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Speaker: The Honourable Gilbert Parent

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, April 20, 1998

The House met at 11 a.m.

Prayers

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

• (1100)

[*English*]

NATIONAL HEAD START PROGRAM

The House resumed from February 19 consideration of the motion.

Mr. Chuck Cadman (Surrey North, Ref.): Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to speak in favour of Motion No. 261 as proposed by my hon. colleague for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca.

I am also pleased to hear of the support for this motion from other parties. As has been stated many times, this is not an issue that needs to attract political sensitivities. It is unfortunate that members of the Bloc appear to be attempting to characterize this proposal in that fashion.

They referred to encroachment into the area of provincial jurisdiction. They have tied this motion into the Canadian unity debate. That is quite a stretch for the imagination. It may be an example of paranoia, whereby the separatists now see every issue as an attempt to attack Quebec. This motion should and must be solely seen as an attempt to address problems experienced throughout our society. It affects all Canadians.

As to the issue of provincial jurisdiction, I would first like to point out that the motion includes the words “develop, along with their provincial counterparts, a comprehensive National Head Start Program for children in their first 8 years of life”.

Just as with health and education, the federal government has an acute interest in the proper development of our children. As well, the primary purpose of this motion is to provide a good start for our children. Extensive studies have shown that the first eight years of life are critical in an individual's development.

Inadequate attention and nurturing for our youngsters can often lead to subsequent developmental difficulties. With a poor start children may often wind up on the wrong side of the law. Since the federal government has a significant stake in the area of criminal law, together with our institutions of the police, the courts, the prisons and the parole system, there may well be a sufficient argument toward federal jurisdiction merely on the basis of criminal law. After all, the federal government should be interested in any opportunity which results in such successful crime prevention whereby a dollar spent on providing a good head start results in the saving of many dollars down the road through decreases in our criminal statistics. But as I said, this motion only proposes the development of the program along with the provinces.

• (1105)

The government has already implemented head start programs among our aboriginal communities. They have been primarily limited to reserves, but both aboriginal people living off reserve and non-aboriginal people are also in need of such programs.

This government's own National Crime Prevention Council has been very supportive of a national head start program. In its 1996 report at page 2 of the executive summary it states:

There is ample evidence that well-designed social development programs can prevent crime and be cost-effective. Rigorous evaluations, mainly American, show that crime prevention through social development pays handsome dividends. In almost 30 years of participant follow-up the Perry Preschool Program in Michigan has been shown to be responsible for very significantly reducing juvenile and adult crime.

This motion proposes that the government explore models based on the Perry Preschool Program, among others.

The Secretary of State for Children and Youth has already spoken to this motion. She commented on how successful the aboriginal head start program has been. She pointed out that funding had doubled due to its benefits. She encouraged further expansion to include the protection of all our children and to assist needy parents toward proper nurturing and caring of the next generation of our society. This motion is on all fours with the secretary of state's comments.

Additional comments have been made in this place about how a national head start program can be a head start on the prevention of crime, about how it is like a registered retirement savings plan. Invest a dollar today to reap many more dollars in the future.

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The Minister of Finance should be the first to climb on board and support programs of this nature. He should not concern himself solely with attempting to solve the problems of the present, but should plan ahead. By spending money today as an investment in our children he can save much more in the future through decreased health costs, crime costs and societal costs.

The Minister of Health knows that well fed, well adjusted children from sound families lead much more healthier lives. The Minister of Justice knows that this type of child is much less likely to come before our justice system. The Solicitor General will be very pleased to see less strain on his limited prison and parole resources.

A couple of years ago the Minister of Finance recognized that an investment in our children today would keep them out of jail in 20 years. He said that caring for children should be Canada's number one priority. This motion encourages him to do just that.

I note that recently the province of Ontario provided \$10 million to fund a home visiting program for new mothers. It is known as Healthy Babies, Healthy Children. Hospitals will screen all new mothers to identify babies and families who may need extra support and services. It is to provide high risk families with the parenting help needed and to avoid child abuse and neglect. But already health authorities are saying the funding is not enough.

Everyone appears to be on side as far as need and as far as applicability. But, with all due respect, there is a definite requirement for federal involvement. Pooling of resources will reduce costs of implementation. Ideas and successes can be shared. National standards will ensure children from all parts of this country receive necessary assistance and protection.

Canada has come under criticism by the International Centre for the Prevention of Crime. It has been pointed out that Belgium, with a population of 10 million, spends \$140 million a year on crime prevention. Canada, with nearly three times the population, spends only \$10 million.

Crime costs Canadians approximately \$46 billion a year. So far caring for children through crime prevention measures, as proposed by this motion, has not become our number one priority.

Back in August 1996 the former minister of justice commented about the justice system and how the harm has already been done by the time people come before the courts. He stated "We must do more than deal with the symptoms of the problem. We must go to the source".

Programs as proposed by this motion go to the source. In 1996 the Child Welfare League of Canada argued the need to create a comprehensive and permanent universal program cross Canada to address funding for early intervention measures to assist our children. Sandra Scarth, executive director of this organization, in meetings with the former justice minister and solicitor general pointed out the necessity to identify mothers and children who are likely to be in difficulty and who need regular intensive support from birth until school entry.

• (1110)

Some of the facts presented were:

Child maltreatment in Canada is estimated at one in five.

There are 40,000 Canadian children in substitute care, such as foster homes and group homes.

Child welfare authorities are monitoring nearly 200,000 children who may be in unsatisfactory and unacceptable positions in their homes.

One sex offender in three suffered some kind of sexual trauma as a child.

Eighty per cent of female prisoners were physically and/or sexually abused as children.

The risk of drug abuse is seven times as high for children who have been sexually abused as for children who have not, and the risk of suicide is 10 times as high.

The biggest factors in whether a parent will abuse a child are childhood experiences, social isolation and physical or developmental problems with the child.

Surely facts and figures such as these should be enough for all of us to address how we can better provide for a proper good start for our children. They are the most defenceless and least protected members of our society. This motion is a good start toward addressing some of the inadequacies toward these children. We will all benefit from the further developments as proposed by the member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca.

There is much demand across this country, and rightly so, to strengthen the Young Offenders Act, especially as it relates to violent crime. Would it not be nice if we were able to head off the problems before they entered the realm of criminality? Would it not be nice if we never had to invoke the Young Offenders Act or the Criminal Code in the first place? Of course we know that such a state is unattainable. It would be Utopian, but perhaps this House could move the country one small step closer by supporting this motion.

I urge my colleagues in this place to give it careful consideration.

Mr. Lynn Myers (Waterloo—Wellington, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to address the House today on Motion No. 261, advocating a national head start program for Canadian children.

In the last decade we have learned a tremendous amount about early child development. What happens in the first few years of life, indeed as early as the prenatal period, can have a lasting effect on the development of a child. A child's earliest experiences often

affect his or her capacity to learn, to be healthy and to be productive throughout life. We now know, for example, that the brain develops more rapidly in the first year of life than had previously been believed.

While most children go through the early years of life getting everything they need to develop to their full potential, some children are not as fortunate. Unfortunately poverty is the largest single factor affecting young Canadians today. Many children who live in poverty have inadequate housing or do not get enough to eat. Other Canadian children live in families who are isolated without adequate social support or who face barriers to accessing quality health care and social services. Still other children experience neglect or abuse. It is estimated that one in five children are living in conditions of risk.

The hon. member will be pleased to know that early investments in healthy child development are a priority for this government. The government is taking a preventative approach to physical and mental health by optimizing early child development for all children and intervening early for at risk and marginalized children. The government recognizes the importance of supporting families, which have undoubtedly the most important influence on a child's development. Also recognized is the need to support parents in their role as children's teachers and their protectors.

The Government of Canada has developed three programs that provide long term funding to community groups to design and deliver programs to address the needs of pregnant women, young children and families living in conditions of risk. The first program is the Canada prenatal nutrition program, CPMP; the second is the community action program for children, CAPC; and the aboriginal head start program is the third.

The Canadian prenatal nutrition program, or CPMP, funds 264 projects in 751 communities. These projects offer food supplements, nutrition counselling and support, education and counselling on issues such as alcohol abuse, stress and family violence. These projects also make referrals to other services; 8,500 in their first six months of operation.

CPMP participants are pregnant teens, women living in isolation, women who abuse alcohol or other substances, women living in violent situations and women diagnosed with other problems including diabetes, et cetera. This program is successfully reaching pregnant women who are at risk of low birth. In fact the number of participants in 1997 and 1998 is 30% higher than was anticipated.

• (1115)

The community action program for children, or CAPC, funds over 450 projects across Canada so that children get a better start in life and are ready to start school and improve their chances of growing into healthy and productive adults. Activities include home visiting, parenting classes, play groups, discussion groups

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and counselling. Over 30,000 parents and children are involved each week in CAPC activities.

In addition, these projects have created 1,000 jobs with 20% of them filled by CAPC parents. The projects also account for 30,000 hours of volunteer time every month. I can speak from experience regarding the CAPC. It is an exceptional program and certainly one which is valued by the residents of my riding Waterloo—Wellington.

Children at aboriginal head start spend an average of three hours per day and four days per week in classroom activities. Approximately 30,000 children are enrolled in the program with an average of 30 to 40 children at any given site. Approximately 400 aboriginal people are employed in head start centres and aboriginal communities are involved in the planning, development and operation of all aboriginal head start projects.

Aboriginal head start, CAPC and CPNP have all proven successful in working within broad based community partnerships channelling resources into areas where they have the most positive impact on at risk and marginalized children. The success of these programs speaks volumes to the value of co-operative community based interventions for children.

This community based approach is paying back dividends by getting more children off to a better start in life, increasing their school readiness and improving their chances of growing into healthy and productive adults who will participate fully in Canadian society.

There are some key issues raised by the motion in the context of the national children's agenda which I would like to highlight at this time.

First, the motion represents a major emerging theme in the national children's agenda but is only one part of that agenda. Early child development while a central theme to NCA is only one piece of the overall agenda and discussions are still in an early stage. No decisions have been made regarding the specific areas of action. The national children's agenda is a more comprehensive approach to child development than the present motion covering children throughout their entire childhood. For example, other areas of interest include supporting families around work, family balance and effective safe communities. It is important to support children in early years but that support must continue throughout development.

Second, further consideration is needed on how to strategically focus our efforts on the early years of childhood. The exact development years which would be included in early child development remains under discussion. The motion does not consider the prenatal period which is crucial to child development. For example, low birth weight babies are more at risk for later developmental problems. As well, though the motion refers to children ages zero to eight, it may be more appropriate to start with

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children in their early preschool years, for example under age four or five where no formal system currently exists. Then as the system develops the program could be expanded to include children ages six to eight when school transition issues begin.

Third, the motion misses the importance of citizen engagement in plans to improve the well-being of Canada's children. The motion speaks to the need to work with the provinces and territories on children's issues. However no mention is made of the importance of engaging the public. The national children's agenda is intended to be more than a product of governments talking to governments and other partners will be engaged as the agenda moves forward. All Canadians will have the opportunity to contribute their views regarding possible areas for action and to define how we improve the well-being of all Canadian children.

Fourth, full implementation by the year 2000 is overly optimistic. Though the programs listed in the motion in the federal government's CAPC provide good models on which to build, full implementation of the national head start program by the year 2000 is too optimistic. Given the overlapping areas of jurisdiction and the cross sectorial approach needed to properly address children's issues, negotiations for a national head start will take some time, not to mention the time required for broader consultations to engage citizens.

In light of the growing body of research demonstrating the window of opportunity which exists in early childhood, and in view of the growing political and public interest in the area of child development, a system to enhance early child development is critical and should be an early priority.

Clearly children's issues, particularly those relating to early child development, are a priority as indicated in the September 23, 1997 Speech from the Throne, the recent first ministers' meeting of December 12, 1997, and the commitment to federal-provincial territorial development of the national children's agenda. This is apparent.

• (1120)

Motion No. 261 is consistent with this emphasis on enhancing children's well-being. However, given the status of the national children's agenda it would be inappropriate for the motion to go forward.

Early in 1997 federal, provincial and territorial governments began working together to develop the national children's agenda. It would be inconsistent to now be advancing on another front on a private member's motion and what it suggests.

Most recently at the December 12, 1997 meeting, first ministers reaffirmed their commitment to new co-operative approaches to

ensure child well-being. Noting the progress of the national children's agenda, first ministers agreed to fast track work on that agenda. Until that work in progress has been outlined and discussed Motion No. 261 is premature.

Therefore I ask all members of the House to vote accordingly.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Maud Debien (Laval East, BQ): Madam Speaker, I will begin by going over the wording of Motion M-261 introduced by my colleague for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, which reads as follows:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should: (a) develop, along with their provincial counterparts, a comprehensive National Head Start Program for children in their first 8 years of life; (b) ensure that this integrated program involves both hospitals and schools, and is modelled on the experiences of the Moncton Head Start Program, Hawaii Head Start Program, and PERRY Pre-School Program; and (c) ensure that the program is implemented by the year 2000.

Far be it from me to question the good faith of the hon. member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca and his noble intentions to prevent child and youth crime. We are all concerned about giving children a good start in life. We are all concerned about crime among young people, especially the fact that it is on the increase.

Either in their role as MPs or in their professional activities, all of the members in this House have been in a position to observe cases of youth crime. We all agree that the deep-seated causes of this must be dealt with seriously.

Once again, however, the Bloc Quebecois is forced to point out that this motion falls within an area of exclusively provincial jurisdiction, and that it inaugurates new national standards and directives we do not support.

The Bloc Quebecois is therefore opposed to the mechanisms proposed by the hon. member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca to fight youth crime. We believe the provinces are better placed to identify and assess community needs and to put into place programs and various types of intervention with young people.

We know, and experience has shown, that each province has its own particular philosophy about the prevention of youth and adult crime. It may be a question of identity and culture. We have only to think of the debates in the House regarding the Young Offenders Act. It became clear that members' attitudes, reactions and solutions with respect to this legislation differed enormously.

The same is true in this debate. Quebecers and Canadians often see things differently, as is evident from their approach to social issues. By setting up a comprehensive program such as the one proposed by the member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, the federal government would not only be interfering in areas of jurisdiction

where it has no business, but would not be helping children and young people whose situation requires an adapted approach.

If the other provinces wish to have the federal government intervene and set up programs to keep youth from turning to crime, we respect that choice. Quebec's choice must also be respected.

It must be pointed out that a good start has already been made. I was most astonished to hear the Reform member who spoke before me just now speak about the Bloc Québécois' paranoia, because we are opposed to this bill.

• (1125)

If Reform members were to come to Quebec and find out what is being done, they would perhaps not hold these views about us.

In fact, as I mentioned earlier, Quebec has already taken the lead in this area. In his health and welfare policy, the Quebec minister of health and social services has made the elimination of youth crime a priority. What we have seen is that there has been no increase in the number of young offenders in recent years, but that their offences have become much more serious in nature.

In addition, the causality and risk factors underlying this major change in youth crime have been identified. These include single parenthood, the absence and desertion of the father, poverty, drug addiction, social exclusion, school adjustment problems, the company of other young offenders, parental crime and conjugal conflicts. The causes are numerous and they were clearly identified.

Finally, Quebec advocates five priority measures to reduce the prevalence and seriousness of delinquency by the year 2002: making fathers more accountable; strengthening the father-child relationship; taking action in the school environment; supporting flexible interventions instead of rigid ones; seeking a better balance in the funds earmarked for boys and girls who are experiencing difficulties; giving special attention to girls and, among other initiatives, adjusting any new measure and action related to the Young Offenders Act.

As you can see, the approach taken by Quebec stakeholders speaks for itself. They identified the problems, along with their causes and risk factors. Then, they proposed solutions while also setting realistic goals. This approach reflects the reality of Quebec society, and more specifically that of young offenders.

This action plan was part of the national priorities on public health, on which all stakeholders were consulted, including the health and social services network, community organizations, professional groups, municipalities, and the education, environment, transport, justice and recreation sectors. All took part in the development of the program. Since it is the result of a consensus, the program is based on joint action and is very flexible. This would unfortunately not be the case if Quebec had to implement a

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program designed and developed in some federal administration back room.

Let us tell it as it is. In what way would the federal government be in a better position to resolve the problems facing young children when poverty has been on the rise ever since this government took office? There are serious child poverty problems in Canada. There are 1.5 million poor children whose basic needs are not met and who do not have what is needed to get a good start in life.

But remember that where there are poor children, there are poor parents. A study released in March by the economist Pierre Fortin showed that 58% of the unemployed who are not eligible under the employment insurance plan have no choice but to go on welfare. These individuals cannot qualify for EI benefits. They are therefore forced onto social assistance and on the way to living in poverty.

What has the government done to help eliminate child poverty? Not much. In fact, it has cut transfer payments to the provinces, attacked the unemployed from all sides to increase surpluses in the employment insurance fund and supported the finance minister in his accounting operations. Injecting a measly \$425 million in the child tax benefit program will certainly not help children get out of poverty in the short term.

This centralizing policy which the Reform Party is putting forward will once again prove to be useless and expensive because of the overlap it will create in Quebec.

• (1130)

We must avoid falling in this trap at all cost. The federal government and the Reform Party must understand once and for all that Quebec can look after its own business and take care of its own problems as well. It does not need big brother looking over its shoulder to achieve its goals.

As I mentioned earlier, Quebec has already taken the lead in dealing with youth crime. The hon. member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca should come and see what is being done in this respect. Perhaps the members of the Reform Party would then change their minds.

[English]

Mr. John McKay (Scarborough East, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I congratulate the hon. member for bringing forward this important motion to the House. I hope that he has as much success in influencing the agenda for change as he did with respect to the land mines issue.

This is a serious motion which deserves a serious and thoughtful response. The essence of the motion links rising crime among young offenders with dysfunctional family dynamics.

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Do we put resources in at the front end of a child's life or do we pay for it later on through involvement in the justice system? Are the resources to go to programs to help families or do we build bigger jails? Either way, we are going to spend resources. What is the best way to spend them?

Stating the question is easy. The answer, however, is far more problematic. Unfortunately influence in society is not like physics. Every action has an opposite and equal reaction in physics, but the same cannot be said of the sociology of social programs.

In his support material the hon. member makes reference to programs in Hawaii and New Brunswick. I am not so pretentious as to dispute the efficacy of the programs or their research. However, those results may not necessarily play out in a larger, less controlled societal environment. In other words, the larger the target community, the less measurable will be the results.

There does seem to be a correlation between a drop in juvenile crime and meeting the basic needs of children. However, it is not as neat as we would like it to be. There appears to be a correlation but it is not neat.

I draw attention to an article by Cathy Campbell in *Child Health*, winter issue 1998, volume 20, quoting Dr. Clyde Hertzman, professor of health care and epidemiology at UBC: "Lower income children who get good early childhood education are healthier, go further in school, get better jobs and rely less on the social welfare system".

The National Crime Prevention Council estimates that crime costs Canada \$46 billion annually. If we took \$1 million and invested it in prison space for career criminals this would prevent 60 crimes annually. If we took the same amount and used it to monitor 12 and 13 year old delinquents it would prevent 72 crimes a year. Further, if that \$1 million were invested in incentives for young people to graduate from high school it could be estimated that we would save 258 crimes annually.

In some manner we visit this dilemma every time there is a major crime involving a juvenile which generates media attention or when there is government initiated legislation in the field. If and when the government tables its response to the justice committee's report and recommendations on young offenders this debate will be played out again.

Canada incarcerates children at the rate of four times that of the United States and 15 times that of the average European nation. So much for being a kinder and gentler version of the United States. We are world class incarcerators of juveniles.

• (1135)

I do not think that is something to be proud of. It certainly gives one pause to consider one's very sense of who we are as Canadians.

Canadians believe that juvenile crime is out of control, that they are at risk every time they go to the store to pick up a bag of milk or a carton of cigarettes. Yet arguably the young offenders legislation is tough enough and puts away far more children than any other civilized nation.

There is a discrepancy between what Canadians believe and what is the reality of the legislation. The hon. member proposes a long term solution which has some merit. Some members of his party could easily be described as people who feel that the government is not tough enough on crime, that the government is made up of a bunch of wimps, that the young offenders legislation is not tough enough.

The government responds, as it did through the minister of state for children and youth, by saying look at all the things it is doing. There was the Speech from the Throne, the aboriginal head start programs, the Canada prenatal nutrition program, the \$850 million in the budget and a further \$850 million promised for a child benefit system. The debate goes on and on.

One side firmly believes that we should toughen up all legislation affecting youth and youth crime and the other is saying we need more head start programs.

I do not find myself seriously disagreeing with the hon. member's motion. I might quibble with the wording to ensure that children are seen as part of the family and that programs should be tailored to support the family. Beyond that, I would see his motion as something that supports government initiatives and the general direction of this government. Only it urges a more coherent view on the government.

I support the thrust of this motion. However, I am concerned that there is not an easy correlation between head start programs and crime reduction. The government should continue to monitor its initiatives in light of the tests set out in this motion.

Mr. Jack Ramsay (Crowfoot, Ref.): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to support private member's Motion No. 261 by the member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca. I congratulate him on bringing this matter forward.

The underlying concern it represents for our children, particularly the ages encompassed by the bill from time of birth until age 8, is a concern that will receive support from people across the country. I think it will receive support in the hearts of every member in the House.

When we did the 10 year review of the Young Offenders Act we travelled across the country and listened to witnesses, both expert and professional, as well as lay people who had an interest in the whole area of the development of youth, of preventing youth crime and wrestling with the question regarding what to do with the very small percentage of violent young offenders who do create a threat to the lives and safety of members of our society.

During that hearing experts told us that aberrant and over aggressive behaviour could be spotted as early as grades one, two and three in the schools by teachers.

I want to assure my Bloc colleagues that when we arrived in Quebec, we found that Quebec had programs far ahead of some of the other provinces. To set their minds more at ease, in the Young Offenders Act meetings that we are holding across western Canada today, as I stand and speak I make mention of the fact that there are programs in Quebec that ought to be looked at and perhaps emulated by other provinces if they have a real concern about dealing with the early detection and preventive programs.

This is the three level approach that my party has taken to the whole area of the Young Offenders Act. The two areas, of course, lie within the jurisdiction of the provinces. The first is the early detection and prevention where resources are placed in the programs where a teacher, for example, seeing a child having difficulties can refer that child to a program of the provincial government where the child as well as the parents can receive the help they need to keep that young child on track.

• (1140)

We think this is a very worthwhile program, very much along the lines of the head start program that my colleague from Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca is referring to in this motion. There are aspects of this ongoing in Canada already. My colleague from across the way earlier mentioned the head start programs in some of the aboriginal communities in Canada.

What we want to do through this motion is create a greater awareness of the need to help the children and the benefit, not only from a societal point of view but from the economic point of view, as my colleague who just finished speaking touched on, we think is extremely important.

We also looked at programs such as the Sparwood program and the Maple Ridge program in B.C., two excellent programs where young children who get into difficulty for the first or second time with the law are diverted from the court system into these community justice systems.

We met last week with Lola Chapman who heads the Maple Ridge program. She gave us some astounding figures that gave me and my colleagues great hope and encouragement that we can keep more of our young children out of the criminal justice system while at the same time catching them at a time when rehab efforts will have the greatest impact on them.

Let me give an example. The figures she gave us started three years ago. At that time in her area there was a juvenile court sitting once a week and approximately 45 to 60 young offenders passed before the court during one day. That is now down to an average of

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eight per day. That is a very commendable achievement on the part of those very concerned and dedicated volunteers who support the program and work with the young people who are referred to them rather than taking them into the court system. The police and now the crown are able to refer them to this program that has been running for approximately three years.

Miss Chapman spoke about the success rate and I asked her to define what success meant. She said they consider a success to include any young offender who has not repeated within at least a year's time. She also said their success rate was 94%. That is very commendable. The Sparwood program is a little different but still has the same high success rate of over 90% in dealing with young people who have brushed with the law for the first time and who have never returned to difficulties. This is very commendable.

When we look from the federal point of view of how to reduce the number of people entering the youth justice system and what we should really be doing with the Young Offenders Act we are encouraged by these two programs. This is the early detection and preventive program, the best of which I have seen so far in Quebec, and also the diversion program. This program is involved when young people get into difficulties for the first or second time and they are diverted away from court. They have concerned people who will stick with them 7 days a week, 24 hours a day to help and guide them.

In those cases involving restitution in 100% of the cases restitution has been paid and that again is another astonishing figure. It shows the degree of accountability and responsibility that we need to engender in our young people so that when they become adults they have that sense of responsibility with them.

When we look at this whole area of the youth justice system and what we should be doing with the Young Offenders Act, we could introduce and have every community set up its own unique program similar to what the Sparwood and Maple Ridge programs have set up. I understand they are spreading across the provinces and it is into Alberta now.

• (1145)

We could reduce that very small percentage of violent young offenders who threaten the lives and safety of members of society. As the federal government and as federal politicians we have to wrestle with that problem. What do we do with that very small percentage of violent young offenders who threaten the lives and safety of members of our society?

We must not shrink from the use of incarceration. At the same time we must ensure that our educational programs and other rehab programs in the institutions are sound and are getting through to our young people so that the possibility of rehabilitation is very real.

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We visited closed custody and open custody facilities. We did not see very much to encourage us with regard to the rehab programs. In most cases they are voluntary and are not compulsory. Young offenders can sit and watch TV or play cards if they do not want to engage in the programs.

This motion brings an awareness. If that awareness is followed through it will strengthen the early detection and prevention programs at the point where it is so badly needed.

I only have another minute or so but I want to refer to the Sydney mines project outside Sydney, Nova Scotia which we visited. It involves children who have fallen through the cracks, who have had to leave school, have bumped into the law and so on. They are doing a magnificent job in getting those young children up to speed in educational areas. They are getting them on track and are moving forward. There have been enormous successes.

We must divert our resources from the back end to the front end so that we do not have a continually expanding criminal justice system which simply eats away at more dollars and does not attack the real cause of crime.

If poverty is a cause of crime which in many cases it is, then we should look at the high taxation levels which have left one family in every five living in poverty.

Mr. Rick Laliberte (Churchill River, NDP): Madam Speaker, I would like to speak in support of Motion No. 261. The member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca has raised a very important challenge for this country.

I am speaking from experience in terms of my being in the educational system and in the administration of a school district for the last 12 years. I have also seen the beginning of the aboriginal head start program in my community.

The member proposes that the first eight years of life are crucial for child development. I remind the House and fellow citizens of Canada that children in aboriginal communities were affected by the residential school system policy, much to the detriment of the parenting process in those communities. I must caution that we do not try to institutionalize our children at a very young age. We must not abandon the family structure of our people. All Canadians want to live in a family environment.

Head start is crucial if the family environment is not intact. If the parents are not able to provide the academic, social, economic and emotional support, then the head start program plays an important role. The head start program is the community taking the leadership in an extended family role.

The community base is crucial. The aboriginal head start program made that a major priority. Community groups had to be

involved in the development of head start. The other aspect is the educational systems in Canada.

● (1150)

Why could the schools not administer the head start program so that an additional administrative structure is not created? We do not need to duplicate administration. We want to create programs and services for children and their families, not to spend money on administration. We should allow the school systems to administer the program as is done in the province of Quebec.

The head start program will require curriculum development. An integral part of the aboriginal head start program is language development. Neheyo-watsin, in my language, we cannot lose the aboriginal languages of this country's aboriginal peoples. This is the homeland of that language. If head start imposes English or French as opposed to the community's first language, it is a detriment and takes us back to institutionalization and residential school policies. That is not the intention of the community aboriginal head start programs.

The communities want to keep their languages first. If children can keep the first language intact until the age of eight years, then they can pick up a second, third or fourth language with greater ease. However, their first language must be developed first.

While the motion mentions provincial and federal partnership, it begs to include community partnership in this development. It mentions hospitals and schools. In educational and community development, schools play a more integral part than do hospitals. There is more readiness of schools than hospitals in our communities.

Transporting a child of three, four or five years of age across the community to another city or town to attend head start programs or receive services is a little out of vision. Many of the head start outreach programs are at the home base. This allows the development of children at home by the parents with support services from the head start program. Keeping a family together is very important.

I have another example concerning crime. Reform members have taken this as the flagship of reducing crime. There is a statistic which astounded me. On a tour of the Saskatchewan penitentiary during the royal commission hearings the commissioners heard many briefs given by inmates. At the end of the day the co-chair, Mr. Erasmus, asked the attending inmates how many of them had come through the foster home program. Eighty per cent of the inmates in that room had come through the foster home program. This points to the family structure.

If immediate families cannot carry the burden of raising a child, the extended families must immediately be put into place. The community must be given the authority and the means to provide that child support in the child's immediate surroundings. By

displacing children elsewhere in the province or in the country is not to their betterment. We must keep the families as close as possible within their immediate areas. This is a concern I have with the head start program as well.

In my community I have seen the evolution of urbanization. Because of low incomes and social housing, families are forced to stay in a community with water and sewer systems. Traditionally however, they lived along the rivers and lakes which is where the clans raised and supported each other. Now, because of the way neighbourhoods are designed, a sister could be living across town and an uncle could be living on the other side of town, leaving no family support system in the community structure.

There is also an evolution on the family farms. They have been hit hard by declining incomes. The spouses must rely on a second source of income which will take members away from the family. The federal and provincial governments should support the family as much as possible. Farmers provide for the wealth of the agricultural community. They provide food for this nation and for the world. The fishermen who provide the food do not diminish their responsibility or their role in this country. Keep their families intact. Do not compromise them by creating programs that keep parenting away from their responsibilities. My message is to keep the families intact.

• (1155)

Mr. Benoît Serré (Timiskaming—Cochrane, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise today to speak on Motion No. M-261, a motion which encourages the government to develop a comprehensive national head start program. I thank my colleague the hon. member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca for introducing this motion. I congratulate him for his compassion and for the work he has done on this very important issue.

There is no doubt that youth crime is alarming. Social workers are getting calls from parents who claim their children are uncontrollably violent. It is even a problem among elementary school children and preschoolers. It is not rare to see 10-year old children behaving violently at school, nor is it rare to see that between siblings. There is indeed something inconceivably wrong with an 11-year old boy who rapes or a 14-year old who stabs a 7-year old to death.

The truth is that harsher punishment or counselling and proper parenting are simply not enough. What is the solution? The solution might be found in programs such as head start which would assist at risk children in their development. Head start programs aim to level the playing field before children enter the public school system. This is a constructive approach to deal with the problem.

Every year thousands of disadvantaged children enter school for the first time. Many have health problems and many lack self-con-

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fidence. If children are allowed to fall behind in the early years, then often their troubles are compounded in later years. Extensive research has shown that it is possible to enhance the ability of a disadvantaged child to cope with school and their total environment.

[*Translation*]

A real head start program addresses the emotional, social and psychological needs of children, as well as their health and nutritional requirements. All existing head start programs have been very favourably received by educators, child development specialists, community leaders and parents.

This program will have a significant impact on communities. To a certain extent, it will make it possible to find solutions to a variety of situations: single-parent families, teenage pregnancies, illiteracy, homelessness, alcohol and drug abuse, and ill-treatment of children.

A head start program helps children to do better in school and provides parents with the knowledge and services they need to manage their lives better. Parents must participate directly in their children's development, playing a great role in this regard.

The head start program is patterned on the national action program for children and on the agreement worked out by premiers for the purpose of accelerating the work planned under this program.

Naturally, funding for the head start program would come from the federal, provincial and municipal governments and would require the participation of community volunteers. It would recognize that the needs of children vary by community, province and region.

[*English*]

What is the priority? The priority must be our children. They learn how to learn at an early age. Have members ever been in an intensive care neonatal unit? Have they ever seen a baby addicted to drugs or affected by alcohol? Do they know how much that costs? It costs hundreds of thousands of dollars. Then the child becomes a ward of the community, perhaps permanently damaged.

• (1200)

This is why we are having this debate today. We want to stress the importance of little children, young and formative pieces of clay. Children are and must be our priority.

[*Translation*]

We must create a special early childhood development program for disadvantaged children. It is an investment we will never regret.

*Government Orders**[English]*

In the first 18 months a child learns to think well or poorly of himself. In the first two years children either learn how to learn or do not learn how to learn. This is why we must provide them with tools for their development and guide them on the right path. It costs a lot more to send kids to prison than to send them to school.

I am passionate about early childhood education for disadvantaged, tiny children. Studies prove that if we love and nurture, show affection to these little pieces of clay they will be honour students. Furthermore, studies confirm that there can be more than \$7 in savings for every \$1 spent on such programs.

We must be on the cutting edge of this initiative. We have eliminated the deficit. It is now time to invest in our children, our greatest asset. We have to take responsibility because it is our duty.

Let us come out of this debate with a consensus. We must continually rework the head start idea for it to become the most cost effective program ever developed.

I see that the hour has come to an end. I will continue the next time the matter is before the House.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault): The time provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired and the order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the order paper.

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NUNAVUT ACT

Hon. Jane Stewart (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Lib.) moved that Bill C-39, an act to amend the Nunavut Act and the Constitution Act, 1867, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

She said: Madam Speaker, it is indeed a pleasure and an honour for me to begin the debate on Bill C-39, an act to amend the Nunavut Act and the Constitution Act, 1867.

I remind the House and indeed all Canadians that on April 1, 1999 something very important will happen, something that is reflective of who we are as a country and as Canadians, something that describes how we have been able through the course of the 20th century to find ways and means of modernizing democracy, of reflecting the will of the people of the land, and of taking creative approaches through negotiation, building treaties and discussion to find better ways to build governing structures that are representative and reflective of the people we are elected to represent.

On April 1, 1999 Canada will have a new territory, the territory of Nunavut. Over the course of the 20th century we as a country have found ways to build a nation, to make change. If we go back to 1905, it was in that year that two new provinces were created out of the Northwest Territories, the province of Alberta and the province of Saskatchewan. In a peaceful way we reflected the interests, the needs, and respected the requirements of the people living in what we now know to be two very important special provinces in our federation, Alberta and Saskatchewan.

At the beginning of the 20th century we had something very important and now we have at the end of the 20th century something equally important.

The creation of Nunavut is something we should all be proud of. It is something that is capturing the attention of the world. We know it is very rare that countries can in peaceful ways through negotiation build, change, redraw their maps and in a very active way remember and reflect on the fact that governments really are about people. Our challenge is to find modern ways to ensure that the people of the country feel a part of it and feel that their ideas and their concerns are reflected in their governing structures.

• (1205)

Bill C-39 is an extremely important piece of the legislative framework that will allow us to have a successful creation of or transition to the new territory of Nunavut on April 1, 1999.

As a result of conversations with my counterparts in the Government of the Northwest Territories, with the leadership of the Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, with the work of the interim commissioner Jack Anawak and of the Nunavut Implementation Committee, we have identified that we need to build on the work that has gone on in the past and to implement amendments that will ensure the stable, safe and seamless transition to the new territory of Nunavut in April 1999.

Bill C-39 then is not an end in itself but is one piece in a long history of what the peoples of the eastern Arctic wanted and require. It makes sense to have a government that reflects them in modern times.

