation. I would like to point out that when I refer to members who are without party status and currently sitting in the House, I am referring to those members who are not officially recognized by the House of Commons due in part to the 12 member party threshold to which we as parliamentarians are currently bound through the 1963 statute that is embodied in the Parliament of Canada Act.

We are currently sitting in the 35th session of Parliament with a high number of MPs without party status representing constituents all across Canada. It is now time that the House recognize this as a significant deficit in terms of opinion and representation in debate. Without these voices the constituents in 15 ridings are quiet.

There have been a number of important debates in which those members have been unable to participate, and Bill C-41 is one of those in which many of us would very much like to participate.

Under current parliamentary rules and practice the opportunities for members with non-party status are limited in committee work. Political parties dominate the ever increasing role of the House and it is extremely difficult for members who do not belong to a party to have the same influence or to participate as fully as members who are party members.

Freedom of speech is a fundamental parliamentary privilege. Professor W.F. Dawson of the University of Alberta said in a 1959 article:

The privilege of freedom of speech is probably the most important and least questioned of all privileges enjoyed by the House. In its most elementary form this privilege was stated in the Bill of Rights which declared that 'the freedom of speech and debates of proceedings in Parliament ought not to be impeached or questioned in any court or place outside of Parliament'. Today, it is one of the privileges requested by the Speaker at the beginning of every Parliament.

Freedom of speech means that the members have the right to speak freely in the Chamber without fear of intimidation or challenge. What they say is privileged, protected or immune from being questioned outside of Parliament.

• (1510)

Joseph Maingot, former law clerk and parliamentary counsel of the House of Commons, has said:

The privilege of freedom of speech, though of a personal nature, is not so much intended to protect the members against prosecutions for their individual advantage

but to support the right of people by enabling their representatives to execute the functions of their office without fear either of civil or criminal prosecution.

Freedom to speak freely is not the sole element of this privilege. Members must also be free to speak. This means that they have to have opportunities to participate in debate and to participate fully in the proceedings of Parliament, including parliamentary committees. Even if members are not inhibited in terms of what they say in the House, they are still inhibited in not being given opportunities to speak. The right to say whatever they want is meaningless if there is no chance to speak in any case.

Freedom of speech does not mean that members have an unlimited or unrestrained right to speak on every issue. The rules of the House impose limits on the participation of members and it is the duty of the Speaker to restrain those who abuse the rules.

It is clear that no member of the House can speak whenever he or she wishes. It is the role of the Speaker to recognize members and to preserve order and decorum. The democratic rights of an elected member are diminished when they do not possess the same opportunities as other members.

The rights of members and through them of their constituents must be respected. I speak from my heart for Calgary Southeast. The Speaker must be assured that the rights of all members of the House are protected. This is an ongoing process and must be reviewed afresh from time to time. The question must be asked whether independent or non-affiliated party members are being allowed to fully participate in the proceedings of the House and its committees. The privileges of these members, their freedom of speech and the fundamental tenants of parliamentary democracy must be satisfied.

Mr. Speaker, if you find that I have a prima facie case of privilege, I am prepared to move the appropriate motion, seconded by the member for Kamloops.

I appreciate the time to speak.

**Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has made an eloquent case for a prima facie case of privilege being established. I hope she will not take it as being too negative if I bring some other considerations to the attention of the House and to you, Mr. Speaker, the purpose of which is to urge you to reach the conclusion that there is no prima facie case of privilege.

What the hon. member is complaining about has been the accepted practice of the House for many years, for generations. I would suggest that if the hon. member studies the opportunities available to her as an independent private member, she will find that the opportunities she is seeking do exist. She has the same



opportunities as any other member to present petitions on behalf of her constituents. She has the same opportunity as any other member to file written questions or to file Notions of Motions for the Production of Papers.

Mr. Speaker, when it comes to speaking in debate it is you, sir, who has the ultimate authority to decide who to recognize, who to see. It is my impression, based on some years experience here, that if a member wishes to speak in a debate, while they may not get the floor at the exact time they would like to have it, if they make their interest known to Chair they will be recognized to speak in that debate.

Furthermore, with respect to committees our rules are clear. One does not have to be a formal member of a committee to attend committee meetings and to take part in discussions. It is true the person will not have the right to vote in the committee, but in terms of being heard the rules are clear. I repeat, one does not have to be a member of a committee in order to attend the meetings and take part in discussion.

The hon. member concedes that freedom of speech, being very important, has to have some reasonable limit. I think the reasonable limits which have been established both by our rules and by the custom of the House are an effort to make sure that the limited time available in any day for debate and discussion is distributed in a reasonably equitable fashion among members. I think this is a reasonable limitation on what she considers her freedom of speech.

Finally, I would say that the comments she has made regarding freedom of speech refer to the right of someone once they have the floor to speak freely without sanction outside the House. The right of freedom of speech as I understand it does not mean that any member can speak any time whenever they want, perhaps in a way that is not equitable with respect to the equal rights of other members, including those who work together as an organized party.

• (1515)

Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has made an eloquent statement. I understand her concerns but I would suggest that in consultation with you, with the Clerk of the House, with members who perhaps may have been here a little longer than she, she could well get advice which would help her to participate more fully even as an independent member than she has been able to do up to now.

That being the case, I respectfully submit that she has not made a prima facie case to enable her to put a motion of privilege.

[Translation]

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I fully agree with what was said by the government house

### *Privilege*

leader. We have discussed this question on several occasions, both before 1993 and since then.

I know that the Bloc Québécois raised the matter when we had only eight members, and we had to live with the rules of the House. So I think that was settled. There is only one remedy and that is to take full advantage of other opportunities that may arise, in questions and comments, in committees, presenting petitions, and so forth.

I would say that the best way is to belong to a party that fields candidates in elections and wins enough seats so its has even more opportunities to express its views here in the House. That is how the British parliamentary system works. Even with our own sovereignist option, as far as we are concerned, we fully agree with this kind of system. I would ask you to reject the question of privilege.

[English]

**Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley East, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I listened to the comments and I share some of the opinions that have already been expressed here on behalf of the government.

I would like to tell the hon. member that I have signed a sheet, along with the government whip and the whip of the official opposition, to allow the member to be an associate member of the committees of her choice. If there are other committees she would like to be an associate member of, I would be willing and happy to do that as well.

I encourage the member for Kamloops, who did get a question today in question period, to realize that there is a rotation. Mr. Speaker, I know you consider the independents to be under the protection of the Chair and you want to ensure they have the opportunity to get on the floor as much as possible.

At times I have substituted members of the NDP or other independent members when our members had to catch a plane or something. This allows them to get their speeches in if it had been difficult for them to do so. But obviously I have to look after the needs of my own party first. I will try to be accommodating. I do not want to see the hon. member not being able to get her point of view heard. If there are ways that can be dovetailed into the House life, that should be done.

**The Speaker:** I thank the hon. member for Calgary Southeast for bringing up this point. She pinpointed that she was talking specifically about freedom of speech. I am going to come to that point in a second but before I do, I thank the hon. government House leader for his intervention as well as the House leader for the Bloc and the whip of the Reform Party.

The hon. member for Calgary Southeast will remember that early in this Parliament in 1994, possibly as early as May 1994, the

*The Address*

hon. member for Winnipeg Transcona argued very eloquently that independent members should be given more leeway in the procedures of this House. At that time in my response I mentioned to him that in the magnanimity of the House usually we could make some adjustments so that members who wanted to be heard on a particular issue could be heard.

• (1520)

I would point out to the hon. member for Calgary Southeast that now it is taken for granted that at least one and sometimes two independent members will have statements prior to our question period and we have tried as much as possible to get at least one independent member on in every question period every day. We have not always succeeded but to the extent that we have been able to get them on, I would suggest that the House as a family has been successful.

Many times members will come to me on a particular issue where they have to ask a question on that specific date, for example, if there is a catastrophe in the Saguenay or something like that. That it is a topic just for that day and they have to get information from the minister. I make every effort to see to it that the member, whether an independent or belonging to another party, would have a chance to get their question on.

I would tend to agree with the government House leader in this respect about freedom of speech. I direct myself precisely to the point that freedom of speech of course has to do with a member's being able to say what he or she wants to say without any impediments in this House after the member has the floor. As to the member's being able to get the floor, to get the eye or the attention of the Speaker, members as a House have generally decided that this will probably be the make-up. But in the absence of any suggestions from the different parties it is of course the responsibility of the Chair to make the decision as to who will speak and when.

I find at this point that there is not a prima facie case of privilege with regard to the specific point to which the member alludes. However, once again I appeal to the House in its magnanimity, and I refer specifically to the whip of the Reform Party who said he has made some allocations where it was possible for independent members to take the place of some of the members of his party who would have spoken had it not been for another occasion, for example. These things I think we can work out together.

However, specifically to the member for Calgary Southeast, if there is a burning issue, something on which the member must absolutely speak, although this does not occur on all the issues, I would ask the hon. member to address herself to the other whips if she likes or come up to the floor and where that slot is put in there, the Chair will give every consideration for those members who make a direct appeal to the Chair at that time.

I thank all hon. members for their interventions at this time.

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**SPEECH FROM THE THRONE**

## RESUMPTION OF DEBATE ON ADDRESS IN REPLY

The House resumed consideration of the motion for an address to His Excellency the Governor General in reply to his Speech at the opening of the session.

**Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley East, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with our deputy House leader.

Today we are discussing the Liberal speech from the throne which was delivered on February 27 of this year, some nine months ago. It was 13 pages long. We all tried to listen to it. Only once in that 13 pages did the Liberal government even mention the word family, and that was just in a passing reference.

Today I would like to take the government to task a bit about that and also explain perhaps the priorities I think the family issue should have been given in the speech from the throne and certainly would be given by the Reform Party.

In an Angus Reid poll in 1994, 63 per cent of Canadians agreed that the family is in crisis, not just in trouble, in crisis.

• (1525)

In our recent fresh start initiative we have addressed the concerns that many Canadians have about their families being under pressure, stressed out, overworked, underpaid and having no time to spend with their families, on charity work or on community work. They are feeling the stress and are not enjoying it.

In a seven page attack memo that was put out by the Liberals last week in response to our fresh start campaign, they said Reformers do not understand the complexities of the modern family. Just what they are talking about I do not know. The modern family is not very complicated. I can tell members right now that if one wants to call it complicated, in the modern family most times both parents have to work. Some also have to moonlight. If that is complex then I think I understand it. The modern one income family has to pay \$7,000 more a year in taxes than the two income family making the same amount when both parents work. This is the so-called complex reality of the modern family.

I think it is really very simple. Parents do not have enough time, enough disposable income and enough assets to spend as much time and energy with their children because they have to work harder for diminishing returns.

It is interesting that most of these people do not feel that they have a choice about whether they are going to spend more time with their family. They end up working split shifts, two shifts, two

*The Address*

jobs and so on because they are forced to for economic reasons. Many of them would prefer, especially when the children are young, to be able to look after their children and have the assets to do that.

On page 38 of the red book the Liberals said the following: “Young families need a support system that enables parents to participate fully in the economic life of the country. That is why the availability of quality child care is an economic issue”.

The Liberals’ concern for families is that they have to find ways for them to participate fully in the economic life of the country. In other words, it is Liberal doublespeak for “get to work, people, you do not have enough assets to stay home and look after your children, so put them in day care”.

The Liberals do not seem to understand that there are other options, that we can reduce taxes so that one parent can look after the children. We can change the Criminal Code so that parents do not feel worried about the safety of their families and their children. We can change the taxation system so that it reflects an equality for all people regardless of their choice for child care.

Before I get into our own fresh start alternative, it is interesting that the Liberal answer seems to be to keep taxes high and force both parents to participate in the economic life of the country so that they can tax them both highly and then the government will run a huge national program in order to pick up the slack. It is no wonder 63 per cent of families feel that they are stressed out and overstressed. They do not have an option. The options have been taken away from them by this government. It does not seem to understand that the simple answer, and not just the simple but the correct answer, to what it would like to say is a very complex issue is a very obvious set of guidelines and priorities that can change and turn this whole problem on its head and give families the stress relief they deserve.

This is what Reform’s fresh start would emphasize if we were giving the throne speech today. First, we would acknowledge the problem which is that because of social and economic changes many families are facing high debt, stress, bankruptcy and burnout. A reform government will recognize the value of families as the most important building block in our society so they can spend less time under pressure and more time with those they care about the most. That should have been the guiding principle, the acknowledgement of the problem, so that we could get on with solving problems that families feel need to be addressed and should have been addressed in the throne speech.

This is our commitment to the Canadian family. A Reform government would make families a priority and ensure that government policies and regulations are family friendly.

• (1530)

Second, extend the \$3,000 to \$5,000 child care deduction to all parents, including those who are there for their children at home.

Third, increase the spousal amount from \$5,300 to \$7,900 thus levelling the playing field for parents who choose to stay at home to look after young children and helping families meet the needs of a more demanding economy. In other words, increasing the spousal deduction will put more dollars in their pockets so they can look after their families in whatever way they feel necessary.

