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**Friday, September 23, 1994**

**Speaker: The Honourable Gilbert Parent**

# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, September 23, 1994

The House met at 10 a.m.

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*Prayers*

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[*English*]

## POINTS OF ORDER

KOREAN AIR FLIGHT 2033

**Mr. Nelson Riis (Kamloops):** Mr. Speaker, Captain Barry Woods, the Canadian captain of Korean Air flight 2033 which crashed August 10, and who as a result of his efforts saved all 152 passengers and eight crew, was being held by the South Koreans. This morning it was announced that he has been released and allowed to return to Canada to his wife and family.

On behalf of the family, I express our appreciation to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, not only for his personal efforts but for the efforts of his department both here and in South Korea for the extraordinary work that has made this reunion possible. Again, on behalf of the family I say thank you very much to the minister.

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## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

### CANADA PETROLEUM RESOURCES ACT

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill C-25, an act to amend the Canada Petroleum Resources Act, as reported (without amendment) from the committee.

**Hon. Ron Irwin (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development)** moved that the bill be concurred in.

(Motion agreed to.)

**The Deputy Speaker:** When shall the bill be read the third time? By leave, now?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Irwin** moved that the bill be read the third time and passed.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I do not believe this is a very contentious bill. It has all-party support, therefore I will be brief. It is more in the line of housekeeping than substantive change to anything being done in that area. This is the member's area. I remember that from the last round of speeches.

I would like to begin by thanking hon. members for supporting this bill at second reading and at committee. The support of members for the bill guarantees longer term benefits and stability to dozens of individuals, families and businesses associated with the Norman Wells project.

Bill C-25 will accomplish two basic objectives. First, it will extend existing jobs, create new employment and business opportunities. Second, it will ensure responsible management of one of Canada's most important producing fields.

As hon. members are aware, Bill C-25 will allow production from the massive Norman Wells oil fields to continue beyond the year 2008 and possibly to the year 2020. Without this extension the community of Norman Wells would suffer economically since it is dependent on the oil industry to a significant degree.

There is an important human element to this legislation. We are talking about maintaining existing jobs, creating new jobs in a region of Canada with few economic alternatives. We are talking about continuing a way of life and a source of income for families that have depended on the Norman Wells project for many years.

Information gathered from prolonged production and advanced technology demonstrates the extent of the field should be redefined and the expiration date should be extended to capture the full productive capability of the field.

The National Energy Board conducted an independent review of Imperial Oil's assessment. It has corroborated the conclusion that the fringe areas of the oil field extend beyond the 1944 boundaries as well as the corporation's projections on the remaining production life beyond 2008.

(1005)

It is incumbent upon the government as the steward of northern resources on behalf of all Canadians to ensure that Norman Wells field is fully developed. The extension and expansion of the proven area agreement will accomplish this strategic goal.

*Government Orders*

All Canadians stand to win from the full development of the Norman Wells field. The benefits will be most obvious in the north and in Alberta where most of the money that supports the production and operation is spent. Members will be happy to know, Mr. Speaker, that the money is spent in your home province.

Taxpayers across Canada will gain something from the return on the government's one-third investment in Norman Wells. This is expected to bring the government millions in additional revenues after 2008. As well, the government will receive millions of dollars in royalty payments as a result of the extension. These two revenue sources will improve the government's overall financial situation and ease some of the burden on taxpayers.

I am pleased to note that a share of the royalties from Norman Wells will also go to the aboriginal people of the area under the terms of the land claim settlement agreements. This money will be used by the aboriginal beneficiaries to improve conditions in their communities, increase economic development initiatives and generally to build a better future.

Finally, extending the production day for Norman Wells will also revitalize industry interest in the north, particularly as land claim settlements create certainty to open new areas for exploration and development.

By approving Bill C-25 we will be sending a clear message that the Canadian north is an attractive area for investment. There are many arguments in favour of Bill C-25 and the continued production of the Norman Wells oil field. As far as I am aware there are no meaningful arguments against the project and I think members of the House agree.

With this in mind I urge my hon. colleagues to once again demonstrate their support for the bill so that it can be referred to the other place and be quickly promulgated into law. I know that the oil company involved has been waiting patiently for several months for this bill to go through the House and the other place. They are ready to keep on working. I do not think there is any disagreement in the House on this bill.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. René Canuel (Matapédia—Matane):** Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure today to speak on Bill C-25. Although this bill represents only a minor change to the Norman Wells oilfield, it is a change of no small consequence.

The purpose of this bill is to exclude the Norman Wells Amending Agreement about to be signed from the application of the Canada Petroleum Resources Act. In order to understand the reason for this amendment, it is necessary to go back and examine the history of this oil well. It was discovered in 1919 and drilling operations began in 1920.

The site's distance from markets and the economic crisis of the 1930's were unfavourable to the development of the early wells. Extraction and refining were limited to meeting local needs. World War II led to renewed exploration and the construction of a pipeline to Whitehorse. The end of the war in 1945 brought a halt to operations, which had grown from 100 barrels a day in 1940 to a production ranging from 1,500 to 25,800 barrels daily.

In 1944, the government of Canada signed an agreement with Imperial Oil to ensure the development of the Norman Wells field. In 1966, over 2,000 barrels of oil were being produced daily, primarily for shipment to locations in the Mackenzie Valley, the Arctic coast and DEW line radar stations.

(1010)

In 1974, with 54 producing wells, production was 2,738 barrels of oil daily and 4.9 million cubic feet of gas. In 1981, Cabinet allowed Esso Canada to increase its production to 25,000 barrels of crude, which were sent by pipeline to Zama in Alberta.

Since then, more than 200 injection and producing wells have made Norman Wells the fourth largest producing oil field in Canada. The first delivery to the south took place in April 1985 through a 868 kilometer pipeline, 65 years after the discovery of the field.

The 1944 agreement gave exclusive drilling and mineral prospecting rights and privileges for three 21-year periods. The agreement also established the boundaries of the oil field. As I said earlier, the agreement expires in the year 2008.

The Canadian government holds an interest in the project equivalent to a third of the value of production, less a third of all production and development costs, as well as management costs. Esso also undertook to pay five per cent in annual royalties on the other two thirds of its production.

In 1992, production rose to 12.1 million barrels of oil, representing profits of 50 million for the government. The drilling program undertaken in 1984 and new technologies have made it possible to drill horizontal wells, and at the same time to produce the oil located at the boundaries of the field economically.

The new technologies have also revealed that it would be possible to work this field until the year 2020 if its boundaries were extended.

The National Energy Board has approved the expansion of the field to include the outlying area for the purpose of oil recovery in that area. This is when the Canada Petroleum Resources Act comes into play. This act provides for submissions to be made regarding issuance of production interests.

In view of the fact that the outlying area is of no use to other producers, especially considering the associated costs, it

*Government Orders*

becomes necessary to amend the act to allow the extraction of petroleum in that area not covered by the 1944 agreement.

It is important to consider at this point how other stakeholders might view this expansion of the Norman Wells oil field.

The Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers declared itself in agreement with the proposed change to Norman Wells boundaries because of the very special circumstances of the case. However, the Association indicated this change was not to be construed as a precedent with regard to future issuance of interests.

As for the native people, they have given their consent to the project in March 1994 on one condition: that the bill respecting the Dene and Métis land claims settlement come into force before the petroleum resources legislation be amended.

(1015)

This condition was met and the Bloc Québécois is quite pleased that the government respected the wishes of the natives peoples on this issue. Such a departure from its old ways reflects a new course that should be maintained in the future.

Exploring the new area covered in the Norman Wells Amending Agreement to be signed in 1994 seems, on the face of it, like it could benefit all the communities involved. For one thing, it will allow Imperial to invest over \$30 million in a development program, \$10 million of which will be spent directly in that northern area. In addition, 65 direct jobs will be created, 40 of these for northerners, as well as many indirect jobs in the service industry and other areas.

The development project includes a \$6 million contract for drilling equipment. The drilling contract was awarded to a profit-sharing company owned by the Dene and Métis and Imperial. As new technologies will be developed regarding horizontal wells, this company will acquire the necessary expertise to participate in other drilling jobs. You are also looking at some long term investments, particularly in the use of enhanced oil recovery technologies.

We are talking about investments of up to \$100 million, depending on the exploratory period in that particular oil field. This bill appears to accommodate both the oil industry and the native communities that depend on it for their livelihood. It is also important that the federal petroleum resources legislation remain strong with regard to the future issuance of operating interests. As the Official Opposition critic for natural resources, and after discussion with my colleagues, I will not vote against this bill and I do hope it will pay the dividends it seems to be promising.

[*English*]

**Mr. David Chatters (Athabasca):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak to this bill today, the first bill that I will be able to speak

to in my new capacity as Reform Party critic for oil and gas within the Department of Natural Resources.

Bill C-25 addresses an issue in an area of Canada I am quite familiar with, having been involved in the drilling of several wildcat wells in the Norman Wells field fringe area. Bill C-25 contains a minor amendment to the Canadian Petroleum Resources Act in order to exempt the Norman Wells amending agreement which will now be expanded to include the additional lands which are under the jurisdiction of that act.

Although this bill deals with a minor wording change it is important that this bill pass in order to exclude the Norman Wells agreement from the Canadian Petroleum Resources Act so the governor in council can proceed with its action to extend the boundaries.

At the risk of being repetitive I would like to talk briefly about the history of this oil field, discuss the necessity for this bill and talk about the positive actions the governor in council will be taking to extend the life of this field.

There is a long history leading up to this current amendment. The first oil well was drilled in Norman Wells in 1920. Since then it has grown to be the fourth largest producing field in the country. In 1944 Imperial Oil and Canada signed the Norman Wells proven area agreement which included just under 3,300 hectares within its boundaries.

When the Canadian Petroleum Resources Act came into force the Norman Wells proven area already covered by legislation was exempted from the new act. Because of this bill before us today subsequent renewals and expansions will be similarly exempted.

Since the boundaries of the Norman Wells field will be changing to include areas of new production some exemption from the Canadian Petroleum Resources Act is necessary.

(1020)

It is important to note that the original Norman Wells agreement was signed before the Canadian Petroleum Resources Act came into effect. The new land that will be included in the boundary change to the Norman Wells field is the land that would normally come under the Canadian Petroleum Resources Act. This means that without an amendment exploration and production licences on these new lands would have to go to an open bidding process. This amendment is necessary to provide security of tenure for Imperial Oil and allow for the renewed investment and enhanced recovery techniques in this production field.

This amendment will also provide for one-third ownership in the production of these new areas for Canada.

*Government Orders*

In addition to the expansion of the field this amendment allows for another initiative to take place to extend the life of this field. This is the decision by the governor in council to extend the licence of Imperial Oil on the Norman Wells field to the year 2020.

There have been advances in industry extraction techniques. Imperial Oil in the Norman Wells field has pioneered and perfected much of this new technology. It was here at Norman Wells, because much of these reserves lay below the Mackenzie River, that directional and later horizontal drilling have been developed and are now used all over the world. The technology of building islands in a water body that freezes and thaws in the spring when the ice goes out was also developed here and later used in the Mackenzie Delta and the Beaufort Sea.

Other techniques of well workover for production enhancement such as water and gas flooding, formation fracturing and acidization have also been developed in good measure in this field. They have made Canada a world exporter of petroleum production technology. They have allowed us over the last 20 or 25 years to increase the recoverable reserves in Canada's conventional oil fields by up to 15 per cent, preventing the long predicted decline in conventional crude oil production.

Because of these advancements in technology they now believe that the Norman Wells field will be productive well beyond the original date. Therefore it is important that the governor in council proceed with extending this licence so that as much oil as possible can be extracted in a realistic timeframe.

With this bill allowing for the Norman Wells boundaries to be extended and the order in council decision to extend Imperial Oil's licence, Imperial Oil will be given the security of tenure it needs for long term planning and control of overhead costs. This will make this field economically viable for a much longer period.

It has been assured that there is time to realize a return on major investments in new technology. These investments are essential to maximizing the production from this field.

With the extension of the boundaries and licences, Imperial Oil will commence a \$30 million drilling program. This drilling program will be undertaken mostly in the expanded proven area; more specifically, 12 new wells, four for water injection and eight for production, drilled along the field limits of the new boundaries. About one-third of the money, \$10 million, will be spent directly in the north. Most of the remaining \$20 million will be spent in my home province of Alberta.

I would hope this is an indication that this government realizes the importance of providing our resource based industries with predictability and stability in policy environment. If this government starts sending signals to the private sector that it is safe to make long term investment plans, it will lead to

economic growth and the creation of far more permanent jobs than government can hope to achieve through any temporary government initiated make work projects.

This amendment is good for Imperial Oil because it provides a stable planning environment. It is good for the Sahtu Dene and other local residents because they can rely on employment opportunities and a cash infusion into the local economy for many more years. It is good for the Canadian people because it will generate additional oil revenues and royalties.

From my perspective the only thing objectionable about this bill is that in spite of the fact that no party could or did object to this initiative, it has taken over two years to get this simple initiative through this cumbersome, unresponsive process.

Let me and my party affirm our support for this bill and encourage all other members of this House to do so as well.

(1025)

**Mr. Nelson Riis (Kamloops):** Mr. Speaker, I want to join with others in support of this bill, recognizing as the previous speaker has indicated that this amendment will give recognition for technological development by Imperial Oil. It will be good for Imperial Oil. It will be good for the Sahtu Dene and Metis land claims settlement act process.

The Dene in the area will benefit directly in terms of wealth, particularly with the largest contract involved, \$6 million, and a conditional tender given to Shethah Drilling Ltd., a Dene, Metis and Imperial Oil joint venture. This bodes well in terms of future developments in the north and throughout Canada generally.

Also, as the previous speaker has indicated, the people of Canada will benefit from this resource in two ways, through the normal royalty process and also through profit sharing. It seems to me this marries the federal government, the people of Canada, Imperial Oil of Canada and the First Nations people of the north. This is an excellent model on which further northern development ought to be based.

I had a number of questions in terms of what this bill would do. I want to indicate my appreciation to the minister who, with his associates, clarified some of these. For example, I was not certain whether the Sahtu Dene and Metis land claims settlement act had been proclaimed. This was a condition that they had for their support. I was told that has now taken place.

There was concern also because of the new technology involved. The previous speaker indicated that new technology has been developed in this part of Canada, particularly with horizontal drilling to avoid sensitive and fragile ecological areas. Quite frankly this is good technology that will help development throughout other parts of northern Canada and throughout similar environmentally and ecologically sensitive parts of the world.

*Government Orders*

The question was whether as a result of the increased oil flow and the horizontal drilling technique this would influence the royalty system. I have been assured by the minister it will not. The second question was whether there will be ongoing environmental studies watching this new process as a result of the horizontal drilling that is going on. Again the minister indicated that the National Energy Board and other agencies will actually be monitoring this project in terms of environmental concerns.

Also, I wanted to confirm again in terms of precedent setting that this agreement will continue to give one-third of the profits to the people of Canada. After all, we would appreciate that this resource belongs to the people of Canada and they ought to share directly in its development. Again, that has been confirmed.

This \$30 million drilling program producing eight productive wells will not only bring job opportunities to the residents of the area which is certainly needed, but will benefit Canada in the ways I have already mentioned.

I want to say on behalf of my colleagues that we will be supporting this bill enthusiastically. I do want to share the concern raised by the previous speaker that such a straightforward piece of legislation would take so long. We have been watching this inch its way through the parliamentary process. It says something about the way we deal with business here. Perhaps it will add to the changes that will expedite business, particularly something which is so straightforward.

However, I suppose the quid pro quo would be the concern with the Sahtu Dene and Metis land claims settlement act to get their support on this. That took perhaps more time than we had anticipated.

Overall I think the point was well taken. The process here is cumbersome at best and something we must all strive to achieve is expediting the passing of legislation in the future. The world is changing quickly around us and we have yet to get this place up to speed.

**Mr. John Loney (Edmonton North):** Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to speak in favour of this important bill. While it represents a small amendment, Bill C-25 will have important ramifications for Norman Wells and other northern communities. As my colleague, the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, has outlined, two important objectives underlie this bill.

First, Bill C-25 will ensure the responsible management of an important natural resource. We have heard in earlier debate how this legislation offers sound resource management. I am sure most members of this House will agree that such measures are important to our resource base.

(1030)

Let us turn to the second objective of Bill C-25, the creation of a stronger northern economy. Passage of this legislation offers the sustainment and development of employment and business opportunities. I believe that the realization of this objective alone is impetus for this legislation.

A bit of history is necessary in order to fully appreciate the economic benefits the Norman Wells oil field has brought to the north and those it could yet bring with the passage of this legislation.

In 1944 the Canadian government entered into an agreement with Imperial Oil to develop the oil field at Norman Wells in the Mackenzie Valley. The proven area agreement that was adopted set boundaries and a production limit for the field.

At the time it was predicted that the field would be productive until the year 2008 at the latest, but with today's more sophisticated technology we know that the Norman Wells oil field has a much longer productive life. In fact, it is expected to remain productive until at least 2020.

Technological advances over the 50 years have also led to a more advanced knowledge of the extent of the oil pool at the Norman Wells area. However, it has been shown that a small part of the pool lies outside the original proven area boundaries. As hon. members know, Bill C-25 extends the proven area boundaries to include all the proven reserves.

What does all this mean for the people of Norman Wells and other northern communities? The bottom line is that it means greater economic stability and growth. The Norman Wells project injects millions of dollars into the northern economy each year.

Over 50 companies in Norman Wells and other northern communities receive a substantial amount of business directly from the oil project. This says nothing of the spinoff business generated for those and other companies.

For a better appreciation, consider for a moment how businesses would be affected by reduced spending by Norman Wells employees alone. Considering the project provides annual wages to the northern residents in the range of \$3.7 million, this loss would most certainly have devastating economic effects on small business.

Now consider the positive implications of increasing the size and production life of Norman Wells. The passage of this legislation paves the way for a \$30 million drilling program which will be undertaken by Imperial Oil, the operating company of Norman Wells.

This project and the extension of the field's productive life in general will increase short term employment and stabilize long term employment in the Norman Wells area. It is estimated that an additional 25 person-years of indirect employment will also be created in the north.

*Government Orders*

Northern businesses will also benefit from the opportunity to learn up to date horizontal drilling technology. Future business and employment opportunities will be enhanced for these firms not only in the north, but also in Alberta and B.C. where there is a shortage of such expertise.

The economic benefits of this small amendment to the Canada Petroleum Resources Act do not end at the 60th parallel. Indeed, all Canadians stand to benefit from the passage of this bill.

Not only will the Government of Canada's financial position improve from the additional corporate and personal tax revenues, the government's one-third investment in Norman Wells is expected to bring in millions of extra dollars.

This project will also be an economic benefit to Albertans. At a time when Canadians are looking for economic stimuli, this is clearly a wonderful opportunity. I urge hon. members to lend their support to this bill so economic renewal can continue.

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

\* \* \*

(1035)

**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE ACT**

**Hon. Ralph E. Goodale (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food)** moved that Bill C-49, an act to amend the Department of Agriculture Act and to amend or repeal certain other acts, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to begin the debate on Bill C-49, an act to amend the Department of Agriculture Act and to make related amendments to other acts.