If we think back on the history, it is a fascinating one. We know now that the Inuit people were in Canada's Arctic and high Arctic over 4,000 years ago. I have had the great fortune to travel to the north. I am constantly amazed at how the Inuit and others living in the eastern Arctic have found ways to acclimatize, to live and to thrive in very harsh environmental conditions. If we think about that, 4,500 years ago, it is a tribute to the human condition, to human nature and to the Inuit people to see that they have stayed, thrived and flourished. They are bringing up families in northern climes, something that we have come to appreciate as very much a part of Canada.

In the mid-1500s Martin Frobisher, the explorer, was trying to find a passage to the Orient. He travelled through the islands of the

high Arctic. Carrying on with our history, in the 1870s and 1880s the British crown transferred the Arctic and the islands of the high Arctic to Canadian authority.

In the early 1900s we saw structural changes to the Northwest Territories and the creation of the new provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan. In the 1920s there were discussions with other international parties, the Danes and the Norwegians, but again we viewed these lands to be very much a part of Canada and have defended that strongly.

It has been interesting to note that in the 1960s in the very large territory of the Northwest Territories which crosses over three time zones there were the beginnings of discussions about the need for division. There was a recognition that there were differences across that large geographic mass.

In the 1960s a task force was assembled, the Carrothers commission, to look at the appropriateness of the geographic alignment of that territory and how well we were able to represent the interests of the people there with one governing structure. As we know in the Mackenzie Valley and in the Beaufort Sea at that time there was increasing interest in the natural resources, an increasing population growth and an interest in building toward stronger representative government.

In 1973 a significant decision of the supreme court allowed us to start thinking about the Northwest Territories and other lands in Canada in a new way. In 1973 in the Calder decision the door was opened for us to consider the issue of aboriginal title in Canada and the fact that it may continue to exist. In 1973 the Inuit Tapirisat began to research the traditional occupancy of the Inuit people in the far north, to reflect their information and beliefs and to encourage us to work together to build a modern land claims structure and strategy.

• (1210)

The year 1973 was the turning point and gave us the interest to build the modern land claims strategy that we now see being implemented across the country, not only in the north with the Inuit people, with the Dene and the Metis but in British Columbia and Quebec where we are settling comprehensive agreements on land claims and self-government.

Over the course of the seventies and into the eighties the discussion about division and appropriate boundaries in the Northwest Territories continued. There were different strategies put forward. The Dene suggested that we break into three different territories. The Inuvialuit, the Inuit people around the Beaufort, became very interested in focusing on their self-government in land claims agreements. We have settled those and are proceeding to implementation in the western part of the Northwest Territories.

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In 1992 we came to understand more fully the importance of settling what has come to be Canada's largest land claim agreement, the land claim agreement in Nunavut. This is a huge territory in and of itself, covering over 200 million square kilometres of land. In 1993 the Nunavut Act legislation was passed that allows us to settle the land claim and create the new and innovative governing structures that we need so that the people of the eastern Arctic feel that their government is reflective of their interests and of their concerns.

While the government will not be dissimilar in many ways to the governments we see in the territories, there will be some differences. One that is of particular interest and that has been strongly encouraged by the Inuit in the eastern Arctic is that the government be decentralized and that there be bodies of the government in remote communities so that people are connected with their structures of government.

It is an interesting undertaking which as I said is reflective of our capacity as a country to build democracy, to build a nation and to understand that democracy is not static and has to change and evolve, and that a country and a federation as successful as ours can find ways in modern times to evolve and to change.

The history that has brought us to this point has been a long and arduous one. It has been 20 years since we have focused our attention on building a new government in the eastern Arctic. This has been strongly supported by all people in the Northwest Territories, and it would have to be because when boundaries change there are issues associated with division that have to be negotiated.

I am proud to say that the discussions are currently continuing and being undertaken to ensure we have the platform for governing structures available on April 1 and are proceeding in a positive fashion.

As I said at the outset, we have discovered that we need more legislation to allow us to continue to make progress. That legislation and these amendments are real and important. They were not just dreamed up by this side of the House. The needs were fed to us by our partners in the Northwest Territories, the Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, our partners in the Nunavut Implementation Commission and the interim commissioner, Mr. Jack Anawak, a former colleague of ours in the House who has taken on the task of ensuring that we are implementing "Footprints In the Snow", the document that gave us the grand design for the territory itself.

The amendments that are part of Bill C-39 fall into two broad categories: the amendments that are particularly technical in nature and the second group of amendments to ensure full representation for the people of Nunavut both in the House and in the other place.

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• (1215)

When it comes to the technical amendments, they essentially are required so that we have a stable and even flow of activities between now and April 1, 1999 and then into the future. We want to make sure, for example, that people have the ability to have their car licences continued, that people have a court structure which has continuity, that for cases which have been or are being heard there is not a requirement for a stoppage, but that things can flow and continue.

We want to make sure that social services continue to be provided and that we have platforms so that there is no stop or start, that individual residents can be assured that their circumstances will not change in terms of their day to day lives.

These technical amendments are critically important and they are necessitated by the fact that we believe and are sure we can create this new territory with a minimum of confusion, concern and difficulty for citizens in what will be the western Arctic and the eastern Arctic.

We can imagine the work that goes into preparing this platform. The interim commissioner as we speak is in negotiations with the Government of the Northwest Territories with the Government of Canada, looking at arrangements, at contracts that have been struck between the federal government and the Northwest Territories and sorting them out to make sure that the assets and liabilities in the territory are clearly split fairly and identified and that there is an acceptable and fair approach to the creation of this whole new territory.

When we look at the other set of amendments, they are equally important because one of the things that we believe in strongly in this country is that individuals must be represented within their governments. At the federal level that means having representation here in the House of Commons and it very clearly means having representation in the other place.

With this bill we will confirm the member of Parliament for Nunavut. My colleague, the member for Nunavut, ran in that territory in the election of 1993 and for the first time it was called Nunavut, but that needs to be confirmed in the Constitution so that there is a place for the people of Nunavut in this place.

As I have said, we have to ensure that the voice and representation of the people of the Northwest Territories and the western Arctic and eastern Arctic is heard in the Senate. That is why we have to make an amendment to the Constitution Act, 1867 to ensure that their voice is heard in the Senate.

This bill is not about redefining the structures of government as they exist. It is about making sure that the voices of the people in

Nunavut and western Arctic will continue to be heard in their houses of parliament.

I would like to continue on by talking about the relationship we have built among ourselves, the people of this country, to ensure we do have a positive and successful transition to the creation of Nunavut on April 1, 1999.

As can be imagined, it is not easy. What we see is a willingness of the part of all people associated to make sure this works. They reflect on their history. They reflect on the importance of the land claim agreements. They reflect on the importance of proving that we can continue to develop a democracy that works, a federation that works, a nation that works.

• (1220)

I have had the pleasure of sitting down at a principals meeting in Iqaluit with my counterpart, the deputy premier of the Northwest Territories, Mr. Goo Arlooktoo, and with the president of the Nunavut Tunngavik Corporation, Jose Kusagak, listening to the interim commissioner talk about the plans and the implementation strategies that must occur in the next few days.

It is a challenge and it is our view that the best approach we have in place is the basic framework of our legislation package so that the people of Nunavut, upon electing their government, their men and women who will be in their territory to represent them, can make the decisions that are required to build a series of legislation that truly reflects the realities of the eastern Arctic.

In this bill we are asking the House to confirm and to agree to early elections. We want to make sure that before April 1, 1999 the men and women of the eastern Arctic have been elected and are ready to take office on that very important and significant date, to begin their work as representatives of the people who are Inuit and non-Inuit.

There are things that are very important in this that we must understand. First of all in the context of this land claims agreement, we are not talking about self-government for the Inuit people. We are talking about building a public government that will represent all who live in the eastern Arctic, in the territory of Nunavut.

With this public government, we will have a structure that better represents the Inuit people who make up 85% of the population but which, in addition, is representative of those other Canadians who live in the territory.

To this point, the Nunavut Act would have the elections occur after the transition, after the creation, after April 1, 1999. In our view and in the view of the Nunavut implementation commission, that is inappropriate. Rather, the election must occur before.

This brings some great urgency to this piece of legislation and why I would encourage all members of the House to support the speedy passage of Bill C-39.

As we all know, the process of election, the process of presenting oneself to the public for consideration takes time. Individuals need to question proposed candidates, to get to know them, to understand their point of view, to determine if they have the philosophy that is so much defined for us in footprints in the snow.

That is why I am asking the House to support us in moving Bill C-39 through the process of legislation as quickly as possible. We need to ensure that there will be representation for the people of Nunavut in their government in Iqaluit, in their house of Parliament here on this side and the other side.

As I say, this is a truly exciting time. Our job together, my job as the representative from the federal government in this very important initiative, is to have the platform ready, to have the basic legislative framework there, to ensure that there is a public service there to serve and support the men and women who will be duly elected before April 1, 1999.

Our job is to provide that infrastructure but then to give it over in a stable fashion as smoothly as possible, as efficiently as possible to the individual men and women who will be elected by the people of the eastern Arctic to sit on their behalf in the new government of Nunavut in Iqaluit.

Members can see why Bill C-39 is required. It is required so that technically we have the structure in place for the new government to function.

• (1225)

It is required so that the people of Nunavut can hold their election and truly celebrate their new government on April 1. It is required to ensure that the people of Nunavut will have their voices heard here in Ottawa, in their national capital, in the House of Commons and in the Senate.

As I said at the outset, this is just one small piece in what has been a long and exciting and tremendously important history of our eastern Arctic. I want to congratulate all those who to date have put their time and energy into such a significant undertaking.

I think of John Amagoalik who chairs the Nunavut implementation commission, called Mr. Nunavut, who has over the course of his lifetime really worked for nothing more than a clear representation, a clear governing structure for the Inuit and other Canadians who live in eastern Arctic.

I congratulate those men and women in the existing Government of the Northwest Territories who have consistently supported this

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approach, the minister of finance, John Todd, the deputy premier, Goo Arlooktoo, the premier and the representatives from the eastern Arctic and the western Arctic now who are working and focusing on making this an effective example of how Canada works.

I want to thank those men and women here in the federal legislature, the member for Nunavut who has so strongly supported this initiative and provided me with direction and advice and I expect will explain to the House her involvement in the whole process.

This is an exciting time in Canada's history. We can be very proud of our country. We can be very proud of its heritage. We can be very proud that we are part of a nation that takes very seriously the issues of democracy, the structures of government, the focus that we believe that we can build ways and means that represent all individuals who live in this nation. We can be flexible and through positive initiatives of negotiations, of treaties and discussions, keep our country moving forward in a healthy and hopeful direction that is not static, that is not arbitrary, but is thoughtful and always recognizes that the role of government is to make the lives of its citizens better.

In my mind this undertaking, the creation of the new territory of Nunavut, is a shining example of how we make progress in this country, of how we show that our federation works, of how we indicate to the rest of the world that we are unique and that we are building a democracy that is second to none.

I will just ask all members to reflect on what is being asked for in this legislation and to understand that by supporting it they are supporting the values and the strengths that make this country so great.

Mr. Preston Manning (Leader of the Opposition, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I rise to address the bill before the House, an act to amend the Nunavut Act and the Constitution Act, 1867.

My remarks will focus almost exclusively on that portion of the bill which amends the Constitution in relation to the Senate of Canada. In fact, I want to use the opportunity of this debate to make the case against the Senate in its present form and the case for a reformed Senate to the benefit not only of the people of Nunavut but of all Canadians. Before doing so, let me address a few words on behalf of the official opposition to the good people of Nunavut.

The territory of Nunavut was created by the passage of the Nunavut Act in 1993. As the minister has already said, it establishes a territory with an area of two million square kilometres that encompasses much of the eastern Arctic. It is a huge, rugged, impressive part of Canada. This territory is inhabited by over 24,000 people, 85% of whom are Inuit and 15% of whom are other aboriginal peoples and non-aboriginals. As one of the largest and most thinly populated regions of our country, its representation in Parliament presents some unique challenges.

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• (1230)

On behalf of the official opposition, I wish the people of Nunavut well. They will enjoy the full support of the official opposition in developing democratic, accountable and effective political institutions as well as federal policies that protect and advance their interests. On this latter subject, I will advise the people of Nunavut concerning two serious weaknesses in the approach of the current Liberal government to Canada's north.

First, the government has no vision of the north other than to bureaucratize it, overregulate it and overgovern it. If the deficiency of the substitution of bureaucracy for vision is to be overcome, it must be overcome by northerners themselves developing their own vision. As they do so, the official opposition pledges its help in communicating that vision to other Canadians so it can be realized.

Second, I regret to say that this Liberal government is not competent when it comes to constitution making. It has made no effort and has no intention of attempting to repair the weaknesses and defects of the Canadian Constitution. In passing the Nunavut Act in 1993, we believe the federal government has made a major constitutional error. Nunavut will pay a heavy price in the future if that error is not remedied.

I refer particularly to the point made by Reformers when the Nunavut Act was passed that in effect the federal government was creating a new province. By doing so without following the provisions of the current Constitution, namely by failing to get the required approval of the other provinces, it was creating a situation where the Nunavut Act itself and every law and regulation passed under it may someday be challenged in the courts as being constitutionally invalid. This is an inexcusable mistake for the federal government to make with respect to the creation of Nunavut. The official opposition will do everything in its power to remedy that mistake.

Several of my colleagues, in particular the chief opposition critic for Indian affairs and northern development, the hon. member for Skeena, will analyse part 1 of this bill and propose improvements that will benefit the people of Nunavut in practical ways.

My intention is to focus entirely on part 2 of the bill. This section seeks to amend the Constitution of Canada. In particular it provides for the representation of the Yukon territory, the Northwest territory and Nunavut in the Senate of Canada. It raises not only for the people of Nunavut but for all Canadians the issue of what representation in the Senate of Canada means today and what it should mean in years to come. This is a subject which is long overdue for a thorough discussion in this House.

When Reformers first arrived in this House, despite the fact that our Constitution guarantees freedom of speech and that all of us

were elected on a platform that included Senate reform, we were amazed to discover that references to the Senate were often considered taboo and were discouraged, if not suppressed. The standing order that prohibits the use of offensive words against either House or against any member thereof was never intended to prevent reference to defects in the operations of either House or in the performance of the duties of members, nor was it meant to suppress frank and open discussion of the need for parliamentary reform.

One of the most profound ways in which we can show our respect for Parliament, for either House and for the office and person of its members is to acknowledge shortcomings when they exist and to advocate remedies for those shortcomings. Constructive criticism of the upper house and its members by members of this House and the advocacy of reform, even the advocacy of the abolition of the upper house must not be misconstrued as offensive or disrespectful. There is ample historical precedent for this position.

• (1235)

The Canadian Senate and other upper houses and the conduct of their members have been intensely analysed, scrutinized and debated in the legislative assemblies of Canada in the past. In the Confederation debates in the legislative assemblies of Canada, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick that gave birth to our country, discussion of the proposed Senate and the limitations of the existing legislative councils dominated those debates.

The reform, retention or abolition of upper chambers was the subject of intense debate and discussion in the Manitoba legislature in 1876, the New Brunswick legislature in 1892, in the Prince Edward Island legislature in 1893, in the Nova Scotia legislature in 1928, in the Newfoundland legislature in 1934 and in the Quebec assembly in 1968. If we need other Commonwealth examples, we could cite the debate and discussion of this subject in the New Zealand legislature in 1951 and the frequent discussion of this subject in the Australian lower house right up to the present day.

Of course discussion of the Senate in this House has been primarily discouraged by the unwritten and unspoken agreement between the two traditional parties whose members dominate the Senate. Why such an agreement? Because the current Senate is an institution which, if ever held up to genuine and prolonged public and media scrutiny, would not survive in its present form.

As I am sure everyone will agree, fortunately there is one particular circumstance under which full discussion of the Senate in all its aspects is not taboo and cannot be discouraged or prevented. That is when the government itself introduces legislation that refers directly to the Senate, representation in the Senate, changes to the Senate and changes to those sections of the

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Constitution governing the Senate. That is precisely what we have in part 2 of the bill before us, in particular clauses 43 to 47.

Today we have been given the perfect opportunity, and I might say the rare opportunity, on behalf of the people of Nunavut who are being offered representation in the Senate of Canada and on behalf of all Canadians, to do three things: one, to make the case against the status quo of the Senate as presently constituted; two, to consider the case for and against Senate abolition; and three, because Reformers always want to get on to positive alternatives, to make the case for a reformed Senate, in particular an elected, equal and effective Senate. It is now my intention to lay these three cases before the House.

The case against the status quo Senate, the Senate as it is, the Senate to which this bill proposes to send a senator from Nunavut, could fill volumes. However let me outline only seven of the most serious and telling arguments against the Senate in its present form, arguments which we have to take into account if we genuinely respect that institution and want to ensure it has a future in the 21st century.

The first point is that the Senate was defective and fraudulently constructed from the very beginning. In other words, the Senate of Canada, if you will allow me to use a theological expression, Mr. Speaker, was conceived in sin. I am not referring here to the drinking bouts which characterized the Quebec and Charlottetown conferences at which the proposal for the Senate was first put forward.

In the 1860s, John A. Macdonald and the other Fathers of Confederation particularly from Upper Canada were confronted with a dilemma. They had a deadlock in the Parliament of the United Colony of Canada, an equal number of seats for Lower Canada and Upper Canada, but with the population of Upper Canada rising rapidly. They wanted a new assembly based on representation by population, rep by pop as George Brown put it, but how to persuade Lower Canada, Quebec, to agree to give up equal representation which it already had in the colonial assembly.

Said Sir John A. and others "We will create two houses with rep by pop in the lower house and equality between Quebec and Ontario in the upper house. Moreover, we will assure Quebec and Atlantic Canada as well that the main function of this upper house, this Senate based on equality, will be to protect local and regional interests, including the language and culture of Quebec". Thus the Senate of Canada was conceived and brought into the world.

• (1240)

We have John A., our first and best prime minister, declaring in the Confederation debates: "In order to protect local interests, and to prevent sectional jealousies"—which was the 19th century term for regional alienation—"it was found requisite that the great

divisions into which British North America is separated should be represented in the upper house on the principle of equality.

Likewise we have George-Etienne Cartier arguing that Quebecers should accept this arrangement which limited their province to perpetual minority status in the House of Commons because in compensation, Quebec would be represented in the Senate by a block of senators equal in number to those from Ontario.

There is only one thing wrong with this whole scheme. It was defective at best, and some observers would say and have said that it was even fraudulent. The new Senate was not to be democratically accountable. It was to be appointed which virtually guaranteed that in a time when democracy was in ascendancy, an appointed Senate would decline in influence, respectability and effectiveness in relation to the lower house.

The new senators were to be appointed by the prime minister which meant that rather than representing local and regional interests they ended up representing the partisan interests of the prime minister who appointed them. Thus from the very outset the effectiveness of the Senate in safeguarding local and regional interests, the big selling point to Quebec, was compromised. What good was equality no matter how it was defined in such an unaccountable and an ineffective chamber?

Second, I want to argue that the Senate was and is a compromised house and that by the end of the 19th century it had become apparent that it was already a compromised institution. It was compromised in terms of accountability. It was compromised by partisan patronage. It was compromised in its ability to represent regional interests. Its equality was compromised by ineffectiveness.

In referring to the Senate as a compromised house, do not misunderstand me. Reformers are often accused of being unwilling to recognize the value of compromise but that is not true. Of course we recognize the value of compromising to achieve a greater more principled objective such as the creation or preservation of a country. What Reformers object to is the tendency of old line politicians in Canada not only to compromise but to then compromise their compromises, and then to compromise again until there is no discernible principle left in either their positions or their actions.

This is precisely what has happened to the institutions of both the House of Commons and the Senate throughout the 20th century under Liberal and Tory mismanagement. A two house parliament, a bicameral parliament, is itself a compromise. It is a principled compromise between geography and demography with representation according to the principle of population, numbers of people, in the lower house and representation according to the principle of geographic area in the upper house.

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Lincoln said it most succinctly when he described the compromise made by the American founding fathers: "The convention that framed the United States Constitution had this difficulty: the small states wished to so frame the new government that they might be equal to the large ones regardless of the inequality of population; the large ones insisted on equality in proportion to population". What did the American founding fathers do? These are Lincoln's words: "They compromised it by basing the House of Representatives on population and the Senate on states regardless of population, and the executive on both principles".

In Canada we started out down the same road, but then we compromised the compromises. Representation by region or province in the Senate was compromised by patronage. Then we started jiggling the numbers of senators allotted to each province, departing further and further from the principle that Sir John A. himself enunciated in the Confederation debates, that the great divisions into which British North America is separated should be represented in the upper house on the principle of equality.

Then in later proposals, like the Charlottetown accord, it was even proposed that some seats in the Senate be based on race and some on gender, some by direct election and some by provincial appointment, until there is no discernible principle left as a basis for Senate representation or to guide the Senate's activities.

Similarly over the same period, successive federal governments began to compromise representation by population in the lower house, minimum numbers of seats for P.E.I. and Quebec, overrepresentation for rural ridings to compensate for their geography, underrepresentation for cities, underrepresentation for the fastest growing provinces like British Columbia.

• (1245)

Since 1867 with respect to parliamentary representation successive Liberal and Tory regimes have compromised the compromises until we have neither genuine representation by population in this House nor genuine representation by province or by area in the upper house. By compromising the compromises they have rendered both chambers less effective in serving the public and less effective in representing national interests than they would otherwise be.

My third point is that the Senate is hopelessly tainted by patronage, and I have already referred to patronage as contributing to the decline of the Senate in the early days. Let me now explicitly list this factor of patronage as a specific and particular reason why this institution is falling into disrepute.

It appears to the public, and it is the public we are here to serve and the Senate is also here to serve, that the majority of senators

have been appointed not on the basis of acceptability to electors and not on the basis of ability or achievement but primarily on the basis of their service to party and the sitting prime minister.

With respect to 20 of the last 28 appointments to the Senate by the current Prime Minister, if we asked an average citizen primarily informed by news reports why they think these people were appointed rather than others, the most likely answer today is the appointed people had strong connections to the Liberal Party.

Let me give a couple of examples. On March 6 of this year Senator Fitzpatrick, a prominent B.C. Liberal organizer whose friendship with the Prime Minister dates back 35 years, found himself appointed to the Senate. Only later did the public become aware of the business relationship between Senator Fitzpatrick and the Prime Minister.

In 1987 the Senator and the corporation he formerly owned and operated co-ordinated a stock flip that helped earn the Prime Minister a quick \$45,000 profit. In other words, the Prime Minister appointed a long time party activist, personal friend and financial benefactor to the upper house. A reasonable person operating on the general information available to the public would conclude that this was, whatever else it was, first and foremost a patronage appointment.

The same type of patronage connection was evident when Brian Mulroney appointed Senator Fernand Roberge to the Senate in 1993. Senator Roberge was president of the Ritz-Carlton Hotel in Montreal, once Prime Minister Mulroney's favourite watering hole and the site of much of his plotting to unseat Joe Clark as the Tory leader. Senator Roberge was one of the insiders assembled for Mulroney's second run at the party leadership in 1983. Senator Roberge organized the friends of Brian Mulroney gathering of 5,000 people when Mulroney launched his winning leadership campaign and a hospitality suite operation to woo stray delegates. Senator Roberge was also a member of the candidate selection committee for Quebec during the next election.

What is the public to think when it reads through the list of Senate appointees and finds these things? Senator Angus from Quebec, former chairman of the PC Canada fund, known as one of the most successful political fundraisers in the country's history, helped raise money for the Mulroney failed leadership campaign in 1976 and a successful one in 1983.

There is Senator Buchanan of Nova Scotia, former Tory premier of Nova Scotia but one with a notorious reputation for provincial patronage. Senator Cogger was co-chairman of the federal Conservative 1988 election campaign in Quebec and a long time friend of Mr. Mulroney. Senator Jessiman of Manitoba is a long time Tory fundraiser from that province.

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I could go on and on but let me deal with some of the appointments by the current Prime Minister. First, Senator Bryden of New Brunswick, candidate for the Liberal leadership in New Brunswick and the person who managed the Prime Minister's 1990 Liberal leadership campaign; Senator Joyal from Quebec, former Liberal MP and prominent Quebec Liberal backroom worker; Senator Robichaud from New Brunswick, former secretary of state in the Prime Minister's government and active worker for the Liberals a great deal of his life; Senator Taylor, former Alberta Liberal leader.

I will tell the House what the public thinks of such a list. I have carried this list around with me for a long time. The public is not amused, the public is not impressed, the public is led to believe that personal and partisan connections to the Prime Minister, patronage connections, not ability or acceptability to electors, are the principal criteria for becoming a Canadian senator.

• (1250)

Fourth, the Senate is further discredited when some of its members are tainted by allegations and charges of ethical misconduct, including allegations of criminal misconduct and no preventive or pre-emptive steps or concerns are shown by the Senate unless the whole thing gets into the media, and no proactive steps are taken to investigate or to suspend during the possibility of investigations or to discipline or remove such senators by the Senate itself.

For example, there has been a swirl of influence peddling allegations for years surrounding Senator Michael Cogger. This senator is alleged to have accepted more than \$200,000 from a Montreal businessman vying for government grants, using his influence as a senator to lobby on behalf of the business community for \$45 million in federal-provincial grants. This Conservative senator for Quebec was acquitted four years ago on influence peddling charges but the Supreme Court of Canada has ordered a new trial in this influence peddling case.

I raise this case not for the purpose of saying anything for or against Senator Cogger. That is not my point. It is to ask why the Senate itself, why for its own protection, why for its own self-respect does it not take a more proactive role in investigating these types of rumours until they get the life that they have, and if necessary disciplining in some way, not for criminal content but for the ethical aspects of the misbehaviour, when the alleged misconduct reflects negatively on that institution. And it is not only that institution. The public does not make a lot of distinction between parliamentarians in the upper house and the lower house. If we are all frank to admit it, it reflects on everybody, including respected members of the House.

In another case the name of Saskatchewan Senator Eric Berntson has been repeatedly mentioned in connection with a fraud scandal involving well known provincial Conservatives in that province. Senator Berntson is currently standing trial on a charge of breach of trust arising from that scandal. The charge is in relation to a January 1987 transfer of \$125,000 in public funds from the PC caucus to the Progressive Conservative Party of Saskatchewan. It is alleged that Senator Berntson obtained money from his legislative expense allowance by submitting false invoices from three companies. In November Senator Berntson was committed to stand trial on another charge of defrauding taxpayers of \$68,000.

Again, the point here is not whether Senator Berntson is guilty or not guilty of fraud. That is for the courts to decide. My point is that these rumours have been swirling around for years, particularly in Saskatchewan and all too frequently allegations of unethical conduct, including even allegations of criminal misconduct, arise against members of the Senate. When that body is so slow and so reluctant and so half heartedly becoming proactive in acknowledging these things and investigating them and doing something to discipline its members then it is the Senate and I would argue the Parliament of Canada that get discredited as institutions.

My fifth point is that the Senate is further discredited by the unconscionable work, travel and spending patterns of some of its members, not all of its members. That is why it is important to distinguish. The Senate is further discredited by the work ethic or lack of work ethic exhibited by some of its members and by the abuse of travel and other privileges.

What is the public to think of former Liberal Senator Andy Thompson's work ethic? Senator Thompson showed up for Senate sittings about once every two years, just enough to fulfil his requirement to keep the Senate seat. Between 1990 and 1997 Thompson collected \$519,550 for attending 14 sitting days in the Senate. With an attendance rate of 2.6% that means he collected \$37,110 per day. That is getting up into the Wayne Gretzky league.

The Senate itself did nothing about this delinquent behaviour until it was forced to do so by pressure from the media and the official opposition in this House. Even after that the most it could do was vote to suspend Thompson without pay.

What is the public to think about Senator Eyton's attendance record or the eight other senators, Kolber, Lucier, Pitfield, Lawson, Angus, Carney, Austin and Sparrow with attendance records of less than 50% between June 1990 and November 1997? What is the public to think of Senator Taylor's travel budget? Senator Taylor billed Canadian taxpayers \$105,000 for travel expenses. This bill included the cost of flying in eight of his nine children at taxpayer expense for his induction. He said it was one of those once in a lifetime occasions when they pay for the family to fly down to the ceremonies.

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• (1255)

What is the public to think about Senator Lucier's place of residence? We are talking about representation of a northern territory in the Senate of Canada. This senator is supposed to represent Yukon, to provide regional representation for that vast northern territory through his seat in the Senate. Senator Lucier lives in British Columbia and he has said that the Senate's legal staff approved his change in residency five years ago when he moved to Vancouver.

I do not want to be one sided on this. Defenders of these defective work habits and attendance records and travel abuses will say, and I regret that they say this, we have all of this in the lower house as well. Perhaps there is regrettably some truth in that. On some other day I will address the need for reform of the House of Commons.

The great difference between the House and the Senate on this score is that in the case of elected members of this House if the public finds out about these abuses or if it judges something we are doing to be an abuse, whether it is or not, the public can do something about it. It can refuse to re-elect. It can throw us out. But in the case of our unelected, unaccountable and largely untouchable senators there is nothing the public can do to rid the chamber of such abusers and such abuses. That is what makes party patronage or unethical activity, lousy attendance or abuse of privilege even more odious when it occurs in the Senate than in the House of Commons.

I am talking about some members of the Senate, not all. That is the reason I mention names. I do not want to impugn people who do not deserve to be impugned. The Senate is discredited when the principal occupation of some of its members is primarily partisan political work. Some senators certainly work hard but the work they do, supported by their Senate salary, their Senate office, their Senate staff and their Senate travel allowance, is primarily partisan work.

Senator Tkachuk billed \$98,329, the second highest of all senators for travel in the fiscal year 1996-97. He explained his bill was higher due to his role as co-chairman of the Tory party and his need to travel to various party functions across the country. The senator explained that as campaign chairman he had to travel all over the country for the party before the election. The president of the Liberal Party from 1975 to 1980 was a senator, Senator Graham, appointed in 1972. This senator also co-chaired the national Liberal campaign in 1997.

Another senator, Senator Hays, was president of the Liberal Party during a campaign in 1997. The chair of the national Tory campaign in 1988 was Senator Atkins, appointed in 1986. There is a strange coincidence between these appointments occurring in one year and two years later full time political work. The Alberta

election chairman for the federal Tories in the 1993 election was Senator Gitter.

During these periods I do not deny that these senators do a great deal of work but it is primarily partisan political work. In attempting to justify this activity some will say that it is all work necessary to the democratic process. What the public does not support is this work being done on the payroll and the budget of the Senate. Nor does the public appreciate seeing Liberal and Tory senators paid from the public purse managing and directing campaigns against parties like Reform, the Bloc and the NDP which have no representation in the Senate.

Even more serious is that some of this political work done by senators is of such an unsavoury character that no amount of whitewash can justify it. Perhaps in this connection I can mention a personal experience. Maybe some believe that people get a negative view toward institutions because of their experiences younger in life. Perhaps that may be my case.

When I was in my teens I once had occasion to attend a reception given for new Canadians who had just received their Canadian citizenship. My family was very much involved in politics and political life in Alberta. I used to go to these things and I found them an inspiration. In the midst of one of these festivities I remember a prominent Edmonton lawyer, a well known Liberal, struggling to his feet because he was drunk and walking over to one of our new Canadians. I remember who the fellow was.

• (1300)

I remember who the fellow was. At least I can picture him. He was a fellow of Italian background. This lawyer put a hand on each of his shoulders. This is a new Canadian who has just been made a citizen a few minutes before. He says in a very loud voice so that everyone else in the room can hear, particularly the other new citizens, "You are now a Canadian citizen, but I hope you realize that it was a Liberal government that let you into the country and if you ever vote for a Tory government they will probably send you home".

This lawyer was doing political work. I would argue it is political dirty work, intimidating new Canadians to vote Liberal.

Why do I mention this incident in the context of a discussion about the Senate? It is because this lawyer was eventually appointed to the Senate from which he continued to do this political work, particularly in Edmonton, only with greater prestige and greater authority.

This type of political work, performed by senators and supported by public funds, discredits the institution. It discredits the whole federal political system, especially in the eyes of new Canadians who are its victims.

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Someone will protest and say this is all grossly unfair. Are there no good senators? Are there no senators who are hard working and conscientious? Are there no senators who render public service? Are there no senators who are distinguished persons in their own right? I would reply, "Of course there are".

To be fair I will name some of them, although members will agree it is difficult for mere mortals like ourselves, and even more difficult for the public operating on partial information and media perception, to separate the sheep from the goats.

Here is a partial list of senators who are distinguished persons in their own right.

Senator Keon is a renowned cardiac surgeon who in 1969 helped to found the Ottawa Heart Institute. Sister Peggy Butts has dedicated much of her life to teaching at schools across the country and working to help women and the poor. She is a recipient of the Weiler Award which acknowledges and honours exceptional contributions to the community and social development in Canada.

Senator Archibald Johnstone is a distinguished World War II veteran. He served as a crew member with the Royal Air Force heavy bomber squadron and retired with the rank of flight lieutenant.

Senator Anne Cools is a former social worker who has dedicated herself to helping women and the poor.

I want to make a special appeal in a few minutes to these and other distinguished senators to divorce themselves from the other senators and become allies of Senate reform. But before I do, let me say what must be said, with no disrespect intended. I say that successive prime ministers abuse even these distinguished appointments in the following way.

In the inner circles it is referred to as applying the holy water principle. A prime minister wants to appoint his political friend to the Senate and he wants to appoint someone for purely partisan political purposes, so to make the appointment less odious to the public he seeks out and appoints at the same time some distinguished and honourable person to sanctify the other appointment.

Let me illustrate this. When Prime Minister Mulroney appointed eight special senators to help ram his GST legislation through the upper house, most of them were Tory patronage appointments: Normand Grimard, a party fundraiser; James Ross, a long time Tory activist; Eric Berntson, a former Tory deputy premier of Saskatchewan; Michael Forrestall, a former Tory MP; et cetera.

But they also included Senator Keon, the renowned cardiac surgeon and founder of the Ottawa Heart Institute, a distinguished non-Tory appointment to sanctify the other patronage appointments.

When the current Prime Minister makes his Senate appointments he does the same thing.

When in 1997 he appointed as senators the former Liberal premier of P.E.I. and a former Liberal MP who was in his own government, he also at the same time made a distinguished non-partisan appointment in the person of Sister Peggy Butts.

When this year he appointed as senator a prominent B.C. Liberal organizer and fundraiser, a two-time failed Liberal candidate from Newfoundland, he also at the same time appointed the distinguished World War II veteran Archibald Johnstone.

The tactic is to sanctify patronage appointments with a few distinguished appointments, but in the end the reputation of all, including the reputation of the Senate, is diminished rather than enhanced.

Let me quickly identify the seventh. Some political scientists, I suppose, would argue that this is one of the most weighty arguments against the Senate in its present form. I refer to the cost of the Senate, particularly the enormous cost in relation to the insignificant benefits.

• (1305)

Over the past 30 years the Senate of Canada has cost the taxpayers of this country some \$1 billion. This breaks down approximately as follows: senators' salaries, \$354 million; senators' travel, \$133 million; senators' office expenses, \$72 million; Senate administration and services, \$441 million.