Fourth, help provinces and local governments ensure that dead-beat parents live up to their responsibilities to support their children when families break down. Reform will ensure that agreements concerning access to children are also respected and enforced. When families break down, an unfortunate thing that happens in society from time to time, Reform wants to make sure that deadbeat parents fulfil their obligations to their children and do not try to skirt around their obligations. It is not only a moral obligation but Reform wants to make it a moral obligation to support those kids.

Fifth, Reform would enact a zero tolerance policy on family violence.

Sixth, crack down on child prostitution and child pornography.

Reform wants to make families a priority. It should have been a priority in the throne speech, and it will certainly be a priority under a Reform government.

Reform believes that the strongest social programs to be had are policies to create and to build strong families. With a strong family all the other problems, many of which are dealt with here by legislation, go by the by. When there is a strong family that can look after themselves, feed the children properly, educate them and buy them school supplies, over the course of time those children are better educated. They have a lower crime rate, are able to concentrate better at school and have the confidence and the security that comes from having a family that is not stressed out completely. That is why families need and should have a higher priority than the government has given them to date.

I would argue that time spent with your family is not a luxury that should be enjoyed by a few or by a fluke of birth or whatever. Family time is essential time whether you are talking economically or psychologically or crime prevention or literacy rates. Families that spend time together can address most societal problems within their own family structure.

I would argue that parenting has real value and the government should recognize this as well. It is often said that children are our country’s future. It is a phrase that is thrown out at every opportunity but it is true. Policies and programs of governments need to reflect the truth: we are concerned about parenting and we

*The Address*

want to make sure that it is possible for families to have and recognize the value of that parenting skill.

That is why Reform places such an emphasis on tax relief for people raising children. People raising children have increased expenses and increased needs. Why not allow the policies and programs to reflect that? Why not increase the spousal allowance so that people who are raising children do not have to send the government money? They can keep that money to look after their families.

Why should we not say that all people who have children, whether they put them in a government run day care, whether grandma is looking after the kids or whether they look after them in their own home, deserve a pat on the back and encouragement. Some of that should come from the tax man. In other words, they deserve some tax relief that is targeted toward recognizing that parenting has real value and that good parenting is the key to a strong society in the 21st century.

That is why Reformers say the child care deduction of \$3,000 to \$5,000 should be given to all people regardless of their choice of child care, whether it is institutional care, at home, with a neighbour, through a pooling of resources or with grandma. It does not matter. When you are raising children you need resources. Those resources should not just be made available to people who are able to hire a nanny. Those resources should be made available to them when they have children. That should be the criterion. It should not be the criterion of a government program.

• (1535)

We believe that if these resources are given to parents they will be able to make better use of them than if those same resources were shipped off to Ottawa and people hoped against hope the program that was delivered in a neighbourhood might actually be of some use to them.

There is an old saying that governments take the people's money, deduct 50 per cent for handling and then give back services the people never asked for nor wanted. That should stop. The services that parents want to provide for their families, if the resources were left in their hands, could be provided. They could provide for the needs of their children better than the federal government.

There are some things we need to do to reassure families about their future security. We have to have zero tolerance toward family violence. As have many hon. members, I have had people in my office telling me terrible stories about spousal abuse, family abuse, child abuse and so on. Each story is sad and sickening. I have zero tolerance for it and so should government policy.

That is why family assault should be made a separate and more serious offence under the Criminal Code. Those who abuse the trust

of people need to be in a special category, a category which is more severe. Those people have broken a trust and have destroyed, perhaps forever, a child's security. It should not be tolerated. There should be zero tolerance for that.

We also want to enforce and strengthen peace bonds and restraining orders toward those who have shown a tendency for violence or who have threatened family members.

Finally, we want to make effective counselling programs a part of any sentence for family assault.

I mentioned earlier some of the other things that families deserve.

Mr. Speaker, as you approach half a century on this earth, as you get toward a very serious plateau in your own life, you will recognize the need to place emphasis on the family. I will allow my colleague to elaborate on that. As you head into your second half century, I know, Mr. Speaker, that you will listen kindly to his remarks.

**Mr. Jake E. Hoepfner (Lisgar—Marquette, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, we heard some very interesting comments from the hon. member for Fraser Valley East.

I was wondering if he has some other statistics. I think I heard at one time that some polling company came out with a statistic which told us how many mums or dads would love to stay home to look after their small children. If that was feasible financially, how does he feel about that?

When I was in Winnipeg I had the privilege of attending a meeting of the Standing Committee on Health. An RCMP officer brought out a very interesting fact. He said that they had found it a lot easier to build a good kid than to fix a broken adult.

When we spend billions and billions of dollars on the justice system, would the hon. member not agree that this would be money very well spent if it was directed toward the parenting of young children?

**Mr. Strahl:** Mr. Speaker, there are statistics to back up all of the things I mentioned today, for example, that children who come from a secure home have lower rates of crime, have higher levels of literacy and education and have better health. The statistics go on and on.

It is true that over 50 per cent of parents say that while their children are young they would prefer, if financially possible, to have one of the parents stay at home to be the chief provider for those children. In other words, they would train them, teach them, spend time with them, build security into their lives, pass on family values, show them right from wrong and so on. They feel that is a valuable asset and a valuable contribution.

*The Address*

• (1540)

That is why the tax proposals that Reform has come up with, especially for low income families, will lower the tax burden by 89 per cent for families making less than \$30,000 a year. Just think of it. I am not going to spend any time worrying about those who can hire a nanny. They have made their priority choices in life and I guess they have a lot of money.

However, if those who are just on the cusp, just barely able to make it, were told that the choices were a little more flexible because if they are making \$30,000 a year as a couple it maybe means that one person is working at a minimum wage job and the other is working part time, and I told them that their tax rate would be lowered by 89 per cent, it would mean that they would be virtually paying no taxes. If they are making \$30,000 a year it is not a lot of money. They need all that money to raise their family.

A family of four earning \$30,000 a year is on the poverty line. Imagine if they got their pay cheque and where today it says deductions for income tax sent off to Ottawa, never to be seen again it seems. Twenty per cent or 30 per cent is deducted for taxes. Would it not be wonderful if they saw instead the column said zero and all the money they earned, they got to take home to spend on their families the way they saw fit? I think if Canadian families were asked who knows better where the money should be spent, most people would say they know the needs in their own homes. They would be able to provide for their children. They have the best interests of their children at heart and they know that given a good shot at it, an ability to hang onto their funds they would be able to do a better job than the bureaucrats in Ottawa.

**Mr. John Williams (St. Albert, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, normally when I start a speech I say how privileged I am to join in the debate. But let us remember that this is, after all, November 1996 and we are debating the throne speech that was tabled on February 27, 1996 approximately eight months ago. Throne speeches are when the government lays out its mandate and desires, what it wants to achieve on behalf of the nation. Unfortunately, over the years they have become perfunctory statements that are bland, wide-ranging and have very little meaning or substance.

The speech we are debating in November 1996 and was tabled in February 27, 1996, is bland, wide-ranging, says nothing specific. I cannot imagine why we are debating this seven months after the fact rather than talking about specific legislation emanating from the speech. The answer unfortunately is somewhat obvious. It is because the government likes these bland, innocuous statements rather than serious legislation to fix the problems that are facing Canadians today.

Members have heard the Reform Party talk about the one in four people in this country who either do not have a job, are looking for a job, or are concerned about their job because they feel that their

jobs may be in jeopardy. We were talking about that in the House in question period less than two hours ago. The finances of a major employer in western Canada are in serious trouble and many jobs are potentially on the line. The government says: "It is not our problem at this point," yet it ran on a policy of jobs, jobs, jobs. It seems rather strange to me that it continues to spout the mantra without delivering on any of the goods.

This is the lack of vision of the Liberal Party that the Reform Party has railed against for the years that we have been in existence. In the section "Ensuring Opportunity: A Strong Economy" of the throne speech it is stated: "The government will work with the private sector and the provinces to make the collective investments required to produce hope, growth and jobs".

• (1545)

We have not seen any tax reduction. The deficit continues to cause the government to borrow more money. The total debt is rising. It will soon be \$600 billion. Yet, we have talked in this House in the last few weeks and have been critical of the government because it has given a company in Montreal, Bombardier, \$87 million interest free.

Surely, that must be what the Liberals were talking about when they said they would work with the private sector and the provinces in their collective investments to produce hope, growth and jobs. I am concerned about the logic. It is the ordinary taxpayers, the people who work hard every day and remember that one in four of them are concerned about their jobs, who have to pay taxes to the Government of Canada because the government had to borrow \$87 million which the government lent to Bombardier interest free.

Bombardier is a large and successful company with an international reputation. It has factories in production around the world. We are proud of Bombardier. We are proud of a Canadian success. But why do we have to be so proud of our Canadian success that we have to go to the ordinary Canadian in the street and say: "Can you spare a little more in taxes to pay the interest on the money we are going to borrow so Bombardier can have an interest free loan of \$87 million?" That does not make sense. If that is the only thing the government had in mind in this line in the throne speech about collective investments with the private sector and the provinces, surely we expected a lot better.

Remember that the government's line was jobs, jobs, jobs. Here we are today, three years into the mandate and an election starting to loom on the horizon. I can see the next election being on the theme: "We didn't do it last time but this time it is going to be job, jobs, jobs. Trust us. We are going to deliver". That line is wearing thin. I doubt very much that Canadians will believe the Liberal Party this time if it runs on a policy of jobs, jobs, jobs. It does not wash.

*The Address*

Under the section on trade: "The government will continue efforts to expand NAFTA and will work toward more world trade liberalization. Where there are trade disputes, the government will spare no effort to promote and defend legitimate trade rights and interests". Nice words. Remember that the Liberals in opposition said: "Scrap NAFTA. We do not want anything to do with it". In the last election, they said they were going to amend it to make sure that it fit their philosophy.

As we can see, the Liberals have already moved a long way to acquiescence. After they won the election, they just said: "Where do we sign? Show us the dotted line for NAFTA". According to the throne speech, they are continuing efforts to expand NAFTA and work toward trade liberalization. My goodness, how they change when they get into power.

Of course in the next line the Liberals talk about promoting and defending legitimate Canadian trade rights. We had it right here today. The softwood lumber disputes should have gone to the World Trade Organization for a complete, satisfactory and final resolution but the minister stood up and said: "We got an agreement for five years. Isn't this neat and wonderful?"

We open the newspaper and find out jobs have been lost in rural Ontario. We find out jobs have been lost in rural Alberta. We find out that jobs have been lost in British Columbia. We wonder what the government really means when it talks about defending legitimate Canadian trade rights and jobs, jobs, jobs. We could go on all day.

How about the public pension plan. "The public pension system will be there to support people in their old age", the Liberals said in the throne speech. Within a few weeks thereafter, the Minister of Finance stood up in this House and said that universality for seniors is right out the window.

There will be no more old age security in 2001. There will be no more guaranteed income supplement in the year 2001. The first thousand dollars of pension income tax free is out the window. The age exemption that every senior has enjoyed as a tax reduction on their tax return is out the window.

• (1550)

Instead anybody with any reasonable income of any kind is going to have a 20 per cent additional surtax applied as a clawback on top of normal taxation. If they are in the higher tax brackets their total payment marginal rate to the government can get as high as 75 per cent. And universality is out the window.

Did the Minister of Finance stand up and say that in this House? No. He couched it in nice and wonderful language much like the throne speech and said: "Don't worry, be happy. If you can look after yourself, good, because we cannot afford to do it for you. The Canada pension plan is in trouble. We are going to soak the working people. We are going to take it back from the retired

people. We are going to put the excess in our own jeans rather than saving the Canada pension plan".

That is what we found out in the throne speech. We are still waiting for the legislation. Eight months later and we are still talking about the throne speech. Surely Canadians deserve better. They do deserve better and it is outlined in the fresh start program of the Reform Party that we introduced a few weeks ago.

Rather than taxing seniors more, we are going to give a tax break to every Canadian after the budget is balanced. After the budget is balanced. Please note that we want that job done first and then we will talk about tax breaks. We have laid these things out.

We are going to cut unemployment insurance for employers to create jobs so that they pay the same rate as the employees, a 28 per cent cut. It is going to take this huge surplus in the UI fund and put it right back into the employers' hands because they are the people who create jobs.

We are going to cut the capital gains rate for the entrepreneurs to give them the incentive to create jobs.

We are going to talk about giving every family the opportunity for a deduction for their children in lieu of saying only if their kids are in day care can they claim a tax deduction and therefore they have no choice if they want to reduce their taxes but to put their kids in day care. We want to recognize that it is the parents who choose how to bring up their children. It is not tax policy that dictates how parents shall bring up their children.