In some ways this bill is a reflection of the kinds of changes the Canadian agriculture and agri-food industry has undergone in recent years and can anticipate in future years.

The amendments add the word "agri-food" to the department's name, reflecting a recognition that the department's mandate extends far beyond the farm gate. This change also reflects a recognition that what happens on the farm and beyond the farm gate are intimately linked together. The strength of primary agriculture depends to a great extent on the strength of all those downstream in the food chain who process and use agricultural products.

The bill also defines more precisely the department's responsibilities for research. The existing act only mentions research indirectly through a reference to experimental farm stations. This bill broadens the definition to cover research related to agriculture and products derived from agriculture, including the operation of experimental farm stations.

This clarification of the mandate of the department in no way takes away from this government's commitment to Canadian farmers as primary producers. In fact it strengthens it by ensuring that the importance of maintaining and nurturing the health and prosperity of the entire agriculture and agri-food industry is upheld.

Farmers are and will always be at the centre of the agriculture industry. As such the department will continue to devote a very large amount of its resources to farmers. In addition, there is a growing need to be aware of the products of Canadian agri-food processors. More and more we must be aware that market development is important not just for raw commodities but increasingly for value added products.

There are opportunities for the agriculture industry to provide ingredients for pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, paints and energy products, in addition to food products. More and more we must be assured that the systems are in place to produce those products and to ensure they reach their market destinations.

Before that process even begins we must ensure that the kinds of crops and livestock demanded by these markets are being produced and we must ensure that the research and technology are there to transform those crops and livestock into the processed products in demand worldwide. That is where the department's research function comes into play, both in developing the commodities that form the basis of the industry and in pioneering new uses for them.

The research branch of the department has been conducting research to the benefit of both the primary and secondary agriculture industries for many, many years and with great distinction. The changes in this bill merely reflect that ongoing work in the definition of the department's responsibilities for research.

It is fitting to be talking about the mandate of the Department of Agriculture and Agri-food at this time. As we approach the beginning of a new century it is time to take a look at where we would like Canada's agriculture and agri-food industry to be in the years 2000, 2005 and 2010.

This industry is a very important one to this nation. It represents 8 per cent of Canada's gross domestic product and accounts for 1.8 million Canadian jobs. That is 15 per cent of all of the employment in this country. Agricultural and agri-food exports equal more than \$13 billion annually. In 1992 farm inputs valued at \$10.5 billion translated into farm products worth \$20 billion. That translated into a further \$44 billion worth of processed food and beverage products.

*Government Orders*

(1040)

The agriculture and agri-food sector enhances the quality of life in both rural and urban Canada. It ensures a safe, high quality food supply. Because of Canada's agriculture and agri-food sector, in comparison to the rest of the world Canadians spend the second lowest proportion of their disposable incomes on food.

It is important to ensure that the success of this industry so vital to all Canadians continues. Canada's agriculture and agri-food industry must be able to compete in a rapidly changing world. A common vision is needed, shared by government and industry, to take the agriculture and agri-food sector into the 21st century. In that way we will together be able to make the kinds of decisions necessary to secure our future.

The world in which Canada's agriculture and agri-food industry does business is not the same today as it was 25 years ago or 10 years ago or even 5 years ago. For example, in the grains and oilseeds sector alone markets for Canadian products have changed dramatically. It was not all that long ago that we depended upon traditional billion dollar bulk grain markets in places like the former Soviet Union and China.

Many of those markets have been replaced by more varied and somewhat smaller and more individual markets. Customers now more and more are buying to exacting specifications. Our U.S. market has grown to almost 60 per cent of agri-food exports so far this year.

By the year 2010 rural population is expected to increase by another two billion people. Over the next five years incomes in regions like Asia and the Pacific are expected to rise by 6 per cent to 12 per cent per year. Incomes are also expected to rise in areas such as Africa, Latin America and the Middle East.

With these increases in income and the changes in the quality of life that it brings, there will be a shift in global consumption patterns to more animal protein products and more highly processed food products than ever before. At the same time, key export markets such as the United States remain crucial to the continued growth and development of our industry here in Canada.

On the domestic side we are also confronted with changing marketplaces and fiscal constraints on federal and provincial budgets. Is the Canadian agriculture and agri-food sector ready to respond to changing demands internationally? Is it ready to respond to changing imperatives on the domestic front?

The industry is strong in a great many ways. The value of agricultural output continues to increase by about 2 per cent annually. Productivity growth rates are high by international standards. Many processing firms are shifting to focus more and more on world markets.

Canada's agriculture and agri-food industry has a solid basis in abundant natural resources and sound environmental practices, is productive in skilled human resources, has a well developed infrastructure and institutions and a reasonably stable operating environment. However, there are areas where we must do better.

Right now Canada has higher processing and marketing costs and less private sector research than many of our major competitors. Although Canada is exporting more of our higher valued agri-food products to the United States, our imports are growing faster than our exports and we are missing opportunities for marketing higher valued agri-food products. There is little growth in our exports of higher valued products to countries other than the United States, in particular to Asian markets where standards of living and demand are growing rapidly.

(1045)

In 1993 our agricultural private sector, supported by federal and provincial ministers of agriculture, set a target for agriculture and agri-food exports of \$20 billion by the year 2000. To achieve that goal, industry and federal and provincial governments will need to work harder to meet the challenges of the global marketplace.

Right now our growth rate in agri-food exports is not sufficient to meet that target of \$20 billion by the year 2000. Change is needed if the Canadian agriculture and agri-food industry is to grow and prosper into the next century.

If we look at the grains and oilseeds sector as an example, it is clear that change is beginning to take place. Farmers are beginning to diversify out of traditional crops such as wheat and into more new crops such as mustard seed, canary seed, lentils and especially canola.

Acreage of specialty crops grew almost 130 per cent in the period from 1988 to 1994. At the same time acreage of wheat fell by about 15 per cent. With farmers beginning to diversify out of traditional crops, new demands and challenges are being placed on our grain handling and transportation system as these different crops are moved into export position.

In the last crop year, as we all know, we experienced some very serious problems with moving grains and oilseeds partly due to a rail car shortage and a number of other factors that conspired together at the same time. Those issues, as I have discussed in the House on other occasions, are being dealt with so that the kinds of problems experienced in the last crop year can be avoided to the largest extent humanly possible in the current crop year and into the future.

The whole experience with our grain handling and transportation system brings into focus the question of whether the system in Canada is sufficiently equipped to meet the demands of a rapidly changing international marketplace.

*Government Orders*

On another front we have to look at technology and we have to ensure that Canada is not being left behind. For example, non-food uses for grains, oilseeds and other agricultural products are expected to rise dramatically in the years immediately ahead. Forecasts in the United States and Europe predict that up to 50 per cent of raw agricultural materials will be used in the future for non-food industrial purposes.

Is Canada investing sufficiently in the kinds of research required to develop new products from our grains, our oilseeds and our other agricultural output?

There are many other issues on the agenda with respect to the renewal of our supply management systems, with respect to our red meat sector, with respect to horticulture issues and with respect to challenges affecting the broad spectrum of Canadian agriculture.

Clearly, as we face all the issues and challenges that provide us at the same time with enormous opportunity, we must develop a common vision to ensure the decisions taken today and the initiatives undertaken in the future are part of a comprehensive long term plan for a progressive, competitive and successful agriculture and agri-food sector.

I believe such a vision for the future must include at least five key elements. First it must be founded on economic reality. If the base is artificial then the plan will soon collapse.

The fundamental reality is the marketplace. We must produce what the world wants to buy. We must do it cost effectively. We must diversify. We must be good managers and world class marketers. We must build strategic alliances internally and internationally. We must ensure that the benefits flow fairly among all our regions and all the players in that complicated food chain.

(1050)

Second, our vision must recognize that rural Canada is not a backwater. It can in fact be the location of wealth generation, economic growth and new jobs.

Diversification on and off the farm, value added processing, and niche marketing including exports, are all part of the equation for rural Canada, as are research and development and information technology to link the kitchen table in Sedley, Saskatchewan, to Toronto and Vancouver and indeed Osaka and Hong Kong.

A third requirement for our vision is financial security. I have not met a farmer yet who tells me that he or she wants subsidization. What they want is a decent marketplace with a decent return.

Well managed farms should expect a reasonable rate of return even though in some cases it may be supplemented by some amount of off farm income. The weather and other production

and marketing risks will always necessitate a farm safety net program, but federal and provincial tax dollars are scarce and support in the form of safety nets must not distort production or marketing signals.

Fourth, we must achieve resource and environmental sustainability. We need a sensitive and sensible balance among social, economic and environmental considerations founded on enhancing our resource base, maintaining surrounding ecosystems, and developing, adapting and marketing new technologies to protect our environment. Our environmental stewardship could become a unique new Canadian export opportunity.

The fifth and final element in this vision that I would mention at the moment is the maintenance of a safe and secure food supply. That is really the foundation upon which everything else rests. Food safety has been and must continue to be a priority in and for Canada. Our reputation for safety and quality is vital to our domestic consumers and is a critical advantage in the international marketplace.

We must reduce our inspection costs while not impairing but rather enhancing our inspection system overall. That can be achieved by a national, non-duplicative system tuned to market requirements and international standards with alternative delivery options.

What I have mentioned in the last few moments is a framework in which I believe we can structure a sound and solid game plan for the Canadian agriculture and agri-food sector. It is not yet all inclusive and it is certainly not cast in stone, but I think it is a basis upon which to begin.

We cannot foretell the future. Neither can we forestall it. What we must do is define our best case scenario, where we really want to get to, and set out the steps needed to make that outcome most likely. I hope we can do it with the largest degree of consensus and teamwork.

I close by saying I am extremely confident about Canada's agri-food sector and I am very ambitious about its future. There are no guarantees but as Wayne Gretzky once said, you will miss 100 per cent of the shots you never take. We need to start shooting the puck at the net and we need to score. That is what this vision for the future of Canadian agriculture is intended to achieve.

With a strong market orientation and the careful use of scarce tax dollars, with diversification, innovation and value added, with thoughtful stewardship of our natural resources, with the enhancement of our human resources, with a sharp focus on rural Canada and local communities, with high international standards and a cohesive team Canada attitude we can meet the objectives outlined in our red book last year about growth, jobs and security. Agriculture and agri-food can play a very large role.

(1055)

*[Translation]*

**Mr. André Caron (Jonquière):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak on behalf of the Bloc Québécois on Bill C-49, introduced by the Minister of Agriculture to amend the act governing his department.

Essentially, the bill changes the department's name to Department of Agriculture and Agri-Food. As the minister explained during his speech, the new name confirms that today the government's agricultural responsibilities are not restricted to helping farmers; their economic well-being and survival are largely dependent on the need to process, market and distribute their products.

I think a country has a responsibility to ensure the smooth development of its agricultural sector, whose impact on the lives of nations and peoples is well known.

In his speech, the minister identified his responsibilities with respect to marketing. I think it is an important sector. In Quebec, I heard about demands made by fine cheese producers, for example, who saw their industry's problem as one of marketing. I hope that this bill will enable the department, in cases like these, to help our producers market their products.

Of course, in a modern state, the agriculture department's responsibilities go beyond dealing with agricultural production as such. I think a modern state's responsibilities extend to marketing and to helping and supporting agricultural producers and processors. With the globalization of markets, we must export abroad.

I think, as the minister pointed out in his speech, that the time for exporting raw commodities is over. We, for instance, used to export enormous quantities of wheat to Russia. I think that we must refine our policies in this area and take steps to process our products right here, because agriculture—as the minister also mentioned—is a major source of jobs in Canada. The downstream sector in agriculture, the whole processing industry, is very important in that respect.

It is therefore important that the Department of Agriculture work to improve our competitiveness, our independence from foreign countries, and to ensure the future of our agricultural system, and that the department do its part to promote research. The bill points out that the department has responsibilities in this area.

I would like to point out how ironic it is that Bill C-50 on the Canadian Wheat Board, proposing that checkoffs be made from sales proceeds to support research, was tabled last Monday. I do not know if, in the future, other agricultural sectors will be asked to make the same effort. If not, one has to wonder whether we are not asking wheat producers to subsidize agricultural research twice through their taxes and the checkoffs? It remains to be seen.

*S. O. 31*

You can see from my remarks that the Bloc Québécois supports this bill, even though it does not address at all the matter of overlap. Mr. Speaker, I will be happy to clarify what I mean after Question Period.

**The Deputy Speaker:** It being eleven o'clock, pursuant to Standing Order 30(5), the House will now proceed to Statements by Members, pursuant to Standing Order 31.

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## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

*[Translation]*

### MARATHON OF MONTREAL ISLAND

**Mr. Martin Cauchon (Outremont):** Mr. Speaker, I am proud today to commend and congratulate the organizers and all the volunteers who made possible the third Marathon of Montreal Island, held last Sunday in the cities of Outremont, Mount Royal and Saint-Laurent, and in which I myself had the honour to take part.

This international sporting event provides direct economic benefits estimated at several million dollars for the greater Montreal region. Again this year, it drew more than 6,000 athletes, including many from all over the world. In short, the September 18 marathon was a resounding success.

In closing, I wish to especially point out the participation of 1,200 volunteers who worked together to make this major sporting event such a great success. I want to draw attention to the excellent work they did and I thank them very sincerely for it.

\* \* \*

### 1992 REFERENDUM

**Mr. Paul Crête (Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup):** Mr. Speaker, once again, the Prime Minister of Canada takes a malicious pleasure in making Quebec pay for belonging to Canada.

This prime minister has done everything to make Quebecers like him. He was involved in the proclamation of the war measures in 1970. He was responsible for the night of the long knives. He is the one who thanked the Premier of Newfoundland, Clyde Wells, for killing the Meech Lake Accord.

Now he is acting like a bad debtor by refusing to pay Quebec back for its contribution to the 1992 referendum, which was held under Quebec law with the agreement of the federal government then in power.

Mr. Prime Minister, you are being consistent only with yourself when you show such contempt for the Quebec people, who are able to judge you when they see who is defending Quebec's interests in this House. You accuse us of being elected under false representations; we reply to you that you are robbing the Quebec people of pride and honour.

*S. O. 31*

[*English*]

### LAND CLAIMS

**Mr. Philip Mayfield (Cariboo—Chilcotin):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring to the attention of this House the need to open B.C. land claims negotiations to the general public.

On September 20 Premier Mike Harcourt bowed to public pressure and issued a statement claiming to bring a new openness to the process. Steps have been taken to include local municipal governments in treaty negotiations but more must be done.

As the premier recently noted, closed doors negotiations and mandatory confidentiality statements have undermined public trust.

There is a mood of uncertainty and fear in affected communities. Negotiations have been secretly carried out and the average citizen is scared. Public policy is best decided in open meetings, not behind closed doors. Let the people who have to live with the decisions have a say in the decisions.

I call on the federal government to follow the premier's lead and allow the average citizen to be a part of negotiations. This is necessary to restore a mood of trust and public confidence to a process long marred by unwarranted secrecy.

\* \* \*

### SASKATCHEWAN

**Mrs. Georgette Sheridan (Saskatoon—Humboldt):** Mr. Speaker, I have three topics, Saskatchewan, immigration and birthdays.

My province of Saskatchewan joined Confederation in 1905. It was another Liberal Prime Minister, Laurier, whose visionary immigration policies opened the west to settlement by immigrants from around the world.

Settlers came to a land that Saskatchewan's Connie Kaldor describes as harsh and unforgiving. This land offered independence and opportunity, treasures precious enough to be worth a little dust and frostbite.

Next year marks Saskatchewan's 90th birthday, the 90th anniversary of Laurier's western visit. In only 90 years, less than one lifetime, Saskatchewan pioneers have taken us from oxcarts to fax machines.

I think of Herbert S. Wright, born on this date in 1907. An English immigrant, Stan and his wife Peggy raised three children. Starting a family at the beginning of the great depression was not easy, yet the Wrights faced the challenge, prospered and were stronger for it.

Thanks to immigrants, pioneers we sometimes call them, Canada is stronger too.

\* \* \*

### MEXICO

**Mr. Andrew Telegdi (Waterloo):** Mr. Speaker, August 21, 1994 was election day in Mexico. I, along with the member for Louis-Hébert, was part of a nine member delegation for the International Centre for Human Rights based in Montreal, headed by Ed Broadbent and funded by the Canadian government.

We were part of a group of a thousand foreign observers invited by Action Civica, a non-partisan organization involving tens of thousands of Mexicans who are fighting for fair elections and a civil society in Mexico.

(1105)

By all accounts the election outcome in Mexico, despite many shortcomings, represented the will of the Mexican people. Given our closer relationships with Mexico through NAFTA it is of great interest to Canadians that Mexico continue on the road to democratization and the building of a civil society.

Canada and Mexico can be strategic allies, ensuring that NAFTA is fair to the three countries involved. I ask my colleagues in the House to join with me in congratulating the Mexican people and Action Civica in their quest.

I further call on this Parliament to work on strengthening our ties with the Mexican government to promote the democratization and the building of a civil society in Mexico.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

### CANADIAN UNITY

**Mrs. Jan Brown (Calgary Southeast):** Mr. Speaker, as a Canadian and a politician, I have just spent a unique and enlightening summer, and I would like to tell the House about it.

Given how much talk there is about the future of Quebec within Canada, many Canadians discuss the issue and share their views with one another. This is what I wanted to do in an active way during the summer.

I went to Quebec several times to study French and to get in contact with people and their milieu. I believe there are always two sides to a coin and at least two perceptions of a problem and its solution.

I wanted to go to the source to find out and to better understand what people think. This is what I did during the summer and I thank all those who helped me get that better understanding of the situation.

S. O. 31

**1992 REFERENDUM**

**Mr. Antoine Dubé (Lévis):** Mr. Speaker, Quebecers have long known that they should not take the federal government's word. They are also used to being forced to fight to get the millions of dollars owed to them. But what really hurts is to have to put up with the mockery and sarcasm of all the Liberal MPs when claiming the \$26 million owed to Quebec taxpayers following the referendum on the Charlottetown accord.

It hurts even more when this sarcasm comes from the Prime Minister, the Minister of Finance and the Minister responsible for Public Service Renewal. Some day, all government members from Quebec will have to explain why they spurned with such delight the justified claims of the Bloc Québécois.

Given their chuckling and their sarcasm, must we conclude that this is the price to pay to remain in the Canadian federation?

\* \* \*

[English]

**HUMAN RIGHTS**

**Ms. Mary Clancy (Halifax):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberal members of Parliament stand strong in their support of human rights. We stand firm behind the principles of Bill C-41 which include sexual orientation as a ground to be protected when an aggravating factor in sentencing for criminal offences.

The Government of Canada stands firm behind this bill as it stands firm in its belief that human rights acts and the charter protect Canadians from all forms of discrimination.

Sexual orientation is one of those protected heads. We promised in the red book to amend the federal Human Rights Act. We look forward to the fulfilment of that promise to make human rights the Canadian hallmark of true civilization.

\* \* \*

**GUN CONTROL**

**Mrs. Karen Kraft Sloan (York—Simcoe):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians on both sides of the highly emotional, polarized gun control debate must move from their extreme positions and work to find common ground. Legitimate concerns of responsible gun owners will be listened to.