We would argue that there is no way that Canadians have received anywhere near \$1 billion in benefits from this institution. Certainly Canadians have not received \$1 billion in legislative improvements as a result of sober second thought. Certainly Canadians have not received \$1 billion in effective representation of regional interests.

For example, I do not know exactly what percentage of that billion in Senate representation represents the cost of British Columbia's Senate representation.

During the last 30 years none of B.C.'s big, major, provincial and regional issues from the state of the west coast fishery to the unique B.C. aboriginal issues to B.C.'s unique constitutional positions to B.C.'s views on equalization have been given anywhere near the representation on the national stage that a province that is going to be the second largest province in Canada deserves. The only way a B.C. senator has been able to get national attention for B.C. in recent years has been to muse publicly about B.C.'s secession.

Regional representation of B.C. interests in the Senate has been completely ineffective. The same can be said for Senate representation of regional interests in every part of the country.

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The cost of the Senate is staggering. The benefits, particularly with respect to regional representation, which Sir John A. himself said was the reason it was being set it up, are negligible.

I say this is an ominous conclusion since, if the abolition of upper houses is studied in the provinces of Canada and in other British jurisdictions, the principal argument for the abolition of upper houses has, in the end, been the excessive cost in relation to minimal benefits.

Time does not permit me to further elaborate on these defects of the old status quo Senate. I want to get on to the more positive dimensions, but further elaboration should not be required.

The seven deadly sins of the current institution are: fraudulent beginnings, compromised principles, partisan patronage of the worst kind, unethical conduct and work habits, abuse of privileges, a higher priority to partisan political work than to the public service, and excessive cost in relation to negligible benefits.

If these grievances and defects are not addressed, what will be the inevitable result? The result will be increasing public dissatisfaction, with dissatisfaction growing into anger, and anger resulting not in demands for reform, but demands for complete abolition of the whole place.

Perhaps it would therefore be appropriate to conclude this case against the Senate of Canada with a reference to one of the most infamous ends to a parliamentary institution in all parliamentary history.

We had nothing to do with the planning of this debate at the time, but it is ironic that it was 349 years ago to the day, April 20, 1649, that Oliver Cromwell walked into the chamber of the so-called rump parliament in England.

This was an institution that had so discredited itself with inactivity and corruption in the pursuit of self-interest that one of its own members, Cromwell, the man who had defended that parliament against the king, who had risked his life to try to save it, who had risked soldiers' lives and had soldiers killed to try to save the institution, now turned against it.

The record says that he came to that British parliament on this day in 1649 and at first he sat in a seat at the back. As he listened to the discussion in the rump parliament, the one for which he had sacrificed lives, the members debated not how to reform the parliament and make it a better servant of the people and the king, all they discussed was how to perpetuate it exactly as it was.

According to historians, Cromwell got up from the back seat and, contrary to accepted practice, went to the front. He walked up

and down in the aisle between the seats and gave one of the shortest, hottest speeches of denunciation of a parliamentary institution that has ever been made.

I will read it in part just to give members a flavour. He said:

It is high time—to put an end to your sitting in this place, which you have dishonoured—; ye are a factious crew, and enemies to all good government; ye are a pack of mercenary wretches—Is there a man amongst you that has the least care for the good of the Commonwealth?—Ye are grown intolerably odious to the whole nation; you were deputed here by the people to get grievances redress'd, are yourselves become the greatest grievance. Your country therefore calls (for a cleansing of) this Augean stable, by putting a final period to your iniquitous proceedings in this House—Depart immediately out of this place; go, get you out! Make haste! —Be gone!

• (1310)

It is to prevent the necessity of any such terrible speech ever being given or such drastic action ever being taken in relation to the Senate of Canada that I now turn to the case for and against Senate abolition and the case for genuine Senate reform.

If the Senate was fraudulently conceived, has compromised its basic principles, is tainted by patronage, unethical conduct and bad work habits, and is excessively costly, it is understandable why some members might ask: Why not simply abolish it?

This is the position of the NDP and a position which commends itself to many as long as it is not critically examined.

The reason a majority of Reformers oppose abolition, despite our vehement opposition to the Senate as it is, is very simple. It is a reason which rests on the very nature of our country and the prerequisites for good government and national unity.

If we were to abolish the Senate—and we ask the NDP members to think about this, particularly those from Atlantic Canada and western Canada—Canada would have a one-house parliament in which the heavily populated areas of southern Ontario and southern Quebec would have an absolute majority of the seats.

In such a parliament, I ask, how would the regional interests of Atlantic Canada, western Canada, northern Canada, northern and rural Ontario, and northern and rural Quebec ever be properly addressed? If Canada were a small country perhaps the effective representation or accommodation of regional interests could be ignored. However, Canada is the second largest country on the face of the earth. Our regions are big enough to be countries in their own right.

National unity, as well as good government, therefore demands that we develop national institutions which recognize and accommodate regional interests rather than ignore or subjugate them, or rather than leave regional representation exclusively to the provincial governments.

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The way that the other big federations, the U.S., Germany and Australia, have reconciled the interests of heavily populated areas with those of thinly populated areas is by properly adapting the two-house parliament to their needs. It is high time that Canada did the same.

For those who think this would represent some Americanized departure from our form of federation or the British parliamentary system, let them study and improve upon the Australian model rather than the American model if they prefer.

Suffice it to say that what we should be striving for in terms of parliamentary institutions is a two-house parliament that works: a lower chamber based on genuine representation by population in which the heavily populated areas rightly enjoy the greater influence, but also an upper chamber in which there are equal numbers of senators per province or state, as in the U.S. and Australia, where the thinly populated regions will have the greater influence.

Then, in that two-house parliament, let those two houses be so conjoined that laws do not become laws and federal policies do not become policies until they pass both houses, thus reconciling the demands of both representation by population and representation by area.

It is the position of the official opposition therefore that, of course, we should abolish those features of the Canadian Senate which render it useless and repugnant to voters and taxpayers. Abolish patronage appointments. Abolish inequitable representation. Abolish unethical activity and practices. Abolish ineffectiveness. However, do not throw out the baby with the bath water.

Let us not be tempted to believe that abolition would simply be the first step toward reform of the Senate.

If the Senate is completely abolished it is highly unlikely that it will be replaced in the foreseeable future with a reformed Senate. Among the members of this House who are suddenly advocating Senate abolition, I have detected no strong interest in establishing any other checks and balances on themselves, in particular the regional checks and balances which a reformed Senate provides.

Those premiers who would prefer to maintain their own monopoly on representing their provincial interests, rather than sharing this responsibility with a federal institution, would not be in a hurry to reinvent the Senate if it were abolished. If the Senate were abolished there is little likelihood that a reformed Senate would ever be established in its place, and the Canadian federal system would continue to fail to balance representation by population with representation by province.

• (1315)

It is therefore the position of the official opposition that the useless and offensive features of the current Senate should be

abolished and an elected, equal and effective Senate should be created in its place. The long range interests of Canadian federalism are better served by Senate reform than by the short term expedient of Senate abolition.

It is long overdue that I put before the House the information and the arguments which will hopefully lead all hon. members to support the proposition that the Senate should be reformed and that we should get on with it. I will outline the objectives of Senate reform and its benefits to the people of Canada, the benefits to ordinary citizens with aspirations for jobs and better services and with concerns about taxes, deteriorating health care and national unity.

As the official opposition envisions it, the objectives of Senate reform are threefold. The first is to give the people of Canada more democratic control over representation in the upper house by electing those representatives, and to ensure that senators, whoever they are and whatever they are and whatever they do, are servants of the people of Canada, not servants of the party of the prime minister who appointed them. The first objective of Senate reform is therefore to democratize the place and to give Canadians the benefits of that democratization, namely accountability of the Senate and the senators to them.

The second objective of Senate reform as we envision it is to make the Senate an effective legislative chamber, more effective in its analysis and amendment of legislation and policy, yes, but in particular more effective in bringing regional perspectives and regional interests of people in different parts of the country to bear on federal government policy and legislation.

The views and the interests of the fisherman in Newfoundland are different from the views and the interests of the businessman in Montreal. The views and the interests of the logger in northern Ontario are different from the views and interests of the factory worker in southern Ontario. The views and interests of the prairie farmer, the Alberta roughneck, the northern trapper, the urban westerner or the retiree on Vancouver Island are all unique and different. All these views and interests are shaped by geography, by where these people live and work as well as by other factors. The challenge is to bring the uniqueness and diversity of these views and interests more effectively to bear on federal legislation and policy.

As I pointed out in the throne speech debate, there was hardly any regional sensitivity at all in the government's legislative program as contained in that speech, despite the fact that in the last federal election the Canadian electorate regionalized the House more definitively than it has for many years.

The government's legislative program and the government's budget did not even acknowledge the urgent requirement for a new Atlantic economic development initiative to address the crying

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need for more jobs and better incomes in that part of the country. The government's legislative program and budget did not even try to link the needs of both the west and east coast fisheries—the conservation needs, the management needs, the people needs, the community needs—and to address them as national issues.

Despite the government's acknowledgement that the national unity problem is rooted in the discontents of Quebec and that it is a priority, there is nothing in the government's legislative program or budget that specifically addresses the regionalized nature or dimension of this problem. Likewise there is nothing explicit in the government's legislative program or budget that addresses the need for recognizing and complementing the Ontario government's efforts to stimulate job and income growth through tax relief with a parallel federal initiative.

There is little or nothing in the government's legislative program or budget that explicitly addresses the needs of the north despite the fact that this region comprises the greater part of the country. There is nothing that seeks to harness the ideas and energies of the new west or the Pacific region to national objectives such as economic growth, strengthening of social services or national unity.

In the U.S. such frontline industries for the new economy as Boeing's aerospace facilities and Microsoft's headquarters in the Pacific northwest are located there in part because of leverage obtained over military contracts and development funds by western states in the U.S. senate, but there is no equivalent of that in Canada. My point is that the second objective of Senate reform should be effective regional representation and action through the Senate's legislative role.

● (1320)

The third objective of Senate reform as envisioned by the official opposition is to give practical and institutional expression to the great principle of equality of citizens and provinces. We fervently believe that the great principle of equality for all rather than special status for some will prove to be the foundation for national unity in the 21st century, and to have one chamber in the Canadian parliament where the voice of the people of each province regardless of their size or their stage of development is equal to that of any other would be conducive to national unity and ensuring the continuation of this great federation to the benefit of all its citizens no matter where they may live.

We can identify practical benefits to Canadians no matter where they live coming from Senate reform. The objectives of Senate reform as we see them are democratic accountability, effective regional representation in national legislation and policy, and affirmation of equality. Who in the House could possibly disagree with such objectives?

I turn now to two trails to Senate reform. The academic literature in Canada including studies commissioned by various parliamen-

tary committees and task forces contains many studies and proposals for Senate reform. I could read off a page of them, but I will not bore hon. members by listing more of them. Suffice to say there is a great wealth of information available on this subject from the Library of Parliament.

What I would like to do is get down to the practical measures required to advance the concept of Senate reform beyond mere academic discussion. I would like to advance Senate reform to the stage where the public is agreed, the provinces are agreed and parliament is agreed on a plan of action which will start us down the road to real Senate reform, a plan of action that will transform the Senate from an obsolete 19th century embarrassment into a useful, functional, respectable 21st century institution.

In particular I want to outline for hon. members the two trails to Senate reform. The one trail which I will refer to as the Meech Lake-Charlottetown trail to Senate reform is one to which both the federal Liberals and the federal Conservatives have been attracted in the past. The current Prime Minister always refers to it when he is questioned about Senate reform.

First I want to examine the Meech Lake-Charlottetown trail to Senate reform and argue that it is a dead end, that it leads nowhere and should be abandoned by any parliamentarian or citizen who genuinely desires reform of the Senate.

I then want to lay before the House what I will unashamedly call the western trail to Senate reform. It is a trail which has its origins in a genuine desire from one great region of the country to advance its regional interests, not by threatening separation but by increasing the effectiveness and regional sensitivity of the institutions of the central government.

The western trail to Senate reform is over 20 years long. I will argue that it can become the Ontario trail, the Quebec trail, the Atlantic trail, the northern trail, the national trail to Senate reform, if we absorb its lessons and support its initiatives.

First I will refer to the Meech Lake-Charlottetown trail to Senate reform. Both the Meech Lake constitutional accord and the Charlottetown constitutional accord contained half-baked proposals for Senate reform. Both accords were opposed by many Senate reformers in all parties and both accords were rejected by Canadians, the Charlottetown accord being rejected through a constitutional referendum.

It is important to understand why the Senate reform proposals contained in these accords were rejected as well as the context in which the accords as a whole were rejected so that future attempts at Senate reform and constitutional change do not founder on the same rocks. I must say that I have been absolutely amazed at the superficiality of the comments made by the Prime Minister on this subject. I want to take some time to examine it thoroughly.

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Members of the House, in particular those from western Canada, will have the following understanding of the events surrounding Meech Lake, Charlottetown and their Senate reform proposals. In 1981 the Government of Quebec under Premier Levesque refused to participate in any further federal-provincial conferences on the Constitution unless Quebec was given special rights and assurances.

In 1986 Premier Bourassa announced that Quebec would resume a full role in constitutional councils of Canada if five Quebec demands were met, namely recognition as a distinct society, the right to opt out of national programs and to be compensated for them, a greater role in immigration regulation, a role in supreme court appointments and a veto on future constitutional amendments.

• (1325)

On April 30, 1987 the Prime Minister and 10 premiers met in private at Meech Lake and without consulting their legislatures or electors drafted an agreement to meet Quebec's five demands and provide for a second round of discussion on further constitutional change including Senate reform. In order to get other premiers to accede to Quebec's demands the Prime Minister had to grant similar rights to other provinces, including the right to veto future constitutional amendments.

The resulting Meech Lake accord was then translated into a constitutional amendment and unanimously approved by the first ministers on June 2 and 3, 1987 in Ottawa. The premiers all agreed to return home and push a Meech Lake resolution through their legislatures without amendment as quickly as possible.

While the western premiers supported the accord with varying degrees of enthusiasm, the majority of their people opposed it. The more they found out about it, the less they liked it. What bothered them more than anything else was the top down, closed door approach to constitution making that Meech Lake represented. The process discredited those who participated in it as well as the content of the accord.

Second, westerners objected to the rigid amending formula. If every province were given the right to veto substantive amendments, the chances of securing the constitutional amendment to reform the Senate, for example, would be drastically reduced.

Third, westerners objected to Meech's token references to Senate reform and the lack of substantive assurances that real progress would be made in this area in any second round of constitutional negotiation.

It had taken the federal Conservative government a very short time to translate Quebec's five constitutional demands into a full blown constitutional amendment. Yet despite the presence in the

cabinet and caucus of western MPs whose constituents had been demanding a triple E Senate since 1984, the federal government had no triple E Senate amendment in preparation and was unresponsive to representations by the Alberta government on that subject.

The poorly conceived token effort at Senate reform contained in the Meech Lake accord consisted of a proposal to appoint senators from a list submitted by the relevant province, provided the appointee was also acceptable to the federal cabinet.

There was also a promise to convene a first ministers conference at which Senate reform would be further discussed. Since every province would have a veto over future constitutional reforms and the Quebec government had already declared its antipathy toward a triple E Senate, the promise of Senate reform through a first ministers conference was meaningless.

Obviously these meagre Meech provisions for Senate reform were unacceptable to those who desired genuine Senate reform and who had developed comprehensive proposals for a Senate that was elected with equal representation and effective powers.

As hon. members will know, after the collapse of Meech, the Mulroney regime made one more attempt at a constitutional accord, an effort which culminated in the Charlottetown accord of 1992. While the process whereby Charlottetown was developed gave some belated attention to securing public input, mainly through the Spicer consultation, its Senate reform proposals were hardly more in tune with western Canadian thinking where Senate reform had been under active consideration for more than 10 years than those of Meech. The Senate reform proposals of the Charlottetown accord were contained in section 2(a) of the agreement.

For the written record I would like to have section 2(a) of the Charlottetown accord recorded at this place in *Hansard*. To save the time of the House I seek consent to dispense with the actual reading and have it recorded in *Hansard* as read. Do I have that consent?

The Speaker: Is the hon. member referring to unanimous consent right now or at the end of his speech?

Mr. Preston Manning: Maybe now, if we could get it.

The Speaker: The hon. member would like to table information. Is there unanimous consent to present the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Speaker: The House has heard the gist of the motion. Is there agreement to accept the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

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● (1330)

Mr. Preston Manning: I think it is important in this discussion to have the relevant statutory instruments in the actual text so that members have in one place everything we are saying. If we are denied unanimous consent then I can read it. Here is the Charlotte-town accord section on institutions:

A. The Senate

7. An Elected Senate

The Constitution should be amended to provide that Senators are elected, either by the population of the provinces and territories of Canada or by the members of their provincial and territorial legislative assemblies.

Federal legislation should govern Senate elections, subject to the constitutional provision above and constitutional provisions requiring that elections take place at the same time as elections to the House of Commons and provisions respecting eligibility and mandate of Senators. Federal legislation would be sufficiently flexible to allow provinces and territories to provide for gender equality in the composition of the Senate.

Matters should be expedited in order that Senate elections be held as soon as possible, and, if feasible, at the same time as the next federal general election for the House of Commons.

8. An Equal Senate

The Senate should initially total 62 Senators and should be composed of six Senators from each province and one Senator from each territory.

9. Aboriginal Peoples' Representation in the Senate

Aboriginal representation in the Senate should be guaranteed in the Constitution. Aboriginal Senate seats should be additional to provincial and territorial seats, rather than drawn from any province or territory's allocation of Senate seats.

Aboriginal senators should have the same role and powers as other Senators, plus a possible double majority power in relation to certain matters materially affecting Aboriginal people. These issues and other details relating to Aboriginal representation in the Senate (numbers, distribution, method of selection) will be discussed further by governments and the representatives for aboriginal people in the early autumn of 1992.

10. Relationship to the House of Commons

The Senate should not be a confidence chamber. In other words, the defeat of government-sponsored legislation by the Senate would not require the government's resignation.

11. Categories of Legislation

There should be four categories of legislation:

- 1) Revenue and expenditure bills ("Supply Bills");
- 2) Legislation materially affecting French language or French culture;
- 3) Bills involving fundamental tax policy changes directly related to natural resources;
- 4) Ordinary legislation (any bill not falling into one of the first three categories).

Initial classification of bills should be by the originator of the bill. With the exception of legislation affecting French language or French culture (see item 14), appeals should be determined by the Speaker of the House of Commons, following consultation with the Speaker of the Senate.

12. Approval of Legislation

The Constitution should oblige the Senate to dispose of any bills approved by the House of Commons, within thirty sitting days of the House of Commons, with the exception of revenue and expenditure bills.

Revenue and expenditure bills would be subject to a 30 calendar-day suspensive veto. If a bill is defeated or amended by the Senate within this period, it could be repassed by a majority vote in the House of Commons on a resolution.

Bills that materially affect French language or French culture would require approval by a majority of Senators voting and a majority of the Francophone Senators voting. The House of Commons would not be able to override the defeat of a bill in this category by the Senate.

Bills that involve fundamental tax policy changes directly related to natural resources would be defeated if a majority of Senators voting cast their votes against the bill. The House of Commons would not be able to override the defeat of a bill in this category by the Senate.

Bills that involve fundamental tax policy changes directly related to natural resources would be defeated if a majority of Senators voting cast their votes against the bill. The House of Commons would not be able to override the Senate's veto. The precise definition of this category of legislation remains to be determined.

Defeat or amendment of ordinary legislation by the Senate would trigger a joint sitting process with the House of Commons. A simple majority vote at the joint sitting would determine the outcome of the bill.

The Senate should have the powers set out in this Consensus Report. There would be no change to the Senate's current role in approving constitutional amendments. Subject to the Consensus Report, Senate powers and procedures should mirror those in the House of Commons.

The Senate should continue to have the capacity to initiate bills, except for money bills.

If any bill initiated and passed by the Senate is amended or rejected by the House of Commons, a joint sitting process should be triggered automatically.

The House of Commons should be obliged to dispose of legislation approved by the Senate within a reasonable time limit.

13. Revenue and Expenditure Bills

In order to preserve Canada's parliamentary traditions, the Senate should not be able to block the routine flow of legislation relating to taxation, borrowing and appropriation.

Revenue and expenditure bills ("supply bills") should be defined as only those matters involving borrowing, the raising of revenue and appropriation as well as matters subordinate to these issues. This definition should exclude fundamental policy changes to the tax system (such as the Goods and Services Tax and the National Energy Program).

14. Double Majority

The originator of a bill should be responsible for designating whether it materially affects French language or French culture. Each designation should be subject to appeal to the Speaker of the Senate under rules to be established by the Senate. These rules should be designed to provide adequate protection to Francophones.

On entering the Senate, Senators should be required to declare whether they are Francophones for the purpose of the double majority voting rule. Any process for challenging these declarations should be left to the rules of the Senate.

15. Ratification of Appointments

The Constitution should specify that the Senate ratify the appointment of the Governor of the Bank of Canada.

The Constitution should also be amended to provide the Senate with a new power to ratify other key appointments made by the federal government.

The Senate should be obliged to deal with any proposed appointments within thirty sitting-days of the House of Commons.

The appointments that would be subject to Senate ratification, including the heads of the national cultural institutions and the heads of federal regulatory boards and agencies, should be set out in specific federal legislation rather than the Constitution. The federal government's commitment to table such legislation should be recorded in a political accord.

An appointment submitted for ratification would be rejected if a majority of Senators voting cast their votes against it.

16. Eligibility for Cabinet

Senators should not be eligible for Cabinet posts.

● (1335)

We now have on the record section II(A) of the Charlottetown accord. It contains 10 clauses pertaining to the Senate of Canada. Four of these clauses were supported by Reformers, their content having been part of our party platform since 1987. They included: clause 8, which provided for equal numbers of senators per province; clause 10, which made clear that the Senate is not a confidence chamber and that the defeat of a bill in the Senate would not bring down the government; clause 15 giving the Senate power to ratify or reject federal appointments for regulatory boards and agencies like the Bank of Canada; and clause 16 providing that senators not be eligible for cabinet posts.

Reformers acknowledged these positive features of the Charlottetown agreement and were supportive of them. Unfortunately it is what is omitted from the Charlottetown Senate reform proposals which left the Senate both undemocratic and ineffective in safeguarding regional interests.

The Charlottetown agreement did not contain a clear statement of the purpose of a reformed Senate. That is where the trouble started. If it had been clearly stated that the purpose of a reformed Senate would be to balance representation by population in the House of Commons with democratic representation of provincial and regional interests in the Senate so that the laws reflect the interests of both the heavily populated and less populated areas, it would then have been much easier to define the power and the structure required to achieve that objective.

In the absence of a clear statement of purpose, the issue of what interests were to be represented in the Senate—regional interests,

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provincial interests, racial interests, linguistic interests, gender interests—became confused. The failure to state the intent of Parliament and the legislatures in reforming the Senate also surrendered to the courts jurisdiction in defining the Senate's future role.

In the absence of a clearly stated objective, no wonder the Senate reform proposals in the Charlottetown accord exhibited considerable confusion on exactly what interests the first ministers wanted to be represented in a reformed Senate.

According to clause 7, senators could be either elected by the population or elected by the legislatures. But election by the legislatures simply means appointment by the provincial governments, replacing federal patronage appointments to the Senate with provincial patronage appointments. Clause 7 also permitted a province to choose senators on the basis of gender.

Clause 9 provided for some Senate seats to be allocated to aboriginals on the basis of race.

Clause 14 permitted some Senate seats to be designated on the basis of language, francophone senators. Francophone and aboriginal senators were to have special voting powers not granted to all senators, thus compromising the principle of equality.

In addition, the Charlottetown agreement seemed to imply that elected senators would be elected at large for each province with no provision for senatorial districts. Under such a scheme all the elected senators from Ontario could presumably come from Toronto, the most heavily populated area, or all the elected senators from B.C. could conceivably come from the lower mainland, the most heavily populated area. This of course would frustrate the whole purpose of an upper chamber, that is to provide more effective representation for thinly populated areas.

All of the above provisions weakened rather than strengthened the ability of the Senate to provide straight, effective democratic representation of the thinly populated areas of Canada in Parliament.

It was however the clauses of the Charlottetown accord, clauses 11, 12 and 13 dealing with the proposed powers of a reformed Senate, where the deficiencies of its Senate reforms are most obvious.

Bills affecting the French language and culture could only be passed if they carried a double majority in the Senate envisioned by Charlottetown. This meant that such legislation must receive a majority of 50% plus one votes in the Senate plus a majority of the votes of the francophone senators.

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• (1340)

If Quebec were to elect a separatist government, as it did in 1976 and again in 1994, which appointed separatist senators, as few as four of these senators could presumably kill any federal language, cultural or broadcasting legislation affecting all of Canada as long as it also affected French language and culture.

Bills changing the natural resource taxation could also be defeated by a majority of 50% plus one in the reformed Senate and the House of Commons could not override such a decision. But with respect to other taxation and spending measures, the Charlottetown proposals gave the Senate only a suspensive veto so that it could not exert consistent downward pressure on spending or taxation.

In the case of all legislation other than legislation materially affecting the French language and culture or natural resource taxation, defeat or amendment of the bill by the Senate under the Charlottetown proposals would lead to a joint sitting with the enlarged House of Commons where Ontario and Quebec would each have more seats than the entire Senate put together. In other words, on all legislation other than French language and cultural legislation and natural resource taxation legislation, the will of the Senate could have been overridden by the House of Commons. It was this general override provision which rendered the reformed Senate provided by Charlottetown largely ineffective.

I go through all of this to make the point that the Meech Lake-Charlottetown trail to Senate reform has proven to be a dead end. It is primarily instructive on how not to reform the Senate.

If we truly want to reform the Senate let us start with Senate reform proposals that have some currency and some support among the public, not those that come from the government or special interests through some top down process. If we truly want to reform the Senate, let us not put forward half-baked Senate proposals such as those contained in the Charlottetown accord which compromise rather than achieve the real objectives of accountability, equality and effectiveness.

The Prime Minister never tires of responding to questions about the Senate from Reformers in this House by saying "but you voted against the Senate reforms in Charlottetown". We can see what a shallow and misleading retort that is. The Prime Minister studiously avoids the issue of why Reformers and a majority of Canadians voted against Charlottetown and why Reformers opposed rather than supported the Charlottetown Senate reform proposals.

Canadians in general and Reformers in particular will support Senate reform proposals that provide effective and accountable regional representation and balance in national decision making. Did the Senate reform proposals in Charlottetown provide this? The short answer is no.

Charlottetown offered a partially reformed Senate, another one of these compromises of the compromises in which all provinces would have equal numbers of senators. It would have been a Senate only partially elected. It would have been ineffective because on all matters other than French language, culture and perhaps natural resource taxation, on all other matters of regional or national interest, it could have been overridden by an enlarged House of Commons.

Charlottetown offered a one and a half E Senate, equal, only partially elected, and ineffective, as compared with the triple E Senate, equal, fully elected and truly effective, which is desired by Reformers. That is why we and the majority of Canadians rejected the Charlottetown approach to Senate reform and why I now want to draw the attention of the House to an alternative approach, the approach I have labelled the western trail to Senate reform.

My own experience and acquaintance with the western trail to Senate reform includes the experience of my father Ernest C. Manning who was premier of Alberta from 1943 to 1968 and who sat as an Alberta senator from 1970 to 1983 after his retirement from provincial politics. There is an old saying that to get into the American or the Australian Senate you have to win an election but to get into the Canadian Senate you have to lose an election or preferably two or three. This was not the case for my father who spent 33 years as an elected member of the Alberta legislature and who never lost an election. He won nine general elections in a row.

• (1345)

Until recent years it was also axiomatic that to be appointed to the Senate you had to be a member of either the Liberal or Conservative parties. In my father's case not only was he not a member or supporter of either of those parties, he spent 33 years fighting Liberals and Conservatives at both the provincial and the federal level. During his last 10 years as premier of Alberta my father had increasingly addressed himself to the need for stronger western representation in all national institutions. The west he believed was coming of age in Confederation and needed and deserved more effective representation on the boards of national companies and organizations and in all federal institutions.

After his retirement from the Alberta legislature he was surprised one day to get a call from Prime Minister Trudeau offering to appoint him to the Senate. According to Trudeau he too wanted to strengthen regional representation in the upper house and he was prepared to reach outside Liberal ranks to do so.

My father thought it only fair to advise Mr. Trudeau that if he accepted the Senate appointment he would use it to criticize and attack those policies of the Trudeau government with which he disagreed. In fact, my father was quite candid in saying that in all his dealings with federal administrations, the King administration, the St. Laurent administration, the Pearson administration and the Diefenbaker administration, he felt the fiscal and constitutional

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policies of the Trudeau Liberals were the worst that he had every encountered.

However, Mr. Trudeau in typical fashion was unfazed and replied to the effect that perhaps it would be better for such sentiments to be expressed within the dignity of the red chamber rather than on the street. So my father went to the Senate with the idea of strengthening western representation and exploring the potential for increasing the Senate's accountability and effectiveness.

When my father arrived he was one of just two independent senators. He sat with no party caucus and took no direction from any whip or party leader. Over the years particularly as a member of the Senate's banking and finance committee he primarily focused on the review of legislation, particularly the scrutiny of federal fiscal and economic policy from both a western and a national perspective.

In particular he was in the Senate at the time the federal government imposed its infamous national energy policy. He was a witness to the utter impotence of the upper chamber, the chamber of sober second thought, the chamber that Sir John A. swore would protect local interests and prevent sectional jealousies. He was witness to the utter impotence of the Canadian Senate to even challenge the regional discrimination of the national energy program let alone mitigate or correct it.

The national energy program was the most regionally discriminatory policy ever imposed on any region of the country by any federal administration. Certainly this was so if regional discrimination was measured in terms of dollars and cents because this particular policy confiscated over \$100 billion of wealth from western Canada, \$40 billion from the imposition of revenue taxes and another \$60 billion from compelling western oil and gas to be sold at less than market values.

If the Canadian Senate had any power at all to either represent regional interests effectively or to play a role in balancing the interests of thinly populated resource producing areas against those of the heavily populated areas, that power should have been exercised in modifying the national energy program. If the Senate could have been effective in modifying the terms of the NEP or the Petroleum Administration Act by even 1%, that would have saved western Canada about \$1 billion.

If the Senate could have doubled its strength and been able to effect that policy by 2%, if it could have just slightly modified the terms of the Petroleum Administration Act by 2%, that would have saved western Canada \$2 billion. But the Senate was utterly impotent to make any changes and any balancing in that national energy policy.

Of course the Senate was completely ineffective in playing that role just as it has proven ineffective in representing the regional

interests of Atlantic Canada with respect to the destruction of the east coast fishery and the interests of Quebec in preserving its language and culture, the interests of rural and northern Ontario and Quebec in promoting economic development outside the golden triangle, the interests of the prairies in agricultural reform and in reversing the discriminatory CF-118 decision, the interests of the north in northern economic development, and the interests of B.C. in getting the west coast fisheries, B.C. aboriginal policy and infrastructure on the national stage.

• (1350)

When it comes to effectiveness and accountability in representing regional interests, the primary function the upper house in a big federation with an unevenly distributed population must perform, the Canadian Senate has proven woefully inadequate.

Over the years my father endeavoured to persuade other senators to sit as independents rather than as party representatives and to strengthen and use their regional voices.

By the time he left there were five so-called independent senators but their numbers were never enough to affect the outcomes of votes or to provide a strong impetus for reform within the Senate.

In 1981 my father therefore joined with Gordon Gibson, a former executive assistant to Trudeau and prominent west coast journalist and author, and Dr. Peter McCormick, a keen analyst of federal politics and institutions from the University of Lethbridge, under the auspices of the Canada West Foundation, to produce a definitive study on the reform of the Senate.

Their study was entitled "Representation: The Canadian Partnership". It argued that reforming the Senate of Canada to make it elected with equal representation from each province and effective powers to advance and protect regional interests would go a long way toward addressing the need for regional fairness and balance in national decision making.

Time does not permit me to tell the full story of the evolution of this concept but the major milestones along the western trail to Senate reform include the following.

In the mid-1970s Premier Lougheed's citizens advisory committee on the Constitution came to similar conclusions on the need for meaningful Senate reform. This was the mid-1970s, over 20 years ago.

Ted Byfield coined and popularized the shorthand phrase triple E Senate referring to elected, equal and effective through the Alberta report and newspaper columns. Jim Grey and Bert Brown created and advanced the work of the Canadian committee for a triple E Senate.

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The Alberta government's special select committee on Senate reform pushed for inclusion of the triple E Senate concept in the Meech Lake negotiations.

Don Getty, who succeeded Lougheed as premier of Alberta, appointed a Senate reform task force to meet with all other premiers and provincial governments to promote the triple E in 1988.

It was Getty, with urging from Bert Brown and Dr. David Elton of the Canada West Foundation, who secured the passage of the Alberta senatorial selection act by the Alberta legislature in 1989.

On the initiative of Premier Klein, and to his credit, the Alberta senatorial selection act is in the process of being updated by the Alberta legislature this month. This statute ought to be studied by every member of this House. Perhaps it is not perfect. Perhaps it can be improved but it is a mechanism for at least democratizing the Senate without having to amend the Constitution.

I have sent a copy of this act to the premiers of every province and territory, along with a list of upcoming Senate vacancies in their jurisdictions, and a plea that they enact similar legislation to at least begin the process of democratizing the Senate.

Copies of this legislation will be readily supplied to anyone interested in it by the Alberta government, by my office or by the office of the honourable member for Nanaimo—Alberni, the chief opposition critic for Senate reform.

While the Alberta legislature was focusing on drafting the senatorial selection act to at least begin the democratization of the Senate, in 1988 the fledgling Reform Party of Canada began an even more ambitious project.

We undertook to draft a full blown triple E Senate constitutional amendment, to submit it to public scrutiny at hearings across the west and to present it to the western premiers meeting in Parksville in 1988.

All this was accomplished. For those who are serious about this business of Senate reform and who are not just content with superficial retorts and analysis, for those who want to look at a draft constitutional amendment to make the Senate of Canada elected, equal and effective, the kind of amendment that should have been at Meech but was not, the kind of amendment that should have been at Charlottetown but was not, the kind of amendment that should be on the government's constitutional agenda and is not, I commend to the House this constitutional amendment.

• (1355)

Again, I seek the consent of the House to dispense with actually reading this amendment and have it recorded in *Hansard* as read.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault): Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. members: No.

Mr. Preston Manning: I would point out that this is ridiculous. Almost every large chamber in the world, the U.S. Congress, the British House of Commons and the Australian upper and lower houses, gives the simple courtesy of allowing a statute to be put into the *Hansard* without actually reading it so it is available for others. It is a common courtesy around the world and I am surprised it is not extended in this House.

And so let me read into the record a draft constitutional amendment to reform the Senate of Canada.