These are the things we have introduced in our fresh start program. This fresh start is a new vision of Canada compared to the no vision, the bland statements that are still bland statements eight months later. They were introduced on February 27, 1996 and today in November 1996 they have not moved forward one single inch.

Let that record speak for itself.

**Mr. John Harvard (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to say publicly that I congratulate you on your appointment to the Chair.

I want to make a couple of observations pursuant to what the hon. member has just said. I think all of us would agree that when MPs come to Ottawa one of the most serious and one of the most grave responsibilities they have is to maintain national unity. The last thing we should do is to try to play one province off against another or one region off against another.

Over and over again that is what the Reform Party does. They shirk that responsibility. They love this game of playing one region off against another. In the last few days they have raised the loan to Bombardier and they somehow leave the impression that there is a game of favouritism going on here and that Quebec or the city of

*The Address*

Montreal is being favoured over some other city, some other province, some other region. Nothing could be further from the truth.

It is noted very well on this side of the House that those members in the Reform Party never mention anything about what the federal government has done to support Calgary's bid for the exposition in 2005. The federal government has done everything possible to ensure that the exposition in 2005 comes to the city of Calgary. It has nothing to do with the fact that Calgary is Calgary or that it is in the province of Alberta or in the region called the west. It is a Canadian city. It belongs to all of us, as does Montreal, as does Winnipeg, as does Halifax. And this federal government has a responsibility to support that bid.

• (1555)

My city of Winnipeg, the capital of Manitoba is getting the PanAm Games in 1999. The federal government is supporting that project to the tune of about \$40 million. Do we hear that from the Reform Party? No. We do not hear that from the Reform Party. The Reform Party would rather talk about a loan to Bombardier because that somehow conjures up an image that Quebec is getting something and the west is not.

I am from the west and I am sick and tired of that kind of game which divides this country. It is a game that should stop. Responsible members of the House of Commons would not indulge in that kind of talk. It is injurious to this country. It is very injurious and the sooner we stop it, the better.

**Mr. Williams:** Mr. Speaker, I think that was feigned outrage by the member who is from Winnipeg and from the west.

I do hope since he is from Winnipeg that he stood up and spoke loudly and at length, that he shouted from the rooftops when the CF-18 contract was taken from Winnipeg and given to another part of the country. Everyone knows that Winnipeg was a better bid, a cheaper bid, yet the people in Winnipeg, in his hometown, were denied that contract.

I am glad he raised the issue of unity. There was a referendum in the province of Quebec a year ago last week that we came within half an inch of losing. Why? Because this government sat and did nothing through the entire campaign. It sat on the sidelines and watched the country almost disintegrate because it had no policy whatsoever to deal with that situation.

While the member for Winnipeg St. James talks about the Reform Party and its policies, I have heard nothing about his defending the motion to create a distinct society for part of this country which was introduced last December in this House. In many parts of the country, including Alberta where I am from, that

type of issue would not even be contemplated. Yet it was introduced in this House by his government to divide this country because the west does not like that particular phrase.

The member has the gall to accuse the Reform Party of divisive policies when we see the government he represents standing by without any governance whatsoever and allowing this country to fail both in unity and through the fact that we now have a \$600 billion debt hanging around our necks, courtesy of that government. That type of thing must stop and a fresh start Reform policy will do that.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Nick Discepola (Parliamentary Secretary to Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I too will share my time with a colleague. I would also like to congratulate you on your appointment, Mr. Speaker.

I am also happy to participate in this debate, even though we are speaking about the throne speech that was delivered on February 27, 1996.

The very fact that we are still discussing the throne speech eight months later shows the importance of this document. I see the throne speech as a kind of business plan for the government. The fact that we are still debating this business plan shows how important it is.

With your permission, I will not go over the whole plan but, as my colleague, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works, pointed out, I will address the part of the throne speech dealing with national unity.

• (1600)

Notwithstanding the actions we took in the weeks following the referendum, there remains some confusion, especially in Quebec, on the various measures our government took to try to settle the basic issue of Canadian unity.

There are obstacles, but I listened with interest to the comments made about the throne speech by members of the Bloc Quebecois and the Reform Party, who, I must point out, were nowhere to be seen during the referendum debate. Today, they claim to be concerned about Canadian unity. That is not true. If they were really concerned about Canadian unity, instead of criticizing our government day in and day out and making no proposals to advance the debate on Canadian unity, they would have expended their energy on settling the matter and especially on trying to convince our colleagues and fellow citizens in western Canada to make an effort to understand a little better what Quebec has been seeking for so long.

It was clearly specified in the throne speech.

*The Address**[English]*

We were very clear in the speech from the throne what this government wanted to do. The Reform Party member who spoke prior to me stated that we have no vision of Canada, that we have no plan for Canada. Nothing could be further from the truth. I question, based on his intervention, whether he even took the time to read the speech from the throne.

As I said in French, the speech from the throne is a blueprint of where our government wants to take this country. In the speech from the throne we talk about modernizing the federation. More important, we talk about the different areas of responsibilities that our government is willing to withdraw from.

I want to quote from the speech from the throne concerning the areas which have been a sore point for most provinces. The throne speech states: "The government will not use its spending power to create new shared cost programs in areas of exclusive provincial jurisdiction without the consent of the majority of the provinces, and any new program will be designed so that non-participating provinces will be compensated provided they establish similar programs in their province".

In the province of Quebec this has been a very sore point for many years. Traditional past governments, in order to penetrate or impede on some provincial jurisdiction, would through their spending powers introduce their own programs and thereby bypass the province totally.

Our government was clear. We wrote it down. We stated that we will no longer do that. Why? We feel we have to work with the provinces because they are our partners. We cannot always look at the other levels of government as our enemies. If we are going to get Canada back on track, as we have done over the past two or three years, of which I am very proud, we are going to have to take new initiatives and work with the provinces.

We also stated in the speech from the throne that the government will work the provinces and Canadians to develop agreed upon values and principles to underlie the social union and to explore new approaches to decision making in social policies. That is very clear.

The Reform Party says we do not want to do anything and that we are not working with the provinces. The newly appointed Minister of Human Resources Development has spent a considerable amount of time, as did his predecessors, in negotiating manpower training with the provinces. It is a long process, but we made the ground rules and the blueprints in our speech from the throne which lay out very clearly where we are headed.

In essence, what we are saying is: "Hey, provinces, we are willing to work with you. Let us sit down and define which level of government is best able to deliver the services". After all, there is only one taxpayer in this country. Whether it is a municipal

government, a provincial government, a federal government or even a school board, there is still only one taxpayer. Quite often these levels ignore that fact.

• (1605)

What we are saying is that we should look at the powers. We are looking at the responsibilities. We said it again in the speech from the throne. The government is prepared to withdraw totally from some sectors.

The government is going to withdraw from manpower training. That is well under way and in the province of Quebec it has been accepted with open arms. The government is also willing to withdraw from areas such as social housing, mining, sports and recreation.

The government has worked with the provinces on these matters, but there are probably some jurisdictions that it needs to retain, such as the environment. Obviously, pollution does not stop at a provincial border. The rivers which are polluted do not stop at a provincial border. The federal government still has to be responsible to a certain degree.

Tourism and food inspection are two others areas in which the federal government is willing to work with the provinces.

What we said in the speech from the throne is that we are prepared to renew the federation. It is incumbent—and the proof is in the longevity of our beautiful country—on every generation to look at Canada and to mould it for its needs and for the needs of future generations. That is what our blueprint states.

I would like to touch on the different things that we have done to respond to the commitments made by our Prime Minister in the weeks preceding the referendum. Again, most people seem to have forgotten them rather quickly.

During the referendum we promised that we would transfer manpower training to the provinces. We have done that. We delivered on that promise.

We promised to recognize regional vetoes. I recall very vividly that debate. I was out west at that point in time. I remember that British Columbians felt they were a separate area and that they should be recognized as a region. Our government listened. Instead of creating four regional vetoes, we went ahead and recognized five regional vetoes. We gave all the regions a veto. Quebec, after all, is the only province that had constitutional change imposed on it against its will.

I have one minute left. I will take that very important minute to appeal to my western colleagues to work with our government. They can use whatever phrase they want. The Liberal Party chose to use distinct society. Let us try to work together to recognize the distinct reality of Quebec. One has to be blind not to recognize that



*The Address*

Quebec has a different language and a different culture. Let us work together to enshrine that in the Constitution.

Yes, we did make exceptions for provinces. British Columbia, for example, in order to join Confederation, required that the national railway be built. In 1892 that dream was realized. Where would British Columbia be today if that dream had never been fulfilled?

If there were only eight residents on Prince Edward Island, all eight would either be senators or members of Parliament. We recognize that even a small province can contribute to Canada.

I make an appeal to the premiers of the provinces to work with our government. I make an appeal for all parties to work with our government to solve the Canadian unity problem once and for all.

[Translation]

**Mr. Nic Leblanc (Longueuil, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question or two for the hon. member for Vaudreuil, one of those members who have frequently raised the fact that political uncertainty was disastrous for Quebec in terms of attracting investments in the province.

I should point out to him that, just today, an announcement was made that a Swedish company will be investing \$300 million in pharmaceutical research in the Montreal area, probably in or around my riding.

If political uncertainty has such a disastrous effect—and perhaps he could address this in his response—it certainly is not political uncertainty caused by separatists, as he puts it, that adversely affects investment.

• (1610)

I would say that the Liberal government's attitude is much more detrimental. On November 5, Claude Piché wrote in *La Presse* that it was strictly an irrational excuse on the part of the Liberals to claim that investments were not coming in as they should in Quebec because of the political uncertainty caused by the separatists, when in fact it was just the opposite.

The problem is due to the fact that the federal government itself would have everyone believe that the lack of investment is due to political uncertainty and the sovereigntist cause.

It is absolutely not true and I would like him to say so, because, if he is serious about wanting to help the people he represents—I think he speaks mainly for the people of Montreal and Quebec, given that he was elected by the people of Quebec—perhaps he should stop talking about political uncertainty and start creating an atmosphere to counter such a perception by investors, because this is strictly a matter of perception.

The perception does not match the reality. There is no survey indicating that political uncertainty in Quebec adversely affects investment. He should say so publicly—I sincerely hope he

will—if he is serious about wanting to help the people of Montreal. That is my first point.

My second is the Bombardier investment issue, that the hon. members from western Canada keep raising. The problem, really, is the way the Liberals have announced it. The Prime Minister himself came to Montreal to announce that he was lending \$87 million to Bombardier.

In fact, it is a loan equivalent to about six or seven million dollars per year, over a few years. As far as I know, never before has a Prime Minister made a trip with his ministers to announce with great pomp annual subsidies of \$7 million to a major company such as Bombardier, when the economic spin-offs will be much greater than the \$7 million in question.

The problem that westerners face has to do with the way the Liberals came with great pomp to Montreal to announce what was in fact a loan of \$87 million. It is a loan and this is fine. I have nothing against it.

The problem is the way it was announced. The government misled people from the west by making them believe it was a huge subsidy, but it is not the case. I would appreciate it if the hon. member for Vaudreuil would explain it, to correct the false impression created by the fact that the Prime Minister came with great pomp and that the Minister of Industry said the government was giving \$87 million. The government is not giving \$87 million; it will give about \$7 million per year, taking interest rates into account, for a few years. The hon. member should set the record straight.

**The Speaker:** I would ask the hon. member for Vaudreuil to provide a brief response.

**Mr. Discepola:** Mr. Speaker, I will not have time to deal with the two questions in a brief response. I will discuss the issue of political uncertainty and its effect on the economy of Montreal and of the province as a whole.

The member for Longueuil only has to walk or drive through the streets of Montreal to see the devastating effects that this region has had to put up with for a long time. I am proud of the measures recently announced by our government to help Montreal's economy. It is sad and deplorable that the Quebec premier did not invite the federal government to the socio-economic summit. If he cared about Quebec's interests, he would at least have invited the federal government. Yet, Bloc Quebecois members are asking us why we do not do more for Montreal.

We are not the ones dreaming in technicolour, it is Bloc Quebecois members and separatists. The facts speak for themselves. Let us take a look at the unemployment rate. It is no coincidence. After all, we have the same policies for Quebec as for other provinces, and for Montreal as for other major cities. We do not devise policies to punish Quebec.

*The Address*

We must ask ourselves why the unemployment rate is two points higher in the Montreal region. The Canadian average is around 9.6 per cent, while the rate for Quebec is 12.6 per cent.

Why is it that the uncertainty affects the Quebec and Canadian economies indirectly and directly? It is not good for Quebec and it is not good for Canada. I hope some day they understand that.

[English]

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Winnipeg St. James will have the floor. It is my understanding that the hon. member will be speaking for 10 minutes.

• (1615)

**Mr. John Harvard (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Vaudreuil for allowing me to share his time in reply to the throne speech. I would like to pledge my co-operation to my hon. colleague from Vaudreuil as he makes every effort to strengthen Quebec's position and place in this federation.