We must not equate gun owners with criminals. However, we must also work to prevent the abuse of firearms.

The shocking brutality of domestic violence must be recognized and understood by all Canadians. In Canada 42 per cent of women killed by husbands are shot, 80 per cent with rifles and shotguns. The majority of these guns are legally owned.

It is a privilege, not a right, to own a firearm. We must do whatever possible to ensure our communities, homes and children are safe.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**FEDERAL PUBLIC SERVANTS**

**Mr. Mark Assad (Gatineau—La Lièvre):** Mr. Speaker, for many years, federal employees working in the National Capital Region have had to cope with upheavals that have changed their lives. The Conservative government destroyed the morale of the region's public servants, but it paid a price for its ill-advised partisan policies.

All studies on decentralizing federal services should be suspended immediately. We need a five-year moratorium on transfer of public servants.

(1110)

Treasury Board should prepare specific guidelines that are sensible, cost-conscious, and consider the impact on public service morale and whether services will really be improved.

As members of the National Capital caucus, we intend to defend our position and demonstrate that these plans are a big mistake. Specific guidelines issued by Treasury Board would prevent the party in power from transferring services for political reasons.

\* \* \*

**1992 REFERENDUM**

**Mr. André Caron (Jonquière):** Mr. Speaker, how can we trust a federal government that repudiates verbal agreements made with the former Premier of Quebec and member of the great Liberal family?

Everyone saw Mr. Bourassa say in the Quebec National Assembly that there was an agreement on referendum costs. The government's attitude is astonishing, when we consider that the same federal government, on the basis of a commitment by an unknown individual, approved a transaction that was totally unacceptable, in the case of Ginn Publishing.

This government's double standard shows that many Quebecers are right to distrust federal politicians who fail to keep their word once they have won the election.

It is a sad reflection on democracy, and Quebecers will not forget that in Canada, they must pay twice for the federal referendum and that the word of a Quebecer who is Prime Minister in Ottawa does not mean a thing.

*Oral Questions*

[English]

**EMERGENCY PERSONNEL**

**Mr. Jim Gouk (Kootenay West—Revelstoke):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to notify my fellow MPs that I intend to bring forward a very important private member's bill that could likely save the life of a firefighter or police officer in the near future.

The bill would require hospital officials to notify emergency response personnel when they have inadvertently come into contact with an infectious disease while carrying out their life saving duties. This disclosure would be strictly private and confidential.

In an age when contagious diseases ranging from HIV to hepatitis are on the rise in Canada, protection for emergency personnel is needed more than ever. Lives are at stake here.

I ask the government to give my bill its most serious consideration once introduced. A formal symposium on this issue will be held in Ottawa next week. I feel it would be a sign of goodwill if all hon. members were to recognize the potential danger our invaluable emergency service personnel now find themselves in and pledge to resolve this dangerous situation.

\* \* \*

**GUN CONTROL**

**Mr. John Bryden (Hamilton—Wentworth):** Mr. Speaker, a large number of legitimate gun owners gathered on Parliament Hill yesterday to express their concerns about the government's pending gun control legislation.

They listened to the assurances of the justice minister and, in their turn, submitted a lengthy petition of many thousands of names.

The time for the presentation of petitions yesterday had passed. I wish them to know that their petition was promptly given to the Clerk of the House to review it for possible presentation in this Chamber or for formal delivery to the Minister of Justice.

\* \* \*

**TEAM CANADA**

**Mr. John O'Reilly (Victoria—Haliburton):** Mr. Speaker, during the summer months our country hosted the Commonwealth Games. I am proud to say that Team Canada turned in its best performance ever. Our team won a record 128 medals: 40 gold, 42 silver and 46 bronze.

I would like to congratulate all Canadians who participated in the games. In particular, I would like to congratulate two of Canada's athletes who hail from my riding of Victoria—Haliburton in the province of Ontario. Nancy Sweetnam of Lindsay won a silver medal in the 400 metre individual medley and a

bronze medal in the 200 metre individual medley. Linda Szulga, who hails from Burnt River, Ontario, won a bronze medal in the pairs smallbore rifle competition.

These women represented Canada with a great deal of class and sportsmanship during the games and sacrificed many hours to train for their event.

Once again I salute their achievements and urge all members to applaud the fine showing by Team Canada at Victoria in August.

\* \* \*

**THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Ms. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West):** Mr. Speaker, this government places a high priority on sustainable development, the joint goals of achieving a clean environment and a strong, internationally competitive economy.

That is why yesterday the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment and the Minister of Industry announced a new \$57.5 million national strategy for the Canadian environmental industry.

The environmental industry strategy was developed after extensive consultations with the industry, with all levels of government and with industry associations.

(1115)

This strategy will improve the access of the environmental industry to government programs and services, support cost effective technology development and commercialization, secure dominance in the growing Canadian market and increase exports of environmental technology.

Canada's industry has an important role to play in helping Canada achieve sustainable development, and the government is firmly committed to strengthening this sector of our economy.

**ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**

[Translation]

**SOCIAL PROGRAM REFORM**

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie):** Mr. Speaker, in a powerful report, the Council on Social Development expresses its concerns regarding the increasing poverty in Canada. The council concludes that although we may have to review our social programs they are still working. What is not working however is the labour market.

My question is for the person speaking on behalf of the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister.

**An hon. member:** Put your question.

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Duceppe:** I am just about to do so. I was looking about to see who could give me an answer, as there are not too many people in here this morning.

Does the minister not agree than instead of reforming our social programs, the government must put forward concrete job creation measures since, as the council pointed out, it is not social programs which are not working, but rather jobs which are lacking?

[English]

**Hon. Ralph E. Goodale (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food):** Mr. Speaker, I have a couple of points to make in response to the hon. member's question on behalf of my colleague, the Minister of Human Resources Development.

It needs to be pointed out, as the minister did yesterday in some remarks, that the report of the Canadian Council on Social Development covered a period of time that ended in 1991. Therefore some of its statistical information is more than three years old.

To be fully accurate any report on poverty must take into account the rapidly changing labour market, which I think is implied in the hon. member's question, and the need to direct young people into developing job sectors that have long term potential.

I am sure the hon. member will have noted, not only in our red book proposals from the election campaign of last year but also in the throne speech, in the budget and in all the activities of the Minister of Human Resources Development, that the entire focus was upon the growth of the Canadian economy and the creation of jobs for Canadians.

The statistics would show that in the first nine or ten months of our administration a very substantial beginning has been made. It is not nearly enough yet, but there has been very good progress at the beginning of the term of the government.

[Translation]

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie):** Mr. Speaker, could the agriculture minister explain how he is able to claim that a reform aimed at reducing costs by cutting social programs can create jobs?

[English]

**Hon. Ralph E. Goodale (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food):** Mr. Speaker, as the Minister of Human Resources Development pointed out on many occasions in the House, the objective of the reform process upon which he has embarked is to transform the Canadian system into one that prepares Canadians for the changing requirements of the job market.

Rather than acting just as a net to catch people when they need special assistance, it is transformed into a system to help them

reintegrate into the workforce and be fully prepared for the job opportunities that must exist in the future.

[Translation]

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie):** Mr. Speaker, for a change in the social system, this is a real change indeed! In Quebec alone, there are 22,000 unemployed workers who are no longer eligible for UI benefits and the government reform is going to add thousands more to that number, forcing them onto welfare. In the past year, in Quebec alone, 20,000 more people have been added to the welfare roll. It is a real change indeed, Mr. Speaker.

(1120)

Will the Prime Minister, or the Minister of Agriculture, recognize that the government itself is adding to poverty by making these unjustified and inhuman unemployment insurance cuts?

[English]

**Hon. Ralph E. Goodale (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food):** Mr. Speaker, the government's entire objective is to create economic growth and with that new jobs for Canadians.

It bears noting that since last November we have been successful in assisting in the creation of 275,000 Canadian jobs, including 79,000 in the province of Quebec.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**MONTREAL ECONOMY**

**Mr. Roger Pomerleau (Anjou—Rivière-des-Prairies):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister.

The report of the Canadian Council on Social Development identifies Montreal as the Canadian city with the highest number of people living under the poverty line; 30 per cent of the population, or 386,000 households, live under the poverty line in Montreal. This is more than twice that of all the Atlantic provinces combined.

Considering how serious the situation is in Montreal, will the Prime Minister undertake to implement an economic recovery strategy for that city, because the temporary infrastructure program will clearly not be enough?

[English]

**Hon. Ralph E. Goodale (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food):** Mr. Speaker, the infrastructure program commenced by the government in literally the first few hours after we took office last November has been a remarkable success story with the mayors, municipalities and provincial governments virtually everywhere across the country.

*Oral Questions*

The minister responsible for infrastructure could add more detail. However, as far as I know without exception it has been heralded as a good and successful program. It is serving a very good purpose in establishing jobs for Canadians in the short term period while that program is in place over a span of about two years.

More important, that program will renew and refurbish the physical underpinning of infrastructure in every province and in most communities from coast to coast in the country, giving us a modern infrastructure base upon which to build economic development for the future.

The benefit of the program is being felt in the city of Montreal, just as it is in my home city of Regina and in all communities in between. That was the first major initiative of the government with respect to economic growth and job creation for the future.

As the hon. member will know, we have many other plans in the development process at the present time. I think he will find as those plans come to fruition that communities such as the city of Montreal and all others in Canada will be able to feel the positive impact.

[Translation]

**Mr. Roger Pomerleau (Anjou—Rivière-des-Prairies):** Mr. Speaker, does the Prime Minister intend to announce in the near future assistance measures for defence industry conversion, given that 10,000 jobs are in jeopardy in the Montreal area?

[English]

**Mr. Dennis J. Mills (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Industry):** Mr. Speaker, the Department of Industry is doing a whole range of activities that are relevant to the member's question.

In terms of the defence industry productivity program, we have undertaken a very aggressive review and restructuring of the program so that we will be able to leverage the limited resources we have in that fund and to assist defence industries in converting so they will be much more in touch with knowledge based industries that are emerging as a new job creation force.

We are also giving them added marketing in their conversion to new industries. We must never forget the fact that as a government we are leaning very hard on all financial institutions of the country to become much more progressive in their lending activities and their service activities for small and medium sized entrepreneurs. As a government we believe that is where our greatest hope for putting people back to work rests.

(1125)

**REGISTERED RETIREMENT SAVINGS PLAN**

**Mr. Ray Speaker (Lethbridge):** Mr. Speaker, I raise a question today of major concern in the minds of millions of Canadians. It is about their savings; it is about their retirement.

My question is for the Minister of Finance. Why is the government considering taxing RRSPs?

**Hon. Douglas Peters (Secretary of State (International Financial Institutions)):** Mr. Speaker, I keep hearing about new taxes from the Reform Party. I do not hear the Minister of Finance discussing new taxes.

First I heard of a carbon tax. Now I hear of a tax on RRSPs. All these suggestions of new taxes come from members of the Reform Party and not a single idea on a cut in spending comes from them.

**Mr. Ray Speaker (Lethbridge):** Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Secretary of State for International Financial Institutions.

The Prime Minister, the Minister of Finance and now the minister responsible for financial institutions have been unclear, indefinite, and have not made a statement to the Canadian people indicating that the government is not prepared to tax RRSPs.

If the minister is so sure of himself, would he stand in his place and say to the Canadian people that there will be no taxation on RRSPs during the term of this Parliament?

**Hon. Douglas Peters (Secretary of State (International Financial Institutions)):** Mr. Speaker, as I am sure you know and as I am sure members of the Reform Party will find out with their experience in Parliament, new taxes are announced in budgets. The budget is coming down next February.

In the meantime we will put out a paper in the fall. It will be referred to the finance committee and we will be able to listen to all the ideas of the Reform Party in the finance committee about taxation proposals.

**Mr. Ray Speaker (Lethbridge):** Mr. Speaker, I could only conclude from the answer of the minister that the possibility of new taxes for Canadians is there and that we have to be concerned about it.

The minister recognizes that RRSPs are no different from other pension plans. RRSPs were created so that self-employed people in Canada could save for their retirement.

My question is for the minister. Is the government not only considering taxing RRSPs but also considering taxing government pension plans and private pension plans as well?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Douglas Peters (Secretary of State (International Financial Institutions)):** Mr. Speaker, let me repeat that I keep hearing about new taxes only from the Reform Party. I hear about taxes on RRSPs. Now I hear about taxes on pension plans, on government pension plans, and I hear it from the Reform Party.

All these ideas about new taxes are coming from members of the Reform Party. Do they have a suggestion for cutting spending? Please let us have some ideas on that.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**1992 REFERENDUM**

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday, as he was leaving the House of Commons, the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs started his media scrum by stating: "The federal government owes nothing to Quebec". How arrogant! As for the Prime Minister, he keeps saying that he needs to get a bill before he can pay the Quebec taxpayers the \$26 million he owes them.

The minister knows full well that the people of Quebec paid twice for the referendum, once for the referendum in Quebec and again for the one held in the rest of Canada. Why then persist obstinately in refusing to pay what they owe to Quebec?

**Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister responsible for Public Service Renewal):** Mr. Speaker, on October 26, 1992, two referendums were held in Canada: one under the federal referendum act and another, under Bill 150 and the Quebec referendum act. These are two different acts. For example, the residency requirements are not the same in the Quebec legislation as in the federal legislation. Therefore, there is no legal basis for paying the government of Quebec for holding a referendum under its own provincial legislation.

(1130)

The issue being raised could only be settled if we had in our files a clear agreement to waive the application of the act. But there is no evidence of such a document.

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval):** Mr. Speaker, is the minister's response not proof in itself of this government's failure to recognize that Quebec is different from the rest of Canada? Is it not a tacit admission of the fact they are unable to accept this fundamental difference for one thing? Now, I would like to ask him: is the Premier of Quebec stating before the Quebec National Assembly that there was an agreement not sufficient proof of the existence of such an agreement? Does the minister doubt the word of the former Premier of Quebec?

**Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister responsible for Public Service Renewal):** Mr. Speaker, in response to the first part of the hon. member's question, if Premier Bourassa decided to hold a referendum under his own legislation, he obviously believed it was for the best political advantage of both himself and the province to have a separate referendum.

As for the second part of the question, I cannot help but wonder: if an agreement did exist between Premier Bourassa and Mr. Mulroney, and then Mrs. Kim Campbell, why then did neither Mr. Mulroney nor Mrs. Campbell express their agreement or pay a debt they presumably undertook to pay?

\* \* \*

[English]

**HEALTH**

**Mr. Grant Hill (MacLeod):** The health minister has stated that Canada's blood supply system does not need to have as strict standards as those in the U.S. Frankly, that is hogwash. Will the minister raise her standards so that all Canadians will once again feel safe?

**Hon. Diane Marleau (Minister of Health):** Mr. Speaker, our system of blood collection is among the best in the world. What is happening with the FDA, and I will repeat it again, is a question of different regulations to meet different systems, one system not being superior to the other.

That being said, we are working with the FDA to harmonize those regulations, which would help us ship plasma to the States. We are going to continue to look at any possible way that we can improve the safety of our blood supply.

**Mr. Grant Hill (MacLeod):** Mr. Speaker, that is actually the first time I have heard the minister say that she is concerned about an improvement to the system which she has continually said is excellent and needs no changes. Frankly the patients, the people of Canada, expect no more hidebound, old fashioned statements. Rather, they would prefer to see changes that will improve our system.

Will this minister stop making those old fashioned statements that simply try to cover her tracks?

**Hon. Diane Marleau (Minister of Health):** Mr. Speaker, I have been very clear during this whole debate. We have taken every step since I have been minister of health to ensure that we are using everything we know to guarantee the safety of the blood supply and we will continue to do that.

It bothers me a great deal to have responsible people continuing to spread uncertainty when every day in every hospital across this land our blood supply system saves lives. Let us continue to encourage donors to move forward and donate their blood to continue to give the gift of life.

## Oral Questions

(1135)

[Translation]

## CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

**Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Canadian Heritage. At the press conference announcing the appointment of Mr. Manera as president of the CBC, the heritage minister said that the government was committed to making no further cuts in the CBC's government funding.

How can the minister, who claims to be a great friend of this institution, justify his about-face and go back on his February 3 commitment by announcing that it would be hard for him not to cut the CBC's budget?

**Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage):** Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to note our colleague's interest in the CBC, this great federal institution which promotes our culture from coast to coast.

If she is referring to decisions that have been made, I would like to know what these decisions are. What was said earlier this year has not changed, so I think she is indulging in speculations she may have heard elsewhere. However, no changes or decisions have been made that contradict what we said earlier.

**Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata):** Mr. Speaker, it is quite obvious that it has not been announced, as the Minister of Canadian Heritage's colleague was saying. The budget has not been announced yet, but there is no smoke without fire. When we read in the newspaper that it will be difficult to avoid cutting the CBC's budget by 5 per cent to 8 per cent, it is a warning of things to come.

Only yesterday, the vice president, Mr. Pineau, clearly said to the heritage committee that cuts were coming. So they should stop treating us like fools. Does the minister confirm that these cuts, if they are implemented, would mostly affect the services offered to Canada's francophone and Acadian communities?

**Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage):** Mr. Speaker, I think that our colleague is worrying about smoke. I did not know she planned a career change from member of Parliament to firefighter.

I think that if she wants to help this great institution, the CBC—which she herself is working on as a member of the parliamentary committee currently reviewing the CBC—she should say frankly that she is happy that this institution is working to promote Canadian unity and ask it to do even more.

[English]

## PUBLIC SERVICE

**Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley East):** Mr. Speaker, we have heard reports of infighting within the Liberal cabinet over a plan to uproot public servants and ship them to the east coast. On the one hand the Minister of Public Works and Government Services wants to move them to his hometown in Atlantic Canada while opposing ministers of public renewal and industry and others say, and I think the quote is: "You do not move departments around just for the fun of it".

Will the minister of government renewal bring this dispute to an end by stating categorically that there are no longer any plans to ship parts of the civil service to the east coast?

**Hon. David Michael Collette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, I want to categorically assure you and members of this House that there is no division on this issue within cabinet.

The administration of the federal government is complex. We have hundreds of thousands of employees. Perhaps on a supplementary my colleague the President of the Treasury Board might address some of the more specific issues relating to public servants.

As the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs has noted, we are planning to reshape government and reorder our financial priorities. This will be done in an orderly fashion. Certainly the statements made by my colleague the Minister of Public Works and Government Services are in no way at odds with government policy.

**Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley East):** Mr. Speaker, I am not sure if they are listening to their own reports. The Minister of Public Works and Government Services has established a committee with very specific instructions. The instructions are: To develop an action plan to enhance the government presence in Atlantic Canada. That is pretty much at odds with the plan that says: "We will reorganize the civil service on the basis of cost effectiveness and efficiency".

(1140)

Will the Minister of Public Works and Government Services fall into line with the latter, which is cost effectiveness, and state today that he will disband this committee that is merely looking to enhance his own political future?