Motion for a Resolution to Authorize an Amendment to the Constitution of Canada

WHEREAS the *Constitution Act, 1982*, duly in force and effect throughout Canada, provides that amendments may be initiated to the Constitution of Canada by resolutions of the Parliament of Canada and resolutions of the requisite number of legislative assemblies, depending on the nature of the subject matter;

AND WHEREAS the Senate of Canada was originally intended to bring to bear provincial, regional, and minority interests in the law-making process at the national level and to provide an effective balance to representation by population in the House of Commons;

AND WHEREAS experience has shown that the Senate has not been able to perform its role effectively because the distribution of seats and the selection process of Senators have undermined its legitimacy;

AND WHEREAS a reformed Senate, if properly constituted, could perform the role originally intended for it and alleviate feelings of alienation and remoteness toward national affairs which exist, particularly in the less populous regions of Canada and among minority groups;

AND WHEREAS the amendment proposed in the Schedule hereto recognizes the principle of the equality of all provinces and provides new institutional arrangements to assure all regions of Canada an equitable role in national decision making, thereby fostering greater harmony and co-operation between the governments and people of Canada;

AND WHEREAS Section 42 of the *Constitution Act, 1982* provides that the subject matter of this amendment may be made by proclamation issued by the Governor General under the Great Seal of Canada where so authorized by resolutions of the Parliament of Canada and of the legislative assemblies of seven provinces having fifty per cent of the population of Canada;

NOW THEREFORE the [House of Commons, or Legislative Assembly of the province] resolves that an amendment to the Constitution of Canada be authorized to be made by proclamation issued by His Excellency the Governor General under the Great Seal of Canada in accordance with the Schedule hereto.

SCHEDULE

1. Sections 21 to 36 inclusive and Section 53 of the *Constitution Act, 1867*, are repealed and the following substituted therefor:

The Senate

21. The Upper House, styled the Senate, constituted by Section 17 of this Act, shall be comprised of 108 members called Senators who shall be drawn from throughout Canada and elected in accordance with the provisions of Sections 22 and 23.

S. O. 31

The Speaker: I can well understand sometimes when we have to read a great deal. I go through that myself during the putting of questions. However, as it is almost 2 p.m., I think we will break for statements by members and then the hon. member will have the floor when we return after question period today.

They all exemplify the daily extraordinary courage and behind the scenes effort that the governor general seeks to reward. I salute them and all volunteers this week.

* * *

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*English*]

ARMENIAN PEOPLE

Mr. Sarkis Assadourian (Brampton Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to commemorate the 83rd anniversary of the Armenian genocide of 1915 at the hands of the Turkish government, the first genocide of the 20th century but sorrowfully not the last.

Armenians, Jews, Ukrainians, Cambodians and Rwandans, among others, have all been victims of genocide.

In 1996 this House designated April 20 to 27 of each year as the week of remembrance of inhumanity of people toward one another.

This week allows us to consider the horrible loss of life and terrible suffering that the crimes of genocide have inflicted upon its victims.

The premeditated mass murder of 1.5 million Armenians is not a tragedy, it is a genocide. Let us recognize the horrors of genocide and pledge to eliminate this evil from our society.

* * *

VOLUNTEERS

Mr. Derrek Konrad (Prince Albert, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today with pride to salute this country's unsung heroes during this, their special week, national volunteer week. I am particularly proud of the volunteers in my riding who daily give of themselves to make the Prince Albert constituency a great place to live and work.

● (1400)

Last month the governor general saw fit to honour 53 such dedicated volunteers across Canada with his annual Caring Canadian Award.

On that short list of 53 were 3 of my own constituents and I recognize them for their accomplishments today. On behalf of their neighbours, friends and fellow residents in the riding of Prince Albert I congratulate Marilyn Brown, Ralph Hjertaas from the city of Prince Albert and Marie-Jeanne Leblanc of the community of Zenon Park.

NATIONAL TEXTILES WEEK

Mr. Janko Perić (Cambridge, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today marks the launch of National Textiles Week.

Since 1989 textile exports from such companies as Tiger Brand, Montreal Woollens, Cambridge Towel, Penmans-Forsyth, Barrday and others have tripled. This \$10 billion industry has embraced NAFTA and exports to the United States are four times greater than before free trade. The Textile Human Resources Council is also launching its textile management internship program at Mohawk College.

Bringing together management, labour, government and education, this exciting program will train young graduates for emerging careers in the textile industry.

I congratulate the entire textile industry for its important role in Canada's economy.

* * *

CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

Mrs. Karen Redman (Kitchener Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, April is Cancer Awareness Month. Few people in the House have not been touched personally by this disease through friends, relatives and immediate family.

This past weekend Linda McCartney, Paul McCartney's wife, died from breast cancer. Occasionally the passing of a high profile individual draws attention to this cruel and widespread disease.

In 1997 nearly 150,000 Canadians were diagnosed with cancer. The most frequently diagnosed cancers are breast cancer in women and prostate cancer in men. Individuals must take responsibility for their own health and get regular breast and prostate exams and take advantage of the availability of these services for early detection.

Through funds for research the medical profession is building a meaningful body of knowledge, and I believe effective cancer treatments and a cure will be found in my lifetime.

Last fall I had the opportunity to be present when the Corinne Boyer Foundation made an endowment to the chair of ovarian cancer research at the Ottawa hospital and Ottawa university.

These are the actions which are needed to fight this battle. Private individuals—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Parkdale—High Park.

*S. O. 31***YTV YOUTH ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS**

Ms. Sarmite Bulte (Parkdale—High Park, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the YTV Youth Achievement Awards were held last night in Toronto.

These awards celebrate the achievements and successes of ordinary Canadian kids doing extraordinary things in disciplines ranging from acting, music and dance to bravery, business, science and technology.

This past fall over 1,300 nominations were received from across the country. A distinguished panel of judges recently deliberated over the 147 finalists, choosing 16 grand prize winners in 15 categories for this year's awards.

Last night 26 outstanding young Canadians were featured in a live variety showcase broadcast nationally on YTV. The awards show combined great entertainment with inspirational stories and a celebration of great performances by talented young Canadians.

Today's youth are Canada's future leaders. Last night's winners are indeed testimony to the quality and capabilities of our young Canadian people. My congratulations to all the nominees, finalists and—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Okanagan—Coquihalla.

* * *

MULTILATERAL AGREEMENT ON INVESTMENT

Mr. Jim Hart (Okanagan—Coquihalla, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of the constituents of Okanagan—Coquihalla who are concerned about the multilateral agreement on investment.

Canadians have only received information from the alarmists with some groups going as far as instilling fear in our senior citizens. The tactics of such groups as the Council of Canadians I find deplorable. They say to seniors that the MAI has chilling implications for Canadians. They say it will undermine the sovereignty and will trample our social programs. The official opposition will not support any agreement if our social programs and sovereignty are not protected.

Canadians want an agreement that will protect our investments abroad and provide a level playing field. Canadians want the benefit of jobs that foreign investment will bring and the opportunity to compete in new markets.

The Liberal government has failed Canadians by following a policy of secrecy and top down decision making that is jeopardizing an agreement that could be beneficial to all Canadians.

• (1405)

CANADIAN FLAG

Mr. Lynn Myers (Waterloo—Wellington, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Pierre Roy, Joe Bilocq and Raymond Carrier, who have persisted in ensuring that the Canadian flag is flown at city hall in Quebec.

For almost two and a half years these three people would arrive early each morning to raise the Canadian flag. Finally on April 7 of this year Quebec City council agreed to officially fly the Canadian flag once again outside city hall.

I along with the residents of Waterloo—Wellington and all Canadians who believe in our great flag salute these great Canadians for their loyalty, commitment and dedication to their country. They are heroes. They set an example for us all. Merci beaucoup.

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ETHOS RADIO

Ms. Rose-Marie Ur (Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, an official launch will occur this Friday in my riding of one of Canada's first volunteer based community Internet radio stations.

The Strathroy Community Resource Centre, with funding from human resources development, is co-operating with Fanshawe College and the United Way to set up Ethos Radio.

A new website and broadcast facility have been established with a mentoring program for 15 local youth participants. This is a unique achievement.

As the statement of principles developed for Ethos Radio says, community is not a place but an attitude of mind. It is a process, a flowing river and not a frozen structure. The important features of the community are its inclusiveness, commitment and consensus.

I congratulate the Strathroy Resource Centre for taking this initiative and enabling the youth of rural Ontario to access the world.

* * *

THE SENATE

Mr. Bill Gilmour (Nanaimo—Alberni, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, now is the opportunity for the Prime Minister to honour his promise for Senate reform.

The Nunavut bill introduced in the House today proposes to amend the constitution to create a new Senate seat for Nunavut. Instead of dictating to the people of Nunavut, the Prime Minister has the opportunity to allow the people to choose their own representative in the Senate.

After more than 28 straight patronage appointments to the Senate, the new territory of Nunavut should reflect the modern democratic ideals to which most developed nations aspire, not the outdated principles of the Liberal Party which still clings to Senate appointments stemming from the last century. The old style of Liberal paternalism is no longer credible in this age of democracy.

I challenge the government to amend the Nunavut bill to allow the people of Nunavut to elect their Senate representative, giving them responsible, accountable government, not patronage politics.

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[Translation]

FERNAND LABRIE

Ms. Hélène Alarie (Louis-Hébert, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Professor Fernand Labrie, Director of the Laval University hospital research centre, has been awarded the Killam prize in health sciences. This prestigious \$50,000 award honours eminent world-class Canadian and Quebec researchers working in the private or public sectors.

Fernand Labrie is one of Quebec's most distinguished scientists and most eminent ambassadors in the field of science. He is recognized by his peers throughout the world as a role model for young people embarking upon a career in science.

Dr. Labrie's work on a number of sex hormone-dependent diseases has contributed greatly to the development of knowledge. It is worthy of mention that his clinic at CHUL has become the most important centre in the world for prostate cancer, having treated over 2,000 patients in the past 15 years.

On behalf of the Bloc Québécois, I wish to congratulate this great Quebecker, whose scientific efforts have contributed to improving the lives of many.

* * *

PARTI QUEBÉCOIS

Mr. Denis Coderre (Bourassa, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the least that can be said is that the PQ government is having a hard time with its third referendum on separating Quebec from the rest of Canada. There will be one, there won't be one, nobody knows how, why or when. One week they want one, the next, they no longer want one.

The PQ whip, Jacques Parizeau himself, had to call the sovereignist troops to order and to remind them that Quebec independence remains the priority on the separatist agenda.

The real problem with the PQ is that one never knows what to expect. This political uncertainty creates a climate of insecurity. It creates confusion as well, as the focus of the separatist agenda keeps on being reopened to question, with a thousand and one different stunts that do not hold up to scrutiny.

S. O. 31

The fact of the matter is that the separatist government is rudderless and blows wherever the wind takes it as it tries convince Quebecers that independence is the remedy to all their ills.

So, Mr. Bouchard, will there really be a referendum, or will there not, should the PQ get back in power? People are entitled to know.

* * *

[English]

HEPATITIS C

Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today Canadians heard about the heroic fight of hepatitis C victims in Ireland who after years of fighting finally won a fair compensation package from their government. Sadly it took the death of a prominent activist to bring enough shame on that government to act.

• (1410)

The Canadian government has the opportunity now to act with compassion and end the battle being fought by the wounded, the sick and their loved ones.

Instead of acting with fairness and justice the government has drawn an arbitrary line separating those who would be compensated from those who would not.

Today the victims of hepatitis C stood united on Parliament Hill refusing to be divided by government motivated by cost rather than compassion.

I call on the government to ease the suffering of all hepatitis C victims and to offer a fair and just compensation package for all now.

[Translation]

There must be justice for all the victims of hepatitis C. By showing some compassion, the federal government would avoid forcing the victims to suffer through lawsuits.

* * *

[English]

THE SENATE

Mr. John Bryden (Wentworth—Burlington, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on the weekend the Leader of the Opposition released to the press the text of the speech he just made today condemning Senate patronage appointments.

A story in this morning's *Ottawa Citizen* told us that the member for Calgary Southwest was to quote from Oliver Cromwell "Ye have grown odious to the whole nation—are yourselves become the greatest grievance". That kind of thing.

My picture appears among the 10 who are the target of the member's 17th century rhetoric and I would like to set the record straight. I am the commoner, not the senator. Thus I am sensitive to the context of Cromwell's remarks which the member called "one of the hottest speeches of denunciation ever made in parliament".

S. O. 31

What Cromwell was in the process of doing was abolishing parliament. The speech that the Leader of the Opposition saw fit to celebrate today was the maiden speech of England's first and only dictator.

It is not the Senate that is the danger to democracy around here. It is the Leader of the Opposition.

* * *

[Translation]

C.D. HOWE INSTITUTE

Mr. Yves Rocheleau (Trois-Rivières, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the C.D. Howe Institute recently published two studies that should make all federalists, especially those favouring a hard-line approach towards Quebec, sit up and take note.

The way the federalists tell it, the sovereigntist offer of partnership is nothing more than a nasty separatist trick to hoodwink the public. According to the C.D. Howe Institute, the sovereigntist offer of partnership is a legitimate proposal and the Institute recognizes that agreements will be signed between Canada and a sovereign Quebec.

The way the federalists tell it, the federal government is a cash cow for Quebec. According to the C.D. Howe Institute, even with equalization payments factored in, Quebec families pay, on average, \$652 more in taxes to the federal government than they receive in transfers and services.

There are therefore people in English Canada giving serious thought to Quebec's sovereignty proposal. This is an indication that common sense will prevail following Quebec's accession to sovereignty.

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[English]

NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK

Mr. Jim Jones (Markham, PC): Mr. Speaker, from April 19 to 25 Canada celebrates National Volunteer Week. Far too often people who volunteer in our community are forgotten. These people work tirelessly to help others with no compensation aside from their own feelings of giving back to their neighbours.

It is with pleasure today that I thank all volunteers across the country who devote their time and energy to helping out.

In my riding of Markham alone there are numerous groups and individuals who deserve public mention and recognition for their services to our town.

I would like to show my gratitude to all those who volunteer their time for charities, youth, sports, organizations, coaches and teachers who stay after school to help students.

Many of us in the House owe our being here to all those who volunteered on our campaigns. Dedicating one's time to make our communities better is a most precious gift. All volunteers from coast to coast help make Canada the great country that it is.

* * *

NATIONAL ORGAN DONOR WEEK

Mr. Joseph Volpe (Eglinton—Lawrence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to inform the House and all Canadians that this week is National Organ Donor Week, a time for us to focus and to recognize the special generosity of those who donate organs and tissues.

During this week professional and voluntary organizations encourage families to discuss and make decisions about organ and tissue donation. In addition, health professionals are urged to examine ways in which they might participate in the organ and tissue donation awareness process.

All levels of government are working together to enhance Canada's organ and tissue donation and distribution system. I invite Canadians to consider organ and tissue donation and to sign a donor card or the consent portion of their driver's licence if they have not already done so.

● (1415)

I would like to thank the thousands of Canadian organ and tissue donors and their families for their selfless gift of life. I would also like to salute the many volunteer and professional organizations that promote and support organ and tissue donations during this week and throughout the year.

* * *

CORRECTIONAL SERVICE CANADA

Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, where there is smoke there is fire. That is a fact. Where there is a violent criminal there is danger. That is also a fact, unless you work for CSC where smoke might be fog and a repeat violent sexual offender is your gardener.

Eric Wannamaker, jailed for assaulting young girls, denied parole 60 days ago, reported by the *Calgary Sun* to have been caught twice outside the fence with a young girl, and who had a shrine of pictures of young girls in his cell, was considered a low-risk by CSC. Again they were wrong.

Wannamaker and his buddy Gordon Kennedy, also a convicted sex offender, who had recently been granted day parole, drove

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away from the Bowden Institute in the Kennedy family car and kidnapped Kennedy's 14 year old stepdaughter.

My constituents in Bowden are afraid. As their MP I want to be able to tell them something that will allow them to sleep at night. Knowing how CSC functions there is nothing I can say. As long as CSC continues to give repeat violent offenders a fourth and fifth chance, while pointing to stats to prove its success—

The Speaker: Oral questions.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[*English*]

HEPATITIS C

Mr. Preston Manning (Leader of the Opposition, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, parliament has been recessed for two weeks. The health minister has had two weeks to contemplate the fate of thousands of hepatitis C victims who are suffering because of government negligence.

Hundreds of these victims came to parliament today to ask the minister, to plead with the minister, to beg the minister to compensate them for the harm which the government did.

I have a simple question. Will the health minister now do the right thing and compensate all these victims?

Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have already made clear to the hon. member and to the House how difficult this decision was.

I can assure the hon. member that there is no less sympathy on this side of the House than on that side of the House for those who are suffering from the illness, no matter when they became ill.

The health ministers of Canada, when they dealt with this difficult decision, did so in light of the implications of the decision on the health system in general. Indeed, we confronted the question as to whether governments should pay cash compensation to all of those harmed by the health system. We concluded that it would not be possible to sustain Canada's public system of health care if we took the—

The Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Preston Manning (Leader of the Opposition, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, these victims did not come to parliament to hear more bureaucratic answers, more legal and accounting reasons why the Government of Canada could not respond to their needs.

They even came from hospitals and, as I understand it, the minister did not even meet with them. Could he not look them in the eye?

However, officials with the Irish Hepatitis C Society met with these victims. They spoke of how the Irish government initially refused to pay compensation, but then it changed its mind.

Will the health minister not do the right thing and change his mind?

Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first of all, the hon. member should know that I have met more than once with victims and representatives of victims. I have dealt directly with them. Indeed, I telephone them personally in advance of government decisions so they will know the decisions the governments have made.

The Government of Canada and the governments of all the provinces have not refused to compensate victims. The governments of this country have accepted responsibility for that period of time during which something could have been done, should have been done and was not done.

The facts speak for themselves. All governments of Canada have taken a responsible position on this most difficult issue.

Mr. Preston Manning (Leader of the Opposition, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, part of leadership is knowing when you are wrong and being big enough to change your mind.

Ontario changed course and compensated the Dionne quintuplets. Alberta admitted it was wrong on the sterilization issue and changed its position. The Irish government heard exactly the same arguments the minister has responded to and changed its mind. Many of these victims are so sick they could hardly come to parliament today.

Why is the health minister going to force these victims to sue him in court in order to get the compensation which is rightfully theirs?

• (1420)

Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member speaks of leadership. Leadership is also shown by governments across the country by making the tough decisions on difficult issues that affect the continued sustainability of the public health care system.

What would the hon. member do about those injured by breast implants? What would he do with those mothers who must care for children who have brain damage as a result of high risk births? What would he say to the study released last week by Canadian researchers showing that thousands of deaths every year can be traced to taking prescription medicines?

Would the hon. member propose that cash payments be made to all of those victims?

Mr. Grant Hill (MacLeod, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, members of the Irish government argued just like this health minister argues today. They argued for four years and those victims finally won. They

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won a fair compensation package for every single victim of Hepatitis C from tainted blood.

The victims are here today and they are asking this health minister to meet with them so he can learn the example from Ireland. Will he meet with those victims today?

Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first of all, I have met often in the past with victims and their representatives.

Second, Health Canada some months ago sent its own representative to Ireland to look at the facts of that system. The facts are that about 1,800 victims so far have been compensated. We are covering 22,000 victims.

In Ireland the infection stemmed, for the most part, from a 1977 tainted blood supply brought about by the failure of the government to screen donors properly. The government itself distributed the tainted product which infected 1,500 expectant mothers.

We in this country have taken the same approach—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Macleod.

Mr. Grant Hill (Macleod, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, we have talked about feeble excuses and here, of course, again is just another feeble excuse.

The minister says the Canadian regulator was not responsible. That is not true and he knows it. If the Canadian regulator was responsible there is negligence. We are going to spend more money on these victims if they go through the courts.

For the sake of the victims, not for those of last week or for those who will be victims in the far distant future, but for the ones who are here, will he meet with the Irish individuals, find out and tell us why does the Irish system not work for Canada?

Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have said to the hon. member in response to his question that Health Canada sent representatives to Ireland to meet with officials to examine the facts and to look into exactly how the Irish system is organized and how compensation was paid.

What we learned was that almost all of the victims in Ireland can be traced to 1977 when, because the government did not screen properly, a donor infected the blood supply. The government itself distributed the product that caused most of these infections. Because of that fault the Irish government paid compensation.

We are applying the same principle in Canada. When governments could have acted—

The Speaker: The leader of the Bloc Quebecois.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in the case of the hepatitis C victims, the federal and provincial governments have signed an agreement covering the period from 1986 to July 1990. However, the issue of compensating the other victims remains.

Without calling the agreement for the 1986-1990 period into question, would the Minister of Health be prepared to consider, as a special, humanitarian measure, putting in place a special plan to compensate individuals infected with hepatitis C before 1986 and after July 1990?

Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, all governments in Canada, including the Quebec government, have recognized this matter as a rather difficult one.

We have followed the situation since the beginning and identified a four-year period, between 1986 and 1990, during which the governments could have acted to prevent infection.

That is the period that was eventually selected for compensation, and all governments in Canada, including the Quebec government, have agreed—

The Speaker: The hon. leader of the Bloc Quebecois.

• (1425)

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Quebecois has supported the agreement to compensate those infected with hepatitis C between 1986 and 1990 from day one. But for the other victims, we are faced with a special situation which demands special attention.

Could the minister consider the situation with greater compassion and, as recommended in the Krever report and by the Hemophilia Society, institute a special—I repeat special—no-fault compensation plan for individuals infected before 1986 and after July 1990?

Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the provincial ministers themselves identified as a threat to the health system as a whole any plan to compensate all victims regardless of fault.

All Canadian health ministers, at the provincial and federal levels, have agreed that only those infected during the period when governments could have acted to prevent infection should be compensated.

Mrs. Pauline Picard (Drummond, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Health continues to be insensitive to hepatitis C victims excluded from the program, although the latest figures show that the federal government is headed towards a substantial surplus for 1997-98.

Is it not disgraceful that the Minister of Health refuses to reconsider assistance to all hepatitis C victims, when his government, with its deep health cuts in recent years, is generating surpluses it had not even expected?

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Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the health system in general poses risks for everyone. I wonder whether the hon. member is suggesting that Canada's governments should compensate all victims for all risks.

Has the hon. member asked her colleague, Minister Rochon, in Quebec City, if he is open to such an approach? All Canadian health ministers have agreed to adopt the approach I described.

Mrs. Pauline Picard (Drummond, BQ): Mr. Speaker, since the provinces have paid until now to look after hepatitis C victims, and since they will continue to do so in future, should the federal government not pull its weight and provide appropriate compensation for all those who contracted hepatitis C?

Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, all governments in Canada have acted together. As I said, we identified a four-year period during which action was possible to prevent these infections, and we agreed to compensate those who contracted hepatitis C during this period.

I think this is a wise, prudent, appropriate approach and I repeat that we have adopted an appropriate approach in these very difficult circumstances.

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[English]

BANKING

Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance.

"Whenever bankers rush to do the same thing at the same time it is a sure rule that problems will follow". So states today's *Financial Times*. Through his delay, our finance minister resembles a pipe major leading the parade of mega-mergers.

Let me remind the finance minister that he has a duty to the Canadian public that comes before his Bay Street buddies. Small depositors, small businesses and small communities across this country want to know why the Canadian government will not launch an immediate inquiry into these revolutionary changes and massive concentrations in the banking industry.

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to respond to the leader of the opposition. Perhaps instead of reading the *Financial Times* if she were to read some of the Canadian papers she might know that some time ago the government did that very thing. It is called the MacKay task force and it will be reporting this summer or September at the latest.

Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP): Mr. Speaker, why does the Minister of Finance keep hiding behind the task force on financial services when its members have said themselves they are not looking at the bank merger issue?

Canadians want to have a say in the future of our banking industry. Unfortunately the finance minister says they have to wait until the bankers have had their say, wait until the task force reports, wait until the mergers are unstoppable, wait until there is a loss of tens of thousands of jobs. The bank mega mergers are not waiting. Why is this government waiting until it is too late to make a difference?

• (1430)

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let us be very clear. The decision on the bank mergers will be made by this government, by this Parliament and by the Canadian people. It will not be made by any financial institution. Anybody who has any doubt about that had just better watch us.

* * *

HEPATITIS C

Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, PC): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health. Today in the House of Commons the Minister of Health sounds more like an accountant or a lawyer. The Minister of Health is responsible for the blood system. My question is very direct. Will the minister reopen the hepatitis C compensation package, a package that leaves up to 40,000 Canadians, innocent victims, with nothing?

Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member sounds as though this is a decision made by one government, one party. The approach I have described was taken by all governments of all parties including the Progressive Conservative governments in Prince Edward Island, Ontario, Manitoba and Alberta. I wonder whether the hon. member is saying that the Progressive Conservative governments of those provinces are also taking a wrong policy approach to this issue.

We are sounding not so much like lawyers and accountants as we are like ministers of health concerned about the implications of this most difficult situation where the sustainability of the health system will—

The Speaker: The hon. leader of the Conservative Party.

Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, PC): Mr. Speaker, the package announced by the Minister of Health is not fair and it is not honourable. Sadly it effectively denies innocent victims fairness and compassion. I want to remind the House that the government has the constitutional authority to correct this human tragedy, to act unilaterally as we did in 1991 with HIV. Will the minister exercise moral and constitutional leadership to correct this injustice?

Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I remind the hon. member that it is her party in power in Prince Edward Island, her party in power in Ontario, her party in power in Alberta and Manitoba. They were at the table with us taking a

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position in relation to this very difficult issue which we believe is in the public interest.

If the hon. member's approach were taken, the public health care system would have to pay to all claimants who suffer harm as a result of risks inherent in medical practice. The ministers of health from all governments in this country have decided—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Medicine Hat.

* * *

BANKING

Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the official opposition's policy on bank mergers is very clear. If there is no competition, then there is no merger. On the other hand the Minister of Finance does not seem to have a policy. Why does he not admit that he is using his task force to cover up the lack of a policy? Why does he not admit that he is perfectly happy to let our big banks write the banking policy for this country? That is what he is doing.

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, perhaps the hon. member ought to follow the debate in the House. We set up this task force because we very clearly understood changes would be brought in as a result of globalization and technological change. The basic questions the task force will have to answer are what impact will there be on small business, how will consumers be protected, how will rural communities be affected, what impact will this have on competition, what will happen to our current employees. These questions are the reason we set up the task force.

Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the finance minister has lots of questions but he has no answers. He is the minister. He is supposed to have some answers.

The country has been waiting since last year for this government to open up the banking industry to real competition, yet the government delays. Why the delay? Why is the government delaying bringing in legislation that would provide competition for consumers and businesses in Canada? He promised the legislation. Where is it?

• (1435)

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the question one has to really ask is to what extent will foreign competition provide new bank branches in rural Alberta, to what extent will foreign competition provide bank branches in rural Ontario. The real issue is why is the Reform Party fronting for the big banks; in one mandate, in one year, from Medicine Hat populist to Bay Street populist.

[Translation]

Mr. Yvan Loubier (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ): Mr. Speaker, last week, the CIBC and Toronto Dominion banks announced their intention to merge, as did the Bank of Montreal and the Royal Bank before them. These mergers are the result of market globalization.

Instead of assuming some leadership in this matter, the Minister of Finance put the federal government in a position where it is now trying to catch up to the banks and to this major movement.

How can the Minister of Finance justify the fact that his position and that of his government was not made public two years ago, when the Bank Act was last reviewed and when everyone knew that bank mergers were about to take place?

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, that is why we broke with precedents and did not look back to the past to decide about the future of our financial institutions, and why we set up the MacKay committee to review these issues. We will make a decision in due time, that is when we are ready, not when the big banks would want us to do so.

Mr. Yvan Loubier (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance can say anything he wants, but the fact is that he is watching the train go by while the rest of the world is streamlining operations and has been doing so at an accelerated pace over the past five years.

Is the Minister of Finance prepared to consider the possibility that a special House committee be quickly set up to look at this merger, at its impact on workers, and also at the general attitude of the banks regarding loans, for example?

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, why do the Bloc Québécois and the other opposition parties refuse to face reality?

I want to congratulate my Liberal colleagues for setting up a Liberal caucus committee to review these issues. I also congratulate my Liberal colleagues who have been reviewing these issues for three years, while Bloc members have been making empty speeches.

[English]

Mr. Jason Kenney (Calgary Southeast, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, Clint Eastwood over there keeps looking at the issue but he does not do anything about it. We now have six big banks. We are looking at four big banks. We might go down to three big banks. How many big banks is enough competition for the minister? One? How many?

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the real issue is does the Reform Party want to sit down along with the government, along with the Canadian people, and take a look at the future of the Canadian financial institution system? Is the hon. member interested in what small consumers have to say? Is he

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interested in the problems of rural Canada? Is he interested in how in fact Canadian banks can turn themselves into large global powerhouses? Or does he simply want to stand up here and because a couple of banks decide to get together allow them to set the agenda?

Mr. Jason Kenney (Calgary Southeast, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I do want to know what small businesses are saying. I have heard what they are saying. Two-thirds of the members of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business have said that they are opposed to these bank mergers.

Why is the minister not responding to them? Why is he going to allow financing to become more difficult for small businesses, for terms to become more difficult, to choke economic growth and job creation? Whose side is the finance minister on? The side of small business or the side of the big banks? Of Main Street or Bay Street?

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, every time there is a new moon, Reform seems to change its position. If in fact that is Reform's position, then why did his leader, why did his party say that they were in favour of these mergers provided there was more foreign competition?

They had better make their minds up because the situation from this side of the House looking at them is confusing. Every time they speak it is confusing for the Canadian people.

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[Translation]

C. D. HOWE INSTITUTE

Mr. Pierre Brien (Témiscamingue, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance.

The C. D. Howe Institute has released a study which contradicts what the federalists are always claiming, which is that the federal government is being treated by Quebec as a cash cow.

What is the Minister of Finance's reply to the C. D. Howe Institute's statement, supported by a study, that Quebec families pay \$652 a year more in income tax to the federal government than they get back from it?

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the C. D. Howe Institute's analysis covers less than 40% of the federal government's total cash expenditures.

According to Statistics Canada, the federal government spent approximately \$3,750 more per family in Quebec than it received.

• (1440)

Mr. Pierre Brien (Témiscamingue, BQ): Mr. Speaker, will the Minister of Finance admit that there is an imbalance between what people are paying and what they are receiving, and that this could not be otherwise with a federal government which has imposed

huge cuts on the provinces in recent years, particularly in health and education, while continuing to collect more and more tax from those very same people?

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have just given the hon. member his answer. It is clear, we have reduced taxes and we will continue to reduce them in the years to come.

If the hon. member has not understood, perhaps he wants the figures per person rather than per family. Again, according to Statistics Canada, the federal government spent about \$1,500 more per person in Quebec than it received.

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[English]

YOUNG OFFENDERS ACT

Mr. Chuck Cadman (Surrey North, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the justice minister has had her job for almost a year now. The Young Offenders Act was supposed to be one of her priorities but we are still waiting. She has used words like "timely fashion", "soon" and "complicated". Indeed her parliamentary secretary has told us to be patient. Now we find the real reason for delay is her lack of power or influence within her own caucus.

Will the minister admit she is in over her head and is unable to do the job Canadians expect of her?

Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, unlike the hon. members on the other side of the House, we on this side understand that the renewal of the youth justice system is not a simplistic process. In fact it is one that requires the integration of very important values, protection of society, rehabilitation and reintegration of young people and crime prevention. That is what the renewal of the youth justice system in this country will be about.

Mr. Chuck Cadman (Surrey North, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, it is a sad day when politics and lobbying interfere with the security and safety of Canadians. The Minister of Justice is having problems with her own caucus on proposed amendments to the Young Offenders Act. The minister has had the benefit of an extensive justice committee review of the present legislation. She has had extensive input from provincial justice ministers. She has had extensive input from Canadians.

Will the minister do the right thing for the country or will she succumb to her backbenchers, many of whom have not studied the issues?

Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I have already indicated, we will not take a simplistic approach to this issue seemingly aggravated by those on the other side of this House. Let me assure the hon. member that I look forward to working with him

Oral Questions

and other members of his party when we table our response to the standing committee report on youth justice.

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[Translation]

CIGARETTE PRICES

Mr. Richard Marceau (Charlesbourg, BQ): Mr. Speaker, this morning we learned that, with the increase in the price of cigarettes, cigarette smuggling is back with a vengeance in southern Quebec and Ontario.

Before the situation returns to early 1990 levels, has the solicitor general approached his colleague, the minister responsible for customs, regarding special action to eliminate this scourge?

[English]

Hon. Andy Scott (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as a matter of fact when consideration was given to increasing the price of cigarettes or the taxes on cigarettes, the RCMP was consulted in that exercise and felt that the increase that was suggested, and in fact the increase that we saw, was in the margins of what could be managed by the system as it exists now.

* * *

TRADE

Mr. David Pratt (Nepean—Carleton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Secretary of State for Latin America and Africa. In light of U.S. President Bill Clinton's recent journey to Africa, can the minister tell this House what steps he is taking to better tap into the trade potential between Canada and Africa's emerging markets?

Hon. David Kilgour (Secretary of State (Latin America and Africa), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for Nepean—Carleton.

For the last two weeks or so, business groups, the hon. member for Etobicoke—Lakeshore and I were in six countries in western and southern Africa to try to increase investment flows and trade. The member will know already that Canada's trade with sub-Saharan Africa last year was about three quarters of a billion dollars, up one hundred over the year before.

* * *

YOUNG OFFENDERS ACT

Mr. Jack Ramsay (Crowfoot, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, it has become very clear that the reason the justice minister has unduly delayed bringing in amendments to the Young Offenders Act is because she cannot control her own caucus.

My question to her is this. Is she not up to the job? Is that the real reason she is not doing the job that millions of Canadians are asking for? Is that the real reason for this unacceptable delay in bringing in amendments to the Young Offenders Act?

• (1445)

Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I said before, those on that side of the House seem to think there is a simplistic approach to the renewal of the youth justice system in this country. They seem to think it only involves toughening up the Young Offenders Act.

People on this side of the House take a more holistic and integrated approach to what is a very complex issue. That approach will be reflected in this government's response.

Mr. Jack Ramsay (Crowfoot, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, we understand that she is not even going to accept the recommendations provided by the justice committee to Parliament, that she is not going to accept the recommendations made by hundreds of people across this country, including the chiefs of police and the Canadian Police Association.

If she is in charge of her own portfolio, will she stand today and tell us when she will bring in amendments to the Young Offenders Act?

Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I have said on a number of other occasions in this House, the government's response will be filed in a timely manner.

* * *

HEPATITIS C

Mr. Peter Mancini (Sydney—Victoria, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health. We heard today that there is no clear figure to determine how many victims fall outside the government's hepatitis C compensation package.

Can the minister tell this House what that figure is and how it was determined?

Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am told by epidemiologists at Health Canada that somewhere between 50,000 and 60,000 people were affected pre-1986. That is the best they can do.

The number is not precise because not all provincial governments have done trace back programs to determine the exact number. In general, that is the present belief regarding the number of people infected prior to 1986 through the blood system in general.

Mr. Peter Mancini (Sydney—Victoria, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we also learned today that the hepatitis C victims in Ireland were

forced to fight a long and hard battle for compensation. Tragically, it took the death of a prominent Irish activist and victim to convince that government to compensate all victims.

What will it take for this government to finally do what is fair and just? Is there anything these people can do to convince this government to reconsider?

Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it was precisely to prevent decades of fighting and litigation that I put on the agenda of health ministers last summer the whole question of compensation for hepatitis C victims.