I have recognized in working in the national capital as a federal member of Parliament that we are all family and we are all Canadians. Quebecers are as much Canadians as Albertans or as Manitobans. We are all family. We have our own peculiar problems and our own unique concerns. All of us have a responsibility to work together so we can tackle these problems wherever they might be found, in Quebec, British Columbia or wherever.

We know that the economy of the province of Quebec is in serious trouble, especially on the island of Montreal. We as good Canadians should do everything possible to revive that economy. The stronger the Quebec economy is, the stronger our national economy is. That applies to every province and region in the country.

The member from Vaudreuil mentioned that the 1996 throne speech had a vision of renewing the federation, and that is very true. Its main thrust was renewing the federation. Renewing the federation comes in many manifestations. For example, getting our fiscal house in order was and is part of that vision. Cleaning up the fiscal mess in the national capital is part of that vision. Without stabilizing the government and our national finances, everything else is put into question, everything else is put at risk. As part of that vision, as enunciated in the throne speech, it was so important to talk about and to address this problem of our national fiscal situation.

When this government came to office in the fall of 1993 the deficit was in excess of \$40 billion, maybe even in excess of \$45 billion. That is a lot of money. Something had to be done because without addressing that deficit, other things that this government

wanted to do would not be possible. So our finance minister went to work aggressively and established a course that he has followed. He has followed that course assiduously and without any deviation. In that process and by not deviating he has established credibility. When he sets out to do something, he means it.

He started with a target to reduce the deficit to 3 per cent of the gross domestic product, and he has done that. He has now reset his target at 2 per cent, and it is not going to be long before it will be 1 per cent of the GDP. It will not be that long before there is no deficit at all.

Not only is the deficit being brought down quite rapidly but in the process the debt is being tackled. The finance minister announced a few days ago that come fiscal year 1998 there will no longer be a need for borrowing new money. That is success.

The debt is far too high, in the neighbourhood of \$600 billion. Our interest charges are neighbouring \$50 billion and that is far too much and has to be brought under control.

• (1620)

However, the finance minister has established credibility. He has shown that he can get the job done, and Canadians believe him and support him. I know it is going to be done. As a result of his doing a good job interest rates have come down to the lowest we have seen in almost 40 years. Our interest rates are lower than those in the United States. With interest rates as low as they are it makes buying a car a possibility, a probability. It means more and more Canadians are able to buy new homes or repair their homes or get a mortgage because of the low interest rates. We have had considerable success on that financial front.

That was part of the vision as outlined in the 1996 throne speech. However, there was far more to that vision than just cleaning up the fiscal mess. The throne speech mentioned technology partnerships. Nowadays it seems that wherever we turn we are confronted with new technologies. It is part of globalization and part of the new world order, technology and computers. For a lot of us who were raised a good many years ago, a lot of this new technology is perhaps beyond us. However, this government realizes that we are in a new technological world and we had better observe the necessities of the new technological age.

That is why the Minister of Industry has worked very aggressively on working with technology firms. Through his good work he has developed all kinds of technology partnerships. The government has contributed about \$250 million toward technology partnerships. That will further technological innovation and it will strengthen the economy. It means creating jobs, which is being done already.

Notwithstanding the unacceptable unemployment rate in this country, a lot of new jobs are being created, especially in technology firms. This government has created over 600,000 jobs and I

*The Address*

expect better things to come. I expect those better things to come as early next year, 1997.

Also part of the throne speech vision was youth services. The government has found additional money for youth services. Right now there are about 35,000 Canadian youths involved in apprenticeship programs which is a real opportunity for young people to move from secondary education, high school and other educational institutions into the workplace. It is an ideal opportunity for young people to make the transition from their lives of education to the workplace. I believe our youth policy is working.

Maintaining medicare is part of the vision of the throne speech. Canadians believe very strongly in medicare and want this government to maintain it. I can assure members that we are going to maintain it and adhere to the five basic principles of the medicare system. We are not going to let the medicare system slip away.

It should be observed that in the last budget brought down by the finance minister he put a so-called cash floor so that the support for medicare would be maintained.

I could go on and on but I know I am out of time. However, I think the throne speech of 1996 has a well rounded vision. It is about renewing the federation. It is about strengthening the government. It is about getting government right. It is about serving Canadians much better than they have been in recent years.

• (1625)

**Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I have been sitting here all afternoon listening to the various statements and comments with regard to the throne speech and I have a few comments of my own.

I was a teacher, before I came to this House, for almost 25. I have been a parent for almost all that time. I have met people from across the entire country since coming here and previously and a lot of the remarks that I have today in response to all the speakers who have been on this afternoon come from that.

There is one group of people in this country that I think is the key to the future. Despite all the rhetoric we hear, the government gives the impression that children come first but its policies and its legislation contradict this. That group of people that I think we must consider first and foremost in all the things we do is our children.

Liberal crime bills are very often merely job creation programs for lawyers. Liberal tax policies have forced both parents out of the home in order to avoid poverty. Liberal social engineering programs cause education, health, justice and social program costs to escalate. But the most horrific aspect of the Liberal policies, and the throne speech is an example of that, is they cause violent crime to increase, and our kids will pay a terrible cost.

What is the best crime prevention strategy that we could implement? It is simply to give children back their parents. This is the basis of Reform's fresh start family issues policy.

Let us look at education. The first and best teacher a child could ever have is a loving, caring parent. If we look at justice the best strategy for preventing violent crime is one that encourages bonding between a child and a parent. If we look at health care, the best health care program is one that starts at home with proper emotional development. If we look at social programs, the best social program is one in which taxes are lowered to the point where one job will provide for the needs of the family. It is common sense. It is simple.

When voters examine our fresh start platform they will see that Reform is the family friendly party. The party that puts kids first will do more to make society safer, improve health and education and reduce social program costs than all the big Liberal spending programs.

**Mr. Harvard:** Mr. Speaker, I found the hon. member's remarks interesting. I wish I could believe everything he has been saying. On the one hand he talks about the Reform Party being a family friendly party. Yet day in and day out in this House what do members of the Reform Party talk about? They talk about the criminal justice system. They talk about the spectacular cases that come up from time to time. They tell the government how we have to get tough on the young people of today, that we have to throw them into jail, that we have to lock the jail doors and throw the key away.

What the Reform Party talks about is all we have to do when it comes to youth crime is just write another law, add an amendment to the Young Offenders Act. We do not have to strengthen families. We do not have to help families that find themselves in a dysfunctional way. Oh no, just write a law and strengthen the justice system and maybe get rid of the Young Offenders Act. Not only that, but maybe we can even start charging young kids of nine and ten years of age with crimes.

That is what members of the Reform Party talk about.

• (1630)

Reformers do that every day in this House, and now the member for Yorkton—Melville comes along and says that his party is a family friendly party. I have two words: get serious.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Nic Leblanc (Longueuil, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak to the address in reply to the throne speech, although I find it a bit odd to do so now, since the speech was given on February 27, 1996 and it is now mid-November. I suppose the government, which controls the program in this House, did not want us speaking about the throne speech when it realized it had not met the objectives it set for itself.

*The Address*

I have been here for 12 years, and although I do not recall what happened other years, it seems to me it has taken a while to get to the throne speech. If we had spoken about it in March, April, May perhaps, I would understand. But it is now November. My birthday is November 15 and I did not think I would be speaking about it so close to my birthday. I would have liked to speak about it much earlier.

The throne speech dealt with research and development, science and technology. The government said it would take steps to improve promotion of science and technology, and research and development in order to encourage job creation. It also said it would pay particular attention to the political uncertainty hanging over Quebec.

It also talked about improving free trade with the United States and Mexico, and mentioned NAFTA and a climate favourable to economic growth. These were the main points covered in the throne speech. Unfortunately, this is not exactly what is being done.

With respect to research and development, this morning I listened to experts and representatives of certain departments and Canadian institutions appearing before the industry committee. They seemed quite discouraged by the fact that the government was reducing research and development budgets. In my view and in the view of a number of people who know a little bit about economy and a country's economic performance, research and development is vital. It is something that must not be neglected.

We must always keep a keen eye on a government's obligations regarding education, training, research, and assistance to businesses so that we can operate more economically and be more productive. All this concerns the production environment in a capitalist system like the one in which we live.

People need training in order to be more effective. They need to be healthier, better educated. There must be more applied research that is more closely related to business needs. The purpose of all this is to provide a better standard of living for Quebec and for Canada.

This is, however, not what is happening. Since the Liberals have been in power, there is more unemployment, more people on welfare, things are going from bad to worse. Every day we have to motivate people, to give them faith in the future. At the present time, there is a little glimmer of hope, a minimal rate of growth.

Great attention must be given to everything related to research and development, educational levels, health, products, pure science, so that we can keep up with the growing international competition in the market place.

There are some who think that international competition is somewhat vulgar, bad capitalism, but it is nonetheless a reality. The

reality is that we have decided to open up markets with the United States first, and then with Mexico. Now we are trying to open up markets with Israel, a small country, but still this demonstrates the desire to open up markets.

● (1635)

The countries of Asia and the Pacific have the same desire to open up markets in order to communicate, to do business together. This seems to me to be a good thing for humanity. The greatest opportunities to meet and to dialogue are always available in trade and in business.

I have seen this in the few trips to Africa I have had the opportunity to take. Several of our experts told us that trade was the route by which we will manage to get to know each other and to do business together. Not in the crass capitalist sense of the word, but rather in the sense of having trade exchanges in which the interests of all partners are served. And when people's interests are served, they make an effort to understand each other and get along better, so that gradually, we are better able to live together in peace and harmony. We might have fewer wars and fewer conflicts if we are more open to the world.

Since we know there is an advantage to being open to the world, for the reasons I just mentioned, the Canadian government must co-operate with business, universities, unions and everybody else, whether we are talking about human, scientific or other research, to help us draw on the resources we need to develop our own potential and help others do that as well, whether we are talking about trade, productivity, health care, education, or other sectors. This is all very important.

The government must also be fair. So far, I can tell you the government has not been fair in the way it distributes spending on research and development and science and technology among the provinces.

In 1989, I chaired a committee when I was with the previous government in power. It produced a report. At the time, we noticed that when officials of Statistics Canada evaluated how federal spending on research and development and science and technology was distributed, they always excluded the National Capital Region, which greatly distorts the results.

For instance, if we ask Statistics Canada: "Are your own employees distributed equitably among the provinces?", Statistics Canada answers: "Yes, we do a good job of distributing our staff". So I asked them in a committee in 1989, and this was quite sometime ago: "How are Statistics Canada employees distributed across Canada?" They told me: "They are very well distributed, we have about 150 in Quebec, 185 in Ontario, about 85 in the West and 40 or so in the Maritimes". I said: "How many employees do you have together?" I was told: "We have around 4,500 or 5,000

*The Address*

employees". I said: "Where are the others, I counted only around 700 or 800"? They told me: "The others are in Ottawa".

So there were around 3,500 or 4,000 in Ottawa and furthermore, Ontario had 185, and Ottawa is in Ontario.

This is just an example. So when Statistics Canada provides statistics, they are completely distorted because they exclude the National Capital Region, which is concentrated mostly or at least 80 per cent in Ontario.

Imagine what that represents. I did a calculation, and with unanimous consent, I shall if I may table this document in the House for information purposes.

[*English*]

**The Speaker:** The hon. member is asking for the unanimous consent of the House. Does the hon. member have the consent of the House to move the motion?

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Speaker:** There is not unanimous consent.

• (1640)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Leblanc (Longueuil):** Mr. Speaker, this shows that the Liberals do not want to know the reality and the truth. It is that simple. In any case, this has already been made public, but I still wanted to table this document and ask the government if it could enlighten me about the direction of the changes reflected in this document—for the Liberals' information, I will get back to this document later—and whether these changes were going in the right or the wrong direction.

In 1989, I commissioned and participated in a study on science and technology. Including the national capital region in the statistics is no simple matter. There are some 75 research and development programs in science and technology, and about 20 departments are involved. So for each department and program, we had to calculate what the federal government spent in the national capital region. This is important. It had been done before, but I had never seen the figures, and I wanted to find out for myself. This exercise showed us there is no equity.

In 1989, Ontario, including the national capital region, received \$1.9 billion for science and technology, compared to \$724 million for Quebec. This means that Ontario received \$1.2 billion more per year than Quebec in federal spending. Even though 36 per cent of the population then lived in Ontario, while Quebec's share was 26 per cent, the difference was enormous.

The point I was trying to make earlier, to tie in with research and development, is that there was a \$700 million discrepancy in that

area, for a total of almost \$2 billion per year in science and technology, and research and development.

What this means is that Ontario was getting \$2 billion more every year. I am not saying this only for Ontario, but for all the other Canadian provinces that are disadvantaged by this. A large percentage of the \$2 billion invested each year on science and technology—given how many jobs for scientists and experts there are in that area—is spent on salaries.