**Hon. David Michael Collette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, all of the ministers in the government have been charged with looking at their own departments, the administration and the saving of money. The Minister of Public Works and Government Services is doing what everyone else is doing. They are looking line by line at the budget to see where savings can be made.

*Oral Questions*

We make no apologies. As a national government we are proud that there are public servants across this country, not just in Ottawa.

The hon. member should not read something into what is in effect a legitimate task assigned by a government minister to deal with a very difficult situation.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**FRENCH-SPEAKING COMMUNITY**

**Mr. Gaston Leroux (Richmond—Wolfe):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Canadian Heritage.

After deciding not to implement a real comprehensive policy for the development of the French-speaking community, despite the request of the Federation of Francophone and Acadian Communities, the Minister of Heritage finally brought forth a policy. The policy that emerged from his drawing board is nothing more than an action plan to meet his own obligations under part VII of the Official Languages Act.

Can the minister tell us how and in what way his action plan will develop the francophone community?

**Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage):** Mr. Speaker, I think that the hon. member should have talked more to Francophones and Acadians across Canada. He would have the answer, because they are the ones who called for the application of the sections of the Official Languages Act. They applauded it, when we decided to mobilize the Canadian government in support of Francophones and Acadians throughout the country.

**Mr. Gaston Leroux (Richmond—Wolfe):** Mr. Speaker, can the minister tell us how he can boast about his action plan when no funding has been provided and no new program has been set up?

**Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage):** Mr. Speaker, I believe that the hon. member has understood nothing about this action plan. Perhaps he should look at it a little more closely and then he might understand that what we will do is mobilize resources throughout the Canadian government to support the development of official-language minority communities. That is what he should understand.

\* \* \*

[English]

**PEACEKEEPING**

**Mrs. Beryl Gaffney (Nepean):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Defence.

On Wednesday this House debated Canada's peacekeeping role under the UN banner with a view to reaching a decision on Canada's commitments. Will the minister please explain to this House today if a decision has been made with regard to peacekeeping in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the former Yugoslavia and, if so, the reasons behind his decision?

**Hon. David Michael Collette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member does note that we had a very good debate with expressions of points of view on all sides. I think it is the general consensus that Canada wishes to remain active in United Nations peacekeeping engagements.

I have outlined in my speech that the resources of the Department of National Defence have been considerably strained over recent times. However, there is the capability within the Canadian Armed Forces to take on a number of engagements.

[Translation]

Yes, the government has decided that Canadian troops will stay in the former Yugoslavia, Croatia and Bosnia for another six months.

[English]

We have decided to renew for a further six months our engagement in those two former republics of Yugoslavia.

I would like to put some words of caution here. We have made this decision but it is subject to review if the situation on the ground changes or if the political or military situation calls into question the safety of Canadian troops or the usefulness of the UNPROFOR mandate.

\* \* \*

**SECURITY INTELLIGENCE REVIEW COMMITTEE**

**Ms. Val Meredith (Surrey—White Rock—South Langley):** Mr. Speaker, in July 1992 the Security Intelligence Review Committee issued a top secret section 54 report to the then Solicitor General, Doug Lewis. The report was entitled: "Domestic Terrorism Targets".

Has the ministry reviewed this report and if so, can the parliamentary secretary advise the House if there is any mention of the Reform Party within this report?

(1145)

**Mr. Patrick Gagnon (Parliamentary Secretary to Solicitor General of Canada):** Mr. Speaker, I guess members across the way have been waiting for me to stand up for some time.

Responding in Canada's other official language to the question, I am quite aware of what has happened recently. The government is taking into account the report that will be submitted by SIRC to the Solicitor General.

*Oral Questions*

There are also other investigations going on with the Inspector General and we are looking in detail at what happened. I am sure the Solicitor General will respond in due course.

**Ms. Val Meredith (Surrey—White Rock—South Langley):** Mr. Speaker, I am not sure that the parliamentary secretary understood that this report has already been given. It is a section 54 report that went to the then Solicitor General, Doug Lewis.

Will the parliamentary secretary assure the House that unlike its predecessors, this government will advise legitimate political parties when CSIS learns that groups or individuals deemed to be a threat to national security attempt to infiltrate them?

**Mr. Patrick Gagnon (Parliamentary Secretary to Solicitor General of Canada):** Mr. Speaker, the policy of the government is that we do not condone any investigation of legitimate political organizations. We have made that very clear.

We have also heard from the opposition allegations of all kinds that the government is investigating various political parties. There is none of that.

The Government of Canada and the Solicitor General will make public certain parts of the report that will be handed down. I can assure the hon. member that this Liberal government would not tolerate such actions being taken by our secret service.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**HEALTH**

**Mr. Réal Ménard (Hochelaga—Maisonneuve):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Health.

In March 1993, the Canadian government released its funding plan for the second phase of the National AIDS Strategy. Ottawa was to spend \$211 million on the strategy over the next five years or \$42 million annually. Of those \$42 million, \$1.5 million were not set aside for specific programs but were to be allocated, at the discretion of the minister, to needs not covered by the strategy.

Could the Minister of Health indicate whether according to plan, in 1994–95, in addition to the \$40.7 million for standard programs, \$1.5 million will be allocated by the minister to the National AIDS Strategy, as discretionary funding?

**Hon. Diane Marleau (Minister of Health):** Yes, Mr. Speaker, that is the case. We have established a criteria for the \$1.5 million, and we will try to follow those criteria. I may add that we have already planned to spend \$400,000 of the \$1.5 million on a conference to be held in Vancouver at some time in 1996.

**Mr. Réal Ménard (Hochelaga—Maisonneuve):** Mr. Speaker, as far as the remainder is concerned, could the minister indicate the criteria for allocating these funds and which agencies will benefit?

**Hon. Diane Marleau (Minister of Health):** Mr. Speaker, at this stage we have yet to select the agencies or projects, but they must be projects that are not covered by other types of funding.

\* \* \*

[English]

**CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION**

**Mrs. Jan Brown (Calgary Southeast):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Canadian Heritage.

The CBC already receives more than \$1 billion a year from Canadian taxpayers and the government appears to be on the move to tax even further.

The minister has in his possession a study by the Nordicity Group which recommends new funding sources for the CBC but he does not want the public to see it. The organization, development and funding of the CBC has been behind closed doors for too long now and has now become a matter of accountability.

Will the minister make public or at least provide parliamentarians with this study which recommends new funding sources for the CBC?

(1150)

**Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to have a chance to read the report before I decide what I do with it.

As for transparency, we have provided all the members who want to participate in the hearings of the standing committee on heritage an opportunity to look at the CBC. The hearings started yesterday and will go on for some months. There will be no secrets there. I understand a number of questions have already been put to the CBC through the standing committee.

**Mrs. Jan Brown (Calgary Southeast):** Mr. Speaker, I am really quite surprised that the minister has not yet seen the Nordicity study. I find that quite an unacceptable response.

In any event, the Liberals continue to be unaccountable to Canadians. They are considering a tax on entertainment to generate more money for the CBC. Canadians cannot afford this any longer and they will not put up with any new taxes, especially for the CBC.

Will the minister tell us categorically and right now that there will be no new entertainment tax introduced in order to fund this billion dollar boondoggle?

**Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage):** Mr. Speaker, this morning it seems that the Reform Party wants to tax Canadians to death.

*Oral Questions*

We have not talked about taxes. This is an invention coming from the other side. In due course we will see what the standing committee on heritage will have to say on the question of financing the CBC.

\* \* \*

**INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM**

**Mr. John Loney (Edmonton North):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for Infrastructure.

Many economic observers claim that Canada is coming out of the recession and the job numbers are there to prove it. However as far as my constituents are concerned, there are still too many people out of work.

Can the minister please tell me how many jobs have been created in Alberta so that I can reassure my constituents?

**Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure):** Mr. Speaker, there is a lot of interest in Alberta.

This program is moving very rapidly right across the country. With the co-operation of the Government of Alberta it is moving quite rapidly in that province as well with some 719 infrastructure projects investing over \$422 million and creating some 700,000 jobs in that province. This is only the beginning.

I am pleased to say that we have to this point in time allocated more than two-thirds of the money under the \$6 billion infrastructure program. There are over 6,500 projects across the country and so far we have put some 70,000 Canadians to work. That is only the beginning.

There are more jobs to come in Alberta. There are more jobs to come across the country. It is attracting additional investment dollars in helping to do what this government wants to do, get Canadians back to work.

\* \* \*

*[Translation]***FAMILY PATRIMONY**

**Mr. René Laurin (Joliette):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister or the Acting Prime Minister. After the Government of Quebec passed the Partition of the Family Patrimony Act, the government tabled Bill C-55, which received royal assent on September 29, 1992. Bill C-55 would provide for seizing or dividing federal pension benefits. Nearly two years after the bill was passed, the regulations have yet to be approved by the federal government.

Would the Prime Minister or his substitute agree that after waiting for two years, the federal cabinet should move quickly to adopt the regulations so that Quebecers who have been disadvantaged as a result of this situation can obtain the pension share to which they are entitled?

(1155)

*[English]*

**Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure):** Mr. Speaker, I have now signed and recommended to the Governor General the Pension Benefits Division Act which helps to bring into effect the very regulations that are of concern to the hon. member with respect to implementing Bill C-55.

Bill C-55 was put into effect by the previous government. It required a lot of detailed examination as to the regulations. We moved as quickly as we could. We have already made changes which I announced previously with respect to incorporating part-time employees and marriage after retirement into the pension provisions and the further regulations are about to come into effect.

*[Translation]*

**Mr. René Laurin (Joliette):** Mr. Speaker, can the minister give specific reasons for this two-year delay, including nearly one year under the Liberal government, and will he make a formal commitment today that the regulations will be adopted by Christmas?

*[English]*

**Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure):** Mr. Speaker, as I said just a moment ago, when I came upon the regulation requirements, not a lot of work had been done by the previous government. We have expedited the matter and it is nearing completion. A lot of work has been done in a very short period of time because we are anxious to make sure that the provisions are in place to better serve our retired employees and their successors.

\* \* \*

**IMMIGRATION**

**Mr. Art Hanger (Calgary Northeast):** Mr. Speaker, earlier this week the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration neglected to answer a very simple, very straightforward question.

Dudley Vincent Forbes, who is accused of a shooting spree in Toronto over the weekend in which two people died, was deported not once but twice for breaking Canadian visa law.

My question is for the parliamentary secretary. Why was someone who has flouted Canadian law twice, both criminal law and immigration law and been deported twice, allowed to be sponsored as a spouse and returned to Canada?

**Ms. Mary Clancy (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Citizenship and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his question.

*Routine Proceedings*

Indeed the minister did not fail to answer. As the minister stated, when the gentleman came into Canada there was no reason for officials to refuse his application at that time.

**Mr. Art Hanger (Calgary Northeast):** Mr. Speaker, again from the minister's department we get the same mumbo jumbo, political double talk and no real, clear answers in reference to removal, deportation or whatever.

The minister is making a great to-do about his new immigration reform package which is currently before the House. Since nothing in this legislation would have prevented someone like Forbes from returning to Canada, is the minister willing to immediately undertake legislative changes to bar any applicant for immigration who has previously been deported for any reason?

**Ms. Mary Clancy (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Citizenship and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, I am at a loss to understand. I am sorry that the hon. member did not feel my previous answer was clear. I attempted to be clear.

I will be clear again with regard to his first question. At the time there were no reasons for officials to bar the gentleman in question.

As to his second question, the hon. member who participated in the debate on Bill C-44, come next Tuesday when we vote on this bill will be here on our side and will vote for just those kinds of amendments that do the kind of thing the hon. member is asking for. We look for his support and we expect it now.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**TRADE**

**Mr. René Canuel (Matapédia—Matane):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of International Trade. On the issue of lumber, first of all, the federal government failed to get Quebec exempted from countervailing duties, although it does not even subsidize exports from Quebec.

Second, the federal government has let itself be pushed around by American lobby groups that came up with all sorts of inventive ways of dragging things out. Third, having finally won, the government is not even capable of making the United States pay back the \$500 million they owe us.

Is the minister in a position to announce in this House that an agreement has been signed or will he just tell us again that discussions are ongoing but still unsuccessful?

(1200)

**Mr. Alfonso Gagliano (Secretary of State (Parliamentary Affairs) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons):** Mr. Speaker, I can assure the hon. member on behalf of the Minister of International Trade that the minister and the government are looking at this whole issue with a great deal of interest. The government is convinced that the monies the hon. member is referring to will be recovered. Unfortunately, for the time being, proceedings have been initiated by

American groups and we must let the judicial process take its course. As the government of Canada, we are making representations to ensure the Canadian taxpayers are paid back.

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

[Translation]

**DEPARTMENT OF CANADIAN HERITAGE ACT**

**Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-53, an act to establish the Department of Canadian Heritage and to amend and repeal certain other acts.

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

\* \* \*

[English]

**PETITIONS****ASSISTED SUICIDE**

**Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell):** Mr. Speaker, I have a petition signed by 22,000 Canadians asking for the Parliament of Canada to retain section 241 of the Criminal Code of Canada which forbids assisting in the commission of a suicide.

This petition was circulated thanks to a quadriplegic, a woman from Winnipeg by the name of Theresa Ducharme. I want to publicly congratulate Mrs. Ducharme, given the immense effort required on her part for having taken such an initiative.

[Translation]

*IRVING WHALE*

**Mrs. Monique Guay (Laurentides):** Mr. Speaker, last week, I went to the Magdalen Islands. The people there gave me this petition concerning the wreck of the *Irving Whale*. The petitioners ask that the leaks from the wreck be plugged as soon as possible. They also ask that further public hearings be held.

Having seen and studied the reports on the *Irving Whale*, I strongly support the Magdalen Islanders' requests and I submit their petition.

[English]

**YOUNG OFFENDERS ACT**

**Ms. Val Meredith (Surrey—White Rock—South Langley):** Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions I would like to present to the House. The first one has 478 signatures. It is a request that Parliament review and amend the Young Offenders Act to save society from further harm committed by young offenders and to discourage young people from committing crimes by increasing penalties, releasing names for serious offenders and giving the police more investigative powers.

*Routine Proceedings*

## ASSISTED SUICIDE

**Ms. Val Meredith (Surrey—White Rock—South Langley):** Mr. Speaker, the second petition is from residents of my constituency urging Parliament not to repeal or amend section 241 of the Criminal Code in any way and to uphold the Supreme Court of Canada's decision of September 30, 1993 to disallow doctor assisted suicides.

## INDIAN AFFAIRS

**Hon. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon):** Mr. Speaker, I have a petition signed by members of the Kaska Dena Council. These members are from Fort Ware, British Columbia, Good Hope Lake, Watson Lake, Yukon.

(1205)

As members of the Kaska Dena Council they are calling on the government as represented by the minister of Indian affairs not to devolve jurisdiction and control over unsurrendered lands and resources and to ensure that the land claims for the Kaska Dena Council are resolved equitably before any lands are devolved.

I have the pleasure to present this petition and to support and encourage the government to continue these land claims negotiations with the Kaska Dena Council.

## KILLER CARDS

**Mr. John Cannis (Scarborough Centre):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to present three petitions today on behalf of the constituents of Scarborough Centre.

The first is signed by 74 people from across Scarborough and urges the government to amend the laws to prohibit the importation, distribution, sale and manufacture of serial killer cards and to advise producers of these cards that their products if destined for Canada will be seized and destroyed.

## ABORTION

**Mr. John Cannis (Scarborough Centre):** Mr. Speaker, my second petition is signed by 80 residents of Scarborough Centre and calls on the government to extend protection to the unborn child by amending the Criminal Code to extend the same protection enjoyed by born human beings to the unborn.

## ASSISTED SUICIDE

**Mr. John Cannis (Scarborough Centre):** Mr. Speaker, my third petition is signed by 115 residents of Scarborough Centre who request that Parliament ensure that current provisions of the Criminal Code prohibiting doctor assisted suicide be enforced vigorously and Parliament enact no laws that would sanction or allow the aiding or abetting of suicide or active or passive euthanasia.

## ABORTION

**Mr. Ed Harper (Simcoe Centre):** Mr. Speaker, I have three petitions from Simcoe Centre to present.

The first is a petition on the issue of abortion. The petitioners request that Parliament reconsider amendments to the Criminal Code.

## EUTHANASIA

**Mr. Ed Harper (Simcoe Centre):** Mr. Speaker, the second petition is on the issue of euthanasia. The petitioners request that current laws regarding active euthanasia be enforced.

## HUMAN RIGHTS

**Mr. Ed Harper (Simcoe Centre):** Mr. Speaker, the third petition requests that the Government of Canada not amend the Human Rights Act to include the phrase sexual orientation.

The petitioners fear that such an inclusion would indicate a societal approval of homosexual behaviour. The petitioners believe that the government should not legitimize this behaviour against the clear wishes of the majority.

## GUN CONTROL

**Mr. Philip Mayfield (Cariboo—Chilcotin):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House today to present petitions signed by over 800 people in my riding of Cariboo—Chilcotin.

My constituents from many communities including McLeese Lake, Alexis Creek, Anahim Lake, Quesnel, Williams Lake, Tatla Lake, and 100 Mile House all call upon the government to refrain from passing any legislation that results in additional gun control laws.

I concur with these petitions.

## ASSISTED SUICIDE

**Mr. Jack Frazer (Saanich—Gulf Islands):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36 it is my duty and honour to rise in the House to present two petitions duly certified by the Clerk of Petitions on behalf of the constituents of Saanich—Gulf Islands and surrounding areas.

In both these petitions the petitioners humbly pray and call upon Parliament to ensure that the present provisions of the Criminal Code of Canada prohibiting assisted suicide remain in force.

**Mr. Bob Ringma (Nanaimo—Cowichan):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36 I have a petition representing the views of some of my constituents which I wish to present to the House.

*Government Orders*

The petition calls on the government to enforce the existing provisions in the Criminal Code prohibiting assisted suicide. It also asks that no changes be made to those provisions that would sanction or allow assisted suicide.

On behalf of these concerned constituents I am pleased to table this petition in the House.

## EUTHANASIA

**Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley East):** Mr. Speaker, I have two different petitions to present to the House today.

I have the honour to present a petition from the Netherlands Reform Congregation in my riding regarding the subject of euthanasia. Hundreds of Canadians are in this way sending a message to parliamentarians that physicians in Canada should be working to save lives, not to end them.

I heartily concur with their statement and I trust that the Senate committee conducting hearings on this issue will listen to our collective voices.

## HUMAN RIGHTS

**Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley East):** Mr. Speaker, the second petition I have the honour to present is from 89 of my constituents who are concerned about enshrining the undefined phrase sexual orientation in federal human rights legislation.

They say privileges that society accords to heterosexual couples should not be extended to same sex relationships.

I concur with my constituents.

**Mr. Milliken:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I hope there might be consent to revert to presentation of reports by interparliamentary delegations to permit the very distinguished member for Ottawa—Vanier to present a report that he has on a recent meeting of one of our interparliamentary organizations.

\* \* \*

(1210)

## INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS

**Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues. I was a little distracted; I was here but not quite present.

Pursuant to Standing Order 34, I have the honour to present to the House, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian section of the International Assembly of French-Speaking Parliamentarians, concerning the 20th regular session held in Paris from July 10 to 13.