As a result, discussions ensued. We analysed the facts. We looked at the history and together as governments, federal and provincial, including New Democratic governments in British Columbia and in Saskatchewan, we are taking the right approach by compensating those who were affected during a period when something could have been done to stop it.

If we take a different approach, we will imperil the sustainability of public health care in Canada. That is the basis of the decision we made.

Mr. Greg Thompson (Charlotte, PC): Mr. Speaker, the minister is absolutely wrong when he uses the timeframe of 1986 to 1990. It is simply a frame of convenience.

He knows full well that tests were available that other countries use, specifically West Germany, to identify the problem which is now known as hepatitis C. Will the minister not acknowledge that and with that consideration reverse his decision and include all victims of hepatitis C in this country?

Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member is quite right in saying that, as Mr. Justice Krever pointed out, at various points in time and in various countries prior to 1986 there were tests that were in place. I think even one American state had a test before 1986.

The balance of the evidence and certainly the better judgment is that it was in early 1986 that Canada should have acted to follow the lead of competitor countries like the United States which then put the test in place federally.

That is the point in time at which most informed commentators believe the line is drawn between infections—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Charlotte.

Mr. Greg Thompson (Charlotte, PC): Mr. Speaker, I am not sure if we have an accountant or a lawyer speaking on behalf of the ministry or the government today.

That is a flawed position. These people deserve compensation. It is as simple as that. He should not simply be looking at the dollars because he does not know himself how many victims are out there. It could be as few as 20,000. It could be 30,000. It could be 40,000.

Oral Questions

Will he not do the honourable thing and act unilaterally to compensate these victims?

• (1450)

Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is not a question of dollars. It is a question of the sustainability of the public health care system.

If the honourable member is suggesting because a test came on stream in 1981 or 1982 that the victims back to that year should be compensated, then he is agreeing with the ministers of health of Canada. He is just drawing the line at a different place. He is just saying that was the date after which something could have been done to make a difference.

If the honourable member is agreeing with me in principle but drawing the line at a different place on the calendar then that says a lot about his position. He is indeed supporting the position of the ministers of health of Canada.

* * *

YEAR 2000

Ms. Susan Whelan (Essex, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the president of Treasury Board.

A recent press article suggested that not one federal government department has taken advantage of the services offered by an elite team assembled to assist with the pending year 2000 millennium bug. What assurances can the minister give the House that federal departments are dealing with the urgency of the year 2000 crisis?

Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in fact the information contained in the article was wrong. We already have six packages that have been put forward by six departments and of these two already have been asking for funds.

But what is reassuring is that we already have retainers for \$100 million where we get the resources necessary in order to fill up the needs of the year 2000 bug if ever there is a problem. We feel we have put our systems in place and we are properly equipped to deal with the problem.

* * *

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Gurmant Grewal (Surrey Central, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, last night millions of Canadians watched in anger as officials from CIDA admitted that hundreds of millions of dollars do not go to the needy countries where it is supposed to go.

This money is going to huge Canadian corporations instead of helping the poorest of the poor in developing countries. This is totally unacceptable.

Oral Questions

Will the minister call in the auditor general immediately to investigate this?

Hon. Diane Marleau (Minister for International Cooperation and Minister responsible for Francophonie, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the program to which the MP is referring is CIDA Inc. It is a program designed to encourage private enterprise to invest in the developing world.

The reality is that one out of three of those companies implements a successful program. For every tax dollar invested in the developing world by CIDA Inc. five dollars comes back to Canada and twelve dollars goes to the developing world.

* * *

[Translation]

ACQUISITION OF SUBMARINES

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Verchères, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Defence.

As everyone said it would, the federal government took advantage of the fact that the House of Commons was not sitting to announce the acquisition of four used submarines, just as it did in the case of the helicopters, so determined is it to avoid being questioned about this \$750 million purchase.

How does the minister explain that not only are his government's priorities highly questionable, because it has chosen to buy used submarines rather than give money back to the provinces so that they can ensure basic services, but that, in addition, these new submarines are not even capable of travelling under the Arctic ice?

[English]

Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, these submarines are state of the art. They were commissioned by the royal navy of the U.K. at a time when that was part of its defence future. It has since decided to go to nuclear submarines.

These were very slightly used in the days when they were part of that defence department program. We have acquired them for a quarter of the cost needed to build new ones. That is a great bargain. At least we can replace our 30 year old submarines. We have the capability to patrol our shores and the Arctic.

* * *

BANKING

Hon. Lorne Nystrom (Qu'Appelle, NDP): My question is to the minister of finance, that Bay Street banker, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Colleagues, I ask you to please be very judicious in your choice of words and I would ask the honourable member to put his question.

Hon. Lorne Nystrom: Mr. Speaker, if the two bank mergers go ahead, the two large megabanks will have 70% of the banking assets in this country.

It would take about 100 banks in the United States to have 70% of the banking assets in that country. I submit this is obscene concentration.

In the name of democracy, is the minister now prepared to establish an all party parliamentary committee to study these two mergers and give Canadians a chance to say their peace?

• (1455)

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, just as it is difficult to understand from day to day what the Reform Party position is, it appears to be equally difficult to understand the position of the member for Qu'Appelle. He now wants to have an all party study.

The day before yesterday he said that we should simply say no to the mergers. There seems to be some inconsistency within the NDP as to what exactly its position is.

The fact is in order to protect small business, in order to protect rural communities, in order to make sure Canadian consumers are taken care of and that there is full competition is why we put in place the MacKay committee. That is why there is going to be full—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Charlotte.

* * *

HEALTH

Mr. Greg Thompson (Charlotte, PC): Mr. Speaker, we have not had a lot of information from the health minister today. So this question is to the Deputy Prime Minister.

Based on information in a story that ran in *The Globe and Mail* on April 3, can the Deputy Prime Minister not see that the health minister compromised his position in relation to cabinet solidarity and secrecy in the sense of who supported his position and who did not? Does this not send a message to the government that something has to be done? Maybe the health minister should be replaced because of this breach of confidentiality?

Hon. Herb Gray (Deputy Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is sending a message that Premier Harris should be replaced, that Premier Klein should be replaced, that Premier Binns should be replaced, all Conservatives like him. They shared in that agreement and they continue to stand by it.

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Mr. Reg Alcock (Winnipeg South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, disabled Canadians want the same access to training and jobs that all Canadians enjoy.

Can the Minister for Human Resources Development tell us what he is doing to ensure that they receive it?

Hon. Pierre S. Pettigrew (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his very good work as chair of the parliamentary committee for disabled Canadians.

We want to do even more. This is why our government is moving forward on many fronts to help persons with disabilities. Just last week we signed an agreement with the Government of Manitoba to launch an employment assistance for persons with disabilities agreement in that province. We hope to sign similar agreements with other provinces and territories in the near future.

These agreements will help persons with disabilities to prepare for and enter the workforce.

* * *

POLLING

Mr. Jim Gouk (West Kootenay—Okanagan, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, access to information documents show that Liberals have increased spending on public opinion polling by 68% in three years, spending \$28 million from 1994 to 1997. Almost half of that was without competition.

Given the Liberal criticism of the Tory governments and its spending on the polls, how does the Liberal government justify this whopping 68% increase?

Hon. Alfonso Gagliano (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I do not know where the member gets the figures.

Maybe he should consult with his advertising firm which said: "There is no evidence that the process is unfair or weighted in favour of Liberal political allies". Since we have been in government we have had an open process. That is how we give contracts to Canadians who qualify.

* * *

[Translation]

CORPORATE TAXATION

Mrs. Maud Debiens (Laval East, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance.

Two years ago, with much fanfare, the Minister of Finance announced the creation of a committee to examine corporate taxation. Now, he has once again hastily tabled this committee's report just before the House adjourned.

Privilege

Are we to understand from the minister's actions that this report will once again be shelved?

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Not at all, Mr. Speaker. First of all, I would like to thank the chair and members of the committee for their work.

As members perhaps know, the report will be submitted to the Standing Committee on Finance for study. We have, however, said that our priority is to lower personal taxes.

* * *

[English]

BANKING

Mr. Nelson Riis (Kamloops, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance. He is well aware that if the bank mergers are permitted to proceed we will see the loss of thousands of jobs in that sector. He will appreciate the reduction in competition in that vital sector. He knows that there are major implications in allowing foreign banks to come into Canada.

• (1500)

In light of those three aspects, would he agree with me that it would be appropriate, at least for the finance committee of the House, to do an in-depth analysis of the impacts of these bank mergers on the financial community of Canada and on Canadians generally?

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, absolutely. That is why it is our intention to submit the MacKay report to the finance committee for exactly that purpose.

[Translation]

The Speaker: I have a question for the hon. member for Lac-Saint-Jean. Does the question of privilege arise from question period? For your information, I like matters of privilege to be submitted to me in writing one hour before they are raised.

Mr. Stéphan Tremblay: Indeed, Mr. Speaker, it relates to question period.

The Speaker: If it has to do with something that took place during question period, I recognize the hon. member for Lac-Saint-Jean.

* * *

PRIVILEGE

MARKET GLOBALIZATION

Mr. Stéphan Tremblay (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I will try to make it short. It has to do with globalization and the issues raised in this place today.

Two years ago, when I entered politics, I took an oath to serve my constituents. Today, in a context of market globalization, I think it is becoming increasingly difficult to do so. That is why I jump out of my seat as a member of Parliament to start a public debate on globalization—

Routine Proceedings

[*Editor's Note: The member left the Chamber with his chair.*]
[*English*]

Mr. Randy White: Mr. Speaker, you are not allowed to steal chairs from the House.

The Speaker: I was just going to rule that is not a question of privilege.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1505)

[*English*]

ORDER IN COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS

Mr. Peter Adams (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if you do not mind I think I will keep a hand on my chair while I am speaking.

[*Translation*]

I am very pleased to table in this House today, in both official languages, a number of Order in Council appointments which were made recently by the government.

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

* * *

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Mr. Peter Adams (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 31 petitions.

* * *

[*English*]

PETITIONS

THUNDER BAY REGIONAL HOSPITAL

Mr. Stan Dromisky (Thunder Bay—Atikokan, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the privilege and honour of presenting a significant petition signed by over 1,600 citizens from my riding of Thunder Bay—Atikokan.

My constituents endorse and support Thunder Bay Regional Hospital and the trustees of the hospital board in their vision of a new centrally located hospital to serve not only the citizens of Thunder Bay but all Canadians of the northwestern Ontario region, including thousands of citizens from the first nation communities.

The petitioners call upon parliament to ensure that the federal government, through Health Canada, Indian and Northern Affairs

Canada and such other ministries and agencies as parliament shall direct, provide appropriate funding and support of the capital cost for this new hospital.

MULTILATERAL AGREEMENT ON INVESTMENT

Mr. Nelson Riis (Kamloops, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is my honour to present a petition on behalf of a number of constituents from the Kamloops constituency, primarily the community of Clearwater in the North Thompson valley.

They point out a number of reasons they feel the multilateral agreement on investment is not in the best interest of Canada and simply call upon Canada not to sign the MAI.

PENSIONS

Mr. Nelson Riis (Kamloops, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition on another matter. The petitioners are primarily from the communities of Logan Lake and Kamloops.

They point out their concerns in terms of the way the government is dealing with the pension system for Canadians and call upon the House of Commons to advance cautiously in terms of any changes to the retirement system of the country without very clear consultation with Canadians.

MULTILATERAL AGREEMENT ON INVESTMENT

Mr. Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition signed by a number of people from all over western Canada who are very concerned about the multilateral agreement on investment. They feel the MAI is so fundamentally flawed that the Canadian government should not enter into any kind of a liberalized trade agreement of this nature at this time.

At any time the government sees fit to enter into an agreement of this nature, there should be built in protections for labour standards, environmental standards and other issues to make sure that people are not put in the back seat to the profits of these organizations. I respectfully submit this petition.

* * *

[*Translation*]

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Peter Adams (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Question No. 77 will be answered today.

[*Text*]

Question No. 77—**Mr. Dick Proctor:**

Can the Minister of Public Works and Government Services specify what was the monetary cost of the Canada Post mailing "We're back at our post", the two-sided postcard sent out following the recent postal strike?

Hon. Alfonso Gagliano (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Information concerning Canada Post's operational and material costs is privileged and commercially sensitive. Consequently, the cost of the "We're back at our post"

advertising cards mailed shortly after the 1997 postal strike cannot be specified.

Canada Post has not relied on government funding since 1988. Therefore all its expenses, including corporate advertising campaigns, are self-funded.

The “We’re back at our post” advertising cards were distributed to restore public confidence in Canada Post by announcing the immediate resumption of postal services. As well, they reinforced Canada Post’s commitment and readiness to serve Canadians in a dedicated, hardworking manner.

[Translation]

Mr. Peter Adams: Mr. Speaker, I suggest that the other questions stand.

[English]

Mr. John Cummins (Delta—South Richmond, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, on October 28, 1997 I asked Question No. 33 regarding the Oak Bay Marine Group company which is perhaps favoured by the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans.

• (1510)

On March 26 of this year I was informed by the PCO that it hoped to have the answer in a week. On April 16 I was informed that the answer was being assembled. It is still not here and I would like some idea of when I can expect an answer to that question.

Mr. Peter Adams: Mr. Speaker, it is the first day back after the break. I am not fully familiar with the situation of Question No. 33 but I assure the member that I will look into it.

Mr. John Cummins: Mr. Speaker, on December 2, 1997, I asked Question No. 56, again concerning the Oak Bay Marine Group.

On March 26 the PCO reported that the response was complete, that it had been signed off by the minister a few weeks previous to that and that it was with the government House leader for tabling.

On April 16 the PCO simply said that it was still with the House leader for tabling. I would like to know where that question is.

Mr. Peter Adams: Mr. Speaker, my response is the same. I apologize to the member. I am sure what he says is true. I will also look into the whereabouts of Question No. 56.

Mr. John Cummins: Mr. Speaker, Question No. 51 concerning the aboriginal fishery was asked on December 1, 1997.

On March 26 the PCO said that from the department’s point of view the answer was complete and that it had gone to the minister to be signed off.

S. O. 52

On April 16 the PCO said that it had yet to receive it from the department. I would like to know where my question is.

Mr. Peter Adams: Mr. Speaker, again I have noted Question No. 51.

The member has obviously kept very careful track of the responses he has had at various stages of these questions. I urge the member and others to approach me at any time and I would be glad to look into these matters.

Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC): Mr. Speaker, I would similarly inquire as to where the answer is to Question No. 21.

Some information was received although it was not the information we were looking for. I again ask the representative of the government when we might expect to receive an accurate answer to our question.

Mr. Peter Adams: Mr. Speaker, I thank this other member. With respect to Question No. 21 he says that he has received some other information. I am always glad to respond to these points. I am available. From time to time if members would care to approach me, I would be glad to follow up on these matters fully.

The Speaker: Shall the remaining questions stand?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

REQUEST FOR EMERGENCY DEBATE

BANKING

The Speaker: I have received two letters asking for an emergency debate. The first one I received is from the hon. member for Qu’Appelle.

Both these letters deal basically with the same subject matter, so I will first give the floor to the member for Qu’Appelle. Then I will give it to one of the co-signers of the other letter, the member for Prince George—Bulkley Valley.

Hon. Lorne Nystrom (Qu’Appelle, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I will be brief. This morning I sent you a letter seeking leave under Standing Order 52(2) to seek an emergency debate on the two megabank mergers we have been hearing a lot about recently.

Four of our six big banks have plans now to merge. This will completely transform the financial services industry in our country. It will impact on the constituents of all members of Parliament. It is a very fundamental change, perhaps the most fundamental change in the Canadian financial services industry in the history of Canada.

The government said again today that it plans no parliamentary action until the report of the MacKay task force some time in September. That is about five months down the road, which is a

Government Orders

long time to go without dealing with the issue in the Parliament of Canada.

I submit that an emergency debate is needed now. The financial markets have reacted starting back in January. They are still reacting to these announcements. It is about time we had some democratic parliamentary reaction from the floor of the House of Commons.

• (1515)

For those reasons I submit to you that this is a legitimate case of a request for an emergency debate on a very important issue that we as elected parliamentarians should deal with here in this House in a truly democratic manner. We owe it to our constituents.

The Speaker: The hon. member for Medicine Hat is going to put the case for the other one.

Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, to some degree I want to echo the comments of my colleague from the NDP.

I point out that we have two parties asking for this. I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, quite honestly that we did not get together to make this happen. I think it reflects the concern of the people of Canada over the possibility of a bank merger in what a lot of people would argue is a policy vacuum left by the government.

I want to point out that Canadians are facing the possibility of seeing our six big banks reduced to four, two of which will have the resources, really, to overshadow all of the competition.

My friend has pointed out that the government has no plan to deal with this issue, except to say that there is a group that is studying this right now, but it will not be reporting for several months.

We are very concerned that because many shareholders are involved in this and because the international investment community is watching this closely the banks will be allowed to drive the agenda to the point where the government will be forced to make a decision in their favour without proper public input.

Therefore, I am also asking that you give serious consideration to our request to have an emergency debate on this issue. We think it is one that Canadians are very concerned about and, again, the government has no policy on the issue.

The Speaker: As I said earlier, both of these requests are in order. There is no question that you were discussing it between the parties before. That is not part of it at all.

In my view, they do not meet the requirements for an emergency debate. I would not suggest outright that perhaps some consideration be given to another vehicle for discussing this particular matter. Perhaps something could come up this Thursday when hon.

members could consider another way of venting their opinions on this particular matter.

* * *

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Peter Adams (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there have been consultations among the parties and I think you will find there is unanimous consent for the following motion. I move:

That, notwithstanding the provisions of Standing Order 51, on Tuesday, April 21, 1998, the first spokesperson for each recognized party during the debate pursuant to the aforementioned standing order may speak for no more than 20 minutes and may split their time.

The Speaker: Does the hon. member have the unanimous consent of the House to move the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

NUNAVUT ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-39, an act to amend the Nunavut Act and the Constitution Act, 1867, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mr. Preston Manning (Leader of the Opposition, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I want to resume the discussion of this bill, in particular the subject of Senate reform.

Since I spoke this morning two interesting things have happened in the House. The first was that we saw a Bloc member run out of the House carrying his chair. I have not witnessed this before. During the election I had a speech, actually, on "To whom does this seat belong?" One of my lines was that some members think it belongs to them, but I never expected to see it taken quite that literally.

The second incident was that the member for Wentworth—Burlington made a statement in an S. O. 31 knocking my earlier comments on Senate reform. I just want to say that I understand the member for Wentworth—Burlington is upset today. One of the newspapers mistakenly confused him with a senator from New Brunswick of the same name. In some countries a member of the lower house would be pleased to be confused and mistaken as a senator, but this member went to great lengths to distance himself from that connection. This is yet another argument in support of Senate reform.

● (1520)

When we broke for question period I was in the process of reading into the record the Reform draft constitutional amendment to reform the Senate of Canada, dated May 17, 1988. I can continue to read this into the record, however, I would like to again seek the consent of the House to dispense with actually reading it and to have it recorded in *Hansard* as read if there is unanimous consent for doing that just to save time.

The Speaker: Ordinarily we would not ask the same question, but we are here now. The hon. Leader of the Opposition has told us of the intent of a motion that he would put forward. Does he have permission to put the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Peter Adams: No.

Mr. Preston Manning: I am reading into the record the proposed constitutional amendment of May 17, 1988. I will pick up on section 21.

21. The Upper House, styled the Senate, constituted by Section 17 of this Act, shall be comprised of 108 members called Senators who shall be drawn from throughout Canada and elected in accordance with the provisions of Sections 22 and 23.

22. (1) Each of the Provinces of Canada is at all times entitled to be represented in the Senate by 10 Senators and the Yukon and Northwest Territories are each entitled to be represented by 4 Senators.

(2) Any province which may be created, pursuant to the provisions of the Constitution, after this section comes into force, shall on and after its creation be entitled to be represented in the Senate by 10 Senators.

23. (1) Senators shall be chosen by the people of each Province and Territory through popular elections held throughout Canada in accordance with the provisions of this section.

(2) Except as otherwise provided in sub-section 5, Senators shall be elected for a term of 6 years and Senators shall be eligible for re-election.

(3) Senate elections shall be held throughout Canada on the last Monday of October every three years.

(4) The first election, hereinafter referred to as "the initial election", will be held on the last Monday of October not less than one year nor more than two years after this provision comes into force.

(5) One half of the Senators elected from each Province and Territory at the initial election shall be elected for a term of 3 years and the balance of the Senators elected at the initial election shall be elected for a term of 6 years.

(6) The Legislature of a province or territory shall divide the Province or Territory into senatorial electoral districts, having special regard to geographical considerations, and determine the number of Senators to be chosen from each district.

(7) The election of Senators shall be based on the single transferable ballot method of election.

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(8) The Legislature of a Province or Territory shall make laws in relation to procedures for the election of Senators within that Province or Territory, the financing of elections, the funding of election campaigns, and the nomination of candidates.

(9) The Parliament of Canada may, except as is otherwise provided in sub-section (8) of this Part, make laws in relation to procedures for the election of Senators.

24. Any person is eligible to be elected as a Senator for a Province or Territory if that person:

(a) is a Canadian citizen;

(b) is of the full age of 18 years at the date of the election;

(c) has been ordinarily resident within that Province or Territory for an aggregate period of at least five years during the ten years immediately preceding the election and is resident within that Province or Territory at the date of the election; and

(d) has not been a member of the House of Commons or a Legislative Assembly for a period of one year prior to the date of the election.

25. A Senator shall not be a member of the Governor General in Council, or a director, officer, or member of a federal crown corporation, board, commission, agency or tribunal.

26. (1) If a vacancy occurs in the Senate, not more than two years from the date of the election, then such vacancy shall be filled through a by-election.

(2) The term of a Senator elected at a by-election shall be for the unexpired term of the Senator whose seat was vacated.

27. The Senate is empowered to establish its own procedures for the election of the Speaker of the Senate and for the conduct of its business.

28. (1) Bills proposed to Parliament, other than Bills for appropriating any part of the public revenue or for imposing any tax or impost, may originate in the Senate equally as in the House of Commons.

(2) A bill shall not be taken to appropriate revenue, or to impose taxation, by reason only of its containing provisions for the imposition or appropriation of fines or other pecuniary penalties, or for the demand of payment or appropriation of fees for licences or services.

29. A Bill certified by the Speaker of the House of Commons and the Speaker of the Senate as being a Bill to appropriate money solely for the ordinary annual essential services of the government shall be presented to but need not be passed by the Senate.

30. A defeat of a government sponsored Bill, motion, or resolution in the Senate shall not constitute a vote of non-confidence in the government so as to require the government's resignation.

31. (1) Where any Bill that has been passed by the House of Commons and presented to the Senate

(a) has been refused passage by the Senate, or

(b) has not been finally dealt with by the Senate and not less than 60 days have elapsed since the Bill was presented to the Senate of which at least 45 days were days in which Parliament was sitting, or

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(c) has been amended by the Senate and the House of Commons has duly advised the Senate that it does not concur in all or some of the amendments made by the Senate,

the Bill, in the form in which it was presented to the Senate but with such amendments made by the Senate as may be concurred in by the House of Commons in the case of a Bill to which clause (c) applies, may be referred by the Speaker of either House to the Reconciliation Committee for the purpose of seeking to reconcile the differences and seek a mutually acceptable compromise.

(2) A joint standing committee known as the Reconciliation Committee which shall be composed of ten Senators and ten members of the House of Commons is hereby established for the purpose of this Section.

(3) The Senate and the House of Commons shall elect from among its members persons to be appointed to the Reconciliation Committee established pursuant to this section.

(4) This section shall apply equally, with the necessary changes, to Bills that have been first passed by the Senate.

32. (1) No appointment of a person

(a) to be a Judge of the Supreme Court of Canada;

(b) to be an officer, director, or member of any federal Crown Corporation, Board, Commission, Agency, or Tribunal, having a regional impact, including those set forth in the Appendix

shall have effect until such time as the appointment of that person has been affirmed by the Senate.

(2) If no action is taken by the Senate after 30 sitting days of a nomination being referred to it, then the appointment shall be deemed to have been affirmed by the Senate.

(3) The Speaker of the House of Commons and the Speaker of the Senate together shall determine those federal Crown Corporations, Boards, Commissions, Agencies, and Tribunals which, in addition to those in the Appendix, have a regional impact.

2. The Fifth Schedule of the Constitution Act, 1867, is repealed and the following substituted therefor:

OATH OF ALLEGIANCE

● (1525)

This is a revised oath of allegiance for the Senate:

I, . . . , do swear, That I will faithfully represent the people of the electoral district of—who have elected me to represent them in the Senate of Canada [or as the case may be], and be faithful and bear true allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth.

Then follows a declaration of qualification, modified in accordance with section 24, and an appendix which reads:

Select Crown Corporations, Boards, Commissions, Agencies, or Tribunals, for example:

Air Canada

Bank of Canada

Canadian Broadcasting Corporation

Canadian International Development Agency

Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission

Canadian Transport Commission

Canadian Wheat Board

Export Development Corporation

Federal Business Development Bank

National Energy Board

National Harbours Commission

National Parole Board

St. Lawrence Seaway Authority

We have therefore read into the record this 1988 constitutional amendment to reform the Senate of Canada along the lines of a triple E Senate.

I want to point out to members that this amendment provided for a 108 member elected Senate: 10 members per province and 4 per territory.

In the hearings that accompanied this amendment's development we also found considerable support for six to eight senators per province, a smaller Senate, and one per territory, with considerable debate over whether equality per province or equality per region was preferable.

This amendment also provided for half the senators to be elected every three years to six year terms by a single transferable ballot method of election.

The Reform amendment provided further for the division of each province and territory into senatorial districts in order to ensure genuine regional representation and to ensure that the upper house was not a mirror image of the lower house.

The 1988 triple E amendment required that a senator should not be able to hold office in the cabinet or accept other federal appointments in order to secure greater independence of the Senate from the House and from the Office of the Prime Minister.

The amendment also provided for free votes in the Senate so that it would not become a House of the parties, which has become one of the big problems with the Australian Upper House, and stipulated that a defeat of a government sponsored bill, motion or resolution in the Senate would not constitute a vote of non-confidence in the government so as to require the government to resign.

This amendment provided for the Senate to be coequal with the House in terms of powers, which of course is theoretically the case at the present time. It provided for a reconciliation committee based on the West German model to resolve deadlocks.

In the view of western Reformers, if the Senate deadlocked over a bill like the Petroleum Administration Act, which was the centrepiece of the national energy program, and could find no way to reconcile the conflicting interests, it would be better for Canada

if the legislation was not passed than to have discriminatory legislation passed.

• (1530)

Finally, the 1988 triple E constitutional amendment required that appointments to the Supreme Court of Canada and to crown corporations, boards, commissions, agencies and tribunals having regional impacts and listed in an appendix be affirmed by the reformed Senate.

To pick up our story of the trail of Senate reform in the west, fortified by the Senate reform initiatives of the Alberta legislature, the Senate reform initiatives of the Reform Party, the work of the Canadian committee for a triple E Senate and the research of the Canada West Foundation, Alberta moved toward the next big milestone on the western trail to Senate reform.

This was the Alberta Senate election of 1989 in which over 600,000 Albertans were persuaded to participate. If anyone thinks it is an easy task to persuade 600,000 people to do something they have not done before, they ought to participate in that exercise. In that election Reformer Stan Waters received over 257,000 votes to become Canada's first democratically selected Senate nominee.

I would like to point out that is the largest number of votes that any member of this Parliament ever received. Of course it was large because his constituency was province wide. However, 257,000 people said that that individual should sit in the Parliament of Canada. Eight months later in June 1990 a reluctant Brian Mulroney was finally persuaded to actually accept the results of this democratic election and appoint Stan Waters to the Senate of Canada.

All of this history, all of these milestones on the western trail to Senate reform are detailed in chapter 11 of my 1992 book *The New Canada*. I record them here to make one simple, important point which is that most of the background work required to reform the Senate in the direction of greater accountability, equality and effectiveness has already been done.

I would argue that as much work has been put into this effort in western Canada over the last 20 years as has been put into defining Quebec's constitutional demands over the same period. However this effort has not received one-tenth of the attention of Quebec's constitutional demands. Why? Because it has not been accompanied by the threat of secession. It is now time that such attention was paid.

The immediate future presents new opportunities to pick up the western trail of Senate reform and move toward the objective of providing an accountable and effective Chamber in the national parliament to ensure regional representation and input into national decision making and legislation.

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Let me first describe the opportunity and then issue a challenge, a challenge to the present senators, a challenge to the Prime Minister and the federal government and a challenge to this House, a challenge to act on the present opportunities.

The province of Alberta under the leadership of Premier Klein is in the process of reactivating its senatorial selection act. It is proposing to proceed with the conduct of a senatorial election this fall in conjunction with the Alberta municipal elections. It is proposing to elect two senators in waiting and as soon as there is an Alberta vacancy in the Senate, to then request the Prime Minister to appoint a democratically selected senator to fill the vacancy.

In proceeding along these lines, the premier and the legislature of Alberta are completely in tune with public opinion on this subject in that province. In late February of this year, an Environics West poll reported that 91% of Albertans surveyed said they wanted Alberta's next senator to be elected by all Albertans, compared to only 7% who favoured appointment by the Prime Minister and 2% who said they did not know. In proceeding along these lines, Albertans are rejecting the arguments by the intergovernmental affairs minister that an elected and equal Senate will not serve western interests.

The intergovernmental affairs minister argued three months ago that a Senate in which the Atlantic provinces held 40% of the seats, which would be the case under equal representation by province, or even 20% of the seats, which would be the case under equal representation per region, could easily outvote and frustrate representatives of Alberta's interests in a Senate in which Alberta's representation would at best amount to 10% of the seats. The minister said:

Today (that imbalance) is not important because the (appointed) Senate is not very influential. But the day they are elected, they want to be influential and then the under-representation of Alberta will be a problem. (Reformers) have to explain to Albertans why it would be good that eight per cent of Canadians (in the Atlantic provinces) would have 40 per cent of the seats.

• (1535)

I am sure members can see the flaw in that line of reasoning. One would wonder how this can happen after all the discussions on this subject. The minister's statement completely confuses representation by province with representation by population. We are not trying to get equality of representation by population in the Senate. We want that in this House. We are trying to get equality of representation by areas of province in the upper house and that has been the whole intent.

I should say that Albertans are also insulted by the insinuation that they have not thought this thing through or that they do not understand their own interests. Albertans do not share the intergovernmental affairs minister's negative opinion of Atlantic Canadian

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regional interest. Albertans do not see Atlantic Canada as forever dependent on or beholden to the federal government.

Albertans see in Atlantic Canada a region that suffers regional alienation from Ottawa and central Canada as much or more than western Canada. Albertans see for example the interests of Newfoundland and Nova Scotia in the development and expansion of the east coast oil and gas industry. Albertans see in that not an opponent but a potential ally of the western provinces in protecting and advancing provincial control of natural resources. Albertans will take their chances in favour of stronger, not weaker, regional representation for Atlantic Canada in a reformed Senate.

In proceeding with the election of two standby senators Albertans are also rejecting the argument that step by step election of senators is inadvisable and that democratization of the Senate should be deferred until there is general support for electing all senators.

Albertans believe that a start, a first step however small down the road to a democratic Senate is better than no start at all. Every journey, as the proverb says, begins with a single step and the election of one senator, then two senators, then three will hopefully end in the election of all senators.

This of course is what happened in the United States where at one time senators were appointed by the state legislatures. Then the state of Oregon began to elect senators directly in 1907. For a short time the U.S. Senate contained a mixture of democratically elected senators and the others. The American public soon showed a distinct preference for directly electing their senators rather than having them appointed. In 1913 the U.S. Constitution was amended to provide for a fully democratically elected Senate.

This is why I wrote to each of the provincial premiers in February of this year outlining the Senate vacancies that will occur in their respective provinces in the near future. I urged each province to put in place its own senatorial selection act. If the federal government continues to drag its feet on democratization of the Senate as it drags its feet on every other proposed reform of federal institutions, then the provinces should take the initiative.

In proceeding with an Alberta Senate election this fall, Alberta is also dismissing as lamentable, even laughable, the Prime Minister's lame argument that the election of senators accountable to the people will prevent any further reforms to the Senate, in particular the achievement of equality.

The Senate has been inhabited exclusively for the past 131 years by appointed senators who have resisted every major proposal for reform. We can hardly do any worse. They have resisted proposals for greater effectiveness, greater accountability and greater equality. We can hardly have a more reform resistant Senate than the appointed one, particularly when that is combined with a Prime

Minister who, while professing a commitment to Senate reform, invariably finds excuses for not proceeding.

Election is not wise because it will prevent equality says the Prime Minister. Equality will be difficult because Ontario and Quebec will never agree says the Prime Minister. Effectiveness is not attainable because accountability and equality are unattainable. Round and round we go. The time is not right for Senate reform, or the proposals are not right, or the provincial climate is not right, or the federal climate is not right, or the moon is not in the right phase. Excuses, excuses, excuses.

In the opinion of the official opposition, the time for such lame excuses is over. It is time for leadership and action.

● (1540)

I want to end this presentation of the case for Senate reform with a challenge to this Parliament and to the federal government.

First, to the current senators whom I will divide into the two categories of distinguished senators and the others. To the others, and you know who you are, your colleagues know who you are, and if we have anything to do with it the media and public will know who you are. To those senators who discredit the Senate by patronage connections or by unethical behaviour or by abysmal attendance records, or by sloth or by greed, or by the abuse of travel and expense accounts, by the blatant misuse of positions for purely partisan work, by the failure to be accountable to anyone, by the failure to represent regional aspirations and concerns, to those senators we have only one request. Resign. Resign before the Senate is entirely discredited and you are kicked out lock, stock and barrel by the abolitionists.

In one of the public meetings we had years ago discussing the Senate amendment, I think it was in the Peace River country of B.C. or Alberta, when we got to this point of reforming the Senate, someone raised the question of what should be done with the senators who would be left behind. Given the standing rules of the House I cannot repeat in this Chamber and in the presence of civil company some of the suggestions that were made. All I can say is that the most charitable one was the one which suggested that those senators be granted immunity from future prosecution if they went quietly. That was the tamest of those suggestions.

I have a particular word for the senior Tory senator from Alberta whose reputation as he knows and as other people know was tarnished from the very outset when he took by appointment from the hand of Brian Mulroney the Senate seat which the people of Alberta had given by democratic election to the Reformer Stan Waters.

In late February when Senator Ghitter was convinced that Alberta would not proceed with a senatorial election, he offered to resign his seat to make way for an elected senator if the Prime

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Minister would so appoint. Now that Alberta is proceeding with a senate election, we challenge this senator to act on his offer without conditions. Resign and run in the Alberta election, if the Tories will have you, and join with Albertans in challenging the Prime Minister to appoint the winner of that election.

To the distinguished senators, and I acknowledge your existence and your contributions as distinct from the others, I offer a different challenge. Identify yourselves, clearly identify yourselves to members of this House, but more important to the media and the public as champions of reforming the Senate from within. Do not just talk about the need for Senate reform in generalities. Do something. Sponsor a debate in the Senate, a real no holds barred debate on genuine Senate reform.