Let us take a look at the economic spinoffs in Ontario. First, there are taxes paid on the products, houses and other goods purchased in the province. You can imagine the magnitude. I am strictly speaking in terms of science and technology, and research and development. Two billion dollars generate substantial economic spinoffs in a province.

That is precisely why, a few years ago, I had suggested that the national capital region be considered a province in that respect and that the federal government keep the taxes collected in the region. It would have been fairer. But the government will hear nothing of it, because this benefits Ontario greatly. The fact that Ontario has always been richer than most Canadian provinces explains the presence of the federal government in the national capital region, where it spends tremendous amounts of money.

This is all explained in the document I wish I could have tabled, so that government members could take a look at it, but I will find another way to get it to them.

This goes to show that, when, in the speech from the throne, the government claims to want to be fair and equitable, to encourage harmony, to anticipate political uncertainty, it should start by being fair and equitable to the provinces, including Quebec, until it becomes sovereign.

My other point also concerns research and development, as I said earlier. By the way, our leader is welcome to come and visit the Tokamak facilities in Varennes next week. It is a nuclear fusion research centre. The nuclear industry is a clean industry that can be established within city limits; it really is tomorrow's source of energy. The federal government has decided to withdraw from this project.

• (1645)

I invite you to visit the Tokamak project, in Varennes. It is an extraordinarily modern facility that is the result of a partnership involving Europe, Japan and the United States, and where research is conducted on nuclear fusion, a form of energy for the future.

Electricity is produced with turbines, and power will come from the fusion that generates the heat. It is thousands of times more efficient than uranium and other sources of energy. This is not an imaginary thing. It is said that this form of energy will be available in 10 to 15 years.

*The Address*

The materials created and developed through this research allow companies from the Montreal region and elsewhere to build high performance products that they would not otherwise be able to make.

The chief executive officer of the company says that a large number of products sold are the result of the research conducted at Tokamak. This means that financial spin-offs for the federal government are greater than the \$7 million it is currently investing in this program, but does not intend to reinvest next year.

I do not know how the federal government does its evaluations but, by ending this annual investment of \$7 million, it not only jeopardizes the very important development of nuclear fusion, it also loses potential revenues for itself. This is really a bad calculation.

It is true that the \$7 million invested in nuclear fusion research at Tokamak came from the Atomic Energy of Canada Limited. AECL was competing against Ontario's oil and uranium industries. The Minister of Natural Resources said the project was not one of her priorities. I realize it is not one of her priorities because she must first protect the oil and uranium industries, not this new form of energy called nuclear energy.

The Minister of Industry should subsidize Tokamak, since he does not have to protect other forms of energy. He is neutral in this respect. The Minister of Industry should subsidize Tokamak. I am making this request in all honesty; I am not playing politics. I believe the federal government is making a fundamental mistake by ceasing to invest a mere \$7 million per year in the Tokamak project. This is very important.

I would also like to talk about the whole issue of drugs. I remember all our efforts to attract medical research investors. We worked very hard. That was the first time I saw scientists travel to Ottawa to demonstrate against the opposition. There was a delegation of close to 200 scientists and researchers, primarily from the Montreal area, who came to demonstrate in favour of the government and against the opposition, which wanted to block passage of Bill C-22 concerning drug research.

The Liberals were then in opposition and they vigorously opposed the bill. We were calling for the protection of patents. We wanted to give some protection to those doing drug research and development so that they could justify their investments.

Mr. Trudeau had allowed drugs to be copied after five years. Companies doing drug research were forced to go out of business. Office buildings and research centres, particularly in the Montreal area, had to close their doors.

• (1650)

Hundreds of jobs were lost. Hundreds of millions of dollars left the country, and the Conservatives of the time wanted to get them

back. Hundreds of millions of dollars came back into the country to be invested once again in the Montreal area, because there are many very competent people doing drug research there.

As recently as this morning, we learned that the Swedish company Astra is going to invest in the Montreal area. This will be the first time that this Swedish company has invested abroad, \$300 million over a ten year period, for drug research.

Lately, we have learned to be very wary of the government. I have met people who lobby in Ottawa. They are in favour of Bill C-22 and C-91. They have doubts about the present Liberal government, which intends to reduce the number of years during which drugs are protected.

[English]

**Mr. Harold Culbert (Carleton—Charlotte, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to join in the debate this afternoon on the speech from the throne. The throne speech outlined many initiatives which the government would carry forward this year and into the future.

It reflected what has been said in the House on many occasions, in statements by the Prime Minister and many ministers in the House and elsewhere that the number one priority of the government was, is and continues to be economic growth and jobs for Canadians.

One of the most important initiatives in the speech from the throne was to get government right, to continue to bring order to our financial house and to meet or exceed our deficit reduction targets, targets that the government has met or exceeded to date and will continue for the balance of this year and for 1997 and 1998, reaching a reduced deficit target of \$9 billion in fiscal year 1998-99. This has resulted in the lowest interest rates we have seen in the country for decades and at the same time a low rate of inflation.

It has prompted an increase in small business and industry in Canada which has resulted in hundreds of thousands of new jobs being created. Getting the deficit on a downward trend toward a balanced budget and our financial house in order is also the best protection for our cherished social programs such as the national medicare system and the protection of pensions for those Canadians depending on this important made in Canada program.

Let me talk a bit about economic growth and the enthusiasm for business, industry and the associated jobs with the same in my constituency of Carleton—Charlotte.

• (1655)

Earlier this summer I had the pleasure of attending the official opening of the new, expanded Sabian cymbal plant in the small community of Meductic, New Brunswick. This new, enlarged and modern facility means an additional 12 to 15 new jobs immediately. As a result of these wonderful cymbal producers who export throughout the world and are marketing what is proclaimed to be

*The Address*

the best or one of the best cymbal products known throughout the world is something to take a lot of pride in.

Also earlier this past early summer McCain Foods in Florenceville, New Brunswick announced the expansion of its data processing centre to double its size, meaning another new 30 to 50 jobs. That is confidence when we see this happening.

In Centreville, New Brunswick, another small community in my Carleton—Charlotte constituency, Canusa Foods announced and began construction of a new potato processing plant, meaning another 25 to 30 new jobs that were not there before.

In Woodstock, New Brunswick, Penn Papers is expanding its processing manufacturing plant which certainly means many new jobs.

Last week in the village of McAdam, New Brunswick I had the opportunity to participate in the announcement that the former railway station would be turned over to the community by the Southern New Brunswick Railway Company and by the Irving family. This is a very picturesque railway station and something of which we can be proud as part of our Canadian heritage.

What does it mean to the village of McAdam and surrounding area? It means that it is the focal point for the tourism industry, and I might say year round tourism industry, the focal point for the lakes, the beautiful eco-tourism industry of that whole surrounding area.

Imagine, in a small community, over 800 people came out for the official announcement. They had waited years for this to happen. This did not just start yesterday. It started many years ago. I certainly was delighted to be part of it. What does it mean? It means new and additional jobs for that whole region.

Briggs and Little in York Mills, New Brunswick is a yarn company which is famous across Canada. It will be opening its new plant this month which produces woollen yarns that are used in products across this country. It will see an additional 25, perhaps 30 jobs as a result of this opening. It is a new modern plant, with modern machinery and modern technology to meet today's demands.

• (1700)

Earlier this week, this very week, I had the opportunity to participate in the official opening of Apocan Inc., an antimony mine in the Lake George area of New Brunswick. Some 75 new direct jobs have been created. The mushrooming effect of this antimony mine will produce additional jobs in trucking and other services throughout the community.

What is antimony? In the very early days it was used in the mixture of medicines. Later it was used as a component in the production of alloys. While it is still used to a small extent in those areas today, one of its major purposes now is as a fire retardant. It is

used in many of our homes in such things as draperies, carpeting, even in our clothing because of its fire resistant qualities.

The projections are that the use of this product will increase at a rate of 8 per cent a year for each year in the foreseeable future. Therefore I am optimistic that those 75 jobs announced this very week will continue to expand to become 100, 150 or 200 jobs in future years. They in turn will have the spin-off effect of creating jobs in service industries to support them.

In St. Stephen the famous Ganong Brothers chocolate plant is working at full capacity at the present time. It is working on its Christmas production of those famous chocolates that are in demand not only in Canada but in many parts of the world.

Connors Brothers which operates fish processing and packing plants in Blacks Harbour, Back Bay and Seal Cove has certainly seen increased production this year and the important jobs associated with that.

Agriculture, the traditional fishery, aquaculture, forestry, literally hundreds of small businesses and industries of all sizes are working hard across Carleton—Charlotte, and indeed across New Brunswick, in order to profit, expand and provide hundreds of new jobs.

There are challenges with the new technologies and the changing requirements of today. There is no question that much work still has to be done, but these new technological requirements are being met today and will continue to be met into the future. There are a few examples which were just announced this week by Industry Canada.

There is support for the community access sites. I can refer to those in my constituency and others may want to talk about those in their constituencies because this is good stuff. These are great opportunities for our communities and our youngsters. New technology, new opportunities to connect with the world marketplace are at our doorstep.

Announcements were made for new community access sites in St. Stephen, St. George, Fredericton Junction, Florenceville and Hartland, New Brunswick. These announcements on this three year program are in addition to the ones that were made last year for community access opportunities in Juniper, Bath, Woodstock, Harvey, Lawrence Station, Deer Island, Campobello Island and St. Andrews.

• (1705)

The program provides all of those communities and indeed all of those rural areas with the tools to reach out to the markets and to the information that is available around the world. That is what the throne speech was about: equal access for all Canadians. Regardless of whether they live on Prince Edward Island, in New Brunswick, in the wonderful province of Quebec, on the west coast,

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in central Canada or in the Northwest Territories and Yukon, there will be equal access and equal opportunity for all Canadians.

That is why leading economists and even the OECD have projected that in 1997 Canada will lead all G-7 nations in economic growth. Canada will lead all of the industrialized countries of the world in economic growth. What does that mean for Canadians? It means jobs. That is why we are excited about it. It will mean jobs for all Canadians.

I see my colleague across the way from St. John's, Newfoundland. She is excited because there will be an opportunity for her constituents to get jobs. Jobs are needed in Atlantic Canada, there is no question about it.

Yes, we have challenges and we will continue to have challenges. But we will meet tomorrow's challenges as we have in the past. We did not say it was going to be easy and that the solutions would simply fall at our feet. It has been tough work.

On arriving here we faced a \$42 billion deficit. The debt was over \$500 billion. There was a \$6 billion deficit in the unemployment insurance fund. It went on and on. When we opened the books it was scary. Yes, there is still a way to go. There is no question about it. But is it not great to see our deficit on a downward trend? We can look forward to a balanced budget. That is exciting stuff.

What is being said about Canadian exports? We know that team Canada is planning another trip. Business and industry leaders, the Prime Minister and the premiers will get together to travel overseas to create more opportunities for Canadian business and industry. That is being planned for early 1997. What does that mean to us as Canadians? We are told that every \$1 billion of export trade that is garnered means 11,000 jobs for Canadians, either in new jobs or existing jobs which will be protected. That is important.

Almost every day in the newspapers the leading economists write that Canada will lead in economic growth in 1997. That is the result of getting government right. That is the result of bringing down the deficit. That is the result of having an acceptable inflation rate. That is the result of good administration and hard work. It will continue from this time onward until the next throne speech and thereafter.

• (1710)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. André Caron (Jonquière, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I congratulate the hon. member for Carleton—Charlotte on his speech. It is a very fine Liberal speech. He has listed for us the things that are going well in his riding, and the things that are going a bit better in

Canada with respect to putting our finances in order and reducing the deficit.

What struck me at the beginning of his speech was his reference to three objectives in the throne speech: getting government right, bringing order to our financial house, and reducing the deficit.

I wish to address the first point. I think he perhaps did not speak much on it: getting government right. There is much talk of this, in the newspapers, in books, in magazine articles. They all say the state must change, must be defined differently.

Our Reform colleagues often tell us that we need less and less government, that the state has no role in certain economic or social areas. On the other hand, it ought to play a heavy role in suppressing crime, and other such things.

The question I would like to ask my colleague is not a loaded one. I would just like to know how much it can be claimed that the Canadian government has re-examined the role of the state since the Governor General's reading of the Throne Speech? Does this mean less involvement in the economy, less involvement in social measures? Does it mean government involvement in job creation?

Reference is often made to job creation, and sometimes the impression is given that the government is boasting of having created jobs. There is talk of 600,000 jobs, yet certain ministers sometimes tell us that the government is no longer the one creating jobs, it is business.

Having made these few comments, I wish to ask the following question: How has the federal government met the objective it set for itself in the throne speech to get government right? How has it re-examined the role of government, and what are the differences today between the federal government's concept of government before the throne speech, and now, five or six months later?

[*English*]

**Mr. Culbert:** Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague from the Bloc for his many questions. There were a number of them and I will try to answer them in the order that he put them forward.

The member talked about rethinking government. As all government members are well aware, since arriving in this place we certainly have been rethinking government. We have been looking at the size of all departments.