## QUESTION PASSED AS ORDER FOR RETURN

**Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons):** Mr. Speaker, if Question No. 67 raised by the hon. member for Hochelaga—Maisonneuve could be made an order for return, that return would be tabled immediately.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House that Question No. 67 be made an order for return?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

[Text]

Question No. 67—**Mr. Ménard:**

With regard to the Defence Industry Productivity Program (DIPP) administered by the Department of Industry, (a) which companies have been awarded financial assistance since January 1, 1994, (b) what type of financial assistance (grants, repayable loans with or without royalties, tax benefits) did these companies receive, (c) what was the amount of financial assistance that each company received, and (d) what criteria did the companies receiving assistance have to meet in connection with government requirements promoting defence conversion?

(Return tabled.)

[Translation]

**Mr. Milliken:** I move that the remaining questions stand.

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

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion. That Bill C-49, an act to amend the Department of Agriculture Act and to amend or repeal certain other acts, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

**Mr. André Caron (Jonquière):** Mr. Speaker, I will now continue the speech I started before Question Period. I may recall that I was commenting on the bill introduced by the Minister of Agriculture, which proposes to change the name of the department and define certain powers, duties and functions with respect to research on and processing of agri-food products.

I indicated that the Bloc Québécois supports this bill, but I note, after reading the bill and listening to the minister, who explained the role played by his department in the agricultural industry in this country, that there is considerable potential for overlap.

If we look at what the Government of Quebec and the Government of Canada are doing in the agricultural and

*Government Orders*

agri-food sectors, there are many activities that are practically identical. The Government of Quebec also supports farmers, promotes market development, supports research and also supports activities connected with the inspection of agricultural products.

It is, more or less, what the federal government is going to do as well. This is a typical example of overlap. And if we consider that historically, federal spending on Quebec's agricultural industry has always been less than Quebecers would consider their fair share as part of the Canadian federation, this may be yet another instance of Quebecers paying twice for the same service. They pay for agricultural research and development activities in their province and, since they pay federal taxes, they also pay for what is being done elsewhere.

If federal spending in Quebec could be said to be more or less on a per capita basis, we could say that we are not paying more to get the same services or services that are almost identical to what the federal government can offer. However, that is not the case.

If I am not mistaken, federal spending on agriculture in Quebec has never exceeded 20 per cent, and has often been considerably less.

(1215)

I am not surprised, because this has been going on for quite some time in Quebec, but I am surprised that the minister failed to include in his bill a number of provisions to keep to a minimum any overlap with activities in this sector that are covered by the Government of Quebec.

I feel very much involved in this particular debate. As we heard during Question Period and statements by members, in the past three years, and especially during the 1992 referendum in Quebec, Quebecers have paid for the referendum they held under Quebec's legislation and also paid for the referendum held in the rest of Canada. Since Quebecers pay taxes like everybody else, part of the money spent by the federal government on the referendum in Canada—Regina and Toronto and St. John's, Newfoundland—came from taxes paid by Quebecers. They paid for this referendum and they also paid for their own referendum. This is an obvious case of overlap.

Quebecers understood their Premier had received assurances from the Canadian Prime Minister that they would get the money back. Quebecers believed Premier Bourassa. They did not necessarily think Mr. Bourassa was lying. Mr. Bourassa spoke from his seat in the National Assembly. Today, we are told that the word of the Premier of Quebec is not enough to prove that the federal government owes money to Quebec.

That is why I would have liked to see in the agriculture minister's bill provisions stating that the Department of Agriculture will consult with the Quebec Ministry of Agriculture in order to avoid overlap, to ensure that there are no cases where Quebecers will have to pay twice.

I would have liked to see that in the bill because I realize that if it is not written in black and white before a witness and recorded by a notary, when provisions are not perfectly clear, nothing ever gets done. So we say that even if promises were made by a prime minister, there is no guarantee if it is not in writing.

That is why I would have liked to see in the minister's bill clear indications that real efforts will be made to avoid overlap so that Quebecers will not again—as in many other cases—have to pay twice for the same service.

I will not keep the House any longer. Of course, the Bloc Québécois endorses the spirit of the bill. We will review it in committee. In particular, we will ask that the matter of inspectors be clarified. The definition of "inspector" in French seems slightly different from that in English.

Bloc members will ask for clarifications in committee, because it is very important to convince and assure Quebec francophones that the French version of a bill says the same thing as the English version.

I thank you for your attention and let me assure you that our Bloc colleagues who sit on the agriculture committee will see to it that this bill is improved in the interest of the people of Quebec and Canada.

*[English]*

**Mr. Allan Kerpan (Moose Jaw—Lake Centre):** Mr. Speaker, at first glance one would look at this bill and pass it off merely as simple housekeeping. Certainly as a Reform member I am in favour of any bill that would streamline and make this department more efficient.

(1220)

However a couple of aspects of this legislation give me some concern. First, there is a new section on inspection services. It states: "The minister may designate any person as an inspector for the purpose of providing the inspection services that the minister considers necessary for the enforcement of any act of which the minister has any powers, duties or functions".

I certainly have some questions about this. Does this create another level of inspection police in Canada? For example, will this give the minister, through an appointed inspector, the latitude to enforce any laws in his jurisdiction of agriculture?

The second aspect is the repeal of section 6 which currently states: "The minister shall cause to be laid before each House of Parliament not later than the fifth sitting day of that House after January 31 next, following the end of the fiscal year a report showing the operations of the department for that fiscal year".

The questions I have in that area are, first, how much will it save? If it could save significant dollars I would be the first to admit that I am in favour of that. Second, will the standing committee be able to examine fully the report given by the minister without it being laid on the table in the House?

*Government Orders*

Forces in the world today may radically change the way agri-business is carried on. New trade deals, safety nets, farm debt, to name but a few, will drastically alter agri-business over the next few years. We have a great opportunity here. Rather than just do a facelift on the department by giving it a new name, why does the government and the minister not sit down and do a major overhaul from the ground up?

We are prepared to help in this process but not in the fashion that has been suggested. Let all of us in the House, especially including the minister, go back to square one and develop policy that has been built from the grassroots.

I believe we must do more than just tinker with an agriculture bill and change the department's name. We are facing a crucial time of rapid change: on our farms, in our support business and in both levels of government and their responsibilities regarding agriculture. We are at a time of change, perhaps greater than the dominion land settlement and the emergency action taken during the great depression. We know what the current changes are. They are global trade arrangements. They are new markets. They are new biotechnology. They are less government money. They are greater worldwide food demand. They are the need to look after our environment.

In order to meet all these challenges we must do more than just tinker. We must look at what I refer to as a reconfederation of agriculture. This is our vision. I believe this vision should have three components to it.

First, as Canadians we must encourage each other to appreciate our safe and affordable food supply more. What is more important to our daily lives than food? Yet we take our abundance of supply so much for granted. Many people in other parts of the world have had massive natural disasters or destructive military conflicts that have created food shortages and famines. Thankfully we have never suffered that in Canada.

We must appreciate our food supply more. Surely we should not only see the agri-food department in terms of statistics and figures. While the industry is only 8 per cent of GDP, what is more important in our daily lives than our daily bread?

We as leaders should be talking to people about this. This is what the minister of agriculture should be doing. I would like to see him use this upcoming Thanksgiving season to give a speech to Canadians on the blessings and the importance of a safe and abundant food supply and then to encourage his fellow legislators at all levels to make sure that we protect the resource of farming and food production. This is the first element of a vision statement.

Second, we must realize how important it is to have good legislative policy for our farmers, those who produce and process our food. The basic thing we must strive toward is to make farming profitable again. Our policies must be geared toward this.

(1225)

It is discouraging to know that farmers' real net market income in 1991 was only half of what it was in 1971. On top of that farmers as well as other Canadians have faced tremendous inflation in land prices, equipment prices, building prices, et cetera. Personal income and property taxes have gone up dramatically. How can farmers survive in this economic climate? Support programs have had to compensate.

Farmers want an economic and fiscal environment in which they can make an honest buck on their own. We do not want handouts. We do not want government as a senior business partner. Get out of our pockets and get off our backs, is what farmers are saying.

**Mr. Stinson:** Right on.

**Mr. Kerpan:** This is the direction in which the government should be going.

The third component of our vision is that we must redefine the role of the federal government, the provinces and industry in agriculture. There must be a more clear, more precise division of responsibilities.

Our party went on record in May during debate in the House on what we feel the new arrangements should be. We are doing more work on this. Experts have told us that a brand new arrangement could be made without any opening up of the Constitution. We would need to talk to each other as players and negotiate a new and better relationship but we must streamline and stop the overlap and duplication.

We propose that the provinces have the regulatory responsibility for the management of the physical resources; land, water, crops, livestock and the training and education of human resources, youth, farmers, processors, et cetera, all the players in the system. The federal government would have responsibility for trading relationships, fiscal and monetary policy and support programs that will agree with our trading agreements. The industry would be left alone to make the vast majority of decisions related to production, processing, marketing and transportation.

This arrangement needs to be fleshed out in a lot of detail. However, I sense a real momentum and a desire building in the country to get into this. I would suggest that we take the agriculture sector and work in this direction.

I want to point out to the minister of agriculture that I appreciated his opening comments and his remarks with regard to this bill. He mentioned a five point vision. I talked about a three point vision. In many ways both of those visions have a lot of similarities.

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He talked about the cross-country consultation that is being planned. I ask the question: How do you do this? How do you go to the farmers in this country and get a reading of their feelings and ask their direction? It is very difficult.

I want to encourage the minister today to become involved. There is no other way that consultation like this can work without the full co-operation and the full involvement of the minister and his complete department.

The last thing that farmers need is another consultation process with a report that gets put on someone's desk, never to be looked at. In the last few months I have had the opportunity to look at such reports. Many of them were very well done. Many of them laid out plans and policies that should and could have been implemented by all governments but they were never looked at. We cannot afford that type of consultation process any more.

The minister stated in his opening remarks that the industry has changed in the last 25 years. I certainly agree with that. We need, as the minister pointed out, a common vision for farmers and consumers right across the country.

As a farmer I can remember many times my father telling me that you must be prepared. You must be ready for any eventuality and that you must leave your options open. It reminds me of going out to do a day's field work with the tractor and not having any fuel in the tractor. You may leave the yard with the best intentions in the world of doing a full day's work, but an hour later you run out of fuel and your mission cannot be accomplished. It is simply impossible.

(1230)

We must drive into the next century and not be pulled into it by other market forces. We must take the initiative as government and as industry and drive ourselves into the next century with good policies created and established at the grassroots level.

In closing I go on record again as saying that the Reform Party is most happy, most ready and most willing to co-operate with the government to build that policy. Hopefully together we can develop a policy that is good, that is right, and that is something farmers want for the next century.

[Translation]

**Mr. Paul Crête (Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup):** Mr. Speaker, I enjoyed the hon. member's presentation and I would like him to elaborate on this: would rural development, in which agriculture is surely a very important factor, not require a much broader approach, which, as he mentioned when he talked about co-operation between consumers and producers, would also require a comprehensive approach?

As it is, much of what the federal government does hurts rural communities now, for example with Canada Post and with railways. In many cases, the left hand does not know what the right hand is doing and I would like the hon. member to say whether the federal government should take a different approach. What should be done to ensure that what the government does through these national corporations carries out the desire for action expressed by the Minister of Agriculture, instead of having a negative effect which destroys this good will with an excessively centralizing approach that often wipes out the efforts of local communities?

**The Deputy Speaker:** I apologize to the hon. member, I was mistaken. There is no period for questions and comments after a speaker for a party has spoken. It is all my fault. Can we take it as a representation or is there unanimous consent to let the hon. member ask this question?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

[English]

**Mr. Kerpan:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to respond to that question and I thank you for the time.

Very briefly, certainly we are in what I perceive to be a global market. There is no question about it. The role of people at the committee level is that we have to develop within our own boundaries part of that policy. Certainly part of that planning has to be a developmental policy that will lead us into an even larger global economy than what we are now involved in.

It appears to me from where I sit as a member from Saskatchewan and knowing most about my home province, that farmers are telling me that without starting at square one, the grassroots, we cannot develop the global policy.

The minister probably said it best. In his opening comments he said that without a solid foundation everything else falls down. In my experience that is in fact the case. One cannot build a building with a poor foundation; it just will not stand.

It is my opinion that we have to look at an agricultural policy as if there were none at this point in time. We have to start from step one, build it within our borders, and then expand globally and internationally.

**Mr. Lyle Vanclief (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Agriculture and Agri-food):** Mr. Speaker, it is certainly a pleasure to stand today to make some comments on Bill C-49.

I want to refresh everybody's memory on the purpose of the bill. It is giving effect to a change in the title of the department. At one time it was known as the department of agriculture or the ministry of agriculture and now it will be known as the ministry of agriculture and agri-food. That is one of the changes. Other changes and amendments will have to be made in corresponding

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acts just to expand the act because of the role the department has been playing for many years. We are just bringing it up to date.

(1235)

In response to some comments made by speakers in the opposition, the Reform Party and the Bloc Québécois, concerning the allocation of spending, et cetera, they are not covered in the bill. They are not for discussion in the bill. It is at an administrative level in co-operation with the provinces and the federal government. It is ongoing at all times and certainly can and will continue.

In response to the member from the Reform Party suggesting that the minister give a speech on Thanksgiving Day, if he desires to do so he can certainly get a copy of a speech the minister made on September 19 in Regina to the Chamber of Commerce wherein he stressed the importance of agriculture and the agri-food industry in Canada. He also made some comments about what he saw as some of the issues that needed to be addressed. As the member already knows, next Thursday the minister will be attending a very detailed session on our vision and projected concerns about the total industry with members of the standing committee.

The bill makes other changes. At the present time it states that the mandate is clarified in the bill to include not only primary agriculture but products derived from agriculture. It is necessary to do that. The bill enlarges the responsibility of the minister by changing reference to experimental farm stations to research related to agriculture and products derived from agriculture, including the operation of experimental farm stations across Canada.

We need these important amendments to bring the matter up to date. They reflect the longstanding relationship between the ministry and the agriculture and agri-food industry of Canada. That relationship started changing a number of years ago when the ministry was given the mandate to ensure the safety of the Canadian food supply.

Our inspection services are still one of the most important points of contact between the industry and the department. The highest percentage of the employees in the Department of Agriculture and Agri-Food are in the food inspection and production branch.

As years have gone by the department has played an increasingly important, necessary and continuing role in research and market development assistance. Enforcing safety rules is still important but the department sees itself as more of a supervisor in inspection roles.

A key activity in the department now is partnership. We must continue to rethink our working relationships with the industry clients out there. It is important to re-emphasize that food safety will always be our top priority but our priorities are in other

areas as well. A partnership, however, can only survive if there is good communication among the department and the other parties. I am certainly looking forward to the type of communication and co-operation at the standing committee we have always had since I came to Parliament in 1988.

I want to emphasize another partnership recognized in Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. It was recognized for the first time at the meeting of federal and provincial agriculture ministers in Winnipeg back in early July. I am referring to the important role farm women play in the agriculture and agri-food industry. Not only do we look to them as the nourishers of the nation, but they are playing ever increasing and ever more important roles as business people, as individuals and as partners with their spouses or in businesses. They can play and will play even more roles. They bring to our attention in the department that we have to be constantly aware of safety in agriculture.

(1240)

In Ontario a number of years ago, I had the privilege to be on a health and safety in agriculture task force for two years. At that time the necessity of our role was certainly made clear by farm women and other people involved in the industry.

We know, especially at the primary producer level, that days and nights can be long, wet, muddy or whatever, that conditions are not considered ideal. There are also bankers that would like to get the crop in the bin or to the elevator because there are bills to pay. We have to be very conscious of those concerns and the safety of everybody involved in the industry.

The role of government is changing. Canada's food inspection system is a good example. We cannot afford to have a full time permanent inspector at every factory and every processing plant for every minute. Therefore to a large extent we must rely on the industry to police itself. It too is a net beneficiary of the very high standards of food and produce quality in Canada. It has a responsibility to ensure the products and the processes it takes part in meeting the standards we set. There is also a facilitator role for the department to play.

The industry understands the high quality of our Canadian products is one of the biggest and best selling points for our domestic consumers and those abroad, and we have many of those. Our reputation for quality in Canada is money in the bank. We must make sure we can continue that.

It is a shared responsibility that is expensive to maintain. We spend a tremendous amount of money. I am not saying it is money wasted in any way, shape or form, but cost sharing arrangements are being discussed with the industry. They have worked very well in other countries. They are working very well in Australia, New Zealand and the United States. Certainly those countries have very good standards as well.

*Government Orders*

We have to keep improving the inspection system and that is not cheap. For its part the department is trying to harmonize standards across the country. To our colleague from the Bloc Québécois who spoke earlier I want to point out that one area in which we are making good progress and have co-operation is in getting rid of duplication or overlap among provinces in the Canadian food inspection system. We have a way to go yet. We can and will get rid of the duplication.

That area is of net benefit to everyone and it is necessary to continue that co-operation. We need to work more with the industry as far as research is concerned as often the result of scientific and technical breakthroughs are benefits to all Canadians.

We have goals we must reach in trade. In his comments earlier today the minister spoke about the goals we want to reach, including \$20 billion in agriculture and agri-food export trade from Canada by the year 2000. We know if we are to reach that goal, I say to my colleagues and to the industry, we will have to get better at it than we are at the present time.

We need to capitalize on opportunities, new technologies, changing markets and trading agreements such as GATT, NAFTA and all the others we are involved in. That goal is there. The market is there.

The Asia-Pacific market, for example, is one that really beckons us. We know that 50 per cent of the increase in the world's wealth between now and the year 2000 will take place in the Asia-Pacific area. We also know that 50 per cent of the increase in world trade between now and the year 2000 is going to take place in that area. We know there is a booming increase in trade opportunities in Latin America and South America and we must be there. We as a department, collectively and collaboratively, need to work with all of the stakeholders and all the partners in the industry in order to take the best advantage of that. The opportunities are there so we need to work very closely.

(1245)

In our platform during the campaign last fall we promised the creation of an agri-food council that would focus on international competitiveness. Some of my colleagues across the way will say yes, we put things in place but what are we going to do? I can assure you that these groups of people will not be put in place unless they are going to be given a mandate and that mandate is listened to and we can draw on the resources of those people.

We also said that we would be creating an agri-food trade service. We are doing that in the markets and industry services branch in order to provide a single window to get rid of duplication and get rid of red tape. Therefore, when an industry or someone in the industry wants to discuss access to federal

government programs or federal government support, whether that be in research which we are encouraging as partnerships in research, or whether that be in support as far as marketing opportunities, they can do it at a single window.

Getting Ready to go Global is a \$4 million program. Earlier this week I had the opportunity to join with some constituents at the Experimental Farm in Ottawa where the Indian agricultural program is working with some support from the Getting Ready to go Global program in the development of, and I hope I call it by the proper name, white Indian corn to be made into corn chips, et cetera.

The Getting Ready to go Global program is helping them to do the things that are there. It is to improve management capability, help people promote strategic alliances, apply technological solutions and develop market intelligence. We are pleased to be able to help there.