Answer the suspicions and charges of an impatient public concerning fraudulent beginnings, compromised principles, patronage, excessive partisanship, excessive costs, unaccountability, inequality, ineffectiveness in the Senate as it is. Answer these charges and suspicions not with denials which no one will believe, or protestations of innocence, but by distancing yourselves publicly from those who discredit the Senate and by declaring in concrete terms your commitments to Senate reform.

Discipline those among you whose activities discredit the entire Senate institution and whose abuse of public position and public trust may well bring the Senate walls crashing down upon all your heads.

Sponsor your own Senate reform bill so that we in this House and the public at large can see where you stand in relation to the demands for equality, for accountability, for effectiveness and other reforms necessary to make the Senate a 21st century institution.

The Senate is often described as a Chamber of sober second thought. A lot of jokes have been made about that phrase. It brings to mind that New Testament parable about pouring new wine into old bottles, a parable on institutional reform which is as applicable to political institutions as it is to religious institutions.

The political vineyard in Canada is producing some new wine, demands for more accountability, effectiveness and respect for equality in all our federal institutions. This is strong stuff which should not be rejected or discarded simply because of its novelty or its harsh taste but which needs to be gathered and stored in proper institutions to mellow and be available for present and future use.

As is always the case in the contest between old wine and new wine, there will be those who will argue that the old wine is better and that the old wine bottle is to be preferred to the new. As is often the case, it is the best representatives of the old vintage, not the

worst, who constitute the greatest obstacle to the production, storage and use of a new wine.

• (1545)

In every instance where there is a contest between the proponents of institutions as they are and institutions as they should be, between the defenders of the status quo and the advocates of reform, the greatest obstacle to change is never found in the protests of the worst representatives of the status quo. Rather it is the indifference or the objections of the best and most distinguished representatives of the old order that is the greatest obstacle to change and reform.

The public expects it and is unimpressed when the worst political appointees in the Senate object to our efforts to abolish patronage appointments, when senators surrounded by clouds of unethical or even illegal conduct protest our demands for accountability, or when senators who regard the Senate as an extension of their party object to our insistence that it be made an effective chamber of regional representation. The public expects such senators to be against real Senate reform and their opposition to Senate reform cuts no ice.

When the best and most distinguished senators appear indifferent to these features of the status quo or worse yet defend the status quo and join in the protest against reform, that is an obstacle which truly does delay and prevent genuine reform and makes things worse rather than better. I therefore challenge the best and the most distinguished members of the current Senate to declare themselves in deeds and not just in words clearly and strongly in favour of reform of the Senate. If and when that is done they will find themselves with allies in this House, in particular among the official opposition.

Now I have a challenge to the federal government, to the intergovernmental affairs minister and all other ministers and members with an interest in national unity. Start to see and support Senate reform for what it is, not some eccentric side issue but a means of addressing regional aspirations and concerns through a national institution; concerns and aspirations which if not recognized, if not represented, if not accommodated in concrete ways, have as much potential for destabilizing the unity of this federation in the future as any of the current discontents in Quebec.

We have no great demands of the Prime Minister. No great reforms are to be expected from a Prime Minister whose credo is that the status quo is good enough.

With respect to Senate reform, all we ask is assent to one tiny step: agree to appoint the next senator elected in Alberta to the first Senate vacancy for that province. Even Brian Mulroney ultimately bowed to the will of the public and appointed Stan Waters; surely this Prime Minister can do no less.

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Finally, I have a challenge to the members of the House. I would like to ask for a ringing endorsement of genuine Senate reform from the 36th Parliament but I realize that day will not come until there are at least 150 members elected in this House with a commitment to that objective.

All I am asking the House for today is a token, a token step toward Senate reform but one that would be appreciated by the people of Nunavut and encouraging to Senate reformers everywhere. I ask members of the House to support a simple amendment to the Nunavut bill before us which will be moved by one of my colleagues at report stage. It is an amendment to the effect that prior to appointment of any senator for Nunavut the people of Nunavut should be asked by plebiscite: In your opinion, should Nunavut's first senator be selected by the Prime Minister or through election by the people of Nunavut?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, as the second opposition party, the Bloc Québécois will not have as much time as the leader of the opposition, who, according to my calculations, spoke for over two hours.

I draw the attention of the leader of the opposition to the fact that, during these two hours, he did not, to my knowledge, pronounce the word "Inuit" once. I find it absolutely deplorable that in such an important debate, which concerns one of Canada's great peoples, the Inuit, the leader of the opposition would launch an all-out attack against the Senate, while barely talking about the Inuit people during a two-hour speech.

• (1550)

Over the last few weeks, the Reform Party has been showing that it should not be the official opposition for aboriginal issues. It should be the Bloc Québécois.

I can provide examples. Before the Easter break, the Reform Party launched a major attack on the Stoney community. The issue was the death of a woman and her child, but instead of addressing it, the Reform Party discussed only the economic aspect. The Chief of the Assembly of First Nations strongly condemned this attitude, saying that it was not right. And what is the Reform Party now doing? It will probably decide to sue the Chief of First Nations.

In this context, I again say that the Bloc Québécois welcomes Canada's aboriginal people, including the Inuit and the Metis, and tells them that, if they have specific claims, they should take them to the Bloc Québécois and the other parties, rather than to the official opposition.

The leader of the official opposition has just clearly demonstrated that he has no interest in aboriginal issues, except to play petty politics and to seize the opportunity to present his case against the Senate, as he did today, or to discuss the economy of

aboriginal reserves, as he did in the past, rather than dealing with the fundamental aboriginal issue.

I had to make that point.

I will now deal with the bill before us. Effective April 1, 1999, the map of Canada is going to be substantially changed because a huge area will be created that will come under a legislative assembly, in which many Inuit will of necessity be involved in decision making. I say of necessity because, at this time, 80% of the residents of the area are Inuit, and 20% non-aboriginal.

This will therefore be reflected in the decision-making structures of this new territory and for once the Inuit will really find they have decision-making power on many issues that have always been very important to them.

This is the first time since Newfoundland's entry into Confederation in 1949—which I hardly need point out took two referendums—that we have seen the creation of a territory of such importance with such responsibilities as far as government autonomy is concerned.

Nunavut means something. I have already given an explanation of where all of the lands are situated. Every time I have the opportunity to speak, I like to point out where the new territory is located geographically.

This territory, which, under this bill, will be given the opportunity to come into existence on April 1, 1999 is an immense territory covering 1.9 million square kilometres. I have not done the calculations but, with a total of 17,000 Inuit living there, there are very few inhabitants per square kilometre. That vast expanse will now be under the jurisdiction of the Inuit.

As I said earlier, they make up 80% of the population. The other 20% will not be left out. They can, of course, run for office; it will be done through universal suffrage. I think however that 80% of the seats in the legislative assembly will, of necessity, be held by Inuit.

I have had several opportunities to visit Nunavut. We parliamentarians often tend to visit the capital of a territory or province, and this was so in my case. I have been to Iqaluit twice. The first time, in 1993, I had just been elected and the Prime Minister had decided that Parliament would start sitting only in February, so I took advantage of the opportunity to visit the Far North.

I take a special approach to visits. The first day I often just wander around the place and talk to people. I rarely identify myself. I do not tell them that I am an MP. This way, I get a better idea of what kind of life people lead there.

Life in the Far North is hard. It used to be even harder because most decisions affecting the people there were taken in Ottawa.

• (1555)

What we have before us today will change this situation to ensure that the power is devolved toward those who know what

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their specific needs are. Given the huge area involved, we can see that there are many needs. There are needs with respect to infrastructure, communications and education.

Let me remind members that, all too often, education programs designed here, in Ottawa, were implemented in the Northwest Territories, and the people had to comply with requirements in terms of education, health and economic development. All decisions used to be made in Ottawa. This will be a very significant change for these people.

In my travels, I was also struck by the hospitality of the Inuit. They are very open people who like to discuss. We have had a great deal of fun at the place where I lived, in bars and at the various decision making places in Iqaluit.

The Inuit are a people I greatly admire; they have been living on this land from time immemorial. Long before the arrival of Christopher Columbus, Jacques Cartier and other European discoverers, the Inuit had already settled here, with their own political and cultural systems and all the societal considerations associated with settling a territory.

I was shocked at the time by the price of food in this region, and I later made it one of my favourite themes. It seemed to me that food prices were disproportionate. I will quote some statistics later on, in this regard. But the most alarming thing, in my opinion, is the fact that between 50% and 80% of the population is unemployed. I was amazed to see that food was twice as expensive in Iqaluit as it was in the greater Montreal area for instance.

So, these people are in very extremely difficult circumstances. The fact that they will now be able to take control of their destiny and look after themselves pleases me tremendously. I think this was a fundamental need of theirs.

There is much discussion at present. There are plans to establish a legislative assembly before the new territory is officially created on April 1, 1999. I remind members once again of the specific character of Nunavut. This can be seen by the fact that they have even considered eventually having half the seats in the legislative assembly occupied by women. The respect owed to mothers and to women in general is a serious matter for aboriginal nations. The Inuit and native peoples are often much more advanced than we are when it comes to the status of women.

The very fact that they are considering a parliament or legislative assembly with 50% of the seats held by women is very interesting. I think it would be worthwhile to look closely at how people arrived at the idea of having this percentage of women in the legislative assembly.

The capital of Nunavut is Iqaluit. The committee to prepare the way for the legislative assembly, which I will get to later, did one

important thing and that was to recommend that the government hold a referendum to decide where Nunavut's capital would be, and Iqaluit was the choice.

Another thing about Iqaluit, and I make a point of drawing this to members' attention, is that 10% of its inhabitants are French speaking. Naturally, Inuktitut is the official language of Nunavut, and there are people there who speak English, so there is still a fairly high rate of assimilation.

Without wishing to give advice to the future assembly, but as a Bloc Quebecois representative and French speaking parliamentarian, I would greatly appreciate any efforts that could be made to preserve the French language, because it is, after all, one of Canada's two official languages. Obviously, Inuktitut will probably be the language used in the legislative assembly.

• (1600)

I take this opportunity, with many of Nunavut's inhabitants listening today, to point out that, if they could make an effort to preserve the rights of the 10% of the population that is French-speaking, it would be a very worthwhile gesture.

Nunavut occupies one-fifth of Canada's surface and is composed of three regions: Qikiqtaaluk, Kivallik and Kitikmeot. These three regions contain 28 communities of Inuit operating, as you know, on an essentially municipal basis. These communities are run by mayors, while aboriginal reserves are under the authority of chiefs. Aboriginal reserves have a specific way of appointing the chief and band council. In Inuit communities, the municipal structure is often in place and people elect mayors rather than chiefs of communities.

So, the Nunavut government will allow Inuit people to have the place that should have been theirs since the very beginning. It also reflects the wish of Inuit people regarding self-government. These people have negotiated for close to 25 years to arrive at this result.

The Bloc Quebecois strongly supports the bill. There are a few minor things which we may try to change but, overall, this legislation allows the Inuit people to take their destiny into their own hands. Therefore, we can only agree with it.

Earlier, I mentioned that 50% to 80% of the people are unemployed. Since the legislative assembly will hire a number of public servants, it will help economic development. We should probably warn them not to create a bureaucracy that is too burdensome. Still, if Canada can provide funds for training, it will be a very good thing to create 600 or 700 jobs for people whose first responsibility will be as public servants for the legislative assembly. An effort will have to be made to ensure that this training can allow these people to hold important positions in the public service of that government.

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Another interesting point is that, like in aboriginal reserves, 60% of the population is under 25 years of age. Therefore, it will be important to give them the tools needed to build a solid foundation for their legislative assembly, so that they can adequately control all the programs and address an issue that is extremely important to them and to Indian reserves: their young people.

The birth rate of aboriginal and Inuit people is twice that of the Canadian population as a whole. This will eventually create a problem that has to be looked at now. In fact, this problem is already surfacing in the reserves and villages. There are major demographic pressures, given how young the population is. This issue will have to be looked at very carefully. The legislative assembly will probably be well informed of these statistics, and I am sure that it will take the necessary steps to control the situation properly.

What we have before us is the most important land claims and self-government settlement there has ever been in Canada. I have been here since 1993, and we will remember the many self-government and land claim agreements there have been in the Yukon, the Sahtu, the Mackenzie Valley, and elsewhere. But there has never been such a large amount of land involved. That is very obvious, as we are talking about 28 communities over a territory of 1.9 million square kilometres.

There is a communication problem. We will see that the philosophy the Inuit will adopt concerning their legislative assembly will be aimed at decentralization as much as possible. In the past, all decisions came from Ottawa. Now, they must not all come from Iqaluit, and people will have to look at the possibility of having certain powers passed down to the communities, precisely in order to lessen the isolation of such a vast territory.

• (1605)

I referred earlier to the geography of Nunavut. It is one of the four great regions, principally Inuit, which will be the second to gain recognition. Inuvialuit has already been recognized in the part that is completely in the west of Canada. This one will be located right in the middle, and will encompass a large part, one-fifth in fact, of continental Canada. The other part, Nunavik, occupies the entire northern part of Quebec.

I would just like remind the House that the Government of Quebec is also opening up and intensifying negotiations concerning Nunavik and the Inuit who live there. I think, in fact I am convinced, that this will be the third region to be recognized, in terms of self-government land claims in Quebec, since the last region that involves the Inuit is in Labrador. Negotiations there are dragging out. They are making little progress, while things with

Nunavut are reaching a conclusion. The western side, Inuvialuit, is already done. Soon, I hope, the same will be the case for Nunavik in northern Quebec, and the last one will probably be the people of Labrador.

Nunavut is located in the middle and the east of the Northwest Territories. The bill before us will divide up the Northwest Territories. The lines are already pretty well drawn. There will be one legislative assembly, the one already in place in Yellowknife, NWT, and then another for the other part, the old eastern part of the Northwest Territories, with Iqaluit as its capital, as I have said.

This is a territory with many water courses, running to the Arctic Ocean and to Baffin Bay on the east. Furthermore, Baffin Bay separates Nunavut from Greenland, which does not, by the way, mean that, because the respective territories are separated, there is no contact. I must point out that, for years now, the Inuit have had a circumpolar conference. It is supranational. Naturally, Inuit from throughout Canada speak to each other, but they are also going to speak with Inuit from Greenland or Russia. This is a very important body for them, an international body that allows them to put forward common claims.

Obviously, the isolated and polar nature of this territory is already a particular feature that must be taken into account. I think that there are dealings with other countries that it is important to monitor and I think that the circumpolar conference is ideally suited to this task.

There is possibly a dispute with Quebec that I must mention. I have just drawn a broad outline of Nunavut's geography, which, as I have said, is very far-flung. The Belcher Islands, however, which lie beyond this general outline, were also included in Nunavut. These islands lie a few kilometres off Quebec's shores.

I know that there is a dispute with Quebec. I do not think that the purpose of the bill before us is to resolve that dispute. It seemed to me important to state Quebec's position and to tell members that Quebec is claiming these islands, because they are much closer to Quebec's territory than to the territory of Nunavut.

Basically, the territory of Nunavut was marked off, and then, much later, two islands were dragged in. I have trouble seeing the logic behind this land claim. Quebec has most definitely not thrown in the towel on these islands and there will certainly be other discussions.

With the probable exception of the Belcher Islands, which may well, I agree, be inhabited by Inuit, but Inuit much closer to Quebec than to Nunavut, the territory of Nunavut—with the exception of the Belcher Islands—normally corresponds very closely to the traditional lands of the Inuit living in Canada's north and to the lands inhabited by their ancestors from time immemorial.

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• (1610)

I will now summarize the legislation. The bill seeks to ensure a smooth transition and a delegation of the powers that were all concentrated in Yellowknife, in the Northwest Territories. These powers will now be decentralized and decisions will be made in the Nunavut.

The bill amends the Act to establish a territory to be known as Nunavut and to provide for its government, whose short title is the Nunavut Act. The act already exists. It was passed on June 10, 1993, by the political parties present in Parliament at the time.

The 1993 act also ratified an agreement. Before a bill is introduced, it is often preceded by agreements in principle and various processes that eventually lead to a final agreement requiring that a bill be passed, as is now the case. The same was done with the Nunavut Act. The bill before us today goes a little further, since it calls for constitutional amendments, among others.

At the time, the Nunavut Act provided land titles over a territory covering 350,000 square kilometres, and mining rights over 35,257 square kilometres. This is important, since we often have debates here on mining rights. Until now, it was Canada that developed, mined and benefited from mining or oil rights, with very little going to aboriginal people.

The 1993 Nunavut Act gave Inuit people an opportunity to achieve self-financing, and we should support this idea. We absolutely must break the financial and political dependency of aboriginals and Inuit on Ottawa. The 1993 Nunavut Act was right on target.

It also provided for hunting and fishing rights in that territory. Whenever I have the opportunity to make a speech on Indian affairs or on Inuit people, I stress that these things are extremely important. Hunting and fishing are often the foundations of their economy, whether it is caribou, seal or whale.

The hon. member for Nunavut invited us the other day to a day of festivities with dances and traditional food. I always enjoy traditional Inuit food. Whether it is frozen caribou, seal or Arctic char, they are all delicious foods.

So, hunting and fishing are very fundamental activities in Nunavut. When 50% to 80% of the population is without a job, these foods become subsistence, practically. Earlier, I also explained that prices in stores in the north are often twice what they are in the south. Therefore, these people have to hunt and fish to compensate, and I think that the right to hunt and to fish is the very foundation of Inuit family subsistence.

The act provided for a share of the oil, gas and mining royalties on crown lands, as well as the right of first refusal with regard to sports and commercial development of renewable resources in

Nunavut. For game and fish, the 1993 act gave these people the final say. It is a kind of veto on everything that occurs in the territory, and its purpose is to ensure the subsistence of Inuit families.

It also established the legal and political framework for the establishment of the new territory. Furthermore, it provided for the creation of the famous Nunavut commission I mentioned earlier, whose mandate was to advise the governments of Canada and the Northwest Territories, as well as Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., the three parties concerned in the establishment of Nunavut.

We saw the establishment of Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., which was the agency responsible for managing the whole financial issue, to ensure a harmonious transition toward the establishment of the new territory and its legislative assembly, on April 1, 1999.

What did the commission do? It examined several political and administrative issues. In particular, it looked at the transfer of services from the Government of the Northwest Territories to the new Government of Nunavut. At present, Nunavut is administered by Yellowknife, by the Northwest Territories.

• (1615)

Before the legislative assembly of the new territory is convened, it should be determined which jurisdictional aspects will be devolved to the new territory and a time frame should be set. They have looked into this.

I referred earlier to the funding and development of training programs so that Nunavut can have its own public service. Inuit affairs were normally dealt with by Indian and Northern Affairs officials in Ottawa. Now, from the moment they have their own legislature, Inuit people will need to have an efficient public administration.

One way to promote the economic development of the region is to have decently paid public service employees. I mentioned earlier that 600 to 700 jobs would be created. Funds must be set aside now to train these people to ensure that they can start performing their duties as soon as the new government takes office.

Naturally, the commission is also responsible for organizing the election of the first government and identifying the infrastructure needs, which are enormous because of how isolated most of these regions are.

A referendum was actually held to select the capital of Nunavut. Three municipalities were in the running: Iqaluit, Rankin Inlet and Cambridge Bay. In the end, Iqaluit won out and it will be the capital and seat of the next legislative assembly.

The commission also recommended appointing an interim commissioner to Nunavut, a position held by our former colleague, the hon. member for Nunavut's predecessor, Jack Anawak.

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Most of the recommendations are reflected in the bill before us today. Several amendments will be made to the Nunavut Act, including those I just mentioned. This bill makes a number of changes to the act.

In 1993, the act provided that elections would be held after the territory was established. This makes little sense for, if the territory is officially recognized on April 1, 1999, a legislative assembly should be in place and ready to take immediate action.

We are developing not only the public service, but also the new philosophy. We want to be ready, come April 1, 1999, to put the legislative assembly into action. A number of people are now saying that it will be hard to do all this by the April 1, 1999 deadline, but the information I have for now is that everything possible is being done to ensure that the whole thing is up and running on time.

The elections are apparently going to be held before April 1, 1999, precisely so that the legislative assembly will be ready on the date I mentioned. The legislative assembly will have 19 members. There will therefore be 19 electoral ridings in Nunavut. I think I am very lucky to represent the riding of Saint-Jean. It takes me perhaps 30 minutes to travel from one end of my riding to the other, or an hour to cover the whole area.

Nunavut is so vast that it would take more than one hour by plane to make the same journey. I was saying earlier that the territory will cover an area of 1.9 million square kilometres and have 19 ridings. This means that each riding will cover 100,000 square kilometres.

This is huge as ridings go. In fact, this is why there are many discussions about decentralization taking place in preparation for the next legislative session. The idea is to give each of the 28 communities a little more power so that it is not necessary to ask for Iqaluit's permission every time urgent action is required, since people live in isolated communities.

The Inuit themselves admit this. They say that their government will be extremely decentralized, but that it will be necessary to wait for the commission to wrap up its work and the new assembly to take up its role before deciding on the extent of this decentralization.

Many government departments and agencies will be created in the territory's various communities. Approximately 20 are being considered. There will therefore be 28 communities. Departments and agencies could be decentralized in various municipalities in the interests of maximum decentralization of power.

• (1620)

One last detail on the Nunavut Act, which is that the elections will be based on the current NWT election legislation. The Northwest Territories Elections Act will therefore be the model for the coming elections for the Nunavut Legislative Assembly.

Another amendment to the Northwest Territories Act will be to adjust the number of seats required in the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories, because after April 1, 1999 they will have lost part of their territory. The east will come under the new legislative assembly. The Northwest Territories will go from 15 seats to 14.

The purpose of the bill is to amend the 1867 Constitution Act in order to ensure that Nunavut is represented in the House of Commons as well as in the Senate. There are certain problems. Unlike the leader of the official opposition, I will not spend 35 minutes talking to you about the Senate, and then only 5 on the Inuit, but will try to do the opposite.

I must admit, however, that I have certain reservations about the Senate. Of course, in the present system certain senators represent certain regions, and we in the Bloc Québécois MPs would be ill advised to tell the Nunavut not to elect senators because of our position on the Senate.

I must admit that there some thinking is still needed on this. I believe everyone is aware of the Bloc Québécois position on the Senate. We simply want it abolished. When adding a senator is suggested to us, therefore, we are not all that receptive, but we do not want to take it out on Nunavut by saying it is the only region not entitled to have senators.

I would however like to make a point here. As I have said, we want to clarify our position a bit perhaps. At present, this is an irritant to us. The entire Senate, in fact, is an irritant. We spent an official opposition day demonstrating the inefficiency of the Senate, its costs in particular. For us, the true power must lie with the elected representatives, not with appointed senators.

There may be other ways to view the Senate, as the Reform Party leader demonstrated earlier. But if the Senate were elected, it could create other problems in our opinion. Who, in a given territory, would decide: the senator or the member of Parliament?

There are many problems. Consequently, the Bloc Québécois is not beating around the bush. It proposes the outright abolition of the Senate.

There are other minor changes. The day that Nunavut is established, the laws and ordinances of the legislative assembly of the Northwest Territories will become the laws of Nunavut. We do not want a legislative and political void. When Nunavut is established, people will simply apply the laws that applied previously in the Northwest Territories, in Yellowknife.

This will prevent total chaos on April 2, 1999, by making sure people will not find themselves without laws. So, to avoid legislative void, the Northwest Territories Act will apply to the Nunavut territory. Therefore, the laws and ordinances of the Northwest Territories will form Nunavut's legislative basis.

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The new government will have powers equivalent to those of existing territorial governments. It is anticipated that the whole transfer could be completed around the year 2009. There are many things to transfer in the areas of culture, public housing, health, education, and so on. So, there is a lot of work ahead. People will be able to start operating on April 1, 1999, but it must be realized that it will take some time before the delegation is fully completed.

There is also the issue of leases signed with the federal government regarding Nunavut's administration. These leases will of course be transferred to the Nunavut territory.

As for sharing the assets and liabilities of the Northwest Territories with Nunavut, there is no agreement between the two territories. The governor in council has the power to transfer the property of certain assets to Nunavut and to terminate certain federal contracts.

• (1625)

This means that in the meantime cabinet will be able to make a number of transfers while hoping that everything will be done by April 1, 1999 but knowing full well that everything cannot be done by then. The laws currently applying to the Northwest Territories will remain in force until such time as the people become completely autonomous as far as the Nunavut legislature is concerned.

The authorities and powers of the interim commissioner will also be clarified. At present, he is recruiting many people for the future public service of Nunavut. The interim commissioner, who is our former colleague, Mr. Anawak, is currently busy looking for qualified people to hold important positions in the future public service.

His mandate will end the day the first official commissioner of Nunavut is formally appointed. The new territory of Nunavut will then appoint a commissioner who will be directly assigned to Nunavut on a permanent basis. Mr. Anawak must be listening in. I want to salute this man who, for nine years in this House, represented the riding of Nunatsiak, which is now represented by my hon. colleague opposite.

With respect to the public service of Nunavut and its establishment, some \$39 million has been invested in employee training since April 1996. The process is already under way to recruit the 600 to 700 public service employees who will be responsible for carrying out the administrative and executive functions of the new government.

The establishment and division of the Northwest Territories into separate territories is nothing new. Originally, the Territories covered a much larger area known as Rupert's Land. I think these names can still be found in geography books.

Talk of splitting the territory into an eastern and a western portion is therefore nothing new. Members know that the present boundaries of the Northwest Territories were set in 1912, at the same time as those for Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec. Furthermore, it was at this time that we were given the northern tip of Quebec, that will eventually also be called Nunavik, and that will also probably be part of the drive for self-government that is part of the far north Inuit land claims.

Until 1950, the federal government administered the Northwest Territories. There was a territorial council whose members were appointed and this council was chaired by a commissioner appointed and serving in Ottawa. Ottawa decided who was the public servant and who was the commissioner. He was based in Ottawa and from here made decisions affecting territories thousands of kilometres away.

Things have changed significantly. This, of course, was the forerunner of the legislative assembly of the Northwest Territories.

In conclusion, I would like to read, as I always do, a short passage in Inuktitut, and perhaps my colleague will tell me if I pronounced it properly.

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

[Translation]

As I was saying in Inuktitut, I hope that the return of this bill to the legislative agenda will encourage the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and the government to take action to compensate for their mistreatment of the Nunavut Inuit. I hope that the creation of Nunavut will bring harmony and prosperity to your communities. Long live Nunavut.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault): It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 38, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Halifax West, Human rights; the hon. member for Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre, Multilateral Agreement on Investment; the hon. member for Sault Ste. Marie, Young Offenders Act; the hon. member for Trois-Rivières, Dredging of St. Lawrence; the hon. member for Durham, Canada Pension Plan Investment Board.

• (1630)

[English]

Mr. Gordon Earle (Halifax West, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am very pleased and honoured to have the opportunity to speak to this historic piece of legislation, an act to amend the Nunavut Act and the Constitution Act, 1867.

I noticed earlier the hon. Leader of the Opposition in his remarks commented that the NDP had a certain position with respect to

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Senate reform and that we should take note, particularly members from the Atlantic area, of his words of wisdom. The NDP has clearly stated its position with respect to the Senate. It is unequivocal. It is on record.

I was quite disappointed to hear the hon. Leader of the Opposition, as was mentioned by my colleague from the Bloc, spend two hours commenting on Senate reform when this very important piece of legislation is before the House.

There is quite a bit of excitement surrounding the legislation. This is a very exciting time particularly for the people of Nunavut, for the Inuit.

A few weeks back I had the honour, along with some of my other colleagues, of attending a celebration of the coming into being of Nunavut. It was quite evident when we saw the rich cultural heritage that was being displayed and we sampled the cultural foods and so forth that there was a lot of excitement and a lot of hope surrounding the legislation. That is where we should be putting our focus today in terms of the hopes and aspirations of the people in the north with respect to the legislation rather than using it as a platform for a particular political agenda around Senate reform.

The legislation would pave the way for Nunavut's first general election. Timely passage of the bill would allow for a territorial election to actually precede the formal creation of Nunavut.

I am aware that the provisions contained in Bill C-39 are the result of long negotiations and discussions between the federal government, the Government of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated.

The creation of Nunavut and the unfolding of aboriginal self-government through public government in this new territory will be watched closely throughout the world. I must confess that I am not as fluent in Inuktitut as the previous speaker. From Qurluqtuuq or Copper Mine to Qikiqtarjuaq the early years of the territory of Nunavut will be monitored by many throughout the globe.

Before we send the bill to committee I want to congratulate all Inuit who have worked on and participated in this effort over the last 22 years and before.

Central to the success thus far in the historic effort that is the creation of Nunavut has been the careful negotiations between Inuit negotiators and those aboriginal groups on the borders of the land that is to become Nunavut. The success in the negotiations with first nations people living in northern Saskatchewan and Manitoba, the Denesuline, is a credit to all involved. Although the 60th parallel exists in our textbooks and laws it is irrelevant to the Dene who inhabit this region. The 60th parallel is also irrelevant to the caribou, fish and other wildlife that share the region.

The painstaking work of Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, which is formerly the Tunngavik Federation of Nunavut, is a testament to the bright possibilities that mark the birth of this new territory.

In less than one year Canada's third territory will come into being thanks to passage of the Nunavut Act on June 10, 1993. On behalf of the leader of my party and my caucus colleagues I wish to indicate support of the bill at this stage as our party supported the Nunavut Act in 1993.

The amendments in the bill would allow for an election prior to the April 1, 1999 coming into being of Nunavut. With passage of the bill an elected assembly from the moment it comes into existence will govern Nunavut. It is very important that the assembly be in place at the time Nunavut is officially created.

• (1635)

The other amendments in the bill are the result of prolonged negotiations and would help to ensure the transition to Nunavut is a smooth one. The proposed interim commissioner would have responsibility for working on the division of assets and liabilities between the governments of Nunavut and of the Northwest Territories. The commissioner would also work to clarify how Northwest Territories laws would apply in Nunavut. Clearly these issues must be closely explored in committee.

The bill would also clarify liability for leases relating to staff housing and office facilities. The legislation also reassigns one of the two Northwest Territories seats to Nunavut and creates a seat in the Senate.

Support for the bill will be an important part of the effort to move ahead aboriginal self-government in this region. This will allow for province-type powers essential to the development of the social, cultural, economic and political well-being of Inuit.

Nunavut comprises, as we have heard, 1.9 million square kilometres, roughly one-fifth of the entire Canadian land mass. It is almost the size of Greenland. This clearly represents a tremendous opportunity for Inuit to manage wildlife and resources in a formal fashion in government, having managed them for so many thousands of years before Canada came into being. This will seek to formalize inherent Inuit rights to fish, wildlife and land that have been their rights since time immemorial.

With a population of roughly 24,600, Inuit comprise over four out of every five people in the territory to be. The representatives elected to bring this new territory into being would be accountable to a largely aboriginal electorate. The land claims agreement already passed recognizes Inuit title to 350,000 square kilometres of land and includes provisions for joint management and resource revenue sharing.

It is difficult for many southern Canadians to understand the social and economic nature of the region to become Nunavut. With a litre of milk costing roughly \$7 and a loaf of bread \$3 and with about 20 kilometres of paved road in almost 2 million square kilometres of land, the challenges and the opportunities facing the voters of Nunavut and their families are unique and most certainly require their own territorial government.

Nunavut means “our land”. The bill would facilitate giving meaning in history to that title. This new territory will be able to work in concert with native development corporations such as Nusai and Qikiqtaaluk Corporation representing concerns such as shrimp fishing, trucking and the hotel industry.

The Nunavut government will be elected by all voting residents of Nunavut, Inuit and non-Inuit. The government elected will be responsible to all citizens of the territory. Increasingly, beginning after the first election and the formal birth of the territory in April of next year, the government of Nunavut will assume responsibilities currently exercised by the Government of the Northwest Territories with the transfer of programs such as culture, public housing and health care to be completed by the year 2009.

While the federal government’s co-operation with the Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated and the Government of the Northwest Territories is to be commended, it also serves to further underscore the dismal failure of the government in so many areas concerning self-government for aboriginal peoples.

The Liberal government should take the efforts and relative success in the developing creation of Nunavut and learn from it in its relations with aboriginal peoples throughout the land. The government should be taking the lead instead of waiting for costly and confrontational court actions to determine the history of our relations with aboriginal peoples.

Delgamuukw is an excellent case in point. It is astonishing that on the one hand the government can proceed with positive steps in the creation of the territory of Nunavut but stumble and fall so terribly in its abject failure to respond coherently to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples.

• (1640)

As I mentioned earlier in these comments, the government did manage to engage in successful negotiations with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, the body that now affords representation and a negotiating structure for the Inuit of Nunavut. Why then has the government failed to carry this model forward and negotiate self-government?

The supreme court in the recent Delgamuukw decision encouraged the government not to continue to rely on the courts but to

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negotiate in the spirit of self-government recognized in the Constitution Act.

One of the issues that will need continued work in the future, which is not covered by the bill, is the area of the court system. There are no commitments in the legislation to move to develop community courts and to recognize the role of aboriginal justice. This glaring omission merits serious attention in the months to come. Although the bill would establish the supreme court of Nunavut and the court of appeal of Nunavut, it is silent on the issue of aboriginal justice and this silence condemns the Inuit to the existing judicial arrangements.

Furthermore, the issue of the status of Nunavut in the Canadian charter remains unsettled. Although the legislation would permit the new interim commissioner to enter into full employment contracts with future government of Nunavut employees and go beyond simple recruitment, much concentration is required on the whole issue of staff development and training. The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples stated:

An important goal is to ensure that the majority population of Inuit can staff their own governing institutions. The importance of training to self-determination cannot be overestimated.

Systems must be developed to ensure Inuit are trained and educated in such a way to ensure their full ongoing participation in all aspects of policy making, management and operation of the administrative, cultural, economic and other institutions developed. Given that many of the new jobs to be created will require some form of post-secondary education, according to the commission it is alarming that the government has not addressed the fact that less than one per cent of this population has a university degree.

The challenge at hand for all is to ensure that education is available particularly in areas of accounting, financial management, organizational development, planning and business development. Public education materials and programs must be developed in co-operation with the aboriginal population to ensure all understand and develop the dramatic changes in texture and responsibility of government in the land that will become the territory of Nunavut.

While the minority population of Nunavut currently pervades the territorial administration, the challenge in part will be to see how the majority culture of Nunavut can be “knit together with the culture of the minority population”, as the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples suggested.

Once again I commend the Inuit involved in all aspects of the negotiations which led to the bill and to the development of Nunavut as a whole. As I said at the outset, there is a lot of excitement surrounding the legislation. Even as I am speaking now

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I understand there is a web page on the Internet sponsored by a school in Nunavut. They are having a second by second countdown to the day that Nunavut will come into existence. It is not a day by day countdown but a second by second countdown. That shows how much excitement there is surrounding the whole concept.

This accommodation extends not only to the chief negotiators but to all those involved at every level, particularly families who so often had to endure long absences during the varied steps of the process.