The first thing I recall being done upon arriving here was reducing the number of staff members in ministers' offices. Many offices in the junior portfolios had 50 to 60 staff members and the senior portfolios had from 100 to 120 staff members. Those offices are now working with 15 to 20 staff members. We are rethinking, taking the challenge first.



*The Address*

The hon. member will know that the budget of every member of Parliament was frozen. Government members and opposition members alike, we all shared in it because it was a burden and we had to overcome it.

• (1715)

There have been a number of those initiatives to build a smaller and more active oriented government that can provide services to people.

This was done in balanced fashion. We protected those social programs that I spoke about earlier and a number of others that we and our constituents across Canada cherish in this country. We did not cut and slash and say they would be gone tomorrow, as others have suggested we do. We looked at their value and tried to make the difficult changes in a very balanced fashion that would be respected by all Canadians.

Industry, business and job growth were mentioned. I think all members see that it is our responsibility to develop and take the initiatives that will build the climate in which business and industry in this country can expand and develop, thus creating the jobs that are needed for Canadians, creating jobs in the new technologies that we know are developing right here in the city of Ottawa. It is happening right under our noses. We heard one of our colleagues speak about it this morning.

It is also happening elsewhere in Canada in many small communities. I spoke earlier about the importance of community access so that rural communities would be on the same level as our urban areas. Those are the important things.

I would like to give a quick example. Some of it has been tabled in the House and some of it will be coming. We know in agriculture and fisheries how important our inspections are to ensure that we have the best product to export around the world. Whether it is in agriculture, fisheries or whatever product we are producing it seemed to put them under one umbrella, a new agency that will have the expertise and the most modern technology to ensure that our product is the number one quality in the world. Those are the types of things that will help us to continue our growth in the export trade and continue making Canada number one in the world.

**Mr. Jake E. Hoepfner (Lisgar—Marquette, Ref.):** Madam Speaker, I think seeing the member for Carleton—Charlotte sitting there with his hon. colleague from Malpeque I would have to ask one simple question about the Canadian Wheat Board.

Hearing the member talk about all the expertise in communications that we have today, I am wondering why the Canadian Wheat Board sold less grain than in the previous year. Why, when there was a tremendous need in the U.S, did we sell half a million tonnes less into that market? Now we have a record carry-over in durum and also some feed grains.

It was very interesting to read in the papers recently what the priorities of this Liberal government are. When a motion or a resolution was brought forward to its policy convention supporting the Canadian Wheat Board it was side tracked by a motion to legalize the production of hemp. One of the reporters said: "Instead of supporting the wheat board we can now legally smoke a rope". I am wondering if that is supposed to soothe the nerves of western farmers, with Liberal philosophy of that sort, so that we can sit quietly at the end of the field and more or less smoke a couple of ropes and not realize that our grain is still in the bins instead of being sold. I wonder how the hon. member would respond to that.

**Mr. Culbert:** Madam Speaker, I will try to be as brief as possible. I thank my hon. colleague from the Reform Party for his question.

I recall in all the east coast literature I have read over many years and all of the programs I have seen on television that people around the world have exclaimed time and time again what a wonderful organization the Canadian Wheat Board must be because it continues to bring revenue for western farmers in Canada.

• (1720)

It has, time and time again, shown that it could bring more revenue than those selling on an independent basis in many other countries, many other wheat producers around the world.

Yes, there are problems. The hon. minister, time and time again, has alluded to those problems and is looking at ways to make it better. It has a wonderful history. I am glad to see it is going to continue to expand and prosper for all farmers in western Canada in the future.

**Mr. David Chatters (Athabasca, Ref.):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to join the debate today. I am a little surprised that we are continuing only on the fifth day of debate on the speech from the throne, considering it is nine months since the speech was given. Perhaps it speaks volumes about the worth of the words in the speech from the throne and the integrity of the government in implementing some of those ideas.

I listened with considerable amusement to the former speaker because it was such a typical Liberal speech. The Liberals, in the last three years since I have been here, truly have been masters of governing by illusion and creating an illusion of doing great things when the facts do not bear those things out.

Truly, what could we expect from a party whose leader has an imaginary friend he talks to on the street corner and has imaginary ethical guidelines that his ministers go by? It would only stand to reason that we would have an imaginary report card on the performance of this government giving it an honours score when, in reality, the facts do not bear it out in any way.

*The Address*

I would like to go through some of the facts and statistics that would paint a somewhat different picture than what I have heard coming from the members of the Liberal Party.

The speech from the throne, as a previous speaker indicated, kind of took a three pronged approach in its direction. Its objective was "to provide security for Canadians, to provide unity for Canadians and to provide jobs for Canadians". I believe that was the expression we heard.

When we look at the facts, in spite of the rose coloured glasses that some members wear, they do not bear that out. When we look at the security for Canadians, this government over the last three years has cut social spending transfers to the provinces by some \$7 billion. It has cut funding for health care, for education and has enforced the closure of hospitals. There are many things people do not hear it talk about.

It has cut substantially the benefits to seniors since coming to office in spite of the rhetoric we hear about protecting seniors' benefits and all the rest of it. There has been one segment, however, that it has provided substantial security for to show where its priorities are. Of course, that is in the security of the MP pension plan, looking after its members' own security on retirement. I do not hear a lot of them bragging about that when they are proposing to cut security for other seniors in this country.

When we look at the promise to create unity for Canadians, the statistics do not bear out that there has been much progress on this front as well. Only a year ago we came within half a percentage point of losing the referendum and having this country split apart.

I did not see much progress being made up to that point and certainly not much since. The only reaction before going back to sleep on the whole issue was the proposal to drag up the distinct society clause for Quebec which even the party representing Quebec in this House and most Canadians rejected soundly in the Charlottetown accord many years ago. I do not see that there has been substantial progress on that.

• (1725)

The third prong of the speech from the throne was dealing with jobs for Canadians. Perhaps this is one of the most dismal areas in spite of the illusion that the previous speaker tried to create of this wealth of jobs being created for Canadians.

The fact remains that personal and business bankruptcies are at an all time record high in this country. In spite of presumably coming out of the recession that the North American economy was in and having some of the lowest interest rates since the 1960s, our unemployment rate still hovers on one side or the other of 10 per

cent, in spite of the fact that across the border to the south unemployment rates are only half the rate they are in Canada. I do not see a lot to brag about when we talk about job creation.

Looking a little further at what has been going on in Canada over the last 30 years it is hardly any wonder that conditions in Canada led to the creation of the Reform Party and some of the ideas the Reform brought to this House and promotes in Canada. In spite of all the bragging and illusion created Canadians today, after three years of Liberal government, are unquestionably worse off than they were three years ago. There is no arguing that.

The income of an average family of four has dropped by \$3,000 since 1993. People are working harder and harder just to try to maintain a standard of living. Two out of three two-parent families have two or more jobs; 1.4 million Canadians are unemployed and continue to be unemployed; 2 million to 3 million Canadians are underemployed and one in four Canadians are worried sick about losing their jobs and not being able to provide for their families.

Canadians truly have taken a national pay cut. For a family of four the pay cut has been some \$3,000 over the last three years. The Liberals at the end of their mandate will be collecting some \$26 billion more in taxes than they were when they came to office in 1993. This government, which says everything is so wonderful and rosy, the economy is booming, jobs are being created, has added \$111 billion more to the national debt, forcing it up to the \$600 billion mark; truly not a very good track record.

Looking at the last 25 or 30 years in this country, in 1972 when Pierre Trudeau came to power only 553,000 Canadians were unemployed. When his government was defeated in 1984, 1.45 million Canadians were unemployed.

Then the Tories took over and were going to turn things around. They talked about a job for every Canadian who wants to work. By the time they left in 1993, 1.65 million Canadians were out of work. Certainly in 1993, in spite of the red book promise of jobs, jobs, jobs, there remains in Canada today 1.5 million Canadians out of work.

The Prime Minister is trying to tell Canadians that somewhere around that level of unemployment is acceptable, that it cannot be brought down lower. We know what happened to former Prime Minister Kim Campbell when she made that remark.

Certainly we have heard a lot of bragging today about balanced budgets. A number of previous speakers talked about achieving a balanced budget somewhere in the year 1998-99, getting the deficit down to \$9 billion and then assuming at that point that the budget was balanced. I submit that only in a place like this would anyone presume that a \$9 billion or \$10 billion deficit is in fact a balanced

*The Address*

budget. Certainly in the real world I do not think that could be considered a reality.

• (1730)

Between 1972 and 1984 the Liberals increased the national debt from \$17.2 billion to \$199 billion, a staggering 1,057 per cent increase. In 1984 the Tories promised to put a stop to the increase in the debt. Instead they increased it from \$199 billion to \$508.2 billion in only nine years.

Then of course the current government has added another \$111.5 billion, bringing the debt to the \$600 billion mark. It is not a record about which most governments would have the audacity to brag, I am sure.

The illusion is not one that most Canadians will long believe. I firmly believe that Canadians are demanding an end to this political rhetoric, this campaign platform that makes all kinds of promises that the government has no intention of living up to. Canadians are demanding some integrity in government, some honesty in election platforms and they are demanding a fresh approach to government, a basic restructuring of government, a basic downsizing of government.

I spent last week travelling in western and central Canada with the natural resources standing committee which is holding hearings on rural economic renewal. In spite of real prompting from the members of the Liberal Party on the committee to try to initiate some response in favour of another infrastructure program or subsidies to provide incentives to small business, witness after witness said: "We don't need more hockey rinks and canoe museums and the like. What we need is government to get off our backs, get out of our pockets, give us a chance to make a dollar, succeed in our businesses and be successful".

That is a story we heard over and over again. I very much look forward to the day when we write the report on the committee and put into print what supposedly we heard on the tour.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Ringuette-Maltais):** Could the hon. member please indicate to me if he is sharing his time with another colleague?

**Mr. Chatters:** Yes, Madam Speaker, I am sharing my time with my colleague from Surrey North.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Ringuette-Maltais):** That should have been indicated at the beginning of your speech. You are two minutes over your time. I will give you 30 seconds to wind up your speech.

**Mr. Chatters:** Madam Speaker, I did not realize that the time had expired. I apologize for that.

The government has maintained the degree of popularity that it has over the last number of years through illusion and political

rhetoric that really is very shallow. I am sure that Canadians, come the next election, will see through the rhetoric and the illusion and take a dim view of the record of the government.

**Mr. John Harvard (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I just have a couple of comments to make.

The hon. member of the Reform Party was talking about jobs. He was criticizing the government for not creating enough jobs. I think the member's credibility is lacking very seriously.

Reform Party members have been in Parliament now for three years. For almost three years the word jobs never crossed their lips, never crossed their minds. Did we hear a word about jobs from the Reform Party in 1994? Not a word. Did we hear about jobs from the Reform Party in 1995? Not a word. It was not until this past summer that Reformers discovered the word jobs in the Reform Party vocabulary. Somebody put it there. I suspect what happened was that they read a survey or two or a poll and they discovered that Canadians are actually preoccupied with the issue of jobs. This is the party that talks about its members speaking to its constituents.

• (1735)

It took Reformers three years to discover the word jobs in their vocabulary. Where have they been for three years? Talk about a fresh start. That is the kind of fresh start we get from the Reform Party. It discovers that Canadians are actually concerned about jobs.

While they were somewhere in the wilderness, somewhere in the bush, not realizing that Canadians do have a concern about jobs, the government has been doing something. Since the government came to office, well over 600,000 jobs have been created.

One more thing. Now that Reformers have discovered that Canadians have a concern about jobs, what does the Reform Party propose as a response to that? It proposes a tax cut, right across the board. Do Reformers ever learn anything?

What did Ronald Reagan do in the United States when he came to power in the beginning of the 1980s? Across the board tax cuts. What happened? The deficit went right through the roof. The United States went from being the greatest creditor nation in 1980 to being the greatest debtor nation in the world in 1988. That is what Ronald Reagan did. The Americans suddenly realized that this trickle down theory of economics does not work.

But here is the Reform Party, true to its dinosaur heritage: "Yep, that's what we're proposing, across the board tax cuts". It did not work in the States and it will not work here in this country. Canadians do not believe in it and it will never work. That is why this member and all the members of the Reform Party have absolutely no credibility.

*The Address*

**Mr. Chatters:** Madam Speaker, I can only assume that what I am hearing from across the floor is political rhetoric. I assume the member opposite is an intelligent individual and can certainly read our fresh start platform and our platform of the last four or five years. Job creation has been an integral part of that platform from day one.

I do not expect him to believe or to support our platform, which is perfectly reasonable. Since he is a Liberal and I am a Reformer we take quite a different strategy in dealing with job creation. We believe that jobs can be created by the private sector, by getting government out of Canadians' pockets and off their backs, by giving Canadians back some of the 60 per cent of their wages that governments take away from them with the view that it is smarter than the individual and that it can spend it more wisely.