The agri-food industry marketing strategies is another one. There is the export expansion fund. I will give an example of the type of work of the agri-food industry marketing strategy. The department is providing up to \$475,000 to the Quebec Agri-food Export Club in support of its international market developments. This is a club with international sales, excluding sales to the United States, of \$25 million. It provides information, advice and training to its members. It supports and promotes co-operation among members in promotional activities abroad.

The department also helps agri-food exporters by collecting and disseminating trade intelligence. We have at the present time, and we will continue to emphasize this, about 85 commissioners working either full time or part time in over 100 foreign markets around the world.

For too long the Canadian agri-food industry has been content to just sell to the United States customer. Yes, it is our biggest, our closest and our easiest. However, we cannot put all our eggs in one basket, if I can use that well-worn phrase. We have to continue to look at the other areas, and we are doing that. We have to learn how to satisfy the appetites of the rest of the world. As the minister said this morning, we in North America are probably not too far away from the time when 50 per cent of the production at the farm gate will be used in some way in our society other than as a food product. There are increasing requirements for that.

The minister said as well that we have to look at the opportunities out there, whether they be domestic or abroad, and we have to produce what we can sell. We can no longer be successful trying to sell what we like to produce. We are all guilty of that. When you are in farming you kind of get into feeling that "I have always done this and I have always done that". That is what you become familiar with, but you have to roll with the punches.

*Government Orders*

(1250)

I want to confirm the goals that the changes in this bill emphasize and offer as an opportunity. It is more than just a recognition that we have been doing these things in the department. We have been doing these things in the Government of Canada. I want to stress that better research in agriculture and agri-food will help us develop new products. Better partnerships will help us keep our standards high. In better partnerships, be that with farm women, industry, or the stakeholders, there are a lot of links in this chain and they all have to be strong and tight in order to pull.

Better partnerships will help us keep in touch with the needs within the sector. Better intelligence will keep us on top of market trends. Better promotion will increase the demand for Canadian agri-food products not only domestically but abroad. Better relations between the industry and the department will ensure that the agri-food industry continues to be the engine of prosperity for all Canadians.

In closing, I want to remind the House and everyone in Canada that the agri-food industry from the primary producer to the consumer, including the retail and the restaurant and hotel industry, employs 15 per cent of Canadian workers. It employs 1.8 million Canadians and accounts for 8 per cent of our gross domestic product. It is an important industry.

The government pledges to work even harder in order to make it even more successful and we look forward to the support of all the members in the House in doing so.

**Mr. Elwin Hermanson (Kindersley—Lloydminster):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today and speak to Bill C-49.

This bill deals with the management of the federal Department of Agriculture. As you know, Mr. Speaker, anything that impacts on agriculture is important to me as a farmer and is also important to a great number of my constituents in Kindersley—Lloydminster as agriculture is the leading industry of the riding.

In my opinion and the opinion of my caucus this House does not discuss agricultural issues nearly enough and government action is even more rare. We did see a little bit of action when cabinet was expanded the other day. We now have I believe a minister of state with responsibilities for agriculture. I guess that is well and good but the call I am hearing from the industry is not that the cabinet be expanded but that some of the issues that are near and dear to the industry be dealt with in a real, sincere and effective manner.

I heard a rather humorous description of a man who was adjusting his tie while his pants were on fire. I think that application might apply to the current minister of agriculture who gave a very eloquent speech. There was very little in it that

any of us could find fault with. We all want the best for our industry. The fact is that there are a lot of problems in the industry. Until we act, our eloquence is rather hollow and rather empty.

Most reforms to the agriculture sector have one of two results. Either money is taken out of the farmers' pockets through program cuts or a department reshuffling is initiated, leading to more bureaucracy and red tape. If anything, this bill seems to fall into the second category.

Farmers have made it clear that they are ready for action on a number of very important issues. Instead, the first bill that the minister has brought to us in this session is one that opts to perform some cosmetic changes to the department, shuffles some chairs around and hires a few more inspectors. It would seem that the minister is deliberately ignoring the issues of most concern to the agri-food industry.

For instance there is widespread consensus across the prairie provinces for a producer plebiscite on barley marketing. Opinion polls, farm groups and surveys, including one that I did in my constituency, show that a vast majority of farmers support holding a producer plebiscite. In my constituency a survey indicated that 93 per cent of Canadian Wheat Board permit holders would support a plebiscite to determine how they market their barley. The strength of these numbers indicate that those on both sides of the issue are eager to resolve the question in a democratic manner.

In fact the Prime Minister before the election called for a plebiscite on this issue. Why is this minister not taking action regarding this democratic initiative? He seems more interested in rejigging his department than acting on issues of importance to farmers.

(1255)

Another issue concerns the Canadian Wheat Board. All farmers know that the current board is out of date and unresponsive to the needs of producers. There are some elements of the western Canadian press that are sounding the demise of the wheat board. The Reformers believe that a vibrant and responsive wheat board that gives farmers choices would be preferable to eliminating the board.

Most farmers are calling for a democratized wheat board that will listen to farmers, meet their needs and change with the times. Again, this question was included in a survey in my riding. In fact 96 per cent of Canadian Wheat Board permit holders in the riding of Kindersley—Lloydminster in the survey we conducted supported democratization of the Canadian Wheat Board. In other words, take control of the wheat board out of the hands of the politicians and give it to the producers as is the case with most marketing institutions in Canada.

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It seems that the minister would rather introduce housekeeping measures that have more to do with relabelling bureaucrats than accomplishing anything for farmers.

There are some very constructive things that can be done to reform the department of agriculture and will have positive results for producers.

It is my contention and that of my Reform colleagues that the purpose of funds earmarked for agriculture support should primarily be to assist agriculture producers who, through no fault of their own, find themselves financially disadvantaged.

I remind the minister of agriculture that at present there are a total of 41 different agriculture programs at the federal level, 286 more provincial programs, and 22 joint federal-provincial programs. That brings the total number to 349 separate support programs for agriculture, each one administered and accounted for separately.

The administrative cost of running so many different and often overlapping and outdated programs is rather staggering. Over \$2 billion per year is spent by the minister of agriculture, of which over \$700 million is spent on operating and capital costs alone. These figures do not include the \$728 million spent under the Western Grain Transportation Act. I believe those figures are for the year 1992. They have been reduced somewhat since.

This appallingly high level of overhead signals mismanagement because of overmanagement. By consolidating all those federal programs and initiatives into three or four the government could save many millions of dollars and provide better support to the industry as a result.

We must expose the myth that more money spent always results in more effective programs. In the case of agriculture it is not only possible to provide better support with fewer dollars but it is essential to the long term sustainability of the industry given the bad financial shape of the government.

The government has a moral obligation to the next generation of farmers to ensure that whatever programs it has in place today will remain economically viable for tomorrow. At present with a \$40 billion annual deficit this government is not living up to its moral obligation.

Reform of agriculture programs is essential because we must be able to defend the cost of agriculture support to taxpayers, consumers and future generations. Support programs that protect farmers and producers from situations beyond their control are defensible and desirable for the maintenance of the agricultural industry.

My colleagues in this House have proposed three major programs that we support. I will not review those in their entirety today but I will list them because we believe they are

defensible programs. They include an actuarially sound federal-provincial producer funded crop insurance program. They also include an income stabilization program that is a whole farm program available to all sectors of the industry. The third program that we suggest would be a trade distortion adjustment program designed to compensate exporting producers as a direct countermeasure to foreign subsidies.

My colleagues and I believe that if these improved programs are targeted to those producers who need them there will be many benefits.

A couple of them I might list are support dollars that are strategically targeted to increase their effectiveness manifold. Why are we just spending money in all directions where there is not a quantifiable need? Also, by delivering support more directly to the farmer rather than through a large bureaucracy the money gets to where it is needed and it gets there faster.

(1300)

These are just a few examples of how the minister can increase his effectiveness and the effectiveness of his department for those farmers in need of support and at the same time reduce the burden to taxpayers. These are the kinds of things the government should be doing. Simply making a few internal housekeeping changes to the department is not going to affect producers in any meaningful way.

Rather than making some of these reforms that move the agricultural industry forward the minister is content to shuffle his department around. The minister is adjusting his tie while his pants are on fire. In other words, there are serious problems in agriculture that need urgent attention and here we are in the House today debating a recycled Tory reorganization bill.

If we look at the minister's record of action we can see why farmers and producers from all across Canada are unhappy with his performance. I will list a few of the minister's non accomplishments. The minister signed the GATT agreement the way that we forecast he would during the last election campaign. He did not change a thing, contrary to the promises in the red ink book.

We recognized the decision that had to be made while the Liberals and other parties in this House were reticent to accept the fact that Reform indicated the deal would be signed more or less the way it was signed. The agriculture minister had to sign the GATT deal more or less the way it had been negotiated in spite of promises to the contrary.

Our agriculture minister bungled the grain transportation system effectiveness last year which led to a disastrous year for many producers. Producers are worried about the same thing occurring this year because very little has been done to put safeguards in the transportation system that would not allow a reoccurrence of last year's paralyzed system.

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The agriculture minister is stalling on the issue of backtracking of grain from Thunder Bay. The date has been set back and we have not seen anything of substance that would indicate he is even going to meet the targets he set.

Of even more concern is that the minister of agriculture has caved in on his commitment to defend durum producers in Canada by agreeing to export quotas to the United States when all of the cards were in our deck and we were in the right and the Americans were in the wrong. Yet we caved in and handicapped our producers who were discovering a great export market for their product where the customer had cash on the barrel head to pay for the product.

Our agriculture minister has labelled Canadian farmers as criminals for wanting to export their own grain to the United States. Rather than rectifying the problem he has lashed out at the producers he is supposed to represent. Our agriculture minister has failed to reform the Canadian Wheat Board even though most farmers are calling for it. Our minister of agriculture has failed to consolidate support programs for the agricultural industry, as I mentioned earlier in my speech. He has failed to reduce the proportion of agriculture bureaucrats to farmers. I believe at this time there is one bureaucrat for every three to five farmers. It depends on where the figures come from.

This minister talks about consulting with producers. Certainly there is no one and no party more warm to the idea of consulting with people than the Reform Party. As my colleague from Moose Jaw—Lake Centre said, we have seen consultations, we have seen studies, we have seen a lot of producers and producer groups do an immeasurable amount of work in putting forward proposals that once they have come to the cabinet table get put on a shelf and nothing comes of it or the final product is far removed from what was indicated through the consultation process.

We would urge this minister to move beyond the consultation process and move into the action mode where he either acts on the judgment and wisdom of producers who have spoken in the past or in a democratic fashion allows producers to make decisions such as on the wheat board and the marketing of barley.

The minister must get around to doing something. We cannot consult forever until the industry wanes and becomes weakened over time through inaction.

In his speech the minister talked briefly about Wayne Gretzky. Of course being a hockey fan I perked up immediately when he said Wayne Gretzky said he scored because he shot the puck. My concern is that our agriculture minister is not even on the ice. If he is on the ice he has not even gone over his blue line yet. It is a concern that many producers share.

I hope the minister has listened to the suggestions that I have put forward sharply. I admit I put them forward sharply because I believe that action is required. However, they are in a spirit of constructive criticism. My desire is that the government will very soon stop putting forward administrative bills and finally act to improve the agriculture industry.

(1305)

**Mr. Morris Bodnar (Saskatoon—Dundurn):** Mr. Speaker, perhaps I could remind the hon. member for Kindersley—Lloydminster that the minister, wherever he is on the ice, has such a slapshot that he can score from any position.

On his criticism of the minister with respect to the durum quotas I wish to remind the hon. member that the cap that has been agreed to is higher than the average of shipments to the United States over the last number of years.

My question for this member is one with respect to the Canadian Wheat Board and the criticism of the minister again as to the shipping of grain into the United States. My question is very simple. Does the member and his party support the Canadian Wheat Board and the maintenance of the Canadian Wheat Board?

**Mr. Hermanson:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the hon. member's questions.

I want to speak briefly with regard to the durum cap that he mentioned. It was either the minister of agriculture or his parliamentary secretary who talked about the fast and rapid changes in agriculture.

I agree. As I said, the minister of agriculture was very eloquent in his presentation. Who could help but applaud motherhood and apple pie? What we have seen with regard to durum exports to the United States is a rather rapid increase in those exports to the point in the last three or four years at which we have seen a great market develop which our producers were filling and being paid a good dollar for their product.

What the minister of agriculture has in effect done is cut those exports in half in a growing market that could have expanded. While the minister recognizes that there are rapid changes in agriculture, he is stifling those very positive changes. One of the few positive changes in agriculture he in effect axed and said we will go back to the average, which is half of what producers could have expected to export had the minister stood his ground, stood up to the free trade agreement that was signed with the Americans, which protected our producers and gave us access to that American market.

That is an indefensible position. As the leader of the Reform Party said, it was a cream puff move and we are appalled that the minister would put our own producers at such a disadvantage and allow or disallow them such a good market.

*Government Orders*

With regard to the Canadian Wheat Board, yes the Reform Party is on record. We campaigned in support of the Canadian Wheat Board. I have mentioned this in the House before. Times are changing. When my father was a young man and delivered his own grain he had to deliver it with horses and a wagon 20—some miles and when he got to the point of delivery, there was only one person who would buy it. That person would offer him a price in grade and dockage over which he had no bargaining position whatsoever. If he did not like the deal he had to harness his horses and drive them another day's drive back to the farm, not a good use of time in those days when one was really busy.

Today it is a different situation. It is 1994, with numerous marketing options. Our concern is that the wheat board has been hindered by politicians getting too involved. Producers are in charge of their own marketing boards in most cases, the wheat board is the odd man out.

Even the Ontario Wheat Board, which markets the wheat for Ontario producers, is controlled by producers. It is only the Canadian Wheat Board which is confined to the prairie region that is controlled by government.

If producers control that board, they will make the right decisions for producers and if they make a mistake, they will correct it very quickly. If governments make a mistake—believe me, it has made several—it will never own up to those mistakes and will harm the producers it is supposed to be protecting.

**Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley East):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciated the comments of the hon. member on how to better enhance our agri-food industry.

Given the fact that Canada is rapidly becoming more urbanized, perhaps he would comment on some of his proposals on how a triple-E Senate would enhance farmers' representation in Parliament.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The Chair is having a little difficulty seeing how a triple-E Senate relates to the contents of the member's speech but I am sure the hon. member can make it relevant.

(1310)

**Mr. Hermanson:** Actually I have no problem, Mr. Speaker, responding to that question.

In the United States and even in Australia where there is a triple-E senate the agricultural industry has much more clout in decision making at a national or federal level.

If we look at states such as Iowa, Montana, South Dakota and North Dakota where there are two elected senators representing those states, the same number as Texas, New York and California, we realize that our Senate which is appointed—and we saw the type of appointments, always patronage appointments with

no responsibility to the people they are supposed to represent—certainly is not likely to be very interested in agriculture. It handicaps the more sparsely populated regions of the country which tend to be agricultural regions.

**Mr. Jerry Pickard (Essex—Kent):** Mr. Speaker, thank you for allowing me to speak on the debate on Bill C-49.

My colleague, the parliamentary secretary to the minister of agriculture, has spoken about the department's relationship in the agri-industry. I would like to discuss another important aspect of this bill, its recognition of agriculture and agri-food's role in research and development.

When the department of agriculture was first established the minister was given responsibility for experimental farm stations whose research concentrated on crops and livestock. Since then the role of the department has greatly expanded. The proposed legislation simply reflects today's realities.

AAFC's research efforts are still involved with crops and livestock but they have been taken far beyond the farm gate. The department is now committed to helping not just farmers but also the entire agri-food sector become more competitive here and abroad.

The department is working on non-food uses in agricultural products. For example, it is looking at new pharmaceuticals and grain based fuels like ethanol. It is also trying to develop and promote environmentally sustainable practices in agriculture and the agri-food industry such as biological pest controls.

What does this mean for the average Canadian? Let me put it in perspective. Many people do not realize that they owe their daily bread quite literally to Agriculture Canada research. Virtually all the varieties of wheat grown in this country were developed by scientists employed by the federal government of agriculture. They are constantly working to improve our plant and animal varieties and because of their work we enjoy plentiful, wholesome and certainly some of the least expensive food in the world.

Perhaps the most spectacular success story for government and universal research is that of rapeseed, known today as canola. In World War II rapeseed oil was used as a marine lubricant. Nobody thought of putting it on salad at that time. Government scientists working with universities saw the potential of rapeseed and worked to breed out the toxic elements in rapeseed and create a new strain of nutritious properties. Canola is now the most valuable single crop, worth one billion dollars a year.

The department continues to do outstanding work in plant and animal breeding. It is now exploiting some of the possibilities of new techniques in genetic engineering and biotechnology.

We have all heard of the human genome project whose goal is to identify and record every element in our DNA. On a

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somewhat smaller scale, our agricultural scientists are trying to decipher the DNA pattern of the common oat. AAFC's Ottawa based plant research centre is working with Quaker Oats of Canada and three American universities on this gene mapping project. Once we know what the oats are made of we can make even better ones.

In the agri-food sector innovative research is not a luxury. In a world of rapidly evolving markets technology is giving farmers and food companies new ways to meet their customers' needs. New foods and food processing techniques could stimulate economic growth and create many more jobs for Canadians.

(1315)

The Canadian agri-food industry must remain technologically competitive. Continuing high quality research is fundamental to keeping Canada a world leader in agriculture and agri-food.

AAFC is managing to maintain a strong R and D capability even in the face of budgetary restraint. Increasing the government's budget for agri-food R and D may not be possible, but at least we can keep what we have.

The Minister of Agriculture and Agri-food has made it clear that his strong commitment is to research. However, we need to reallocate some of the funding. To do this, AAFC intends to reduce costs and spend smarter. It will ensure that research priorities are driven by market opportunities, in other words, by doing research that pays.

A good example of this is sunola, a hardy miniature sunflower developed by the Saskatoon Research Centre. Royalties from certified seed sales will go back to the station's budget and it will form more joint ventures with the private sector. The department is working to ensure its research meets market needs. Input from industry helps the research branch set its priorities. Government scientists are encouraged to attend market focus workshops. At one of these events last year AAFC's research branch, eastern region, unveiled 13 potential new technologies; of these 11 were judged to have great market potential.

The agri-food industry has become an increasingly active partner in research since Treasury Board allowed the department to take outside money, including financial support, retention of revenues and royalties. Industry investment in federal government agri-food research has been moved up from \$5 billion in 1989 to approximately \$18 billion today.

During the past year the department has run a pilot project called the matching investment initiative. The department matched every dollar the private sector was willing to put into agri-food research. Two million dollars in federal funding was put into this pilot project this year and this amount could grow substantially in coming years.

Obviously the industry would not make this kind of investment unless it thought research well worth while. When the results come in, the department does not have to waste its time looking for a buyer, because the results are pre-sold. That is why public-private joint ventures can turn theoretical knowledge into practical applications, and much more quickly and easily.

Agri-food research brings many kinds of benefits. Scientific breakthroughs in our laboratories not only add to the store of human knowledge but also help to raise our standard of living both economically and environmentally.