Canadians owe a debt of gratitude to the Denesuline and to the Government of the Northwest Territories for the endless negotiation over the years to arrive at this point. The efforts of the minister and her staff in this instance, not to mention the many people in the federal government who have all brought goodwill and hard work to bear on the development of Nunavut, deserve to be commended.

I look forward to a very careful examination of the bill in detail over the days and weeks to come.

Mr. Norman Doyle (St. John's East, PC): Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to say a few words on Bill C-39, an act to amend the Nunavut Act and the Constitution Act, 1867. My colleague, the member for South Shore, is the critic for aboriginal affairs and northern development but he could not be present today. He is a little late in getting here so he asked me to make some remarks on his behalf.

• (1645)

The creation of the new territory in the northeastern and central region of Canada on April 1, 1999 is a very historic occasion. This will create Nunavut as a separate territory from what is currently the Northwest Territories. This will happen about 50 years from the date of another milestone in Canadian history, the day Newfoundland entered Confederation.

I want to begin with a brief history of the events leading to this momentous occasion, the creation of a new territory in the north to be called Nunavut. It has been a long time in coming to fruition and the journey has not been without a lot of hurdles.

The first attempt to divide the Northwest Territories into two regions was made back in 1965 and was initiated by the western region of the Northwest Territories. The bill died on the order paper at that time. The next event of significance was the release of the Carrothers report in 1966 and its recommendation that a division of the Northwest Territories would not be beneficial at that time to the Inuit living primarily in the eastern region. Instead, the report made a number of recommendations, including the creation of electoral constituencies in the eastern and central Arctic, the appointment of a commissioner who resided in the Northwest Territories and the transfer of federal programs to the territorial government.

It should be noted that at that time the commissioner of the Northwest Territories was based out of Ottawa. His recommendations were to set the stage for division of the Northwest Territories at a later point in time when the regions would be in a better position to assume control of their administration and governance. These recommendations were acted on in the following years.

In 1976 another bid was made for division of the territory, this time by the ITC, an organization representing Inuit in Canada. A plebiscite on the issue of division followed in 1982 and it garnered a 56% rate of approval, particularly strong in the eastern Arctic.

That year also saw the formation of a constitutional alliance consisting of members of the legislative assembly in the Northwest Territories with representatives from aboriginal groups. Its objective was to develop an agreement on dividing the territory. Although an agreement was reached in 1987 it was not ratified by the Dene Nation and Metis Association, which had a land claims settlement in the western area and objected to the proposed boundary. Thus the agreement failed and the group dissolved.

In 1990 the Progressive Conservative government asked John Parker to determine the boundary between the two land claims settlement areas, the Denis-Metis nation in the western area and the Inuit in the eastern region. The proposed boundary was taken to a plebiscite in May of 1992 and received a 54% vote.

One important piece of information that I have not mentioned is that in 1990 it was agreed that a vote on the Inuit land claim agreement would take place. The Inuit ratified the agreement with a vote in November of 1992 that resulted in 85% of the people voting in favour of the settlement. So on May 25, 1993 former Prime Minister Brian Mulroney's government signed the land claims agreement into being.

• (1650)

The Nunavut land claims agreement will create the Nunavut territory on April 1, 1999. The agreement is the largest aboriginal land claims agreement in Canadian history.

Nunavut means our land in Inuktitut and it represents 2.242 million square kilometres, roughly one-fifth of Canada's land mass. The capital of the new region will be Iqaluit on Baffin Island.

The land claims agreement sets out the creation of the new Nunavut territory and gives Inuit title to 350,000 square kilometres of land. Along with the land agreement is a cash settlement for \$1.1 billion over 14 years. In return the Inuit agree to relinquish rights and aboriginal title to other lands within the proposed Nunavut.

There are a number of challenges that must be overcome before the creation of Nunavut in April 1999. This legislation, Bill C-39, addresses some of these concerns. It confers greater powers to the

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interim commissioner, Jack Anawak, to enable him to enter into leases on behalf of the new territory and ensures that employees hired for the new government are permanent rather than temporary positions.

Even more important, this amendment to the Nunavut Act provides for an election prior to the date the new territory comes into existence. This is of critical importance since it ensures a government will be in place to begin work immediately without having to go through the process of an election in what is obviously going to be a critical and a dynamic time for the new territory.

Another issue of concern to the western region was the number of elected representatives required for governing after the division occurs. The western region will be left with 14 members but the regulation requires 15 members to form a government. Amendment to this legislation will reduce the numbers needed to 14. This will ensure that the western region is also in the position to offer a continuation of services for their area.

Furthermore, this legislation amends the Constitution Act, 1867 to create another seat in the Senate to recognize the new territory. Currently there is only one seat for the Northwest Territories, but the senator representing the Northwest Territories resides in what will become Nunavut. This amendment eliminates any uncertainty along these lines.

One of the greatest concerns expressed by the Inuit and others affected by the change is the need for continuation of services. This legislation helps to ensure that this will occur. At the same time there are still concerns for those people living in the eastern and the central Arctic area. Is the infrastructure going to be in place? Will financial assistance be provided and will there be enough of it? Are there going to be enough people to fill the expected 600 new positions in Nunavut?

The new territory will consist of approximately 24,000 people, 85% or 18,000 of them Inuit. Inuktituk will be the working language and the hope is to have 85% of the staffing positions filled by Inuit in the long term and 45% in the short term.

The federal government has provided approximately \$40 million for training and education to prepare the people living in the eastern and central Arctic for positions in the new government. With the settlement of land claims in this area, however, a number of new positions are available for the Inuit and it may be difficult to find people for all these positions. With Nunavut's plan to have government offices spread out over 11 communities attracting workers to the outlying areas may also present a challenge.

The Nunavut implementation commission has reported that Nunavut will have to attain 50% of the people for these new positions from outside of their region.

• (1655)

At the same time a report by the government of the Northwest Territories suggests that only 10% to 15% of its staff will move to Nunavut. That means Nunavut will not have a large corporate knowledge base from which to build.

Furthermore it is questionable whether the infrastructure will be in place in time and Arctic conditions may also be a factor. Moreover, there is little or no private sector space available since everything is typically built on an as needed basis.

Although the entire infrastructure is not required immediately and it is my understanding that the timetable factors in a delay of two years for a summit, a continuation of services will not be possible without adequate infrastructure.

The division of the Northwest Territories creates some interesting and difficult questions for operations such as the Northwest Territories Power Corporation and workers compensation board. According to the divisional secretariat of the Northwest Territories, economies of scale will be a deciding factor in determining how essential services such as these are affected.

Both territories will likely share hospitals and correctional facilities until Nunavut has infrastructure in place for these facilities. That may create problems, however, since the Yellowknife correctional facility is not large enough to accommodate the needs of the entire region.

The western region of the current Northwest Territories has expressed concern over lack of recognition of the problems facing their areas as well. They also have to ensure that the continuation of services is provided during the division of territories. They are obviously in a better position to do so since the infrastructure exists and the legislative, judicial, financial and administrative systems are in place.

Nunavut will have a public government with Inuit and non-Inuit representation. Although Nunavut was created as part of the land claim agreement, the Inuit chose a public government format. The land claim agreement raises another interesting point about what constitutional rights Nunavut will have. Although one would presume its powers would be equivalent to those of the Yukon Territory and the western region, Nunavut will be created as part of a land claim settlement agreement under section 35 of the Constitution. This is another area that is not clarified for the new territory and may create uncertainty.

A Progressive Conservative government initiated the process when the Nunavut land claim agreement was signed in May of 1993 and will culminate in the creation of Nunavut on April 1, 1999. The creation of this territory is a positive move for the

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eastern region. The PC Party supports self-government for aboriginal peoples as a means of improving their economic development.

While I agree in principle with this legislation as it attempts to rectify some omissions in the Nunavut Act, there are still a number of challenges, as we are all very much aware, facing the new territory as it counts down to April 1, 1999.

Mrs. Nancy Karetak-Lindell (Nunavut, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very honoured today to speak to Bill C-39, which is the act to amend the Nunavut Act and the Constitution Act, 1867.

As we discussed a few moments ago, I will be speaking both in Inuktitut and English because of the importance of this bill to my riding.

As the House is very well aware, the map of Canada will change in less than a year from now. April 1, 1999 will mark an important day in the history of Canada. This is equally important to Nunavut residents and to people in the rest of Canada. The coming into place of the Nunavut Act amendments brings us one step closer to our dream. After years of decisions being made by outsiders, Nunavut residents will finally have a chance to control their own future. We should all be proud of that.

• (1700)

This is very significant for me. The people I represent will have the opportunity to make decisions and to control over their own lives. I think of the people who have gone through all the years of having decisions made by people in Ottawa or other parts of Canada who had no idea how those decisions impacted people.

I was quite disappointed earlier today. I thought today we would be talking about the Nunavut Act amendments. I really did not see that when the Leader of the Opposition spent two hours talking about something which I felt was very much a side issue. I felt very cheated of this day. I was told that April 20 would be the day we spoke about the Nunavut Act amendments and the opening of possibilities for the people of Nunavut.

This is a very important day for me. It brings us one step closer to seeing the creation of our government. I think of the people who had no control over their own lives. They see so much hope in the new Nunavut government.

I think of the parents whose children were taken away from them to go to school. They had no control over whether or not their children would go to school thousands of miles away. They did not see them for a year or two at a time. These people whose children are now grown and working still feel they will have an opportunity to make decisions that will help the Nunavut government be responsive to the people it represents.

I think of the people who were relocated from other parts of Canada and who moved to the Nunavut area. There are other people who lived in other parts of Nunavut who were relocated by the

government. They are waiting today for a chance to run their own government, to make decisions in government and to help their government make decisions that are responsive to the people.

I see the Nunavut Act amendments as taking them one step closer to that goal. It is an opportunity to right something that went wrong 50 years ago or however many years ago those decisions were made.

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

[*English*]

This bill also continues the good work set out by the original Nunavut Act as we argue that there are certain things coming out which were not foreseen. Now we have to finish up the Nunavut Act so that we can get a government in place by April 1, 1999. To make sure that the Nunavut government is able to get off on the right track, it is the responsibility of everyone here to help pass the Nunavut Act amendments.

• (1705)

A lot of work has been done by the Government of Canada, the Government of the Northwest Territories, Nunavut Tunngavik and the people of Nunavut and others over the last 30 years. People worked really hard for about 30 years and I want to remember those people.

As I speak here today, I feel that I have come on at the end of the struggle. It is now less than a year to April 1, 1999 and I want to remember the many people who worked over these past years with a lot of determination and courage to get to this position. I would also like to remember those people who will not be with us when we see the results of all their efforts on April 1, 1999.

I would like to take this opportunity to ask the other members of Parliament to support the Nunavut Act amendments because no territory or province in this country can succeed unless it has the support of the rest of the country.

The people of Canada bind Canada together. They make it work. The settling of our land claims is a perfect example of how flexible our federation is and how Canadians from coast to coast to coast are willing to work together. That is the responsibility of all Canadians.

It is important when speaking to this legislation to remember why Nunavut is being created. I spoke a bit about that earlier but I would like to say it again. It is being created out of hope. It is hope for the children and youth of Nunavut and hope for a better future. It is also hope for a better deal for the Inuit who have relied on Nunavut's land and resources for thousands of years.

I also see this more as a bill about democracy and making democracy work for the people of Nunavut. I see it as being necessary to ensure fair representation at two levels of government,

both the federal and territorial levels. This legislation will allow for that.

Bill C-39 is about hope. It provides a smooth transition to the larger new territory of Nunavut. It also allows elections to take place prior to April 1, 1999 which is very important to me. As it is now, we will not have an elected government on April 1, 1999. We will be able to hold an election after that date, but come April 1, 1999 there will not be an elected government to take over if we do not allow this legislation to pass.

I urge everyone in this House to not delay the passing of the act. We must get it through by the end of June 1998. We have already lost so much time dealing with different issues, waiting for new legislation and waiting for new directions for the interim commissioner's office that we do not have much time left to make sure that we have an operational government by April 1, 1999. If we delay it any longer, we will not have time to put into place what needs to be in place to have good government administratively and legislatively to represent the people.

The Inuit have had their own form of government since time began. When I talk about a community, I mean a group of people who live together. Communities were nomadic, but most stayed together through the spring, summer and winter camps or met up with different people. These communities had their own form of governing their own group of people. We see this as a chance for the Nunavut government to use some of those traditional ways of governing along with the new methods of governing we have learned over the years.

• (1710)

The creation of the Nunavut government is an opportunity for us to take the good points of these two types of government and work them into the new legislation for the Nunavut government. It is also an opportunity for the older people to participate by passing on their traditional knowledge of how we used to be governed.

In my maiden speech I talked about how adaptable Inuit people are. We have adapted over the last 50 years at a phenomenal rate. I would like to use that example to show that we will be adapting again to the new government. Not everything will in place by April 1, 1999, but I look at the new Nunavut government as a child. We will grow as we pick up good habits from the experience and adapt things to the way we want to govern ourselves.

Justice is another initiative we will be watching very closely. The new Nunavut government is already covering new ground by creating a unified court system. It will give us an opportunity to deal with incarceration. One of my colleagues mentioned there might be problems with incarceration within the new Nunavut territory. I know we will not have all the infrastructure needed. We will need to use the infrastructures of other territories and prov-

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inces for the time being until we can get our own. This issue has been talked about by many people, especially at the community justice system committee. They want to deal with incarceration of the people of Nunavut. They have some very good ideas.

With the new Nunavut government they will have an opportunity to pass what they know on to the young people and try to deal with their social issues in that way. I am very optimistic that a lot of the ideas which were used in traditional camps can be incorporated into a Nunavut government. They can be adapted to the new way of governing and can be done within the law of the country. I would like to think that this government is flexible enough to allow these ideas to be put into place within the new Nunavut government.

I talked about our new government being in place by April 1, 1999. It is hard to grasp exactly what we are going to see on April 1, 1999. As my hon. colleague mentioned, people are so excited about the possibilities. People are planning events now. I cannot indicate strongly enough how important it is that we make sure this legislation goes through. I see it as being one of the most important pieces of legislation accountable to the people of Nunavut. Any efforts to put up roadblocks to this bill will be denying democracy especially to the people of Nunavut. This is not the Canadian way.

I do not want to talk so much about Senate representation. I want to deal more with the actual Nunavut Act. That is just one little piece of the legislation. This legislation is trying to ensure there is a representative for the western Arctic and one for Nunavut. I do not think this is the time or place to be dealing with how we want to set up the senator.

• (1715)

I want to concentrate more on what it means to the people of Nunavut to make sure these amendments go through because the very crucial ones are not being addressed, as far as I am concerned, by the opposition party.

He talked about the plebiscite. I know that is getting the opinion of the people, but I see that as another delay that we do not need right now. There have already been three plebiscites in getting this far and I think that is an issue which can be dealt with at another time. I do not think this is the time or the place. We still have a responsibility to ensure that we do not deny fair and equal representation, but I do not feel this is the place for it.

Doing the right thing is supporting this bill. As I said, railroading this bill will deny the Nunavut residents quality health care and access to education. We have all these agreements with our southern counterparts because, as I said, we do not have all the facilities and the necessities in our area.

If we railroad this legislation what is going to happen to the court cases, both criminal and civil, that are before the NWT courts? Are

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they going to face a technicality? That could likely happen if the bill does not receive the opposition's support.

I will not go into all the technical reasons for which we want to pass this legislation. To me the Nunavut act amendments have a human element to them. I know those other technical pieces are relevant and necessary, but I want to deal more with what this means to the people of Nunavut.

In the new government Inuktitut is going to be the working language. That is a new initiative on the part of the people of Nunavut. Even though 85% of the people are Inuit, they are not represented in the jobs that are available in our area. If one is unilingual Inuktitut it is very difficult to get jobs in the communities or work for the government. Elders are hoping this will give the people more opportunities to get involved and participate in working with and for their Nunavut government. It will give them such pride to be able to speak in their own language in any office in the government and within the schools.

In closing, again, I would plead with members of Parliament to pass this legislation because it is so crucial to the continuation of the great work of the people who have strived to make a new Nunavut government. We have less than one year to go. We want to work and do all the great things. Just give us a chance to do so.

Mr. Alex Shepherd (Durham, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I was quite taken back by my fellow colleague and her vision of Nunavut. I was speaking to her earlier on a personal basis and I actually managed to get very close to her riding over the Easter holidays when I was in Churchill.

I know the hon. member has a great vision of Nunavut and of the people of that great part of our country.

• (1720)

I want her to know that even though I am member of parliament from Southern Ontario we strongly believe that this is very much part of our nation and our history.

I would like to know from her how she sees the future, for instance, of tourism in the north. I know there are a lot of questions about how that will affect the ecological balance of some of those communities. I know that it is very fragile in some areas.

I am just wondering how she would balance creating more wealth by attracting visitors into the community with their traditional ways of life, as well as protecting the environment.

Mrs. Nancy Karetak-Lindell: Madam Speaker, one of the challenges we have is that economic development and tourism right now has the most potential in the north of creating employment.

Within the Nunavut land claims agreement and settlement different bodies have been created to safeguard the environment.

We hope to work with each of those bodies. As well, we are in the processing of creating a national park. Those advisory boards right now are working with different community groups to ensure that in creating a park all these issues are taken into consideration.

Tourism has one of the biggest potentials in our area. We just do not want to see it getting too crowded.

Mr. Peter Adams (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, like my colleague, I enjoyed very much what the member had to say about Nunavut. I know this is something the people of Nunavut, particularly the Inuit, have been working toward for many, many years. However, it seems to me that the stage they are at now is one where all sorts of things have to be put in place. It is not easy to set up a new territory, particularly a territory which is going to be twice the size of the province of Ontario and one which involves very diverse conditions.

I know that one of the reasons the people want this new territory is so they can deal with the serious problems and challenges which the communities face. It seems to me that the preparation has gone on for many, many years and we are getting to the crunch time. I wonder if the member would care to elaborate on the timing from here on in.

It is my understanding that if we do not proceed promptly in the House of Commons at the present time, the schedule, which will culminate I believe next April, or whenever it is, could be seriously put out of kilter. I wonder if the member could reply and explain to us the timing of events which will follow the passing of this legislation.

Mrs. Nancy Karetak-Lindell: Madam Speaker, I could not stress enough the importance of getting this legislation through at this time. We have had many delays over the years. As I indicated, we have less than a year until April 1, 1999 and we have to be given the opportunity to put into place the elections and the other possible things. The interim commissioner needs direct information that is in this bill to be able to continue his work.

I cannot stress enough the importance of getting this legislation through as soon as possible.

Mr. Roy Bailey (Souris—Moose Mountain, Ref.): Madam Speaker, I guess all MPs at one time or another would say during the course of their sojourn in this place that they are proud to represent their own constituency. In my case I would say that I am proud to represent the constituency of Souris—Moose Mountain which is in Saskatchewan.

• (1725)

I know that the hon. member, who represents the area under discussion, is very proud as well, and indeed should be proud of the

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area that she represents in this House. She has spoken very passionately about the need for the House to pass this bill and the excitement of the people over what will take place in less than one year.

I do not think the hon. member need fear the opposition not supporting what she has said. When we take a look at the tremendous impact, the tremendous area, the tremendous change that must take place, led by people like the member opposite, I know it is going to take place and the people of Nunavut will be satisfied with what they gain through their relationship with the rest of Canada.

The population of Nunavut will be over 24,000. That may not be a lot of people, but they will be spread over a large area. I complain about my constituency being too large, but by comparison the only way an MP could possibly reach all of the communities of Nunavut would be by aircraft and through the modern technology of communication.

We know that the language will be different because 76% of the people of Nunavut speak neither English nor French. We do not have the typical founding nations in the area. The challenge that is there for the people of Nunavut is great.

The people of the area need to feel that the rest of Canada welcomes them as a partner in Canada and welcomes them to the traditions of our parliamentary democracy.

I think they have a tremendous advantage. The hon. member said previously that they are not as fortunate. I would like to suggest to her that perhaps they are more fortunate because they have an opportunity to take a look at some of the mistakes we have made over the past 100 years or so. Maybe they can bring about the type of government which will correct those mistakes.

It is going to cost a lot of money. The province in which I live was a territory much the same as the hon. member's. Saskatchewan was in a part of Canada known as the Northwest Territories. It did not become a province until 1905. A tremendous amount of money went into Saskatchewan, particularly in the building of the railroads and the settlement that took place.

That is not the case with this addition to Canada, but the Nunavut people will have to be patient with the rest of Canada. The progress of the opening of this particular part of Canada should be quicker than even that of western Canada because of modern techniques in transportation and communication.

If I remember correctly, there are some regulations forthcoming that women will very much form a part of the government in the new territory. During the break I met with an Indian band. The chief and the entire band were women. It is the very first in Canada. I complimented them as I sat down to eat with them. I pointed out that if we make sure we have an equal balance with women things

will progress because nobody is closer to understanding the needs of young people and youth. Just as I told my friends in the Ocean Man Reserve in Saskatchewan, this was the best thing I had seen for a long time. I would say the same to the hon. member. She talked about having flexibility, which is very important particularly when going into something new. When the provinces came into Canada, particularly those in western Canada, they experienced all kinds of difficulties with governing themselves and with breaking away from other types of government. Nunavut will experience this, but that does not mean that through the experience it will not develop a better type of government. I am sure it will.

● (1730)

From listening to her speech I am sure the hon. member opposite has a great deal of pride in representing that area. She speaks from the heart. That is the kind of person that will make it go. I am sure many people in that territory will be watching this debate. They will see and understand what is going on, which will only add to their excitement.

I recently watched a television program on this topic. They talked about the tourism industry and the ongoing excitement. Between now and April 1, 1999 there will be a great deal of excitement. I would like members to carry the same excitement I witnessed in watching these people as they develop and become part of Canada. They are not just people in a faraway land but part of Canada connected by the democratic process, by radio, television and all other media, and connected by the hon. member herself being part of the House of Commons. I am very proud to wish her well.

I hope she will convey the message back to her people to go all out and be the very first of all institutions to say that they will elect their own senator. That would put them in first place again. Government members may not agree with that but they could make history by doing it and would never regret it. The member's people would choose their own representative in the red house. That would make it great. If we were to do this all over again and I was talking for the first time to the people of Saskatchewan, I know what they would say. They would say go for it. I say the same thing to the member.

They will have an elected assembly. She is a member of the House in which she represents her constituency well. She should go back to her people and tell them to do something brand new. They should bring in the very first elected senator from their territory. I do not think it would ruffle the feathers of members of the government in which the hon. member sits. It would be the right move for them rather than having somebody in Ottawa appointing somebody where they live. That would be a mistake.

The member has a lot of good things going for her. She talked about the language, about maintaining her culture and about a free

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election for an MP. Let us add to that a free election to the Senate. Nothing but good could come of this.

The Reform Party supports this move. We know there is a tremendous cost involved. There is a tremendous cost involved with many things. An hon. gentleman asked a question about the tourism industry. If I had time that is where I would be going. I would want to go right up there and look at it myself, be there and be part of it.

We wish the member well. We support this move. We hope she will be as diligent in the development and as painstakingly as possible make sure that many of her people get involved. We want them to preserve their culture. We want them to preserve their language. At the same time they must admit that if they are to expand and grow they will have to make some fundamental changes like everybody else has had to do to put their new area in touch with the day.

Canadians can be and will be proud of the member. The government is proud of her as a member. We welcome that. I caution the member to step out, to be bold and to be brave just as she is now in saying that they want this relationship with Canada. They would be the very first area in Canadian history to say thanks but no thanks, we will elect our own senator in our own way. That would be history making beyond anything they could expect in a year's time.

• (1735)

Mr. Peter Adams (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I listened very carefully to what the Reform member had to say. He ended by mentioning that this could be an even more historic occasion for the people of Nunavut.

I hope he listened to the member for Nunavut previously describing what has already gone on, the enormous efforts of literally generations of people to develop this new and very special territory. He mentioned a band in which there was a particular role for women. I do not know if he realizes that the people of Nunavut have gone through various thought processes about the nature of their new legislature and the nature of the way in which it should be elected. They have a very special vision of their new territory.

I believe this is a great day not only for Nunavut but for all the people of Canada. We are to have a new territory built around the culture of a group of people who are the most Canadian of Canadians, that is the Inuit people. They have a vision for themselves and a vision for Canada.

At the very beginning of his remarks the member made the point that the Inuit are a very special part of the mosaic of Canada. We should all realize that.

The careful preparation they have done has already produced the design for a new and very different legislature. It will rule people in two million square kilometres of Canada, twice the size of the province of Ontario. This new territory will be very special for the people who live there. It will also be a beacon for the Inuit in the other parts of Canada and around the world.

The Inuit of northern Quebec, for example, will in the future look to Nunavut as the fount of their language, Inuktitut. The Inuit people of western Canada will be looking to Nunavut. The Eskimo of Alaska will be looking to Nunavut as a special Inuit based territory. The people of Greenland who also speak Inuktitut will be looking to this new territory and this new dynamic legislature. Even people in Siberia who speak a form of Inuktituk will be looking forward to it.

This is an extraordinary event for the people of the new territory of Nunavut and for all the Inuit in Canada and around the world. It is a great day for the Inuit Tapirisat which has been working toward this and for the Inuit Circumpolar Conference, which unites the Inuit around the pole, that has been working toward this for many years.

Today is a great day. The people of Nunavut in this remote part of Canada have been watching today's events on the parliamentary channel. They follow events all over Canada with the greatest of interest, but this is a particularly great day for them. They have been listening to their member of parliament speak. What did they hear this morning? And this is my question for the member. They heard a Fidel Castro length of speech, over two hours of technical lecturing on the history and evolution of the Senate of Canada.

The member ended his speech with the same sort of comments. If Reformers are so keen on the matter of the Senate and if they are truly interested in the future of this wonderful new territory, as the member opposite tried to indicate, why did they not use one of their opposition days to debate that issue? They are given a generous allocation of days from which they could pick. One of my colleagues says there is one this week. Why did they not pick one of their days to debate for a whole day the issue of the Senate? Why did they take up time on this wonderful day for the people of Nunavut?

• (1740)

Will the member respond to that question? If the Senate matter is so important to them, and if at the same time the member is interested, as he says, in the future of the Inuit in Canada, why are we not debating the Senate issue on Thursday, the opposition day the Reform Party controls?

Mr. Roy Bailey: Madam Speaker, I say to the hon. member who asked the question that I spoke with altruism. I was not trying to indicate something. I do not put on a sham when I talk. I was saying

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what I truly meant to say when I talked about my desires as an individual member of the House in the support of the new territory.

I do not know why the hon. member would cast doubt upon my integrity in my speech. I have never really had that happen before. I have spoken in hundreds of different places, in provincial legislatures and in this House. I am somewhat disappointed that he would take the speech I made in the House today and somehow cast that upon what I was trying to say to my hon. colleague.

I wished the hon. colleague well. Is he doubting that I wish her well? I find that rather distasteful. All I said was that I think it would be a great day for these people. It would be a wonderful day. Over the past they have developed their own style of government. They have been promised a member in the Senate. They should be the ones who make the selection. That is not taking a pot-shot against anybody. That would be the right way to go. If I had an opportunity to go back to my own province on this again, I know what it would do.

This was a condemnation of me as a speaker who came to congratulate them. I have read a great deal about the background. I even got a prize at the hon. member's function when she asked who was their most famous inhabitant. I knew it. It was Santa Claus and I got a nice T-shirt. I certainly would not agree with degradation from the hon. member opposite. I would hope that he was not attacking me personally because I would feel quite badly about that.

Mr. Peter Adams: Madam Speaker, I would simply repeat my question. I apologize if the member feels personally upset about it.

Why did we have the longest speech in parliament, a two hour lecture, 38 pages long, on the Senate on the day when the people of Nunavut are looking forward to having their new territory established in law?

Mr. Roy Bailey: Madam Speaker, if I recall—and I was not here for all of it—there were sections in it that we could have agreed to which would have shortened the speech by a great deal. The government opposite refused to do that.

An hon. member: On three different occasions.

Mr. Roy Bailey: Three different times whole pages could have been deleted and the government opposite refused to do it. It chose to do that. It chose to take away the celebration of this day. It was not me but the government opposite.

I want to say in closing that I wish these people well despite the intervention. I mean it from my heart. I do not care what questions they want to throw at me. It is a dead issue. The Nunavut is not a dead issue. I wish them well. I hope they do walk out and say this is the person they want for the Senate.

Hon. Don Boudria (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to

participate in this debate both as a minister and as a member of the House, in my capacity as minister responsible for the administration of the Canada Elections Act and as a member of the House.

We should all rejoice on this great day. This is the day we commence the debate on the creation of the new territory in the great land of Canada.

● (1745)

[*Translation*]

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the hon. member for Nunavut, who is doing such a good job of representing her constituents in that beautiful part of the country, the Canadian North.

[*English*]

The parliamentary secretary to the government House leader said in his remarks a while ago that we were by way of this legislation creating a territory which is much greater than my own province of Ontario. The province of Ontario is so large in its territory east to west that it is greater than most European nations. And here we are creating a territory that will be even larger than that province.

I wish the people of Nunavut well on this great day. I am here to join with my colleagues in cabinet, as did the minister of Indian affairs earlier today, in wishing them the very best on the beginning of this brand new and great adventure which is the creation of this new territory. I am already looking forward to April 1, 1999 when the map of Canada itself will change to reflect the coming into existence of Canada's third territory.

I also believe that what we are seeing today is a continuing process of constitutional change, an evolution of this country, the creation of provinces, of territories. We make changes from time to time to accommodate the fact that we are very much a living society which changes all the time. We are not stagnant. We have not remained the same as some people sometimes pretend. We have in fact grown, evolved and made this country better for many Canadians, hopefully for all Canadians. The process we are starting today will contribute to that.

[*Translation*]

What I find disappointing, however, on this big day is the speech by the Leader of the Opposition, not the earlier one by the hon. member for Souris—Moose Mountain. His was a fine speech.

I was disappointed by the speech by the Leader of the Opposition, earlier today. His diatribe lasted nearly two hours. He used as his excuse for taking up half a day for his litany to the House of Commons that he was refused unanimous consent to table his speech. So it was the fault of the people who refused to allow him to table his speech if he spoke too long.

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Most Canadians will have trouble understanding his reasoning. Why? Simply because it is not all that logical.

[English]

What happened a little earlier today is this. We have seen an opposition party which has been, I would say, unsuccessful in its attempt to criticize the government effectively. It has done a miserable job of doing that. It has failed miserably in criticizing the government. Polls and so on will demonstrate that and the result of a byelection only a few days ago confirms it.

We now have the situation where having been unsuccessful in attacking the government, the Reform Party has commenced attacking the institution. This manifested itself a few weeks back on the appointment of one member of the other place. The Leader of the Opposition made remarks and was challenged to repeat them outside the House. They were outrageous. He refused to do so. He was embarrassed. A little while later, we saw the despicable event of the same person attacking the occupant of the Chair in this Chamber. There were attacks upon the other House, the flag flap and so on.

• (1750)

What we have seen today is part of an attack against the institution of Parliament. It is bad enough that this vicious attack would take place, but it took place on this great day for so many aboriginal Canadians. That is what upsets me as a member of this House.

I am sure some members across, including the member who gave an excellent speech moments ago, cannot feel all that good about what the leader of the Reform Party did earlier today.

That is how I think. I am sure there must be members of the Reform Party who also find what happened earlier today to be extremely distasteful. If there is no member of the Reform Party who finds what happened earlier today to be distasteful, then it is even worse than I thought it would have been.

I will get back to the leader of the Reform Party in a moment. We heard the Reform Party's comments on constitutional reform. Some of us remember what Reformers said a little while ago. Some years ago we had the Charlottetown accord which was designed by the premiers and the prime minister at the time, who certainly was not the leader of my party.

The day after the draft agreement it was decided that the people of Canada would have a direct say in the process. Most of us in this room, including the leaders of all parties except one, put partisan politics aside and went to the people of Canada. The leader in question had just become an avowed separatist after being a federalist, but we will leave that one for another time. Except for that particular leader, all other political leaders in this House joined forces and went to the people of Canada, along with all the

premiers and the head of aboriginal federations in Canada, to speak in favour of the draft constitutional amendment and seek the approval of Canadians.

When we in this House put everything aside, when we shifted everything and put Canada first, there was one aspiring political leader, a hot button political leader, who chose to do otherwise. He campaigned against the accord, pontificated from afar as he did. The accord was eventually defeated. That is fine. I accept that.

The accord in my own constituency had the largest majority in favour of it from the Quebec-Ontario boundary to Vancouver. I campaigned for it every single day, rain or shine. I am very proud of the fact that in my constituency there was favour for the accord, the document which I thought would have contributed to the strengthening of our country.

I remember at the time when the accord was eventually defeated the same person, who is now the Leader of the Opposition, say "Let us put all constitutional discussion aside for at least five years". I hate to quote the man using his own words but that is what he said.

An hon. member: Quote him again. You might just learn something.

Hon. Don Boudria: The member across seems to be sorry that we are quoting his leader. It is maybe a sorry state but we must quote the Leader of the Opposition given some of the contradictions. Now five years later, the same person, the Leader of the Opposition, stands in this House asking for constitutional changes which according to him should have been made before.

Is there something slightly inconsistent with that kind of reasoning? Is there something just slightly wrong? Do you know what is wrong? They are Reformers and it is the Reform Party. That is what is wrong, as the secretary of state just so eloquently pointed out. The leader of the Reform Party having made these comments is now stuck with what he said at the time.

• (1755)

An hon. member: Quote him again.

Hon. Don Boudria: I will gladly quote the leader of the Reform Party again. I would prefer not to quote too much of what he said in the speech he made today because he was attacking members of the other place on an individual basis.

The written text sent around to some of the media outlets described how a person in Alberta had said something inappropriate at one point or another in his life to someone who was seeking Canadian citizenship and the person allegedly went on to become a senator. That was the criticism of the individual and the attack and attempts at the destruction of the institution. It is a little hard to understand.

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I remember some pretty dumb comments being made both in this place and elsewhere by Reform Party MPs, but I have never advocated abolishing the Reform Party. Maybe I should have but I have not done it yet. Neither have I advocated abolishing the House of Commons because some members thought that people of a different ethnicity should work at the back of the shop, or some other similarly ridiculous comments that were made in the last Parliament.

Mr. Dick Harris: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I would like to remind the hon. member that he is wrong in his statement. In the last Parliament he did advocate the—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault): Resuming debate.

Hon. Don Boudria: Madam Speaker, I must say I would have liked to have wiped the party off but through the electoral process. In the last election in my own riding the Reform Party's votes were cut in half. It had in the previous election something like 11% or 12% and I think it was down to about 8% at the polls the last time. I want to tell the hon. member—

Mr. Charlie Penson: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I would ask that you seek quorum in the House.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault): There is a quorum at this point. Resuming debate.

Hon. Don Boudria: Madam Speaker, apart from all other problems of the Reform Party, it seems its members cannot count.

I want to talk about the creation of these anti-government sentiments by the people across the floor and the criticism that has been made of members of the other place.

The hon. member across says to listen to the people. I hope he does not think that what he says in this House and particularly what the leader of the Reform Party says is synonymous with what the people of Canada think. I submit that what the leader of the Reform Party says is seldom the same as what the people of Canada think or want.