I heard the comment awhile back that they believed the primary purpose of government was the redistribution of wealth. I am only assuming that is rhetoric and positioning. I think the member knows better.

**Ms. Margaret Bridgman (Surrey North, Ref.):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to speak in the debate today on the throne speech. I will direct my remarks to the family.

The throne speech was in February. I wondered if the government was going to take the opportunity, as is traditional, to utilize the throne speech to tell us what it intended to do to meet the needs and wants of Canadians. I am glad to see we are now debating it again so we can pursue that.

• (1740)

One of the areas in which Canadians want change is in the area of families and how governments treat families. Of course, work and the resulting income is an essential component for the establishment of a healthy family unit, yet the government and those which preceded it over the last 20 or so years have implemented social and economic policies and continue to enhance those policies which result in undermining the security of Canadian families. That contributes to the levels of stress, burnout and financial hardships which many Canadians face today. The policies of the last 20 odd years have created the situation in which we find ourselves today.

For example, one in four Canadians are worried about losing their job. Another two million to three million Canadians are underemployed. They are unable to find work in the area for which they trained. There are approximately 1.4 million Canadians who are on the unemployed list. That was the number in 1993 I believe. That number has not changed.

Not much of an inroad has been made into job creation. If inroads have been made, then other jobs have disappeared, because the figures are still hovering around 1.4 million. We all know that

puts extra strain on people's lives and on their families. If we do not have a sense of job security we are left in limbo. We begin to wonder what kind of a future we will have.

Canadians are worried about making ends meet. Often two incomes are necessary. Often, despite the two incomes, we do not get enough time to spend with our families and raise our children. About 25 years ago one income seemed to cover the bills and there was some room to spare. Now, for many families, it takes two incomes to run the family.

When we consider that the tax freedom day falls in June, it is easy to see where that second income has to go. One income goes to the household and the other goes to government in some form or another, be it in taxes, user fees or a licence for this or that. It seems that the government wants both parents to have to work. It wants families to need two incomes to survive.

In a recent letter the Minister of Finance said he is opposed to changes in the day care tax deduction because levelling the playing field would be a disincentive for both parents to work. The day care tax deduction should not apply to those parents who work, it should be directed toward the children. It is a day care service for children, so it really should not matter if the parents work. If they have children, they should be entitled to it.

The priority of members of the Reform Party is the family. The best words to illustrate that goal are the words of the leader of our caucus, the hon. member for Calgary Southwest, who said: "Because of social and economic changes, many families are facing high debt, stress, bankruptcy and burnout. A Reform government will recognize the value of families as the most important building block in our society, so you can spend less time under pressure and more time with those that you care about most".

We are committed to Canadians and to the family. We want to make the family a priority and ensure that government regulations and policies are definitely family friendly.

Where do you start? One place to start is to extend the \$3,000 to \$5,000 child care deduction to all parents, not just to those who are working.

We could also increase the spousal deduction from \$5,380 to \$7,900, levelling the field for parents who choose to stay at home to look after their young children. Of course, that would help families to meet the needs of the more demanding economy.

• (1745)

Family time or family life is not a luxury. If families are to preserve health and happiness in a home it is not a luxury, it is a necessity. They need the time to spend building that core structure. It is time to make families a priority once again in our Canadian lifestyle.

*The Address*

The Reform Party believes that parenting has real value and if there is anything this whole House can agree on it is that children are the key to the future of countries around the world.

We must give parents greater freedom to spend time parenting and to succeed economically while they shape the lives of their children. Some ways we feel that can be done is to increase the child deduction to parents to \$5,000 for every preschool child; \$3,000 for every child age 7 to 12 years old. All this is in the fresh start program. We have to start somewhere and these are some of the targets we are looking at which will definitely assist the family situation.

To make it as fair as possible to all families with regard to income level, we will turn the deduction into a tax credit. That method will allow everyone to save.

My critic area is in aboriginal affairs. Consequently, I have spent a fair amount of time looking at that aspect of our country. One thing that comes forward there is family violence. It is not just in that group. It does not matter who we talk to in the country, it seems to be at all levels of society. It does not matter if it is in the north or in the south. I certainly believe that family violence, spousal and child abuse, has to be addressed and there have to be some guidelines put out there. We have to identify the playing field.

This is one thing Reform would like to do. Instead of looking solely at the intent of the action, we would like to focus on the action itself. Assault is not something Canadians choose to have in society. We want to get more firm with people who assault, assault of any kind. However, this predominantly occurs in family circles, which we are not able to address because there tends to be a reluctance to identify the situation. Therefore many people live in these abusive situations who do not wish to come forward. We should create a situation that would encourage them to come forward.

Another thing is that when there actually is a situation of abuse and someone has been charged, in looking at the counselling aspect, the aboriginal community is trying to tell us that there is more than one way of getting to the bottom line. I really feel we should be looking at different methods and address the one which is most suitable to achieving the bottom line.

If a person wishes to read and understand the English language as written in Reform's fresh start, from the family point of view which I am addressing today our main concern is to leave more money in the hands of parents to allow them to build that home and the structure in which to raise their children, cloth, feed and educate them, and give them the choice as to how they wish to pursue that.

**Mr. John Bryden (Hamilton—Wentworth, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I appreciated the remarks of the member for Surrey North

with respect to wanting to improve the lives of families in Canadian society, possibly by tax means and other instruments.

I would like to point out to her this is a sentiment that is shared broadly in the House. Two nights ago there was a motion presented to the House by the member for Mississauga South, a government member, which proposed that the government introduce a caregiver tax, particularly for families with young children and families of the disabled. That motion was supported on all sides of the House.

● (1750)

I think I can assure the member for Surrey North that the desire to give better opportunities to the traditional nuclear family is a concept that is shared by all members of this House, not just the Reform Party. I think we can look forward in the coming year to some significant steps on the part of the government in that regard. I think certainly most members on the government benches would support it in every way.

I would like to take the member just briefly down another road if she would not mind. One of the points made in the speech from the throne was there would be a modernization of the federal labour code which applies to federally regulated industries.

Just this past week a bill was presented to the House containing the proposals of the labour minister in this regard. I would like to draw the attention of the member for Surrey North to a couple of provisions in the proposals put forward by the government in this new legislation. One of the provisions pertains to replacement workers.

In Quebec there has been a ban on replacement workers during labour stoppages since I think 1977. In Ontario legislation was brought forward by the New Democratic Party banning replacement workers in 1993. This legislation was since overturned by the current Conservative government. We find this Liberal government bringing down legislation that is in between these two extremes. What it proposes basically is that replacement workers continue to be an option of a company facing a strike or a work stoppage but that company is not allowed to use those replacement workers to break the union. I think this addresses the problem that exists with several very nasty strikes that exist in Quebec. It seems to me that this is a very positive compromise on the part of the Government of Canada.

I also point out that the labour code proposals also suggest that following work stoppage, those who have been out of work and faced with replacement workers are entitled to return to their jobs. Again the government in its wisdom has made provisions for workers who have legitimately sought to pressure a company by the means of a legal strike but not to be unfairly penalized at the conclusion of that work stoppage.

*The Address*

I hope the member for Surrey North can reply to these three initiatives. The third and final point, which I thought was very progressive on the part of the government in introducing these amendments to the labour code, is that it is proposed that when it comes to the grain handling industry, only those unions that actually handle the grain should continue to have the right to stop the shipment of grain. In other words, peripheral unions will no longer be permitted to hold the country at ransom by the stoppage of shipments of grain.

These are three very positive initiatives that spin directly out of the speech from the throne. I could find the page in the speech from the throne for the member. I think these are very fine initiatives and I would like to hear the member comment on these three initiatives. Does she support them or reject them?

**Ms. Bridgman:** Madam Speaker, I find it ironic that when I address my remarks to family how it suddenly got into silos and grain, but here we are.

I think at the heart of what I want to say here is that the policies of this government and preceding governments over the last 30 years miss the point. We tried them but they are not working. It does not matter what we are looking at, replacement workers or whatever.

Basically what we are doing here is taking a policy and band-aiding it. My background is health and I feel we are addressing a symptom. We are not actually looking at the cause and treating the cause to resolve the problem or the disease.

The negotiating process where we have the type of thing that is being suggested by the government of bringing in these workers when a strike is threatening was not the original intent of the negotiating process.

• (1755)

The negotiating process initially was to give the employee, when things were perceived to be wrong by the employee, some clout to negotiate and bargain to get them right.

We have let that go to the nth degree. It is not working—

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Ringuette-Maltais):** We are now resuming debate.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Paul DeVillers (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to speak today in the debate on the Throne speech.

[*English*]

The speech from the throne was delivered on February 27, 1996, approximately two years and four months into the government's

mandate. It was an opportunity for the government to confirm its priorities, namely jobs and growth, and to continue on that agenda. At that point over half a million net jobs had been created. Now we are at over 620,000 net jobs created.

The speech from the throne went on to deal with three priority themes: the jobs and growth agenda, the security for Canadians, and the modernization of the federation to ensure national unity. The area where I would like to concentrate my remarks is national unity.

When we speak of national unity, invariably we end up speaking of the Quebec situation. Canadians are aware that national unity is a much broader question than simply the wants and desires of the province of Quebec.

We end up concentrating a lot of our effort and time dealing with the Quebec question because the separatist governments in that province have twice called referendums under provincial legislation dealing with the question of the separation of Quebec from the Canadian federation.

Going back prior to the speech from the throne and the time just before the last referendum, Canadians will recall that in the week before the referendum the Prime Minister became very active in the campaign.

Until then the Prime Minister had been a member of the no committee, constituted under the Quebec legislation. There were other members of the committee, federal ministers, the leader of the federal Conservative Party, the leader of the Liberal opposition in Quebec, et cetera.

The strategy that was arrived at was that the Prime Minister would make certain timely interventions in the campaign. As the campaign wore on it became evident from the polling that there was difficulty, that the result was going to be much closer than polls indicated earlier.

The Prime Minister became much more involved. He made certain commitments to the people of Quebec dealing mainly with the recognition of Quebec's distinctness, the question of regional vetoes and the issue of job training. It had been a traditional Quebec demand that job training be turned over to the provinces so that they would have more jurisdiction in that field. The Prime Minister made those commitments.

In December 1995 the House of Commons passed the motion on distinct society, passed the bill dealing with regional vetoes and in the course of its employment insurance reforms it has been dealing with the job training issue.

As far as the federal government and the Prime Minister's being able to honour those commitments without the participation of the provinces, they have done so.

*The Address*

• (1800 )

The government has also indicated and continues to indicate its willingness to entrench the recognition of Quebec's differences in the Constitution as well as the regional vetoes. Of course, that cannot be done unilaterally by the federal government and requires the participation of the provinces in accordance with the amending formula of the Constitution which requires seven provinces representing at least 50 per cent of the population.

The speech from the throne sets out what the government's plan on national unity is. Basically it is a plan of reconciliation, to reconcile all of the concerns of all of the provinces and all of the regions of Canada and to modernize the federation to take those concerns into account.

Much progress has been made with respect to the modernization of the federation. At the first ministers conference in June, steps were initiated and negotiations were undertaken. At the premiers conference in August, there was a resolution passed and agreement arrived at by the premiers that they would work with the federal government in its efforts to try to make arrangements so that the jurisdictions between the provinces and the federal government could be worked out to the satisfaction of all parties.

The federal government has acknowledged that there are certain areas where definitely there should be more provincial involvement. I have made reference already to the job training areas. Another area is the administration of social housing. There are also the forestry and mining sectors. Measures have been taken in the Fisheries Act to allow for the delegation to the interested provinces of responsibilities for management of freshwater fisheries habitats.

Later this month there will be more meetings in the field of the environment. The provincial ministers of the environment will be meeting with the federal Minister of the Environment to try to negotiate the terms of subagreements on environmental assessment to eliminate duplication and the mixed jurisdictions in those areas.

As well, the Minister of Human Resources Development and the Minister of Health are negotiating with their provincial colleagues. They are trying to come to arrangements where perhaps the provinces would have more say in certain areas of jurisdiction and maybe certain other areas of jurisdiction would be turned over to the federal government or their role would be heightened in the appropriate cases.

On the question of future referendums the speech from the throne also indicated the following: "As long as the prospect of another Quebec referendum exists, the government will exercise its responsibility to ensure that the debate is conducted with all the facts on the table, that the rules of the process are fair, that the

consequences are clear and that Canadians, no matter where they live, will have their say in the future of their country".

That commitment is in the speech from the throne. The government has acted upon it with the intervention in the Bertrand case when the Quebec provincial government was saying that the rule of law had nothing to do with the right to self-determination, and also with the reference to the Supreme Court of Canada.

Inevitably, as I indicated at the beginning of my speech, we end up speaking of Quebec when we speak about national unity, even though many of the other provinces share many of the same concerns that Quebec has with the operation of the federation and the need for its modernization.