Consider the case of ethanol. It could be a miracle fuel of the 21st century. It is based on a renewable resource, our surplus grain stocks, and it is cleaner burning than conventional gasoline thus less harmful to the environment. Ethanol and other biomass fuels could be the nucleus of a whole new industry and a tremendous economic boost for rural Canada. AAFC scientists are helping to make this happen. Some day, thanks to them, we may export both ethanol and ethanol technology to an energy hungry world.

This is not a fantasy. There are promising projects in biotechnology under way right now in AAFC's research labs that would have been dismissed a few years back as science fiction.

Would you believe that our molecule biologists are working on a natural sweetener called stevioside that is 300 times more powerful than sugar? That AAFC's scientists are using discarded crab shells to create a truly biodegradable packing material? Genetically engineered enzymes from the stomachs of cows may be used some day instead of toxic chlorine for bleaching fabrics and paper. Not to mention the custom-made micro-organisms that AAFC is introducing for the use as natural insecticides and fertilizers.

(1320)

Experience has shown that agriculture R and D is one of the best investments we can make. A number of studies done in Canada have shown that return on investment in agri-food research can exceed 50 per cent. Findings in the U.S. show similar high rates of return. It is an engine of growth in every sense and we must take advantage of that opportunity.

With the help of our partners in the private sector we should capitalize on many more such opportunities in the future.

**Mr. Elwin Hermanson (Kindersley—Lloydminster):** Mr. Speaker, I would love to ask a question about the Senate but I will refrain.

The hon. member talked extensively about research and it is an issue that is important to discuss. We also have to talk about how to fund research. Quite often the check-off system is used as a mechanism to garner funds for research.

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I would like to get the hon. member's opinion on whether check-offs should be voluntary or whether they should be involuntary. Does he support the concept of how the levels for check-offs should be determined, and how they could enhance the funding for research in agriculture?

**Mr. Pickard:** Mr. Speaker, it truly is important to realize how research has affected the agricultural industry over the years. Over the past 40 years every dollar spent on R and D has returned many more dollars.

At the ag committee hearings just yesterday Professor McEwen of the University of Guelph gave some really interesting observations on research and development.

We have doubled the production per cow in the milk industry. We produce about the same amount of milk that we did 40 years ago with half the number of cows. In the pork industry we produce 80 per cent more lean pork than 40 years ago using far less feed. In the 1950s it required three kilograms of feed to produce a dozen eggs. Today 1.5 kilograms can do the same job. In Prince Edward Island 40 years ago an acre of land produced some 200 bushels of potatoes. Today farmers would consider it disastrous if they did not get 500 bushels per acre. That shows the importance of R and D.

Where do we go with R and D expenditures and how do we bring those forward? It was a very innovative and a very strong move on behalf of the government to open the unique venture between business and government in order to fund research and development. In that way we can spend smart as was suggested by the minister. We have to use joint ventures in order to establish what the industry wishes to engage in, how they wish to move along the research and development, and where we wish to be in the future.

If industry sees research projects as very vital and worth while it will be willing to fund part of that effort. Therefore the major direction of funding in the future will be joint ventures between government and industry in order to move our research and development forward.

I really believe that new innovations, new initiatives in research and development are very critical to our country. Therefore in answering I would suggest that the way to fund research and development and to move it forward is for industry and government to move in the same direction with the same agendas in trying to accomplish the same goals.

**Mr. Hermanson:** Mr. Speaker, I am not sure if I did not phrase my question clearly enough or perhaps the member was not listening. Maybe I should have asked a question about the Senate.

(1325)

My question to the member on the other side was specifically about raising funding for research through check-offs. Maybe the member does not know what a check-off is. It is where you take a percentage of the receipts of an agricultural product, such as so many cents a tonne on wheat or so many cents a litre on milk or whatever and you then designate that funding for research.

My question was whether or not he supported the use of check-offs to raise funding for research. If so, how should that be administered? What should the levels be? Should those check-offs be voluntary or involuntary? In other words, should producers be required to participate in a check-off program or should they have the option of participating?

**Mr. Pickard:** Mr. Speaker, I was trying to expand the viewpoint of the House leader. He seems to be in a very narrow position on research and development.

I would support a voluntary check-off system where the industry puts in money. It has the opportunity to participate or not in the check-off system. I do not have a problem with that. However, it is very important to realize that research has a very broad base and is certainly not just restricted to commodity groups but also many other sources in the country in order to develop science, technology, research or whatever in the future.

I tried to point out how far Canada has gone in research. We as a nation should be very proud of where we have gone and where we are today. Our research is certainly above and beyond that of most countries of the world. We can sell that technology to other countries. We have done very well. If we consider from where we have come with wheat and the developments we have made, we are a very fortunate nation.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The Chair is in a difficult position because the member began speaking at 1.10 p.m. and clearly his time would end at 1.30 p.m. I would like all members to be aware of the fact that if questions go back and forth for another three minutes the question will not be put today.

**Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley East):** Mr. Speaker, just a short question. If the member cannot answer the question about check-offs, I wonder what his opinion is of the triple-E Senate and how it would help the agricultural industry?

**Mr. Pickard:** Mr. Speaker, I think members of the Reform Party have a major problem today in paying attention to what is being debated. They seem intent on keeping the question of a triple-E Senate in front of agriculture. It is really a questionable approach to take in the House.

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However, I believe that the problem is not with the government. The problem is with the opposition. Many times I have seen the press point out how ineffective it is. That ineffectiveness is showing right now.

(Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and referred to a committee.)

**The Deputy Speaker:** It being 1.30 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on today's Order Paper.

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## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

### IMMIGRATION ACT

**Mr. Art Hanger (Calgary Northeast)** moved:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should regulate the testing, under Sections 11(1) and (3) of the Immigration Act, of all applicants for immigration to Canada for H.I.V., and that a positive result of an H.I.V. screening be included, under the terms of Section 19(1) of the Immigration Act, as grounds for the inadmissibility to Canada of the applicant for landing.

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise in the House and address my hon. colleagues to argue this issue, although I do not think there is much of an argument in this case.

This motion to require the regulation of HIV testing for all applicants for immigration and the barring of those who test positive for HIV and AIDS from immigration to Canada is really only common sense. However, often common sense gets lost where immigration is concerned.

Let me briefly provide some background on this issue so that all members of this House can understand the importance of this issue and the importance of passing this motion. I do not need to tell anyone in this House that HIV and AIDS, and I use those terms interchangeably for obvious reasons, is a plague whose potential for death while having been intolerable and heart-breaking has yet to reach its terrible potential.

Thousands of Canadians have been afflicted with this condition. Thousands more may be. As tragic and devastating as this disease has been in Canada, AIDS in Canada has not reached the terrible scope that it has in many other nations, primarily developing nations around the world. There are nations in Africa where estimates put the rate of HIV infection at 20 per cent or more. That is a statistic that should sadden and terrify us all.

There is no question that the prevention of AIDS has been a priority for Canadians. We have engaged in education campaigns, campaigns to clean up our blood supply, efforts to prevent those with the disease from spreading it any further.

However, there is one area of control, an obvious area, that no government has made an effort to enforce, in immigration.

The Immigration Act is clear on a couple of points. First, the protection of Canadian health and safety must be the priority of our policy. Second, anyone who suffers from a condition that would place an excess demand on our social or health services should be considered inadmissible to Canada. The language in the Immigration Act is as simple and straightforward as that.

In order to fulfil the mandate of the Immigration Act the immigration department conducts routine testing of all immigrants and refugees who apply for landing in Canada. To the credit of our immigration medical regulations it is a rigorous test. Here are a few of the things that we currently test for: tuberculosis, hepatitis, diabetes, debilitating physical conditions and even syphilis. Sexually transmitted diseases are currently tested for. Those who have them are screened out with the exception of the most dangerous of all sexually transmitted diseases, the one transmitted disease that is 100 per cent fatal, AIDS.

Why? That is a good question. I have asked that question on many occasions. Here are some of the answers I have received from the department and from the minister. I have been told by high ranking members of the immigration department that HIV-AIDS is not a contagious disease.

I am not kidding. They have told me that AIDS is not contagious. Of course they went on to explain that in their terms contagious means something that you can catch in the air from someone's breath or from a touch. Apparently you cannot contract AIDS in those fashions but everyone knows that AIDS is a highly communicable disease. To say that we need not test immigrants for HIV because it is not contagious is either the height of semantic stupidity or is political correctness that could cost hundreds if not thousands of lives and untold millions of dollars.

(1335)

I have asked the minister if his government advocates the testing of immigrants for AIDS. He told me that the discretion for testing and recommending inadmissibility lies with the doctors overseas.

He said that if doctors detect traces of AIDS then they can, if they want to, recommend that someone not be allowed into Canada. I am not sure what traces of AIDS means. I suspect that the minister meant symptoms.

Needless to say, there are no symptoms of HIV. There is no way other than through a quick, cheap and easy to administer blood test to determine whether someone is infected. I said cheap in my last statement because several people have approached me asking how much this will cost. The answer is not much, from what I understand.

The AIDS test is one of the most routinely performed of all blood screenings. Blood screenings are already performed on all immigrants and the cost of including the HIV screening would be negligible. Even if it were a significant cost, so what? We are literally talking about life and death.

Should someone come to Canada infected with HIV, we the taxpayers are looking at a minimum cost of \$200,000. That is a minimum cost to treat each patient until death. That is a cost we cannot bear.

The risk of admitting immigrants with HIV who likely do not even know that they are infected is one we cannot tolerate. I have asked immigration officials who are currently working on a new set of immigration medical inadmissibility guidelines if HIV infection will be reason enough to declare someone inadmissible if we somehow find out that they have the disease. The answer was no.

They told me the same sort of logic which only some bureaucrats are capable of that the new guidelines use a five year window of medical service consumption. If an immigrant is not expected to use more than the average of medical services within five years of coming to Canada, then they are admitted.

Thus, HIV is not on the list because someone with HIV could remain relatively healthy for up to five years despite the fact that after five years, whenever AIDS kicks in—it undoubtedly will—the costs will be enormous and the risk before that time of transmission is great.

Also, now that doctors around the world have recognized the existence of HIV-2, a new strain of the disease that often takes much longer than five years to develop into full blown AIDS, there is even more reason to conclude that the five year cost guidelines the ministry has come up with do not make sense, not for this disease. That is precisely why we need the government to take specific action on this specific disease.

Canada is currently not testing for HIV because one, it is not contagious; two, doctors need to look for symptoms even though there are not any; and three, it is not expensive to treat. That is the logic coming out of the immigration system currently.

Clearly we need to jump start the immigration department into exercising a little logic in looking after the best interests of Canadians. This motion, when implemented into the immigration regulations, will provide that jump start.

I simply do not understand why this government has held out on the implementation of this measure but on my cynical days I think there may be some special interests that have the ears of this minister and previous ministers of immigration and that have nixed this common sense measure.

### *Private Members' Business*

In case my colleagues on either side of this House think that voting for this motion would cost them votes or would raise the ire of a significant number of people, let me reassure members that it will not.

Let me also assure members that voting against this measure would cost votes. Allow me to provide some evidence to back this up. The immigration association conducted a poll over the summer.

(1340)

One of the questions that was asked of over 1,000 people nationwide was whether they think people with incurable, contagious diseases should be permitted to immigrate into Canada. The result was 77 per cent of the respondents said they should not. Anecdotally, a radio station poll was conducted in Calgary just before the summer asking the same question. This time it was dramatic, if unscientific. Ninety-four per cent said that those with HIV should not be permitted to immigrate into Canada.

When was the last time any issue received this kind of consensus? That is the point. There is consensus on this issue. Granted, I have received letters from one or two individuals with a radical agenda who opposed my calls for HIV testing. That means little when compared with these numbers.

I can assure my hon. colleagues this is a consensus issue. Canadians were shocked when I brought to light the fact that immigrants are not screened for AIDS. Now that they know, they do support the necessary changes.

However, there is more to this than simply acting on the will of the Canadian people. Of course, that is a significant reason in itself for us to act. There is also the matter of doing what is best, doing what is right and doing what makes sense.

Canadians, including the members of this House, want AIDS eliminated in Canada. There is no one who does not want to see this plague eliminated. Given that, why are we not taking the most basic, the most proactive, the most obvious measure possible to move ourselves down the road to doing away with AIDS in Canada, preventing those who carry this disease from coming into Canada?

It boggles the imagination. I do not know how many of my constituents and citizens all over the country have written to me or have personally asked me how we could as a nation be so stupid as to not test immigrants for HIV and screen them out. My answer has been that I do not know.

Why are we not doing it when virtually every other nation on earth is doing it, when countries like the United States have gone so far as to prevent those who admit to having the disease from even entering the country as visitors?

Let me note this is not the intent of my motion. There is no way to screen visitors for HIV. Nor would it be feasible to

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consider doing so. This motion would only affect those who make an application either through the immigration or refugee streams for permanent landing in Canada to become permanent residents.

Let me speak a moment about the humanity of this motion. I have been criticized by one or two of my colleagues on the opposite side of the House for not being humanitarian, for not being sympathetic to the cause of those who want to immigrate into Canada and who carry HIV.

Refusing immigration to Canada to anyone for any reason is not a pleasant task. Canada is the greatest nation on earth and one of the most desired of destinations for those who seek a new and better life in another land.

For these reasons Canada receives more applications for immigration than we can accept, even though we are accepting far too many. Canada must say no to some. There is no way around that. We cannot take everyone who applies. Given this fact, we as Canadians and as a government have some hard choices to make.

We have to devise rules that will screen out some and allow residency to others. In order to write good rules, in order to devise a just and appropriate screening process we must establish priorities.

In my mind the priority that should overshadow all others is the protection of those who have already been admitted to Canada, or were born in Canada. There is no other way. We would be doing a grave injustice to our electorate if we were to hold any priority above its protection and the protection of the services that government administers for it.

(1345)

When some people apply for immigration to Canada who have a disease that not only threatens the safety of Canadians but is guaranteed to place a burden on our already crumbling health care system that is nothing short of massive, we have no choice but to conclude that the acceptance in Canada of these people poses a serious safety and cost threat to Canadians. Such immigrants must be excluded so that a place can be opened up for someone else.

Canada has no moral burden to accept everyone who applies to come to the country. We only have a burden to provide a good home for those whom we accept.

We as legislators have a duty to ensure that only the best, only the most fit and only the most productive come to the country as immigrants. We have a duty to protect our constituents. We have a duty to enforce the preamble of the Immigration Act which charges us to protect the health, safety and good order of Canadian society.

Immigration policy of late has failed in that duty. People have become disillusioned with immigration policy and with the people who implement it. They do not think that the right people

are being allowed in and they see too many examples of good people being excluded. That has to change.

The motion is a small step in restoring some legitimacy to the immigration program in Canada. This is a small step toward convincing Canadian people that their protection is really our top priority. This is a small step toward making the immigration program make sense.

Let us take that step. Let us pass the motion in a non-partisan manner and improve immigration. In the process let us take another step that is just as, if not more, important toward preventing the spread of AIDS in Canada.

When implemented the motion would be a significant step in the war on AIDS. No one loses. Everyone gains. The people of Canada gain increased safety and a lowering of the burden on our medical system. Legislators gain by voting yes on an overwhelmingly popular initiative. The government gains by being handed an order of the House to move on something that is long overdue. Immigrants gain by having the status of their health thoroughly checked.

It is a hard decision to bar someone on medical grounds from coming to Canada as an immigrant, but so many people infected with this disease do not know that they are infected with the disease. While we will stop them from coming to Canada as immigrants, at the same time we could very well be providing an invaluable test and invaluable information to hundreds or thousands of people who may not know they are infected.

We are not doing a disservice to those who are infected since their fate, I am afraid, is certain. However we could unintentionally be doing a service to those who are infected but do not know it.

Finally, regulation is long overdue. It should be passed and it must be passed. There is no good reason for it not to be passed. It should not matter that the motion originated on this side of the House. Just let it pass and we will know we have done our job for the day and have taken a significant step forward in the protection of our citizens and the rationalization of Canada's embattled immigration program.

**Ms. Mary Clancy (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Citizenship and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, it is clear from our discussions that there are still a number of misconceptions regarding persons who are HIV positive or have AIDS. Despite extensive efforts at public education it is clear that prejudices about this terrible disease and the virus associated with it remain entrenched. The motion before us reflects somewhat this unfortunate attitude.

Although I do not—and I want to make it very clear—question my hon. colleague's intentions, I do wonder if the motion is not based on certain mistaken and preconceived ideas. I would like to point out that it is incorrectly assumed by many that a positive result on an HIV test means that someone has AIDS. It

is also incorrectly assumed that AIDS can be transmitted by simple contact. What is even worse, it is sometimes incorrectly assumed that someone who is HIV positive has no further contribution to make to society. We all know that these ideas are false. Nevertheless they unfortunately continue to influence certain public perceptions.

(1350)

Misperceptions about diseases, disabilities and afflictions are not new to Canada. All we have to do to find evidence of this is to examine the Immigration Act of 1952. If we examine it we will see that the question of obligatory HIV screening of immigration applicants has certain historical parallels.

Back in 1952 protecting public health and safety was a key objective of legislators concerned with immigration to Canada as it is today. This was before Canada adopted a system of universal health insurance. The issue at hand was not a concern over an excessive burden on the health care system. Nevertheless the act listed various diseases and deficiencies that in themselves constituted sufficient grounds to deny someone admission to Canada.

The act is far from subtle. It reflected the common prejudices of the time. It denied admission to Canada "to idiots, imbeciles and the feeble-minded, epileptics, lunatics and individuals who are mute, blind or otherwise deficient from a physical point of view". It denied access to Canada of "immigrants who are dumb, blind or otherwise physically defective". Attitudes about disabilities were different back then.

In 1952 they did not consider an individual's capacity to live normally with a medical condition. They did not consider the possibility of calling on medical science to control a medical condition.

Epilepsy, for example, was considered a ground for exclusion even when it was controlled. When a new Immigration Act was proclaimed in 1978 it offered, thank goodness, considerable progress over the old act, especially with respect to medical grounds for exclusion.

Two important changes were made. First, the criterion of excessive demand was added. This measure was intended to protect the universal health insurance system that had been created nine years earlier. It was designed to protect the system from becoming overrun by people who had not paid into the system.

Second, the list of illnesses and deficiencies that automatically made a person ineligible was eliminated. Inadmissibility was now decided by medical officers. These doctors now decided whether a person's condition represented a threat to public health or whether their condition would present an excessive demand on health or social services. For example, people with

### *Private Members' Business*

epilepsy could now be admitted to Canada if their condition was controllable.

We have made much progress since 1952 and I believe we should continue to progress. Unfortunately it is my belief that the motion before us today would take us back to the attitudes that prevailed in 1952.

The motion before us would specifically make a positive HIV test grounds for inadmissibility to Canada. This denies the progress in attitude toward diseases that has been made over the years. It denies the progress in medical attitudes and practice that has also changed. Above all, it denies the progress in our approach to AIDS that has also evolved.

Our laws and our institutions must reflect this progress. As legislators we must take care to dispassionately analyse and reflect on issues that are too often fraught with prejudice and discrimination.