I want to get to the remarks and the unjustified attacks on individuals who sit in the other place. If members of the other place did the same individually to members sitting in this House, Reform MPs would be the first to rise on points of order and questions of privilege. They would say a whole variety of things about those people making false accusations.

The member for Edmonton North said on March 7, 1988 to a member of the other place "Sir, retire. Get a motorhome and go to Florida". This is the kind of inappropriate remark, as though someone had reached a certain age in life and the only thing they had a constitutional right to do was to get a motorhome and take off some place because a Reform MP did not want to look at them any

more. Those kinds of remarks against senior citizens are inappropriate. The hon. member across never did withdraw. She never asked and she never apologized and she should have.

● (1800)

Who are the kind of people who presently sit in the Senate? Let me give a few examples of the excellent Canadians who sit there. If members want to compare attendance records I would suggest that the hon. member across might want to look at the attendance records of people sitting not only in this House but in his own caucus. He might want to look at that very carefully before making accusations against people in the other place.

If we just look even at the voting record in this House recognizing that votes are only held usually on two or maximum three days a week, even then we would find, particularly in the party of the hon. member across, that it is not always something to brag about, and I am putting it mildly. The hon. member should remember that as well when he criticizes members elsewhere.

Let us look at the kind of distinguished people who sit in the other place, recognizing that the method by which we are selecting them has nothing to do with the wishes the Government of Canada has at this time. Most people sitting on my side of the House campaigned in favour of the Charlottetown accord to improve the system. It is the people across the way who refused to improve it.

We have people like Dr. Wilbert Keon, a world famous heart surgeon; publisher Senator Richard Doyle; a very famous author in Canada, Senator Jacques Hébert, a person who in my opinion has done more for Canada's youth than most of us put together could ever achieve in terms of what he has done, Katimavik, World Canada Youth, an author who has written the book *J'accuse les assassins de Coffin*, something which changed capital punishment in this country. With all of the excellent work that he has done, he is one of our colleagues in the other place.

There are actors who sat here recently, famous people, Senator Jean-Louis Roux; corporate people like Eyton, Kolber, Di Nino; public servants, people of the calibre of Michael Pitfield, Roch Bolduc, Noel Kinsella, Jack Austin and Marie Poulin; teachers and professors, Doris Anderson, Dr. Gérald Beaudoin, Ethel Cochrane, Rose-Marie Losier-Cool; municipal and board of education councillors and people with general experience in municipal and local government, senators John Lynch-Staunton, Lucier, Milne, Spivak; judges who now sit in the Senate, Senator Andreychuk; business people, senators Erminie Cohen, Joseph Landry, Walter Twinn, Charlie Watt; people who are learned in the law like Normand Grimard, Duncan Jessiman, Derek Lewis, Donald Oliver; people involved in labour unions, dentists, children's rights advocates like Landon Pearson.

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I am speaking of people who have sat recently in the Senate. Do members know who the Leader of the Opposition was quoting to support his argument? Oliver Cromwell, the only dictator ever to have taken over England. That is how he defends himself, giving speeches and referring to dictators.

Let me quote these words in finishing: "I would say over the first year I was there one of the very first things that struck me was that the Senate is very, very different from the public perception of the Senate. You know, the Senate has taken an awful lot of ridicule and the idea that it is sort of, you know, one step before the graveyard for a lot of old burnt out politicians and this stuff, I was very impressed with the calibre of a lot of people in the Senate". Those were the comments of Ernest Manning and the member across should remember them.

• (1805)

Mr. Jake E. Hoepfner (Portage—Lisgar, Ref.): Madam Speaker, that was really an enjoyable little speech. I can hear that the hon. member did listen to the speech or read it because at least he got some good meat out of it.

What really astounds me is that for 30 years we have had successive Liberal and Conservative governments fill that other place. Every time they change governments they change the positions in there. Why have we \$600 billion of debt in this country if they have been doing such a terrific job? They are supposed to be the house of second thought to guide this House along if we do not know the proper procedures or the financial situation of the country.

For 30 years I sat on my tractor and my combine and have heard that things are improving in this country. Where have they improved? We are number 12 as far as income per capita is concerned, the worst of the industrialized nations. I think it is time that someone in this House stood up for two hours and really put the facts before this House. That is why we have the problems, because the house of second thought or sober thought never realized there was no thought in this House. It did not know how to run this country.

We have \$600 billion of debt piled on the future of our children and grandchildren. The leader of the official opposition is not supposed to say what is wrong with this place. They cannot listen to him. I think it is high time we started to take the bull by the horns and then take him by the tail, swing him and throw him out. That is what is going to happen.

From one member we came to 52 members. We are now 60 members and the next time there will be 152 Reform members on that side. Then let us see if they are going to listen to what this leader is going to say about the Senate. They will not be getting

reappointed, I can tell them that. They will get elected because people will have the right to do that.

Not only that but farmers will not be thrown in jail anymore for selling their own grain when they can get a better price. That is the way we will have this country run. We will have a democracy out here. We will not have a dictatorship. When I see this House and this country compared to the democracy of Cuba I get real upset.

I think we have the right in this House to say what is wrong with this place and to try to improve it. That is why we are here. That is why we will say it time and time again whether it takes an hour or two hours, so I hope the hon. gentleman can give me an answer. Why do we have these problems in this country when it has been Conservatives and Liberals continuously running this country and putting us into this mess?

Hon. Don Boudria: Madam Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to respond to some of this. I am a little bewildered by what the hon. member is seeking to get.

I am not questioning the honesty of the hon. member. I am sure he is honest and I am sure upon reflection he thinks most people in this place are, hopefully all of them, as well. I question his judgment but I do not question his honesty at this point. I am sure he is an honest person even if occasionally he makes these remarks by accusing others of being dishonest. I am sure there is honesty in him notwithstanding those inappropriate remarks.

Getting back to the subject he raised, before he puts his other foot in his mouth, I will try to answer the questions that he has put forward. First of all, what we are debating today is a bill to create a new territory, to allow that territory to exist, to be represented in both houses of this great country. That is what it is about.

When the hon. member talks about the so-called mess that he sees, when he talks about all these things that he sees being wrong with this country, I want to advance the following proposition to him. Yes, this House is to hold governments accountable. Yes, this House is to make the place better. This House is not to destroy this House or the other house in the process. That is wrong and I will keep saying it when it occurs.

This happens to be, notwithstanding the member's comments, the greatest country in the world. It has not been destroyed. It is still the best. It is going to get better with or without the agreement of the hon. member across. Canadians generally want this country to be better. That is what is going to happen. That is why it will get better.

• (1810)

The hon. member in his remarks said that this country is not democratic enough and that is why he is making his comments. It is his leader who invoked the words of a dictator in his speech. Is there not something wrong with that reasoning? Is there not at least

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something that is potentially defective with that way of looking at it?

This country is working and it is working well. Yes, we want our parliamentary institutions to modernize. We want the federation to improve. That is exactly what this bill is doing. It is creating a new territory to make the federation better. That is one of the reasons why we are debating this bill.

Having now answered the hon. member, I restate to the people of Nunavut our best wishes and hopefully the best wishes of everyone in this House for this bill to proceed after some debate to the committee, return to this House, eventually pass the other place and receive royal assent in good and proper time so that the people can continue to build the building blocks of this great country and make it one step better by the creation of Nunavut. That is my wish to the good people of Nunavut. I look forward to that great day, April 1 next year, when all this finally comes together. Hopefully at that point we will all be together, all partisan considerations aside, to rejoice with the people of Nunavut.

Mr. Dick Harris (Prince George—Bulkley Valley, Ref.): Madam Speaker, the hon. House leader across the way is really missing the point we have been making today.

The point was that we in the Reform Party believe that the best thing we could do under this new government formation of Nunavut would be to give it a real democratic tool to work with. It will have the right to elect its member of Parliament. Give it the right to elect its senator. Do not impose the mistakes that the Liberals and the Tories have made for decades. Do not impose that mistake on this new government. Give it a chance. Give the people of this new government a chance to have a true and pure democratic process. That is what we are asking for.

The problem is that this government is so steeped in tradition and bad habits in this patronage system that it cannot see past all these things that have been so destructive to democracy in this country.

Hon. Don Boudria: Madam Speaker, the Senate as presently constituted in terms of the system of appointment was obviously not invented by anyone presently sitting in this House. It was there long before we came along. There have been changes from time to time to the system. The age requirement has been altered. The distribution between provinces has been altered. There have been changes made to that process.

An hon. member: You missed the most important one.

Hon. Don Boudria: The hon. member says I have missed something important, presumably referring to the election of senators. I campaigned for the election of senators. I campaigned for the Charlottetown accord at the same time that the Reform MPs, some of whom are sitting in this House, actively campaigned

against it. There is a bit of duplicity in some of the comments we are hearing today.

• (1815)

Mr. Rick Laliberte (Churchill River, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am very honoured to speak on behalf of our caucus on Bill C-39. The Nunavut Act has made a major change in the perception of our country. The design of the northern territories—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Rick Laliberte: I may be missing part of the dialogue that is taking place in the House.

This legislation introduces the preliminary requirements for the preparations leading up to 1999. It is very much needed. I can understand the reason for these acts, bills and the points which are being raised.

I am honoured to speak on this bill which plays a part in the history of the development of our country.

The hon. member from the official opposition stated that the design of this House is like a vessel. I still view it that way. This is a vessel that was created by the British North America Act which colonized this region of North America. In attaining our sovereignty and in living with and learning from the aboriginal people we have not redesigned or re-envisioned our country in our symbolisms to adopt the original people of this land.

Members will see that the Northwest Territories has been governing itself with a legislature designed not according to party structure but one which is designed to govern by consensus. I will be intrigued to see what symbolism and designs will be adopted in the Nunavut legislature.

People have been bantering about the issue of the Senate today. They should take the time to listen to the aboriginal peoples' view of governance in this country. If they want to be radical there are issues which we could debate, but this is not the time. Debating the Senate has no place in this act. Let Nunavut prepare itself with as much time as it has. It has less than 12 months to prepare itself to govern a gigantic region. Nunavut's communities and peoples have diverse needs. Give Nunavut the time to prepare. Let it take on the Senate debate with the rest of Canada when it is prepared. Now is not the time. We wasted many hours of debate today, hours that could have been fruitful. Dialogue could have taken place for the people of Nunavut. Congratulations could have been extended to the new Northwest Territories in governing itself and its regions.

I raise the example of governance by consensus. Today the Leader of the Opposition asked why not adopt an American style of representation. Look at the history of American governance. The Iroquois confederacy is here in our neighbourhoods. The democratic system was designed from that. Those concepts and perceptions

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were adopted. That is what Canada has to do today. If we are going to debate we have to open up these walls. This vessel has to be re-envisioned. The legislative structures of our provinces should also be re-envisioned.

The design of this House involves us arguing against the other side, arguing with fellow Canadians about the future of our country and our children. We should be supporting each other for the benefit of our future and our children. We should find better means and better ways. We could create a circle.

• (1820)

I envision the Library of Parliament. The parliamentary library is a round building. That building survived a fire. It persevered a test. It is a symbol of the strength of this country. It was the only circular building of the parliament buildings and it survived the fire. Why could we not use that as a symbol of the unity of this country? If there were times of war when we had to make a decision to send our young men and women to war, why could we not decide in the round room in a symbol of unity?

Even the symbol of our flags and governance structure could be decided that way. I do not think a partisan setting is the right place.

I think those symbols will be adopted by the new territories that are being created in the north. Nunavut will certainly search their aboriginal ancestry, the symbolism of their peoples of the past and their history of governance.

Referring to aboriginal people as being uncivilized is untrue. Look at the future of our sustainable development and figure out who was uncivilized. The industrial age is poisoning and polluting our world. Find out where the future of our country and our world is going. Question who really was uncivilized. Give credence to the aboriginal people of this country and empower them to share their views and adopt this form of governance on this land for their future and for the future of everyone.

I congratulate the people of Nunavut for creating the dialogue, for lobbying the powers that be to recognize their need in a self-government public style model of governance. In future years we will see them debating national issues. They will have seats recognizing their territories in this place and in the other place. They will truly share their view and their dialogue which is rightfully theirs.

One of our ancestors, a great leader of the Metis people, Louis Riel, envisioned the future as being part of this great country by building on and allowing the people of those regions that were joining this country to be given the same privileges, rights and opportunities to reflect their views and their ways of life in the laws and in the Constitution of this country. You cannot stifle those people.

It came to pass in 1998. The issue of Louis Riel returned along with the struggle which he and the Metis people had for recognition in this country. They never did anything wrong. They wanted to represent themselves the same way the Nunavut people want to. It is the same way with the people of Alberta, British Columbia, Saskatchewan and other regions of this country. The people of Quebec want to represent and reflect the needs of their people and their future. That is a right we have in the democratic structure of this country.

For us to debate other issues aside from Nunavut is wasting their time. They need time to prepare. Let us pass this bill as fast as we can and allow the other place to give it sober second thought. Hopefully, in passing this legislation Nunavut can prepare itself.

Mr. Derrek Konrad (Prince Albert, Ref.): Madam Speaker, I would first like to thank you for the opportunity to speak to something as important as the creation of this new territory of Nunavut. I would also like to take the opportunity to congratulate the people themselves on this auspicious day when we are debating the bill to create the Nunavut territory.

Now that the time of official establishment of the territory is getting close it is reassuring to see that the government is making sure, through the first part of this bill and its many amendments to the original Nunavut Act, that the territory is going to be a little more effective.

• (1825)

I would like to state my support for the amendment moved by the Leader of the Official Opposition, which was seconded by my colleague, the hon. member for Skeena, who is the critic for Indian affairs and northern development.

I would urge hon. members of the opposition parties as well as all democratically minded members of the government to support Reform's amendment. This amendment only makes sense. The people of Nunavut should be consulted on how their senator is selected, the same as they have had a chance to voice their opinion on the many other political procedures that will govern them.

I would like to add that this amendment makes all the more sense when we take into consideration the fact that the people of Nunavut are taking a whole new approach to government in the territory. Their new ideas on government have been encouraged and are being put into practice in this bill.

The people of Nunavut are adopting a system in which the legislature will have no political parties. Members will be elected without party platforms. This form of government, while not generally adopted by Canadians as a whole, recognizes the unique character of this piece of Canada. Implementing non-party govern-

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ment recognizes and accedes to a desire for a different form of government, one to replace the status quo.

We are calling on the government at this time to take the logical next step, to give the people of Nunavut the right to select their representative and to send him or her to Ottawa as their own representative for their region in that place which was supposedly established for the protection of the regions.

The Prime Minister now makes all Senate appointments. He recommends the governor general. He names all nine supreme court justices and the heads and members of all federal boards, panels, commissions and agencies. It is not too much to expect that Canada in general and Nunavut in particular be spared one more Liberal crony in the upper chamber.

In light of this, I ask whether it makes any sense at all that the people of Nunavut who have a refreshing approach to everything else and who get to do everything else differently should have their senator be some Liberal hack appointed by the Prime Minister. The answer is no. It just does not make any sense at all. The two just do not go together.

The people of Nunavut have offered interesting new ideas and approaches to government. Those ideas and approaches are based on their cultural background.

The government, with this bill, has the chance to do the same. Will the government take this opportunity to offer those fresh new ideas for once and implement them?

I would like to remind members that earlier today the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development said in her speech "We have to ensure that the voice and representation of the people of the Northwest Territories and the western Arctic and eastern Arctic is heard in the Senate".

We could not agree more. We want to ensure that the people of Nunavut have representation in the Senate and not the other way around. What we do not want to see is some Liberal Party hack appointed to the Senate to represent the people of Nunavut, rubber stamping Liberal policies when he bothers to come to Ottawa at all.

We call on this House to support the amendment of the official opposition so that the people of Nunavut have a say in how their senator is elected.

We look forward to the passage of the Reform amendment, the ensuing election and the welcoming of the Nunavut senator to Parliament upon his or her appointment.

If the amendment is defeated it will be with a lot less enthusiasm that the official opposition will support the bill.

Given all the positive reasons for holding a Senate election put forward by the Leader of the Official Opposition and supported by our members, it should pass—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault): I must interrupt the hon. member as it is 6.30 p.m. You will have approximately 15 minutes left at the resumption of debate on this bill if you so wish.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

• (1830)

[English]

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

HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. Gordon Earle (Halifax West, NDP): Madam Speaker, the day before international human rights day I challenged the Minister of Foreign Affairs about the Liberal government's silencing of a First Nations chief and the attempts to silence Canadians concerned about human rights abuses.

Chief Gail Sparrow of the Musqueam First Nation was to give a speech to address APEC representatives on November 25. The government then told Chief Sparrow her speech was to be shortened by one minute. The government then cancelled Chief Sparrow's presentation altogether. Why? Because Chief Sparrow had the gall to give casual mention to human rights in her speech. Her first draft to the representatives included the phrase "I encourage you to ensure there is respect for the dignity of all people".

The Prime Minister's office chose to silence this First Nations leader in order to ensure that APEC leaders like General Suharto of Indonesia would not be reminded of their systemic human rights abuses. Shame.

Or was this a slap in the face for the Musqueam people for daring to suggest to the Department of National Defence that the government should not pave over part of Deadman's Island to build a helicopter pad for APEC visitors without first properly investigating what impact this might have on Musqueam grave sites and heritage?

Regardless, the government did everything to silence the Musqueam people and others who dared to raise human rights issues while at the same time bending over backward for the political comfort of those like Suharto who are responsible for the death, torture and abuse of citizens of their own countries.

The government had the opportunity to refuse to invite Mr. Suharto to Canada by using section 19 of Canadian immigration law to have Suharto declared a war criminal and unfit for entry into

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Canada. When I questioned the minister of immigration about Suharto being allowed to enter Canada, she indicated that he had not been convicted of any crime. When I asked her who would convict him, she had no answer.

Far from keeping known human rights abusers like Suharto out the government instead chose to deploy many large canisters of tear gas indiscriminately over peaceful protesters. Even worse, Canadian officials met with Suharto in Indonesia to assure him his security provisions would be met.

Signs posted by UBC student Craig Jones calling for free speech, democracy and human rights were torn down by RCMP officials, even though the signs were outside the so-called security zone. Why did the government go so far out of its way to silence Canadians concerned about human rights and those who were raising these concerns by peaceful and democratic means?

Why did the government not use its power to prevent a known human rights abuser like Suharto from entering Canada? Why did the government go out of its way to assuage General Suharto's concerns about security while in Canada?

As things now stand, history will remember Suharto as a bloody, ruthless and evil man. I am ashamed that the Liberal government went out of its way to assuage and to welcome this man, even to the point of silencing Canadians like Chief Sparrow and Craig Jones.

The government will likely respond with generalities about protecting heads of state, about how Chief Sparrow could have met one on one with APEC leaders, about investigations into RCMP activities. Not good enough. The responsibility lies with the Prime Minister's office and with this government. The issue of silencing a First Nations chief is not an issue for the public complaints commission but for the Prime Minister's office.

I ask, is the government's first priority in respecting the rights of our own citizens or is it in paving the way for known international human rights abusers to be comfortable in Canada? Is the government's priority in silencing Canadians like Chief Sparrow and Craig Jones in order to offer a platform for known human rights abusers like General Suharto?

Mr. Ted McWhinney (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the hon. member is all at sea, or as somebody said, all in the grass, in his statement because it has a number of purported statements of fact that just are not so.

Far from being an insult to the Musqueam people or to Chief Sparrow, the government went out of its way with the APEC conference to recognize the role of our native peoples.

The single event of the APEC conference that was held outside the downtown Vancouver area was the episode at the Museum of

Anthropology in the University of British Columbia, the heart of my constituency. The significance of it is simply that it is on territory historically with which the Musqueam people are associated and in functions there they take a major part.

• (1835)

In fact Chief Sparrow was given the unprecedented opportunity of greeting every one of the APEC leaders who arrived with our Prime Minister. She was the only person other than the Prime Minister to be allowed to do so.

The only issue on the speeches was simply the time factor. All those who were to speak were given strict time limits. It was found that times were in excess and this is how the program was changed. However, there is no particular issue that Chief Sparrow met the heads of the APEC countries and that her ideas and influence were certainly present.

The leaders' declaration issued after the APEC conference contains language that reflects the links between economic development, the well-being of people, including workers, and of course the role of native peoples. In fact this is a theme dear to the present government. If one consults the most recent declaration of the Americas conference which just concluded in Santiago, one will find a similar expression inserted at Canada's insistence on the role of native peoples in our culture.

MULTILATERAL AGREEMENT ON INVESTMENT

Mr. John Solomon (Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre, NDP): Madam Speaker, on March 17 I asked why the government would not agree to full parliamentary hearings on the multilateral agreement on investment and the negotiations surrounding the MAI when the very ability of our governments to make sovereign laws about the economic future of our country was at stake.

In particular I asked whether the Liberal government would agree to the recommendations of the Saskatchewan government that there be a full impact analysis of the MAI, a full parliamentary debate and a vote. All we are asking for is that Parliament be allowed a say on the matter while we can still make a difference. Why? Because the scope of the MAI goes well beyond legislation that MPs will ever see in Parliament. The MAI limits the future ability of the federal, provincial and municipal governments in this country to make laws in the public interest of Canadians.

The Saskatchewan NDP minister responsible for trade agreements, Bernie Wiens, wrote to the Minister of International Trade in February "Virtually every aspect of provincial jurisdiction over local economic and social management will be directly affected by an MAI. No such agreement should apply to Saskatchewan without its explicit consent".

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Signing the MAI would mean that foreign corporations and investors must be treated the same as Canadian corporations, but when foreign corporations think they have been hard done by they could sue the Government of Canada or other jurisdictions or go to arbitration. Canadian corporations would not be extended the same right.

Foreign investors and corporations would be protected from any future laws that tried to protect or create jobs or laws to strengthen Canadian environmental standards or compliance with Canadian research and development objectives. If forced to comply, they could be compensated by Canadians. It is ironic that the Liberals will bend over backward to compensate foreign companies but not the sick and innocent victims now afflicted with hepatitis C.

Members of the Reform Party cannot wait for the MAI. Showing their true colours as nothing more than shillers for big foreign business, Reform's main criticism of the Liberals is that they are negotiating in secret rather than spending huge amounts of taxpayer dollars to tell everyone how great the MAI will be for big foreign corporations.

The Reform member for North Vancouver slipped and gave away the real reason they love the MAI. It would protect and accelerate moves toward private health care. That is what Reform wants to see in Canada, private, for profit health care, a two tier health care system, one for the rich and one for the rest of Canadians. The MAI would deliver a two tier health care system.

The campaign being led by the Council of Canadians and by the NDP in Parliament for public debate on this issue is finally starting to click with people. Toronto *Star* columnist Rosemary Spiers said last Thursday:

—the Council of Canadians and the NDP[s]—successful campaign against the MAI—has forced the Liberals into retreat—

Canada will not sign the MAI this month, we are told, in Paris. It may later, but this delay shows that public pressure can sometimes make a difference. It is a lesson the government better have learned for the next time because there are more national negotiations coming down the pipe. One example is the financial services agreement which is almost finalized without even coming before the House of Commons. This would provide for example, a 100% foreign ownership of Canadian banks.

The Government of Saskatchewan has outlined reasonable fair guidelines for good international trade agreements: the protection of health care; labour and environmental standards, among others, which I and the NDP support.

I would call on the Liberal government to express support for these principles as well as for public hearings and a vote on the MAI before proceeding any further on our children's future.

• (1840)

Mr. Julian Reed (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Trade, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am always amazed that the NDP of all groups would be so opposed to advancing the state of our nation forward.

I would really like to ask my hon. friend, and I realize he cannot answer it in this debate, what his information base is for the kinds of bizarre statements that have been made over the last year. And they are bizarre. They are being taken from a draft. They are not being taken from the text of any agreement. They are being taken from a draft.

My hon. friend has had more experience in Parliament than I have had. He should know very well that when a number of nations get together, a draft is a compilation of a wish list of all of those nations.

What has been ignored all through these months is the fact that a set of reservations has been put in place for Canada, a very large list of reservations I might add. The minister has made it very clear that many of those reservations are make or break deals.

When the hon. member comes along and plays Chicken Little, as the NDP has been doing for months now, the sky is falling and disaster is upon us, I would ask him to remember one thing. Canada now has 54 investment agreements which are bilateral. We have one trilateral agreement. Since the 1950s when the first one was signed, no company has dictated policy in Canada. No health care has been put in jeopardy. No education has been put in jeopardy. Our treatment of native peoples has not been threatened in any way.

I ask the hon. member to consider the fact that history does not bear him out. History shows that Canada works better with rules than it does without rules. We intend—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault): The hon. member for Sault Ste. Marie.

YOUNG OFFENDERS ACT

Mr. Carmen Provenzano (Sault Ste. Marie, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I rise further to my question to the Minister of Justice concerning the relatively new phenomenon of violent group crime by teenagers and young adults of both sexes.

Violent group crime by teenagers and young adults of both sexes is by all accounts a growing problem in Canada. This disturbing new phenomenon has revealed itself in communities across the country including my hometown of Sault Ste. Marie.

In fact as I stand here today a young man from my riding is undergoing intense physical therapy in a Sudbury hospital after apparently falling victim to a brutal hatchet beating by a group of attackers composed of teenagers and young adults. Two of those alleged attackers are young offenders. One of them who at 17 only narrowly qualifies as a young offender is attempting to have his

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case transferred from adult court to youth court. One of the questions being asked right now in Sault Ste. Marie is why should a 17-year old charged in such a savage crime even have the option of applying for trial in a youth court.

In my opinion and that of a great number of Saultites and Canadians, such accommodations to persons charged with such violent crimes are an insult to the victims. They are inappropriate and in effect amount to a further attack upon them and their families. In fact, they are an insult to the very notion of basic criminal justice.

To illustrate how strongly my constituents feel about this matter, I refer to a petition I recently collected in my riding. This petition called upon Parliament to commission a Canada-wide study of violent group crime by young people and to invoke tough punitive measures to combat such criminal activity.

Five thousand Saultites signed this petition over a three week period. In doing so they voiced their concerns about youth crime and asked the government to address this growing problem before it becomes epidemic. These people clearly recognize, as I do, that we know very little about the phenomenon of youth group crime, that we need to examine what dark antisocial impulses motivate and compel some young people to act in concert and to commit senseless acts of violence without forethought or remorse. They recognize that in order to attempt a solution to the problem we need to establish not only tougher laws but gain a better understanding of the causes and effects of youth crime.

• (1845)

We need to have a meeting of the minds across the country between educators, psychologists, police and legislators to arrive at some understanding of this phenomenon and to formulate a deterrent to violent youth crime.

We need to find answers to basic questions before we offer solutions. The first questions we need to answer are the ones that begin with why.

Why are some young people so desensitized to violence that they band together and commit unspeakable crimes, often without provocation? Why are they not apparently concerned about or at least aware of the consequences of their actions? Why are these young people clearly unable to identify with the victims of their crimes? Why do they appear to be so unattached or non-attached to the consequences of their actions? Why are these consequences not more harsh for young people who go well beyond the bounds of youthful misadventure into the world of violence and even murder?

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault): I am sorry to interrupt but the hon. member's time has expired.

Ms. Eleni Bakopanos (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Madam

Speaker, the Minister of Justice appreciates the member's concern about youth crime, particularly violent youth crime and especially the tragic events in the member's riding. We are very sensitive to that.

The Minister of Justice will soon be releasing a comprehensive response to the report of the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights. A key focus of this response will be on how we can take effective action to deal with violent youth crime. The youth justice system must be capable of responding effectively to the full range of crimes committed by young people, including serious crimes of violence.

The phenomenon of violent youth crime or gang crime, the degree of violence exhibited by group members and especially the rise of female participation in these groups is of concern to the government.

Youth crime is a complex problem best addressed through a multifaceted strategy. Multi-disciplinary, co-operative approaches involving families, communities, the voluntary sector, victims, mentors as well as mental health and child welfare systems must be encouraged.

As a government we recognize the importance of ongoing research on the phenomenon of youth group crime. The member has asked for a national study of group violence by teenagers. The government has devoted a lot of time and resources over the past three years to examining the youth justice system in some detail.

[*Translation*]

In fact, this issue was discussed by the first ministers when they met for the first time in August 1997, and by the Minister of Justice and her provincial and territorial colleagues during their meeting, in December of last year.

The minister and the government are now urging all members of the House to express their views when the minister tables her response to the report of the Standing Committee on Justice, and when the legislation is introduced in the House.

DREDGING OF ST. LAWRENCE

Mr. Yves Rocheleau (Trois-Rivières, BQ): Madam Speaker, I rise today to follow up on a question that I put to the Minister of the Environment on March 25 and to which I received an unsatisfactory reply.

I am going back to the issue in the hope of getting more information. As we know, on March 23, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans announced his department's decision to agree to the Montreal port authority's request and authorize the dredging of the St. Lawrence River to a depth of about one foot, to further deepen the waterway from 11 to 11.3 metres.

The decision was immediately criticized by all environmental groups concerned by and involved in this long-standing issue,

including Stratégie Saint-Laurent and St. Lawrence Vision 2000. Stratégie Saint-Laurent monitors all ZIPs or zones d'intervention prioritaire, including the Lac Saint-Pierre ZIP, whose members I salute. These people rightly care about the future and the development of Lac Saint-Pierre, this extraordinary body of water which could be seriously affected if the federal government continues in this direction without holding public consultations.

• (1850)

This is a major project to dredge off the bottom of the St. Lawrence River 350,000 metric tonnes. This potentially polluting material—this will have to be established—may be floating in the water of the St. Lawrence and carried by the current. We do not know. Consultations are required so we know what we are dealing with. We do not know either where this potentially polluting material would be disposed of.

We are talking about a major project involving the dredging of 350,000 metric tonnes. This work would be done without public consultation, even though the Quebec government has just demanded that the public hearings provided for under the law be carried out with respect to the port of Sorel, where 20,000 cubic metres are to be dredged,

We know about the public health protection requirements imposed by Environment Canada on individuals who are no longer allowed to pour dirt and sand in lakes or rivers to build a pier, for instance. In light of what society normally demands of private companies in terms of respecting the environment and ensuring through established standards and mechanisms that the environment is respected, what right does the Government of Canada have to authorize the dredging of 350,000 metric tonnes without complying with the legislative requirement for public hearings?

The fisheries and oceans minister's response was that consultations had taken place. But, according to Marc Hudon, of Stratégie Saint-Laurent, the groups that were consulted still have a great many questions to ask the government in spite of the consultations that have taken place.

I think that this is a matter of public interest with a capital P and a capital I. The port of Montreal may have wishes and concerns with respect to its ability to compete with foreign ports, which is understandable, but in the public interest, Environment Canada must take its responsibilities and show impartiality—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault): I have to interrupt the hon. member. The time allotted has run out.

[*English*]

Mr. Wayne Easter (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would hope to

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place a few facts on the table to put the fears of the honourable member to rest.

The approved dredging project is to permit the port of Montreal to further deepen the waterway from 11 metres to 11.3 metres below chart datum.

The depth of 11.3 metres is already available in most of the waterway portion aimed at by the project. The dredging project represents 2% of the navigation channel and less than .07% of the whole St. Lawrence surface between Montreal and Cap à la Roche which is a distance of 150 metres.

The port of Montreal carried out a number of technical feasibility studies which were completed in May 1996. The project was subsequently submitted to DFO for review under the Navigable Waters Protection Act and under section 35(2) of the Fisheries Act. Both the NWPA and the Fisheries Act triggered the requirement for an environmental assessment under the CEAA.

The port of Montreal conducted a thorough review of the environmental impacts of the proposed project. As required under the CEAA, the DFO subsequently reviewed the findings for the port of Montreal and requested advice from other agencies including Environment Canada and the Quebec department of environment and wildlife. As well, two rounds of public consultations were held.

After carefully considering input from federal and provincial departments and agencies as well as the public, the department concluded that the project was not likely to have adverse environmental effects given the mitigation and compensation measures that were being imposed, as well as the monitoring program which will be implemented.

• (1855)

CANADA PENSION PLAN INVESTMENT BOARD

Mr. Alex Shepherd (Durham, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I rise in reference to a question I posed on April 1 to the Minister of Finance regarding his position on recommendations made by the Senate banking committee that the proposed CPP investment board be allowed to increase its foreign property rule from 20% to 30% over a five year period. This would allow the board to invest in foreign securities as opposed to domestic ones and would bring that component up to 30%.

My objection to this recommendation is twofold. First, much consideration has been given not to tie the hands of pension managers who need better investment vehicles to enhance the return on investments of pension funds. I would like to draw the attention of the House to the fact that the vast majority of mutual

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funds now operated by these same managers cannot even perform at the average of the growth in Canadian stock exchange prices.

In other words most managers underperform even in terms of the averages of a TSE 300 composite index. Their inability to achieve even average returns in Canada should give us a clue to allowing them to expand investments in volatile foreign markets with CPP beneficiaries' money.

This volatility would include foreign exchange fluctuations as well as the general uncertainties of unknown regulatory environments. We only have to think of southeast Asia to believe that is one of those markets.

Can it be demonstrated that the current 20% rule diminishes potential returns in Canada regardless of the limit? For instance, the United States has an unrestricted limit for pension funds, but historically and currently only 10% of these funds are invested in foreign investments.

I refer to Japan which similarly has an unrestricted rule but only invests 19%. Australia, which allows its pension managers full discretion of total foreign investment, only invests 16%. In other words it would appear that the norm in the world is under the 20% rule in any case. Why the necessity of changing it? There seems quite frankly to be no empirical evidence for increasing the limit.

My second concern is what I call the cascade effect. If the foreign property rule is increased for the Canada pension plan investment board, it follows that it should also be increased by their pensions, not the least of which is registered retirement savings plans.

Investors are free in this country to invest in foreign assets. The question is do we want to provide an income tax subsidy to do so. Needless to say those who maximize their RRSP contribution limits and take full advantage of the existing foreign component are also the highest income earners. I suggest it is inappropriate to provide them with further tax deferrals with Canadian taxpayers money simply so they can make foreign investments. Quite frankly they are already free to do so with tax paid money.

The minister stated that he would study this with his provincial counterparts. I wonder if the minister could not be more definitive in saying that he opposes this move at this time.

Mr. Wayne Easter (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Lib.): Madam Speaker, first I compliment the member for Durham on his continuing work and interest in this area.

Let me take the opportunity to express the minister's gratitude to the members of the Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce for their work and the report they produced on the Canada pension plan investment board and its draft regulations.

The new investment board is a key part of the fundamental reform of the CPP approved by the House last year. By investing new CPP funds prudently in a diversified portfolio of investments to earn higher returns, the board will help ensure that the CPP will be there for Canadians in the future.

We are pleased to see that the committee's report is generally supportive of the investment provisions and the governance structure of the CPP investment board that were developed jointly with the provinces. There are a number of ideas in the report, however, that federal and provincial governments will want to consider carefully.

• (1900)

The minister has therefore forwarded the committee's report to provincial colleagues as joint stewards of the Canada pension plan. It is our firm intention to provide the committee with a full response as soon as possible after provincial colleagues have had the opportunity to review the committee's recommendations.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault): The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 7 p.m.)

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