Canada today is not the same place it was in 1867. Much has changed and obviously there is a need to modernize the workings of the various levels of government. We come back to the Prime Minister's commitment on the question of recognizing Quebec's distinctiveness.

• (1805 )

In today's debate I heard one of the members from the Reform Party mention Charlottetown and that the concept of a distinct society was rejected when Charlottetown was rejected and that the people had their say. There were so many things in the Charlottetown accord. No one can say with any degree of certainty which of the components of the accord people were voting against when they voted no. If they were voting yes, they had to agree with every component. It was a flawed process and I think we have learned our lesson.

The Prime Minister has indicated on several occasions in this House that his strategy is to deal with these issues separately one at a time so we will know exactly what the acceptance of a particular concept is. It is not correct to say that the people of Canada rejected the distinct society because it was one of the components of the Charlottetown accord.

The polls tell us that 60 to 65 per cent of Quebecers feel an attachment toward Canada and want to see the difficulties that are being expressed by many of the provinces and not just Quebec resolved within the Canadian context. We need to determine why then did we have a referendum result with 49 per cent voting yes? Was the question reasonable and fair? Did the people understand it precisely?

I think it was more than that. There has to be some other explanation as to why, if only 30 to 35 per cent of people are committed to separating, as high as 49 per cent would vote yes. We need to look at that and determine the reason for that and for those of us who want to see the country stay together, what we can do to deal with that.

*The Address*

That is where we come back to the question of the recognition of Quebec, its difference by reason of its French language, its French culture and its French institutions. Those are the facts. Quebec is the only province in Canada that has a predominantly French speaking population, a predominantly French culture. It has le droit civil. It is one of two jurisdictions in North America that has le droit civil legal system as opposed to the common law system. There is an indisputable difference I would submit and we need to deal with that. A recognition of that difference needs to be entrenched in the Constitution.

People may have noticed that I am not using the term distinct society. When that concept is discussed there is a fear in the provinces other than Quebec that it means there is going to be some advantage, right, power or privilege given to Quebec that the other provinces will not enjoy. That certainly is not what is being proposed by this government. This government is simply proposing a recognition of Quebec's difference by reason of its French language, culture and institutions without granting to it any further rights, powers or privileges.

That begs the question: Of what value is it? Is it simply symbolic? It is not going to fill the bill. It is not going to address the concerns of the Quebec people who are looking for some reason to remain in Canada. I submit it is more than symbolic because it would entrench in the Constitution the existing constitutional convention.

Mr. Justice Brian Dickson, the retired chief justice of the Supreme Court of Canada, recently published an article in the *Globe and Mail*. It indicated that presently the Supreme Court of Canada in interpreting grey areas of the Constitution takes into account Quebec's difference by reason of its French language, culture and institutions.

• (1810)

We would be guaranteeing what is existing now. On the one hand we would have something substantial which Quebecers could feel secure about. On the other hand we would not be granting any rights, powers or privileges that the other provinces do not now enjoy. In other words, there would be no preference given.

There is certainly room for that type of discussion, not by our friends in the Bloc Quebecois and members of the PQ government in Quebec because they want a separate country. Offering them any form of guarantee or recognition in the way the Constitution is interpreted today will not be of any benefit to them because it will not lead to separation.

We have to address the other 60 to 65 per cent of Quebecers who are looking for that. It is also a way for Canadians outside Quebec to express to their fellow Canadians in Quebec that they are prepared to assist in the preservation of the French language,

culture and institutions which are prevalent in Quebec. It is a way to support them and to alleviate their insecurity.

The Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs has said that if Quebec is the only predominantly French speaking province or jurisdiction in Canada and in North America, it creates a natural insecurity and a legitimate concern with respect to the preservation of the French language, culture and institutions. If we Canadians outside Quebec can show that we are prepared to support them in that preservation, it would have an influence on their desire to remain a part of this country.

As part of my duties for the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs I have travelled to different regions of Canada. I was in three of the four maritime provinces this past summer. I have been to British Columbia and Alberta. I have spoken with people who have formed Canadian unity groups, Canadian citizens who are concerned about Canadian unity. They have expressed frustration at not being able to do anything about the preservation of unity in Canada. They have come together in an effort to become involved in the process.

When I speak to them in the terms I have just outlined, I get very little opposition to the concept of recognizing Quebec's differences by reason of its French language, culture and institutions when it is presented to them in a way that gives them some assurance that it will not lead to any additional rights, powers or privileges. Once the term distinct society is put into the equation however, then there is all of the baggage that comes from the constitutional wrangling of the previous government with the Meech Lake and Charlottetown accords.

There is a way to develop that support and to act on it. The government is on the right track. The Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs has spoken to most of his provincial counterparts. In certain provinces he gets a warmer reception than in others. However, we must continue to work on it.

• (1815)

**Mr. John Williams (St. Albert, Ref.):** Madam Speaker, I noted that the member focused on unity or disunity or the lack of unity or the concern about unity but very little on how to build unity in the country.

I was particularly intrigued by one comment. I am talking about the courts of this land for which we have respect and high regard for their impartiality and the quality of the judgments they render based on the law. The law of this land is important and it is the responsibility of the courts to uphold the law as Parliament sets it out in the statutes for them to apply. Of course, there is a great deal of independence between this House and the courts to ensure that they are totally impartial and unbiased and not influenced by the House or by anyone else for that matter.



*The Address*

The member made reference to the fact that the courts seem to take into consideration the political perceptions of the different culture in Quebec, the language and so on, compared to the rest of the country.

I wonder if he was suggesting that the courts are becoming politically aware, if I can use that phrase. I hope not, but I thought that is what he was alluding to.

I happen to have a little quote here, a supreme court ruling in the province of Alberta, where I am from. It was a rather eloquent judgment that went on for some considerable length by Mr. Justice John McClung in a ruling in 1996 in the Alberta Court of Appeal in the case of *Vriend et al v. Alberta*.

He said: "None of our precious and historic legislative safeguards are in play when judges choose to privateer in parliamentary sea lanes". I thought that was a wonderful quote that says that the courts are apart, separate and must protect their own integrity and impartiality. If they want to privateer in the sea lanes of politics, we should all be serious concerned.

Would the hon. member please confirm to me and to the members of the House that he was not suggesting that the courts would take politics into consideration or anything into consideration other than the law which they are asked to interpret. Or did I misinterpret what he was trying to say?

**Mr. DeVillers:** Madam Speaker, I agree with the proposition that the hon. member has put forth that the courts should not become involved in politics. We need to maintain the separation between the judiciary and the political procedures in the country.

I was quoting an article by Mr. Justice Brian Dickson, retired chief justice of the Supreme Court of Canada. He was not talking about politics. He was talking about when the Supreme Court of Canada is called on to interpret grey areas of the Constitution; in other words, areas where the jurisdictions are not clearly aligned.

The convention now is that the Supreme Court of Canada in those grey areas takes into account the fact, not a political policy, that Quebec is the only jurisdiction in Canada which has a predominantly French speaking population. There are French speaking people in all other regions but they are not the majority. Therefore in Quebec they are different by reason of the first language of use, by reason of their culture because they are of French origin and have a different culture than the multiplicity of cultures we have in Canada and because their legal system is the Napoleonic code, *le droit civil*, which is an entirely different legal system which therefore leads to different institutions in that province.

He is not playing politics. He is saying that the Supreme Court of Canada takes those actual facts into consideration when it needs to interpret areas that are not black and white in the Canadian Constitution.

• (1820)

**Mr. John Bryden (Hamilton—Wentworth, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for Simcoe North for his remarks which I appreciated very much.

I would like his response to a point about distinct society. There are about 600,000 Francophones who live in Ontario plus many thousands who live in New Brunswick and other parts of the country. My thoughts with respect to affirming that Quebec has distinct society status are that it would not only protect the cultural traditions of Quebec but it would also be a guarantee to Francophones elsewhere in the country that this national government will defend their interests, their language and their culture.

**Mr. DeVillers:** Madam Speaker, that is the case with the government's policies on official bilingualism and that is being done by the government at the present time. The French speaking minorities in the other provinces are protected where the demand is sufficient and they can obtain the services they need in the French language.

However, that is a different issue from recognizing that Quebec as a province has a majority of French speaking people; whereas in the other regions the member referred to, the French speaking people are the minority or perhaps in the case of New Brunswick it is almost a 50-50 split. In the other provinces, save New Brunswick, French speaking people are in the minority.

It is the recognition that Quebec is predominantly French speaking, although it has many other people from various backgrounds, that we are talking about. It is about recognizing that fact and the consequences of its culture and its institutions as well.

**Mr. Williams:** Madam Speaker, I am still intrigued by the question I asked. I am not sure I got a satisfactory answer. The hon. member quoted a retired chief justice, an eminent person.

I am still trying to get clear in my mind these facts he kept referring to. The courts are to apply the law and the law is quite specific. It is written down quite clearly. The law is the basis on which judgments are rendered by the courts. I get this uneasy feeling that he is suggesting the courts take facts, whatever facts may be or however one interprets facts, into consideration in rendering their judgments. Could he make it crystal clear?

I am not aware of any law on our books today that says one province is different from another. Yet the law of the land is what the courts are supposed to apply. Could he be crystal clear and tell me on what basis extraneous facts can be introduced by courts in rendering their decisions?

**Mr. DeVillers:** Madam Speaker, I guess we are going to beat this horse to death. It is simple. There are grey areas in the Constitution. The member says the law is clear. Well, it is not. There are many areas. The Constitution does not cover every possibility. There are

*The Address*

unclear areas which the court has to interpret. I am not saying it. Mr. Justice Dickson is saying the court takes into account the difference that Quebec has by reason of its French language, culture and institutions. That is what we are trying to get to make that a law. It is not a law now. It is a constitutional convention. We are saying let us entrench it into the Constitution. It should be of some comfort to some Quebecers and it is not taking anything away from the other provinces because it is what is happening now.

• (1825)

[*Translation*]

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Ringuette-Maltais):** I will now recognize the hon. member for Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead. The hon. member may start on the first five minutes of his speech.

[*English*]

**Mr. Harvard:** Just the truth, just the truth.

**Mr. Maurice Bernier (Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead, BQ):** You will hear the truth now.

[*Translation*]

First of all, I would like to say that I only have three or four minutes left until the end of this sitting. I will resume speaking on the next day of debate on the Throne speech. I do not have time to get into the main part of my speech, which was supposed to be about the government's record on dealing with the disabled, but I will get back to this later on.

For the time being, I will merely refer to some statements by my colleague from Simcoe North who, I think, is a reasonable man who is usually able to make a fairly correct assessment of a political situation, but when he talks about the situation in Quebec, I should remind him of certain facts, just to fine tune the facts he already has. He said, if I am not mistaken, that about 65 per cent want a new and improved Canadian federation, that is, improvements within the Canadian system.

I do not know to which poll he is referring but, depending on the questions asked, you can get the results you want. It is like the Prime Minister, who at his convention about two weeks ago gave himself a score of 78 per cent when referring to his government's achievements. If we dig a little further, we get far different results.

I just want to take one poll as an example, since my colleague from Simcoe North was referring to polls to support his own figure of 65 per cent. A poll published today in the daily papers found that the level of satisfaction with the Prime Minister and the govern-

ment has been dropping since the beginning of the summer. It now seems that 35 per cent of Canadians support the leader of the government, the Prime Minister, while in April this was 39 per cent and a few months ago it was 44 per cent.

We see there has been a major drop in the level of satisfaction, which is a strong indication, before an election, of the kind of support a government would get if there was an election tomorrow morning.

So figures can be made to say what we want them to say. The fact is that if we want to get involved in a constitutional debate, we are looking at something that is impossible within the Canadian federation. Federalists with the federal government or in the provinces who, over the past thirty years, have tried to change the system in response to the legitimate demands of Quebec and also of the other provinces, have always come up against a dead end. We were always faced with an impossible situation following negotiations, and the hon. member was referring to Charlottetown, when the people spoke for the first time.

But apart from this exercise, we always came up against the situation where Quebec was isolated, having come away disappointed from discussions. And I think it important to repeat this. I have said it I know not how many times in this House, and I will say it again. This was after discussions between federalists, not discussions between federalists on the one hand and separatists on the other, as my colleague for Simcoe North mentioned just now, when he said that it would never be possible to satisfy the wishes of the Bloc Québécois and the Parti Québécois.

I know that the period provided for debate has expired, so I will close by saying that, if political partisanship were put aside, and the proposal made by sovereignists and almost approved by a majority of Quebecers read carefully, it would be understood that sovereignists in this House and in Quebec basically want two things: first, recognition of the people of Quebec, the means we have and the means that go with this recognition in order to be able to affirm ourselves; and second, a partnership agreement with our preferred partner, Canada.

That is what we want and that will be the key in the future to resolving our present problems. I will continue these thoughts another time.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Ringuette-Maltais):** It being 6.30 p.m., the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m.

(The House adjourned at 6.31 p.m.)



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