As dedicated legislators we must take pains to avoid imposing our value judgments on others. We must take care to resist ill informed and preconceived ideas. We must be very careful to avoid being stampeded into adopting a policy that is more based on fear than it is on fact.

I want to make our position very clear. The facts are unambiguous. People who have tested positive for HIV can live for many years without developing AIDS. AIDS is not a disease that can be transmitted by simple contact. People who are HIV positive can make a significant contribution to our society. Many of us have worked relentlessly to destroy the myths surrounding AIDS. Any decision that marks a step backward threatens to compromise the considerable progress we have made over the past few years.

Our decision on this important issue has the potential to critically damage our international reputation for openness, fairness and justice. We must avoid this at all cost.

(1355)

At the same time I appreciate the concern expressed about not imposing an excessive burden on our country's social and health services. This is a priority for the department of immigration and for the minister.

I am confident we can arrive at a decision that is both fair and economical. That is why the government is reviewing the extensive information we have on HIV. We will be announcing our decision soon.

I am sure my hon. colleague agrees this issue deserves our careful attention. The last time the medical provisions of the Immigration Act were reviewed was in 1978. That is why we are not about to rush into a hasty, ill conceived decision on this matter. We are devoting considerable care and attention to medical inadmissibility issues once again.

*Private Members' Business*

I assure the hon. member that our decisions will appropriately reflect the health care system, social justice and economic matters that concern us today. I know the hon. member, with his very great concern in this area, would not want us to act hastily. I assure you, Mr. Speaker, the House and the hon. member that we will not.

[Translation]

**Mr. Osvaldo Nunez (Bourassa):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to participate in this debate on motion M-285 requesting mandatory HIV screening for immigrants and prescribed classes of visitors.

Section 11 of the Immigration Act states that every immigrant and every visitor of a prescribed class shall undergo a medical examination. The medical examination required under Section 11(1) is defined in Section 11 as including a mental examination, a physical examination as well as a medical assessment of records respecting the immigrant or visitor.

Section 19 lists the classes of inadmissible persons, from terrorists and war criminals to persons convicted of an offence committed in Canada or outside Canada and so on.

In its present form, the motion tabled by my colleague the Reform Party member for Calgary Northeast therefore intends to bar entry to immigrants and visitors who are HIV-positive or have AIDS. In his opinion, this medical condition should be listed in Section 19 of the Immigration Act.

The minister of immigration has already stated that it was currently possible for Canada to disqualify applicants who are H.I.V. positive or have AIDS. In 1993, 54 applications were rejected on those grounds. A medical officer needs only suspect such a condition for an AIDS test to be performed. If the diagnosis is positive, then two medical officers must agree to recommend that the application be rejected by government.

The minister told the press that the reason for refusing in such cases is not the danger for public health but the financial burden it would impose on Canada's health care system. This provision would also be used to refuse admission to people with other diseases that require very costly medical care, like some cancers, kidney or heart diseases.

The minister himself also pointed out that it would be important to ensure the reliability of tests in different countries before making the tests compulsory. As for refugee claimants, who must undergo a medical examination within 60 days of arriving in Canada, the minister surely considers it a sensitive issue, because he said that on one hand there are medical considerations and on the other a real fear of persecution.

(1400)

This issue is also tied to human rights. The Department of Justice should look at this aspect of the issue before making a final decision on this.

Immigrant selection based on AIDS screening is a matter for public debate. One of the arguments put forward in this debate is that excluding HIV-positive immigrants would limit transmission of the virus and reduce health-care costs associated with the treatment of immigrants with AIDS.

To determine whether a specific minority of immigrants constitutes a financial burden on the public health-care system, we must look beyond the costs related to a particular disease. The economic burden for a given disease must be compared with that for other existing diseases on the basis of which immigrants are selected or rejected. This, of course, for the purpose of developing an immigration policy that is sensible, fair and, above all, free from any hint of discrimination.

A group of researchers at the McGill Centre for Medicine, Ethics and Law in Montreal recently published a study comparing the cost of treating AIDS patients and the cost of treating coronary disease. In their study, the researchers used a model to project costs directly attributable to AIDS and coronary disease over the ten-year period following the arrival of immigrants who entered Canada in 1988.

The model has three components: first, estimating the cost of screening immigrants for AIDS; second, estimating the cost of treating immigrants with AIDS; and third, estimating the cost of treating immigrants suffering from coronary disease.

The results of the study may come as a surprise to some people. It is estimated that after ten years, the total direct cost of HIV-related health care would be \$18.5 million. Over the same ten-year period, the total cost of treating immigrants suffering from coronary disease would be \$21.6 million.

[English]

There is no effective screening method for detecting an increasing risk of developing clinical coronary heart disease. However, excluding all immigrants over the age of 50 years old would potentially save \$14 million of the expected \$21.6 million in cost attributable to coronary heart disease.

With regard to the reliability of the testing itself, we know it is not 100 per cent sure. In fact, three consecutive tests are needed to confirm positive HIV infection in a person. This process, time consuming and costly, will fail to detect close to 10 per cent of HIV carriers.

The study I am talking about assumed the testing to be done in Canada so that the false results could be reduced. How could the Canadian government possibly control the quality of testing in other countries? A similar problem produced itself in 1981 when

costly testing for intestinal parasites in prospective immigrants were abolished partly because of the inability to control the quality of testing in overseas laboratories.

All of these facts speak clearly against the introduction of AIDS testing of prospective immigrants and refugees. I have not even spoken about ethical considerations, which would seem just as important in the discussion. After all, applying a criterion for one disease and not for another is simply discriminatory. Testing for AIDS would also reinforce stereotyping and discrimination for prospective immigrants or refugees, whether it be in this country or the country they would be forced to return to.

(1405)

The spreading of AIDS must not be labelled as originating from visitors or new residents to this country, but must rather be seen in its global context. In other words, if the Canadian government were to impose obligatory AIDS testing, how could it justify not spending an equal amount of tax dollars on educational programs aimed at preventing the spreading of this disease? Prevention is the only way to control AIDS, which is surely better than spending millions on a testing which gives absolutely no concrete results.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, for all these reasons, the Bloc Quebecois will vote against this motion.

[English]

For all these reasons the Bloc Quebecois will vote against this motion.

**Mr. Rey D. Pagtakhan (Winnipeg North):** Mr. Speaker, thank you for your kind consideration. I am pleased to debate the private member's motion put forward by the member for Calgary Northeast which in essence asks the government to make it mandatory to test applicants for immigration to Canada for the AIDS virus, also known as HIV.

Because of its severity, its infectious pandemic nature, the lack of a preventive vaccine and an effective treatment, AIDS had in the past engendered a great deal of fear among the general public, employers, insurance companies, schools and even health care workers.

Today the very mention of the term AIDS which once struck fear into the hearts of almost all still frightens some. Fear can elicit two opposite behaviours. It can compel one to take preventive measures, which is laudable, or it can drive out the compassion one would normally feel for those living with the disease, which would be a tragedy.

Fear of AIDS was often based on misunderstanding or misinformation. But as research adds to our knowledge and understanding of HIV and as public education dispels the myths which surround it, much of that fear has now subsided. Compassion for the patients and the victims of the virus has returned. I am

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therefore concerned that the motion before us and the action it proposes play upon the unfounded fears of the past.

The motion could resurrect public misunderstanding about HIV and cause undue panic and unnecessary suffering without serving any public health good. This misunderstanding could be directed toward immigrants even though immigrants now in Canada are no more likely to test positive for HIV than are Canadians born in this country.

I am concerned that we might unwittingly or wittingly stir up resentment against immigrants without achieving any benefit to public health and safety or to our health care system. We need to keep things in perspective.

Medical experts do not consider HIV to be a threat to public health or safety in the same way tuberculosis is or smallpox once was. I have more reason to fear being in the same room with someone who has a common cold virus than I do being near someone who is HIV positive.

HIV cannot be transmitted through casual contact as a cold can be. Even close contact as happens with health care workers and their patients is a very low risk activity. I certainly will not be infected by a chance contact with an immigrant or foreign visitor who has HIV.

Canada's public education campaign has been successful. I would like to think that the times when innocent children born with HIV were barred from schools are far behind us.

The private member's motion now before us which calls for mandatory testing of immigrants for HIV and the automatic inadmissibility for those who test positive is truly a regressive move. This motion would be a throwback to those dark days of the early eighties when our understanding of AIDS was still in its infancy.

(1410)

Does the action the member proposes make more sense than barring those living with HIV from schools, from the workplace, from public transportation? Does the action make more sense than simply testing the 28 million citizens of Canada today? I submit it does not.

If the entrance of HIV positive individuals into Canada would pose a threat to Canadians, would the member then take the next step and propose mandatory testing as part of the criteria for obtaining a visitor's visa to the country? What of the open border that separates the United States from Canada? Is the member also proposing HIV testing at the United States-Canada border starting today?

Is the member willing to go on record today as suggesting that all those who enter Canada, including pilots on every return trip, diplomats, tourists, returning Canadians, will need to obtain an HIV clearance card first? Has the member considered the

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consequences of false positive screening tests in which healthy individuals without the virus have been deemed possessing it? Has the member imagined the emotional toll this would take on those healthy individuals?

What about false negative tests in which actually infected individuals show negative test results because of the lag period it takes to develop the antibodies? Has the member imagined the false sense of security that would result from this situation?

I wonder if the member has imagined the enormous cost it would entail to test everyone. This is a member of the party that pontificates daily in this House about cutting government costs. Has the hon. member imagined the message we would be sending our tourists and the international community if this motion were to be adopted?

If the member's chief motive is to protect the health and safety of Canadians his proposed course of action would fall flat because it is not based on knowledge of how HIV is transmitted from person to person. If the motive behind this motion is to prevent unnecessary strain on our health care system, the hon. member should recognize that this should be viewed in the light of our overall medical admissibility criteria that already exists.

We would have to ask one fundamental question: Are people carrying the AIDS virus but without the disease not different from those suffering from the disease or any other chronic health condition in relation to cost to the health care system? There is a mountain of difference.

This government is not dismissing the concerns Canadians have about AIDS, its virus or HIV testing of applicants for immigration. It is addressing them in the most constructive and progressive way possible, by conducting a thorough review of all medical testing for applicants for immigration with the benefit of the best expert advice and consultations. When that review is complete the government will take whatever action is necessary to protect the health and safety of Canadians and to preserve the integrity of our health care system.

However, until the review is complete any action of the sort proposed by the hon. member would be premature and unwarranted. Unfounded debate and an uninformed decision by this House would merely foster the kind of misunderstanding and fear about HIV that we should be working to overcome. We must refuse to assist wittingly or unwittingly in perpetrating the myths and fears that too often harden people's hearts and make outcasts of those who most need our human compassion and understanding. We should formulate public policy based on fact not fear, on evidence not speculation, on reason not political propaganda.

I know the hon. member opposite who introduced this motion would like to share the sentiment of this government and that of this member for Winnipeg North.

In conclusion, I would request that the member in all sincerity withdraw his motion until such time as we have all the scientific evidence we need to make a reasoned public health policy that Canadians want.

**Mr. Grant Hill (Macleod):** Mr. Speaker, I want to tell this House about one of my heroes. This hero is Joseph Lister. Joseph Lister was the founder of antiseptic surgery and a pioneer in preventive medicine. He was a surgeon of some note in Edinburgh. Lister noted that in his surgical suite 50 per cent of the people on whom he performed amputations died. They passed on of an illness called sepsis. Sepsis was something that Lister did not understand.

(1415)

Lister noted that carbolic acid seemed to make a difference in the cleanliness of the wound after he was done. That carbolic acid and Lister's thoughts about microbes, the brand new microscope that was just available and Louis Pasteur's work on pasteurization went together to form the basis of scientific medicine.

In a very short period of time in his life, the mortality from amputations went from 45 to 50 per cent down to 5 per cent. It is very interesting that Lister had his thoughts and ideas denigrated by much of the medical community when he first presented them.

This surgeon who is now looked on as the benchmark of surgical treatment was laughed at. During his lifetime he was able to see matters change and he became the founder of modern antiseptic surgery.

I also would like to say that modern medicine can be criticized. Modern medicine has had an effect on another type of mortality, infant mortality. Statistics show that in 1930 in Canada 89 of 1,000 babies died. In 1991 but six of 1,000 babies died.

The reason I brought this up is that modern medicine undergoes evolution and change. Thought processes alter and move. I have listened today to rather eloquent arguments for how we should ignore medical information. I stand here to say that we do so at our peril.

My good associate for Calgary Northeast believes that immigrants with AIDS should be inadmissible to Canada. I want to talk about the other medical reasons we do not admit immigrants to Canada.

I am going to compare the diseases that we do not allow people in for to HIV. One is venereal disease, which is discovered by a blood test. It is not contagious. It is infectious by sexual contact. It is treatable and is seldom fatal if treated. It is

not visible except in advanced stages. It is cheap to treat with two medicines, amoxicillin and probenecid. But you do not come into Canada if you have VD.

Another disease is hepatitis. It is found by a blood test. It is infectious by blood to blood contact. That is, the nurse who happens to be pricked in the finger when she has taken blood from a person with hepatitis can get hepatitis. It is not visible unless the person is jaundiced or yellow. It can be fatal in some cases. It is difficult to treat at moderate cost.

Another disease is tuberculosis. It is discovered by a Mantoux test or a scratch on the skin. It is infectious. In the true sense of word it is contagious by cough or sputum. It is treatable, rarely fatal. It is fairly inexpensive to treat as well.

(1420)

If an immigrant has any one of these diseases he or she is inadmissible. I am sorry, they cannot be admitted to Canada. What other diseases would cause denial of entry into Canada? Parasites, leprosy, and the list goes on.

I would like to quote the parliamentary secretary to the minister from *Hansard* some time ago. This is an interesting quotation on the same subject. "I also want to talk about something the hon. member raised with regard to the fact that people coming into Canada are not tested for HIV and that the minister promised to do something about it four weeks ago. The hon. member should know—I thought he knew, maybe he does not know that the enabling legislation and regulation on medical matters under this department's aegis has remained unchanged for 40 years". She went on to say: "There should not be precipitous moves on an issue like this. Be careful. Go at it slowly. Do not move quickly".

In my view if this member had not brought this issue forward it probably would have been hidden under another 40 years of deadwood and backwoods thinking.

Where is HIV if we compare it to the other illnesses that do not allow people to enter Canada? How does it stack up in terms of the criteria I mentioned before? It is found by a blood test. It is contagious by blood to blood contact. Notice that I said blood to blood contact. It is not visible except in very advanced cases. It is fatal and has no cure. It is very expensive to treat. Various comments have been made here today about the cost. The best estimates I have are costs that range between \$50,000 and \$250,000 for an individual who has the disease advanced enough to require direct medical care.

How much does venereal disease cost to treat? About \$25 for the test, \$50 for the medicine, \$100 for a doctor's visit, \$25 for a retest, \$50 for the clinic and the pharmacy, in total about \$250. TB is estimated at \$1,105. Not a good comparison there.

Why is HIV different from other diseases? I want to be very frank about this. HIV is different because the medical issue has been pushed aside by the human rights issue. This disease is not

being treated strictly as a medical issue, it is being treated as a human rights issue.

When the disease was first discovered medical people called it gay men's disease. Why? Because it was discovered to be primarily a disease of gay men. There was an outcry that would not allow the medical profession to call it what it was. Change the name. As the disease became better known and better understood it was found to be more common in the Haitian community. There was an outcry from the Haitian community. "You cannot discriminate against the Haitian community because it is more common in our citizens. You cannot mention that". But medical practitioners must mention that. How could they hide their heads in the sand and say that it does not exist?

We know that intravenous drug users often end up with HIV. We know that the sad and sorry hemophiliacs who must have blood products given to them often end up with the disease. We know that those poor unfortunates who contact it in surgery and other blood to blood contact also get the disease.

Lister would have looked at this issue and thought that Canadians had gone mad. We understand the source. We understand the mechanism. We understand the diagnosis. We know the cost and we know the risk.

(1425)

I have treated people for illness all my adult life. Common sense tells me to deny entrance to those who have the other diseases. Common sense tells me to deny entrance to Canada for those who have AIDS.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Public Works and Government Services):** Mr. Speaker, the motion before the House today says that the Immigration Act should require all prospective immigrants to be tested for HIV and include a positive result as grounds for inadmissibility.

The motion seems quite straightforward, but it raises a multitude of questions, and as we analyze these questions, the subject becomes very complex indeed. The first question is why in some cases, as you know, we already screen prospective immigrants for HIV, in accordance with existing guidelines. Applicants who test positive may be considered inadmissible on medical grounds. We must therefore ask ourselves why our current practice is not acceptable, if such is the case.

At the very least, we should take a good look at the current policy on inadmissibility on medical grounds. By law, all immigrants and certain visitors shall produce their medical records and undergo a medical examination. The legislation does not list diseases that justify inadmissibility on medical grounds. The simple fact of having a disease does not in itself constitute grounds for refusal under the Act.

Grounds for refusal tend to be based on the consequences, that admitting an individual would have on Canada, whatever the nature of his medical problems.

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[English]

The act requires medical officers to determine inadmissible those applicants who would likely pose a threat to public health or safety or create excessive demands on Canada's health or social services.

While there is much that we do not know or understand about HIV, expert medical opinion does agree on one thing: A person with HIV does not represent a threat to public health or safety merely because of the infection. I would hope that most Canadians understand by now that one does not get HIV or AIDS just by being around someone who tests HIV positive.

Refusing admission to applicants with HIV would have to be based on any excessive demand they might place on health or social services. This requires a judgment to be made in each individual case. It seems to me that the question of whether or not a person with any specific illness could create an excessive demand depends on many factors: the severity of the illness, how far it has advanced, prognosis for recovery or deterioration, the standard treatment, and so on. Making that kind of assessment requires a great deal of expertise applied on a case by case basis.

Members of this House should recognize that the motion we are looking at today calls for a significant departure from current policy and practice. It singles out a specific disease. It asks that we name that disease in the act and it suggests that the act should automatically exclude people with that disease without any reference to an expert medical assessment of consequences.

[Translation]

For the time being, I will not ask whether we know enough about HIV to adopt such measures. I merely want to point out

that it would be unprecedented in the recent history of Canadian immigration. This measure should not be adopted without serious study and it should not be adopted until its potential benefits, if any, can be properly evaluated.

The physician is not obliged to test for HIV, either by the Act or the regulations, but he may do so if he has reason to believe that the virus may be present.

If an applicant's medical records or a medical examination point to the possibility of HIV infection or even a health condition that causes the physician some concern, the latter may order further testing to make a better assessment of the individual's condition.

[English]

As things stand now, testing for HIV does take place when there is reason to do so. Under current guidelines immigrant applicants found to be HIV positive are usually considered to represent an excessive demand on our health and social services. They are deemed inadmissible.

The point I want to make is not to denigrate the motion. The point is we do have an ability now to look at this and we should examine whether our current legislation is satisfactory. If it is not, we should examine this further.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The time provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired. Pursuant to Standing Order 93, the order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the Order Paper.

It being 2.30 p.m. the House stands adjourned until Monday next at 11 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 2.30 p.m.)

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